

Criminology Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

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

- 1. According to Freud, where do mental conflicts primarily arise from?**
 - A. Learned behaviors from peers**
 - B. Desires that are repressed into the unconscious**
 - C. Biological predispositions**
 - D. Coping mechanisms developed in adulthood**
- 2. What is a key characteristic of lower-class culture noted in criminology?**
 - A. High educational attainment**
 - B. Encouragement of innovative solutions**
 - C. Acceptance of stealing as a norm**
 - D. Commitment to social justice**
- 3. Which of the following are major theories of crime?**
 - A. Biological, psychological, and sociological theories**
 - B. Historical, cultural, and legal theories**
 - C. Financial, ethical, and procedural theories**
 - D. Environmental, behavioral, and economic theories**
- 4. What is involved in the process of criminal profiling?**
 - A. Creating legal strategies for defense**
 - B. Analyzing crime scene evidence and behavior**
 - C. Interviewing suspects and witnesses**
 - D. Tracking criminal patterns over time**
- 5. What does substantive law outline?**
 - A. The procedures for enforcing laws**
 - B. The responsibilities and rights of individuals**
 - C. The methods for legal interpretation**
 - D. The process of criminal trials**

- 6. According to family studies in criminology, what tendency is observed regarding parents and children?**
- A. Most children become criminals regardless of parent history**
 - B. Children are less likely to be criminals if raised by a single parent**
 - C. If one parent is a criminal, the child is likely to become one too**
 - D. Criminality is more associated with socioeconomic factors than parental influence**
- 7. What distinguishes civil law from criminal law?**
- A. Civil law addresses government litigation**
 - B. Civil law deals with disputes between individuals**
 - C. Civil law concerns regulatory offenses**
 - D. Civil law is focused on national security issues**
- 8. What does the "Bail Reform Act" address?**
- A. The rights of victims in cases of crime**
 - B. Conditions of pre-trial detention and bail**
 - C. Sentencing guidelines for severe crimes**
 - D. The processes for closing police cases**
- 9. What are the two primary types of self-regulatory mechanisms outlined in criminology?**
- A. Self rewards or self punishments**
 - B. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation**
 - C. Goals and intentions**
 - D. Positive and negative reinforcement**
- 10. What does "stare decisis" emphasize in legal contexts?**
- A. Creating new laws to address current issues**
 - B. Adhering to established rulings in previous cases**
 - C. Ignoring past case law in favor of current norms**
 - D. Overruling decisions made by lower courts**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. According to Freud, where do mental conflicts primarily arise from?

- A. Learned behaviors from peers**
- B. Desires that are repressed into the unconscious**
- C. Biological predispositions**
- D. Coping mechanisms developed in adulthood**

Freud's theory posits that mental conflicts primarily stem from desires that are repressed into the unconscious mind. He believed that individuals possess basic instincts and desires, particularly of a sexual and aggressive nature, which, if unacceptable to the individual or society, are pushed out of conscious awareness into the unconscious. This repression can lead to internal conflict, anxiety, and various psychological symptoms, as the repressed desires seek expression but are not accessible to the conscious mind. Freud emphasized that these unresolved conflicts form the basis of neuroses, manifesting through dreams, slips of the tongue, and various psychological issues. Thus, he viewed understanding these repressed desires and bringing them to consciousness as critical for psychotherapy and resolving mental conflicts. In contrast, while learned behaviors from peers, biological predispositions, and coping mechanisms are aspects that can influence behavior and mental health, they do not capture the central role of repression in Freud's model of the psyche and conflict resolution. This focus on repression highlights the origins of mental conflicts as fundamentally rooted in the unconscious, underlining the importance of exploring these aspects in the therapeutic process.

2. What is a key characteristic of lower-class culture noted in criminology?

- A. High educational attainment**
- B. Encouragement of innovative solutions**
- C. Acceptance of stealing as a norm**
- D. Commitment to social justice**

A key characteristic of lower-class culture noted in criminology is the acceptance of stealing as a norm. This viewpoint is rooted in the socio-economic conditions that often characterize lower-class environments, where individuals may feel marginalized or disadvantaged due to lack of opportunities, poverty, and systemic inequality. As a result, some individuals in these contexts might adopt behaviors such as theft or other forms of economic crime as a means of survival or economic necessity. In criminological theories, this behavior is often linked to subcultures that form in response to cultural norms and values that diverge from mainstream society. This acceptance can also be understood through the lens of social norms that develop within certain communities. If stealing is normalized or justified within a group due to prevailing circumstances, individuals may be more likely to engage in such behaviors without experiencing the same level of stigma as in a different social context. Thus, this characteristic highlights the impact of societal structures and local cultural influences on behavior, particularly in relation to crime.

3. Which of the following are major theories of crime?

- A. Biological, psychological, and sociological theories**
- B. Historical, cultural, and legal theories
- C. Financial, ethical, and procedural theories
- D. Environmental, behavioral, and economic theories

The selection of biological, psychological, and sociological theories as major theories of crime is well-founded within criminological studies. These theories offer comprehensive frameworks for understanding the root causes and motivations behind criminal behavior. Biological theories explore the influence of genetics, neurophysiology, and heredity on behavior, suggesting that inherent physiological factors may predispose individuals to criminality. This approach examines how biological traits can influence a person's propensity for engaging in criminal acts. Psychological theories focus on individual mental processes and behaviors, considering how personality traits, mental health issues, and cognitive development can shape a person's likelihood of committing crimes. This perspective emphasizes the importance of understanding the psychological state of individuals to comprehend why they may engage in criminal behavior. Sociological theories, on the other hand, investigate how societal structures, relationships, and cultural norms contribute to crime. They look into factors such as poverty, peer influence, and social disorganization, which can foster environments conducive to criminal activity. In contrast, the other options provided do not encompass the core criminological theories in a conventional sense. Theories listed in the alternative responses either delve into more specific aspects of crime or law and do not primarily focus on the foundational frameworks that drive criminological thought.

