California Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) Written Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

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Questions

1. What classification would require the use of a matrix system?

A. Class II only

B. Class I and Class IV

C. Class III and Class V

D. Class I and Class III

2. When a person occludes and mandibular anterior teeth cannot be seen, the diagnosis is

A. Underbite

B. Crossbite

C. Overbite

D. Misalignment

3. What is the proper method for decontaminating impressions before sending them to the laboratory?

A. Only rinse with water

B. Sterilize using autoclave

C. Clean and disinfect

D. Dry and package

4. When should chairside environmental barriers be changed?

A. After every patient

B. Once a day

C. After every two patients

D. Once a week

5. What is the use of an orthodontic scaler?

A. For polishing teeth

B. Removing excess cement or bonding material

C. Cutting arch wires

D. Measuring tooth alignment

6. When the dentist taps on a tooth, what diagnostic test is being performed?

A. Inspection

B. Palpation

C. Percussion

D. Auscultation

7. Another name for dentinal sealer is

A. Adhesive

B. Desensitizer

C. Etchant

D. Bonding Agent

8. What is most commonly used for taking a bite registration?

A. Alginate

B. Bite registration material

C. Plaster

D. Silicone

9. What system accomplishes the mixing of final impression material for the assistant?

A. Hand mixing

B. Suction-based

C. Auto-mix

D. Vortex mixing

10. What is the best method for managing components of dental instruments that cannot be detached from the dental unit?

A. Disinfecting with high heat

B. Covering with impervious barriers that are changed between each patient

C. Using a different set of instruments

D. Soaking in disinfectant for extended periods

Answers

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

Explanations

1. What classification would require the use of a matrix system?

A. Class II only

B. Class I and Class IV

C. Class III and Class V

D. Class I and Class III

The classification that requires the use of a matrix system is primarily Class II restorations. A matrix system is used in dentistry to create a temporary wall around a cavity preparation that is being filled with restorative material. This is particularly important in Class II cavities, which are located on the proximal surfaces of posterior teeth. When a cavity is prepared on these surfaces, the matrix provides support for the filling material, allowing it to form a proper contour and to properly restore the proximal contact with adjacent teeth. Without a matrix, it would be challenging to achieve the appropriate shape, form, and contact area required for proper function and aesthetics. While Class I restorations involve fillings on the chewing surfaces of teeth and do not usually require a matrix, Class IV restorations, which are for anterior teeth and involve the incisal edge, may also require a matrix to achieve proper contour. However, the question asks specifically about classifications that 'require' a matrix system, and the answer focuses on the definitive need in Class II restorations. Other classifications may not universally require a matrix and therefore would not fit the question as precisely as Class II restorations do.

2. When a person occludes and mandibular anterior teeth cannot be seen, the diagnosis is

A. Underbite

B. Crossbite

C. Overbite

D. Misalignment

An occlusion is the way your teeth come together. Therefore, when a person occludes and mandibular anterior teeth cannot be seen, it means that the upper teeth are overlapping too much over the lower teeth, making it impossible to see the lower front teeth. This is known as an overbite. An underbite refers to when the lower teeth overlap the upper teeth. A crossbite refers to when the upper teeth overlap the lower teeth on one side. Misalignment could refer to any issue with the alignment of the teeth, including overbite, underbite, or crossbite.

3. What is the proper method for decontaminating impressions before sending them to the laboratory?

A. Only rinse with water

B. Sterilize using autoclave

C. Clean and disinfect

D. Dry and package

Cleaning and disinfecting is the proper method for decontaminating impressions before sending them to the laboratory. Rinsing with only water may remove some debris, but it is not enough to fully decontaminate the impressions. Sterilizing using an autoclave is unnecessary and may even damage the impressions. Drying and packaging without prior cleaning and disinfecting can also cause contamination. Therefore, the most effective and appropriate method is to clean and disinfect the impressions before sending them to the laboratory.

