

CERTIFIED POLYSOMNOGRAPHIC TECHNICIAN (CPSGT) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE) STUDY GUIDE



Prepare with structure. Pass with confidence



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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. Which of the following is an indicator of excessive daytime sleepiness?**
 - A. Frequent cold symptoms
 - B. High energy levels throughout the day
 - C. Difficulty staying awake in quiet environments
 - D. Better sleep quality reported
- 2. What role do actigraphy devices play in sleep studies?**
 - A. They measure brain activity during sleep
 - B. They assess heart rate variability
 - C. They monitor movement to assess sleep-wake patterns in a home setting
 - D. They help in determining sleep architecture
- 3. Alpha-wave intrusion during sleep often indicates what condition?**
 - A. Depression
 - B. Chronic pain
 - C. Anxiety
 - D. Sleep apnea
- 4. Name a common medication that can affect sleep architecture.**
 - A. Antidepressants
 - B. Benzodiazepines
 - C. Stimulants
 - D. Antipsychotics
- 5. A study used to look for seizure activity during sleep is called what?**
 - A. Nocturnal seizure study
 - B. Overnight EEG study
 - C. Sleep EEG study
 - D. Nocturnal polysomnogram
- 6. Which filter would be used to adjust the rise time of a signal?**
 - A. The HFF
 - B. The LFF
 - C. The 60-Hz Notch Filter
 - D. The Bandpass Filter

- 7. Which of the following is often a symptom of obstructive sleep apnea?**
- A. Insomnia
 - B. Loud snoring
 - C. Sleep paralysis
 - D. Sleep terrors
- 8. What does the term "arousal" refer to in sleep studies?**
- A. A deep stage of sleep
 - B. A brief shift in brain activity indicating alertness
 - C. A prolonged period of wakefulness
 - D. The onset of REM sleep
- 9. Name a physiological parameter measured during polysomnography that indicates respiratory issues.**
- A. Heart rate
 - B. End-tidal CO2 levels
 - C. Body temperature
 - D. Blood pressure
- 10. What common symptom indicates possible sleep apnea?**
- A. Frequent leg movement at night
 - B. Loud snoring
 - C. Difficulty waking up in the morning
 - D. Excessive daytime sleepiness

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following is an indicator of excessive daytime sleepiness?

- A. Frequent cold symptoms
- B. High energy levels throughout the day
- C. Difficulty staying awake in quiet environments**
- D. Better sleep quality reported

Excessive daytime sleepiness is often characterized by persistent drowsiness and a lack of alertness during the day. One of the key indicators of this condition is the difficulty individuals may experience in remaining awake, especially in quiet or sedentary environments where there is minimal stimulation. These conditions can exacerbate feelings of fatigue, making it challenging to maintain focus or stay awake. When comparing this to the other options, frequent cold symptoms do not directly relate to sleepiness but rather suggest potential underlying health issues. High energy levels throughout the day would typically indicate adequate rest rather than excessive sleepiness. Lastly, better sleep quality reported would indicate that an individual is likely getting sufficient restorative sleep, which contradicts the premise of excessive daytime sleepiness. Thus, experiencing difficulty staying awake in tranquil settings serves as a strong indicator of excessive daytime sleepiness.

2. What role do actigraphy devices play in sleep studies?

- A. They measure brain activity during sleep
- B. They assess heart rate variability
- C. They monitor movement to assess sleep-wake patterns in a home setting**
- D. They help in determining sleep architecture

Actigraphy devices are primarily used to monitor movement as a means to assess sleep-wake patterns, particularly in a home setting. They are worn like a wristwatch and utilize accelerometers to detect motion, allowing for the collection of data on sleep duration, restlessness during sleep, and overall activity levels throughout the day and night. This information can help healthcare professionals evaluate sleep patterns over extended periods, which offers a more comprehensive understanding of a person's sleep habits in a natural environment outside of a sleep lab. The other functions mentioned, such as measuring brain activity, assessing heart rate variability, or determining sleep architecture, are not the primary functions of actigraphy. Those aspects are usually investigated through more specialized equipment such as polysomnography, which utilizes electrodes to monitor brain waves, heart rate, and other physiological data during sleep.

