

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

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. What instrument is used to smooth the edges of a stainless steel crown after adjusting its height?**
 - A. Diamond bur**
 - B. High-speed handpiece**
 - C. Green stone**
 - D. Amalgam carrier**

- 2. An insulating base is placed in/on the _____ of a cavity preparation.**
 - A. Pulpal Floor**
 - B. Marginal Ridge**
 - C. Cavity Wall**
 - D. Enamel Surface**

- 3. The patient record is a permanent document of whom?**
 - A. The dentist**
 - B. The patient**
 - C. The dental hygienist**
 - D. The dental assistant**

- 4. What is done to baseplate wax before placement in the patient's mouth for a bite registration?**
 - A. Chilled**
 - B. Warmed**
 - C. Moistened**
 - D. Coated with a disinfectant**

- 5. A used dental anesthetic needle is an example of?**
 - A. Biodegradable waste**
 - B. Non-regulated waste**
 - C. Regulated waste**
 - D. Recyclable waste**

- 6. The California Radiological Safety Code requires the patient protection apron to contain at least what thickness of lead?**
- A. .50 mm**
 - B. .25 mm**
 - C. .75 mm**
 - D. 1 mm**
- 7. How often must the exposure control plan be reviewed according to the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard?**
- A. Every six months**
 - B. Annually**
 - C. Every two years**
 - D. Biannually**
- 8. Another term for necrotic is**
- A. Inflamed**
 - B. Healing**
 - C. Dead and nonvital**
 - D. Infected**
- 9. A blood pressure reading of 142/96 in an adult is classified as what?**
- A. Prehypertension**
 - B. Hypertension**
 - C. Normal**
 - D. Hypotensive**
- 10. The primary active agent in the solution used for unsaturated chemical vapor sterilization is?**
- A. Alcohol**
 - B. Ethylene oxide**
 - C. Formaldehyde**
 - D. Hydrogen peroxide**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What instrument is used to smooth the edges of a stainless steel crown after adjusting its height?

- A. Diamond bur**
- B. High-speed handpiece**
- C. Green stone**
- D. Amalgam carrier**

A diamond bur is usually used for cutting into and shaping the stainless steel crown, not necessarily for smoothing the edges. A high-speed handpiece is typically used for polishing metals and finishing procedures, so it could be a potential option for smoothing the edges of a stainless steel crown, but the green stone is the more commonly used instrument for this specific task. An amalgam carrier is used for carrying and placing amalgam material, which is not relevant for smoothing the edges of a stainless steel crown.

2. An insulating base is placed in/on the _____ of a cavity preparation.

- A. Pulpal Floor**
- B. Marginal Ridge**
- C. Cavity Wall**
- D. Enamel Surface**

The pulpal floor is the correct answer because it refers to the bottom surface of the cavity preparation where the base material is placed. Option B, marginal ridge, is incorrect because it refers to the raised edges of the preparation, not the bottom surface where the base is placed. Option C, cavity wall, is also incorrect because it refers to the sides of the preparation, not the bottom surface. Option D, enamel surface, is incorrect because it refers to the outer layer of the tooth, not the specific location within the preparation.

3. The patient record is a permanent document of whom?

- A. The dentist**
- B. The patient**
- C. The dental hygienist**
- D. The dental assistant**

The patient record is considered a permanent document of the dentist. This is because the dentist is responsible for the diagnosis, treatment planning, and overall care provided to the patient. The records reflect the professional judgment and actions taken by the dentist regarding the patient's oral health. Additionally, the documentation serves legal purposes, and any changes or treatment updates need to be attributed to the dentist, who ultimately holds accountability for the patient's care. While the patient, dental hygienist, and dental assistant all play important roles in the overall treatment and management of the patient's dental needs, the primary ownership and responsibility of the patient record rests with the dentist. The documentation includes comprehensive details about the patient's health history, treatment progress, and any procedures performed, which all fall under the purview of the dentist's professional obligations.

