

BPA Parliamentary Procedures Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. In the case where two members rise at the same time to speak, who does the chairman usually recognize?**
 - A. The member who was recognized first in the previous discussion**
 - B. The member who rises first and addresses the chair**
 - C. The member with the most seniority**
 - D. The member who made the last motion**
- 2. What follows special orders in the standard order of business?**
 - A. New business**
 - B. General orders and unfinished business**
 - C. Reports of officers**
 - D. Announcements**
- 3. What action is taken when a member calls for a "vote"?**
 - A. The meeting is automatically adjourned**
 - B. A decision is made based on majority opinion**
 - C. The discussion on the motion is immediately halted**
 - D. Members are allowed to continue debating**
- 4. What document contains the rules and procedures governing the activities of a society?**
 - A. Constitution**
 - B. Charter**
 - C. Resolution**
 - D. Order of business**
- 5. What is the significance of adopting minutes from a previous meeting?**
 - A. It allows for the addition of new members**
 - B. It provides a record of decisions made and actions taken**
 - C. It helps to set the agenda for future meetings**
 - D. It confirms the leadership positions**

- 6. Why might a chair allow a discussion on a motion without a second?**
- A. To save time for the assembly.**
 - B. If the chair believes the motion has strong support.**
 - C. To encourage open forum debates.**
 - D. When the motion is extraordinarily urgent.**
- 7. What are rules of order that modify or supplement parliamentary authority called?**
- A. Special rules of order**
 - B. Standing rules**
 - C. General rules**
 - D. Procedural rules**
- 8. What should a member do if they need to clarify a point during the debate?**
- A. Continue speaking until the point is addressed**
 - B. Raise a Point of Order**
 - C. Call for a division of the assembly**
 - D. Seek permission to speak from the chair**
- 9. What is true regarding the need for a seconder on small boards or committees?**
- A. All motions must be seconded**
 - B. Only the main motion needs to be seconded**
 - C. Proposed motions need not be seconded**
 - D. Seconding a motion is optional**
- 10. Which of the following is NOT a function of parliamentary procedure?**
- A. To facilitate orderly and efficient meetings**
 - B. To ensure every member has equal speaking opportunities**
 - C. To determine the financial standing of an organization**
 - D. To provide a system for making decisions**

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. D
9. C
10. C

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Explanations

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1. In the case where two members rise at the same time to speak, who does the chairman usually recognize?

A. The member who was recognized first in the previous discussion

B. The member who rises first and addresses the chair

C. The member with the most seniority

D. The member who made the last motion

The chairman typically recognizes the member who rises first and addresses the chair because it follows the established protocols and courtesies in parliamentary procedure. When two members stand simultaneously, the norm is that the one who indicates their intention to speak first has priority. This practice fosters a respectful and orderly debate, ensuring that discussions can proceed smoothly without confusion. It also upholds the principle of fairness, giving the first speaker the opportunity to present their point or argument without interruption. Recognizing members in this way helps maintain decorum within the meeting, allowing participants to understand who has the floor and preventing interruptions that could lead to chaos during discussions.

2. What follows special orders in the standard order of business?

A. New business

B. General orders and unfinished business

C. Reports of officers

D. Announcements

In the standard order of business, the section that follows special orders is the consideration of general orders and unfinished business. This is an established sequence in parliamentary procedure that helps organizations manage their meetings effectively and ensures that all important topics are addressed systematically. Special orders are specific items of business that are scheduled to be given priority in the meeting, often because they require immediate attention or are of significant importance. Once those items are dealt with, the meeting progresses to general orders, which include items that have been previously scheduled for discussion, as well as any unfinished business from past meetings that still needs to be resolved. This ensures that all relevant and pending issues are systematically addressed before moving on to new business, thereby maintaining order and continuity in proceedings.

3. What action is taken when a member calls for a "vote"?

- A. The meeting is automatically adjourned**
- B. A decision is made based on majority opinion**
- C. The discussion on the motion is immediately halted**
- D. Members are allowed to continue debating**

When a member calls for a "vote," the primary action taken is that a decision is made based on majority opinion. This process signifies that the assembly is ready to conclude the discussion on the matter at hand and move to a formal voting procedure, where members express their support or opposition to the motion being considered. This action is fundamental in parliamentary procedures, as it ensures that the group's decision reflects the majority's stance on the specific issue, which aligns with the democratic principles underpinning most assembly meetings. By calling for a vote, members signal that they have had sufficient discussion and are ready to weigh in with their opinions formally, leading to a resolution that is reflective of the majority view. The other options do not accurately represent the action of calling for a vote. For instance, if the meeting were to be adjourned automatically, it would not allow for any decision to be made on the motion. Additionally, halting the discussion is a part of the voting process, but the focus is on the outcome rather than stopping conversation for its own sake. Finally, allowing members to continue debating would contradict the intent of calling for a vote, which is to finalize discussion and reach a consensus.

4. What document contains the rules and procedures governing the activities of a society?

- A. Constitution**
- B. Charter**
- C. Resolution**
- D. Order of business**

The Constitution serves as the foundational document for an organization or society, outlining its fundamental principles, structures, and rules. It defines the governance framework, including the roles of the membership, the responsibilities of the leadership, and the procedures for conducting meetings and making decisions. This document typically includes provisions regarding membership, meetings, amendments, and specific operational guidelines that all members must follow. In connection with the other choices, a Charter generally refers to a document that establishes an organization and often accompanies a Constitution, but it may not contain all the ongoing rules and procedures needed for the society's activities. A Resolution is a formal decision or expression of opinion made by the group, focusing on specific issues rather than the overall governance structure. The Order of Business is a procedural guide that outlines the agenda for meetings but does not encompass the comprehensive rules and governance structure provided in the Constitution. Therefore, the Constitution is indeed the correct answer, as it is the primary document that governs the society's overall activities and operations.