3. Alpha-wave intrusion during sleep often indicates what condition?

- A. Depression
- B. Chronic pain**
- C. Anxiety
- D. Sleep apnea

Alpha-wave intrusion during sleep is commonly associated with chronic pain conditions. This phenomenon is characterized by the intrusion of alpha waves, which are normally predominant during relaxed wakefulness, into the sleep stages that are supposed to be dominated by slower wave activities like delta waves. When a person experiences chronic pain, their sleep architecture can be disrupted, leading to periods of wakefulness or lighter sleep. This disruption is often detectable on a polysomnographic recording as alpha waves intruding into sleep. The presence of these waves can indicate that the individual is not obtaining restorative sleep, as the quality of sleep is affected by their ongoing pain experience, resulting in fragmented sleep patterns. Although conditions like anxiety and depression can also impact sleep, the direct correlation between alpha-wave intrusion and chronic pain is well documented, making this the most relevant answer. Sleep apnea is typically characterized by different patterns, such as recurring episodes of breathing cessation and associated hypoxia, but does not primarily show alpha-wave intrusion.

4. Name a common medication that can affect sleep architecture.

- A. Antidepressants
- B. Benzodiazepines**
- C. Stimulants
- D. Antipsychotics

Benzodiazepines are commonly used medications that significantly affect sleep architecture. They are designed to enhance the effect of the neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), promoting sedation and relaxation. While they can help initiate sleep and reduce nighttime awakenings, benzodiazepines can alter the natural progression of sleep cycles, particularly by reducing the time spent in rapid eye movement (REM) sleep and certain stages of non-REM sleep. This alteration can impact the overall restorative quality of sleep. In contrast, other medications, while also influential on sleep, may vary in their effect on architecture. Antidepressants can sometimes increase REM sleep latency; stimulants can cause increased wakefulness and disrupt sleep patterns; and antipsychotics are known to alter sleep but can have a more variable impact compared to benzodiazepines. Understanding the specific effects of these medications is essential for evaluating their implications on sleep health.

5. A study used to look for seizure activity during sleep is called what?

- A. Nocturnal seizure study**
- B. Overnight EEG study
- C. Sleep EEG study
- D. Nocturnal polysomnogram

A study aimed at detecting seizure activity during sleep is known as a nocturnal seizure study. This type of study specifically focuses on monitoring EEG activity during the sleep phase to identify potential seizure events that may not be apparent during wakefulness. In a nocturnal seizure study, electrodes are placed on the scalp to record brain activity over the course of the night, allowing for detailed analysis of any abnormal bursts of electrical activity that would indicate seizures. This targeted approach is crucial for diagnosing epilepsy and other seizure disorders that may manifest predominantly at night. The other study types listed, while related to evaluating brain activity, do not specifically focus on seizure detection during sleep. For instance, an overnight EEG study typically records electrical activity of the brain but may not be dedicated solely to nocturnal seizures. Similarly, a sleep EEG study assesses brain activity during sleep, but it often encompasses a broader scope of conditions beyond just seizures. A nocturnal polysomnogram, while it examines various sleep parameters such as breathing, leg movements, and sleep stages, also does not hone in exclusively on seizure activity. Therefore, the term nocturnal seizure study is most appropriately aligned with the question asked.

6. Which filter would be used to adjust the rise time of a signal?

- A. The HFF**
- B. The LFF
- C. The 60-Hz Notch Filter
- D. The Bandpass Filter

The use of the High-Frequency Filter (HFF) is appropriate for adjusting the rise time of a signal because it allows higher frequency components to pass through while attenuating lower frequency signals. When analyzing polysomnographic data, particularly EEG signals, rise time refers to how quickly the signal can respond to rapid changes. By employing a high-frequency filter, one can enhance the fast waveforms, thus improving the clarity of the signal we are monitoring. In contrast, the Low-Frequency Filter (LFF) would limit the higher frequency components, potentially resulting in a slower rise time. The 60-Hz Notch Filter is specifically used to eliminate electrical interference from power lines, which does not directly affect rise time adjustments. The Bandpass Filter, while useful for isolating a specific frequency range, does not specifically focus on adjusting the rise time as effectively as the HFF does. Overall, the identification of the HFF as the correct option illustrates the importance of frequency selection in managing signal characteristics in polysomnography.