4. When should chairside environmental barriers be changed?

A. After every patient

B. Once a day

C. After every two patients

D. Once a week

Chairside environmental barriers, such as disposable headrest covers, should be changed after every patient to prevent cross-contamination. Changing them after every two patients or once a day may not be sufficient, as the barrier may have been exposed to contamination and can potentially transfer it to the next patient. Additionally, changing them only once a week is not recommended as the barriers can accumulate a significant amount of debris and bacteria within that timeframe. Therefore, changing the barriers after every patient is the most effective way to maintain a clean and safe environment for patients.

5. What is the use of an orthodontic scaler?

A. For polishing teeth

B. Removing excess cement or bonding material

C. Cutting arch wires

D. Measuring tooth alignment

An orthodontic scaler is a dental tool commonly used for removing excess bonding material or cement from teeth. It can also be used to remove tartar and plaque from teeth before or after an orthodontic treatment. Option A, polishing teeth, is done using a different tool called a dental polisher. Option C, cutting arch wires, is done using a different tool as well, called an orthodontic wire cutter. Finally, option D, measuring tooth alignment, is typically done using a tool called an orthodontic ruler. Therefore, option B is the most correct answer as it specifically describes the main use of an orthodontic scaler.

6. When the dentist taps on a tooth, what diagnostic test is being performed?

A. Inspection

B. Palpation

C. Percussion

D. Auscultation

When the dentist taps on a tooth, it is often called tooth percussion. This is a diagnostic test that involves tapping on the tooth to assess its health and identify any underlying issues. Inspection would involve visually examining the tooth, while palpation would involve applying pressure to the tooth using the hands. Auscultation involves listening for any abnormal sounds, which is not applicable when examining a tooth. Therefore, the correct answer is percussion.

7. Another name for dentinal sealer is

A. Adhesive

B. Desensitizer

C. Etchant

D. Bonding Agent

A dentinal sealer is a type of material used in dentistry that is placed on the surface of the tooth after it has been prepared for restoration or after a cavity has been filled. It helps to seal the exposed dentin and protect it from further damage. Out of the given options, only the term "desensitizer" accurately describes what a dentinal sealer does. Adhesive, etchant, and bonding agent are all types of dental materials, but they do not necessarily have the same function as a dentinal sealer. For example, an adhesive is used to bond dental restorations, such as crowns or fillings, to the tooth structure. An etchant is used to prepare the tooth surface for bonding and a bonding agent helps to improve the adhesion of restorative materials. Therefore, these options are not correct answers for another name for dentinal sealer

8. What is most commonly used for taking a bite registration?

A. Alginate

B. Bite registration material

C. Plaster

D. Silicone

Bite registration is a common term used to describe the process of obtaining a registration of the relationship between the upper and lower teeth. This is necessary for fabricating dental restorations such as crowns, bridges, and dentures. While alginate, plaster, and silicone can all be used for bite registration, they are not the most commonly used material. Alginate is more commonly used for taking impressions of the teeth and other oral structures. Plaster is typically used as a model material for fabricating dental restorations, and silicone is commonly used in dentistry for taking impressions and making custom trays. However, bite registration material is specifically designed for this purpose, making it the most commonly used material for this specific task.

9. What system accomplishes the mixing of final impression material for the assistant?

A. Hand mixing

B. Suction-based

C. Auto-mix

D. Vortex mixing

Auto-mix is the best option because it automates the mixing process, ensuring precise and consistent mixtures every time. Hand mixing, while it may seem simple and convenient, can lead to uneven mixtures and inaccurate results. Suction-based and vortex mixing may also provide inconsistent mixtures and are not specifically designed for final impression material mixing. Therefore, auto-mix is the most effective and reliable option for ensuring accurate and consistent final impression material mixing for the assistant.

10. What is the best method for managing components of dental instruments that cannot be detached from the dental unit?

A. Disinfecting with high heat

B. Covering with impervious barriers that are changed between each patient

C. Using a different set of instruments

D. Soaking in disinfectant for extended periods

Using a different set of instruments is not a suitable option as it may be costly and time-consuming. High heat disinfection may not be effective for all types of instruments and can potentially damage them. Soaking in disinfectant for extended periods can also damage the instruments and is not a practical method. The best method would be to cover the instruments with impervious barriers and change them between patients to prevent cross-contamination and ensure proper hygiene. This method is cost-effective and efficient in maintaining the cleanliness and safety of dental instruments.