4. What is done to baseplate wax before placement in the patient's mouth for a bite registration?

- A. Chilled**
- B. Warmed**
- C. Moistened**
- D. Coated with a disinfectant**

Before placement in the patient's mouth for a bite registration, baseplate wax should be warmed. Other options such as chilling, moistening, or coating with a disinfectant can cause the wax to become too hard, too soft, or alter its properties, making it difficult to accurately record the patient's bite.

5. A used dental anesthetic needle is an example of?

- A. Biodegradable waste**
- B. Non-regulated waste**
- C. Regulated waste**
- D. Recyclable waste**

A used dental anesthetic needle falls under regulated waste on account of its potential for contamination. Biodegradable waste could include items like food waste or paper products that can decompose naturally in a landfill. Non-regulated waste typically includes items like dust, dirt, or personal hygiene products. Recyclable waste refers to materials that can be processed and reused, such as plastic bottles or aluminum cans. None of these options fully encompass the potential hazards of a used dental anesthetic needle, making C the most accurate choice.

6. The California Radiological Safety Code requires the patient protection apron to contain at least what thickness of lead?

- A. .50 mm**
- B. .25 mm**
- C. .75 mm**
- D. 1 mm**

The California Radiological Safety Code requires the patient protection apron to contain at least a thickness of .25 mm of lead in order to adequately protect the patient from radiation exposure. Option A of .50 mm is too thick and may be unnecessarily heavy and uncomfortable for the patient to wear. Option C of .75 mm is also thicker than necessary, and the extra weight may cause additional strain on the patient. Option D of 1 mm may also provide enough protection, but it is not required by the safety code and may be more expensive and less comfortable for patients. Therefore, B is the most appropriate and accurate answer.

7. How often must the exposure control plan be reviewed according to the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard?

- A. Every six months**
- B. Annually**
- C. Every two years**
- D. Biannually**

According to the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, the exposure control plan must be reviewed at least annually. This ensures that the plan is up to date and effective in protecting employees from exposure to bloodborne pathogens. The other options are incorrect because they suggest a longer time frame between reviews, which may not adequately address any changes or updates in the workplace that could affect the exposure control plan.

8. Another term for necrotic is

- A. Inflamed**
- B. Healing**
- C. Dead and nonvital**
- D. Infected**

Necrotic refers to tissue death, specifically when large amounts of cells die in a certain area. The other options are incorrect because they do not accurately describe the state of necrosis. Inflamed refers to a tissue that is swollen or irritated, while healing indicates a tissue in the process of repairing itself. Infected means that there is a presence of harmful bacteria or germs, while necrosis can occur without infection. Dead and nonvital accurately describe the condition of necrosis, as it refers to tissue that is no longer living and unable to perform its normal functions.

9. A blood pressure reading of 142/96 in an adult is classified as what?

- A. Prehypertension**
- B. Hypertension**
- C. Normal**
- D. Hypotensive**

A blood pressure reading of 142/96 can be classified as hypertension because it falls within the range of 140/90 or higher, indicating high blood pressure. Prehypertension refers to a reading between 120/80 and 139/89, indicating the potential to develop hypertension. Normal blood pressure is typically less than 120/80, while hypotension refers to lower readings below 90/60, indicating low blood pressure.

10. The primary active agent in the solution used for unsaturated chemical vapor sterilization is?

A. Alcohol

B. Ethylene oxide

C. Formaldehyde

D. Hydrogen peroxide

Formaldehyde is the primary active agent in the solution used for unsaturated chemical vapor sterilization because it has strong antimicrobial properties. Alcohol (choice A) is not typically used for sterilization because it evaporates too quickly and does not effectively kill the necessary microorganisms. Ethylene oxide (choice B) is a commonly used sterilization method, but it is generally used for materials that are sensitive to heat and moisture, such as plastic or rubber. Hydrogen peroxide (choice D) is a disinfectant, but it is not typically used for sterilization. It may be used in some sterilization processes as a secondary agent to enhance the effectiveness of other sterilizing agents, but it is not the primary active agent in unsaturated chemical vapor sterilization.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://californiarda.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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