7. Which of the following is often a symptom of obstructive sleep apnea?

- A. Insomnia
- B. Loud snoring**
- C. Sleep paralysis
- D. Sleep terrors

Loud snoring is often a prominent symptom of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). In OSA, the airway becomes partially or completely blocked during sleep, leading to disrupted breathing patterns. This disruption causes airflow to be obstructed, resulting in snoring as air tries to pass through narrowed passages. The loudness and interrupted nature of the snoring may also be accentuated by episodes where breathing stops temporarily, which can lead to gasping or choking sounds that often awaken the individual or disturb their partner. In contrast, insomnia, sleep paralysis, and sleep terrors do not specifically link to obstructive sleep apnea. While individuals with OSA may experience insomnia due to frequent awakenings, it is not a direct symptom of the condition itself. Sleep paralysis involves the temporary inability to move or speak while falling asleep or waking up, which is unrelated to the airway obstructions seen in OSA. Sleep terrors are episodes of intense fear during sleep, typically associated with non-REM sleep rather than the distinct breathing issues characteristic of obstructive sleep apnea.

8. What does the term "arousal" refer to in sleep studies?

- A. A deep stage of sleep
- B. A brief shift in brain activity indicating alertness**
- C. A prolonged period of wakefulness
- D. The onset of REM sleep

In sleep studies, the term "arousal" refers to a brief shift in brain activity that indicates a transition from sleep to a state of awareness or alertness. This shift can occur during sleep stages and is typically characterized by changes in brain wave patterns, heart rate, and muscle tone. Arousal can be due to various stimuli, such as external noises, physiological changes, or internal processes. Understanding this concept is critical in polysomnography, as monitoring arousals helps assess the overall quality of sleep and can indicate underlying sleep disorders. The presence of frequent arousals may suggest fragmented sleep, which can have implications for a person's health and well-being.

9. Name a physiological parameter measured during polysomnography that indicates respiratory issues.

- A. Heart rate
- B. End-tidal CO2 levels**
- C. Body temperature
- D. Blood pressure

End-tidal CO2 levels are a crucial physiological parameter measured during polysomnography that specifically indicate respiratory issues. This measurement evaluates the concentration of carbon dioxide in exhaled air, providing insight into how effectively the lungs are ventilating and exchanging gases. Abnormal levels can suggest conditions such as sleep apnea or hypoventilation, where the respiratory system is not functioning optimally, leading to inadequate elimination of carbon dioxide from the body. Monitoring end-tidal CO2 helps identify respiratory disturbances during sleep, enabling interventions to be made that can improve patient outcomes and quality of sleep. The other parameters, while important for overall health monitoring, do not directly indicate respiratory problems in the context of sleep studies. Heart rate is indicative of cardiovascular function, body temperature reflects thermoregulation, and blood pressure is important for assessing overall cardiovascular health, but they do not specifically focus on respiratory efficacy as end-tidal CO2 levels do.

10. What common symptom indicates possible sleep apnea?

- A. Frequent leg movement at night
- B. Loud snoring**
- C. Difficulty waking up in the morning
- D. Excessive daytime sleepiness

Loud snoring is a common symptom that often indicates the presence of sleep apnea. This condition is characterized by intermittent airway obstruction during sleep, which can cause the person to snore loudly as air struggles to pass through the blocked airways. While snoring alone does not definitively diagnose sleep apnea, it is frequently reported by partners of individuals who have the condition. The presence of loud snoring combined with other symptoms can help healthcare providers identify potential sleep apnea. It can prompt further evaluation such as a sleep study, where specific patterns of breathing interruptions can be assessed. Other symptoms, including excessive daytime sleepiness and difficulty waking in the morning, may also be associated with sleep apnea but are not as directly indicative as loud snoring, which often leads to a closer examination of potential obstructive events during sleep.

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://cpsgt.examzify.com>

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

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