5. What is the significance of adopting minutes from a previous meeting?

- A. It allows for the addition of new members**
- B. It provides a record of decisions made and actions taken**
- C. It helps to set the agenda for future meetings**
- D. It confirms the leadership positions**

Adopting the minutes from a previous meeting is significant because it serves as an official record that documents the decisions made and actions taken during that meeting. This record ensures that all members are aware of what transpired and helps maintain continuity in discussions. Accurate minutes can provide vital information for future meetings, especially regarding unresolved issues and tasks assigned. By adopting these minutes, the organization affirms the validity of those records, which serves to keep the membership informed and accountable. In contrast to the other options, which may relate to different aspects of meeting procedures, the primary role of minutes is to capture and confirm the key outcomes of prior discussions, thus making option B the most representative of the minutes' significance.

6. Why might a chair allow a discussion on a motion without a second?

- A. To save time for the assembly.**
- B. If the chair believes the motion has strong support.**
- C. To encourage open forum debates.**
- D. When the motion is extraordinarily urgent.**

The reasoning behind allowing a discussion on a motion without a second is often rooted in the chair's assessment of the motion's support within the assembly. If the chair believes that a motion has strong support, they may permit discussion to gauge that support more thoroughly or ensure that the assembly has an opportunity to deliberate on a potentially significant issue. This approach aligns with the goals of parliamentary procedure, which emphasizes facilitating dialogue and decision-making within the group. In scenarios where a motion is expected to resonate with many members, the chair may prioritize the discussion to foster a collective evaluation and consideration of the motion's merits, rather than requiring a formal second upfront, which could stifle valuable debate on the topic. This method can help in identifying the assembly's consensus and overall direction without unnecessary procedural delays. The other choices, while they present valid scenarios, do not directly justify the allowance of discussion without a second in the same way. Saving time, encouraging open forum debates, or addressing urgency may be valid reasons in specific contexts, but they do not inherently address the chair's assessment of support for the motion, which is critical in this specific scenario.

7. What are rules of order that modify or supplement parliamentary authority called?

A. Special rules of order

B. Standing rules

C. General rules

D. Procedural rules

The term referring to rules of order that modify or supplement parliamentary authority is known as special rules of order. These rules are created to address specific needs or situations that are not adequately covered by the general parliamentary authority, like Robert's Rules of Order. Special rules of order allow organizations to tailor their procedures to fit their unique circumstances or preferences, ensuring that the governance structure is both effective and relevant to their particular needs. They can cover aspects such as voting procedures, meeting protocols, or the roles of committee members that may diverge from standard practices outlined in the overarching parliamentary authority. In contrast, standing rules pertain to the routine operations of an organization and establish ongoing procedures that govern the day-to-day functioning. General rules are not a recognized category in parliamentary law and procedural rules typically refer to the framework of a specific meeting's conduct or agenda but do not serve the same purpose as special rules of order.

8. What should a member do if they need to clarify a point during the debate?

A. Continue speaking until the point is addressed

B. Raise a Point of Order

C. Call for a division of the assembly

D. Seek permission to speak from the chair

When a member needs to clarify a point during a debate, seeking permission to speak from the chair is the appropriate course of action. This is in accordance with parliamentary procedure, which emphasizes maintaining order and respect during discussions. By requesting permission to speak, the member allows the chair to manage the debate effectively, ensuring that all voices are heard in an orderly manner. This process helps maintain an environment where all points of view can be expressed while keeping the discourse respectful and organized. Engaging in a debate without permission can disrupt the flow of discussion and lead to confusion, while other choices may not address the need for clarification appropriately. A point of order is more suited for addressing breaches of rules or procedures, rather than seeking clarification. Similarly, calling for a division of the assembly pertains to verifying votes rather than clarifying points in discussions. Thus, seeking permission aligns with the structured approach to debate and enhances communication among members.

9. What is true regarding the need for a seconder on small boards or committees?

- A. All motions must be seconded**
- B. Only the main motion needs to be seconded**
- C. Proposed motions need not be seconded**
- D. Seconding a motion is optional**

In small boards or committees, the need for a seconder is often relaxed due to the more informal nature and the close working relationship among members. In such settings, it is commonly accepted that proposed motions may not require a formal second. This flexibility allows for more efficient discussions and decision-making, as members often understand the intent and support of each other's motions without requiring the procedural step of seconding. On larger boards, the requirement for a second is more strictly enforced to ensure that proposed motions are supported by more than one member, indicating a broader interest in discussion. However, in smaller groups, where communication is more direct and members are familiar with each other's viewpoints, the need for a second can be deemed unnecessary. This context illustrates why the idea that proposed motions need not be seconded is accurate for small committees, promoting a smoother and more efficient flow of business.

10. Which of the following is NOT a function of parliamentary procedure?

- A. To facilitate orderly and efficient meetings**
- B. To ensure every member has equal speaking opportunities**
- C. To determine the financial standing of an organization**
- D. To provide a system for making decisions**

The correct answer is that determining the financial standing of an organization is not a function of parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedure primarily focuses on the governance of meetings and the methods by which decisions are made by a group. It facilitates orderly and efficient meetings, allowing for structured discussions and decision-making processes. Additionally, it ensures that every member has a chance to speak, promoting fairness and equality within the discussion. Another vital aspect of parliamentary procedure is that it provides systematic methods for making decisions, which can include voting and consensus-building techniques. However, assessing an organization's financial state falls under the financial management or accounting domains rather than the procedural framework designed to manage meetings and decision-making processes. Thus, this choice represents an element outside the scope of what parliamentary procedure encompasses.