4. What is involved in the process of criminal profiling?

- A. Creating legal strategies for defense
- B. Analyzing crime scene evidence and behavior**
- C. Interviewing suspects and witnesses
- D. Tracking criminal patterns over time

The process of criminal profiling primarily involves analyzing crime scene evidence and behavior to understand the characteristics and motivations of the perpetrator. This technique utilizes various aspects of the crime scene—including the type of crime committed, the methods used, and the physical evidence left behind—to create a psychological profile of the offender. Profilers look for patterns in the behavior exhibited during the crime, which can provide insights into the criminal's personality, background, and possible future actions. This analytical approach helps law enforcement narrow down suspects and guide investigations effectively, making it a crucial element in the field of criminology. While other options, such as creating legal strategies or interviewing suspects, are relevant to the criminal justice process, they do not encapsulate the essence of criminal profiling as it focuses specifically on understanding criminal behavior through crime scene analysis. Tracking criminal patterns over time is also valuable for understanding broader crime trends but is more related to crime analysis rather than the individual assessment that profiling entails.

5. What does substantive law outline?

- A. The procedures for enforcing laws
- B. The responsibilities and rights of individuals**
- C. The methods for legal interpretation
- D. The process of criminal trials

Substantive law defines the rights and duties of individuals and establishes what constitutes criminal behavior, as well as the corresponding penalties for those behaviors. It establishes the legal standards and principles that govern how individuals can interact with each other and what actions are permissible or impermissible under the law. This area of law is fundamental because it lays out the specific laws that can lead to prosecution or civil remedies. While the other choices refer to different aspects of law, they do not encapsulate the essence of substantive law. For instance, procedures for enforcing laws pertain to procedural law, which outlines how substantive laws are enforced. Legal interpretation methods are concerned with how laws are interpreted rather than the rights and responsibilities defined by substantive law. Similarly, the process of criminal trials deals specifically with the judicial procedures involved in adjudicating criminal cases, rather than detailing what the laws are. Thus, the correct understanding of substantive law is crucial for comprehending the legal framework within which individuals operate.

6. According to family studies in criminology, what tendency is observed regarding parents and children?

- A. Most children become criminals regardless of parent history
- B. Children are less likely to be criminals if raised by a single parent
- C. If one parent is a criminal, the child is likely to become one too**
- D. Criminality is more associated with socioeconomic factors than parental influence

The observation that if one parent is a criminal, the child is likely to become one too highlights the significant role that parental behavior and upbringing play in influencing a child's development and future choices. Numerous family studies in criminology indicate that criminal behavior can be transmitted from parent to child through various mechanisms. This may include genetic predisposition, environmental influences, and social learning processes. Children often model their behavior on their parents, and if a parent engages in criminal activity, it can normalize such behaviors for the child. Additionally, familial criminality can create a context where children are more exposed to criminal environments, which can further increase the likelihood of them engaging in similar behaviors themselves as they grow older. This tendency underscores the importance of family dynamics in understanding crime and delinquency and highlights how intergenerational patterns of behavior can perpetuate cycles of criminality. Understanding this aspect can be crucial for developing preventive measures and interventions aimed at breaking these cycles.

7. What distinguishes civil law from criminal law?

- A. Civil law addresses government litigation
- B. Civil law deals with disputes between individuals**
- C. Civil law concerns regulatory offenses
- D. Civil law is focused on national security issues

Civil law is distinguished from criminal law primarily by its focus on disputes between individuals or entities rather than on offenses against the state or public order. The essence of civil law lies in providing a legal framework for resolving conflicts that arise from private matters, such as contracts, property disputes, and personal injury claims. In a civil case, one party, known as the plaintiff, seeks compensation or resolution from another party, the defendant, which is fundamentally different from the criminal law context where the state prosecutes individuals for violations of law. In the context of the other options, civil law does not primarily address cases involving government litigation, regulatory offenses, or national security issues, which are typically under the purview of criminal law. Instead, civil law focuses on private rights and obligations, making it a critical aspect of maintaining order and fairness in personal and business relationships.

8. What does the "Bail Reform Act" address?

- A. The rights of victims in cases of crime
- B. Conditions of pre-trial detention and bail**
- C. Sentencing guidelines for severe crimes
- D. The processes for closing police cases

The "Bail Reform Act" specifically addresses the conditions of pre-trial detention and the criteria for setting bail. It was implemented to ensure that individuals awaiting trial are not unnecessarily detained if they pose minimal risk to public safety and are likely to appear for their court dates. The Act aims to balance the rights of the accused with the need for public safety and the integrity of the judicial process by establishing guidelines for courts to follow when determining bail amounts and conditions. This reform is significant in promoting fairness within the legal system and reducing the number of individuals held in jail simply because they cannot afford bail. In contrast, the other options focus on different aspects of the criminal justice system. The rights of victims is a separate issue and pertains more to victims' advocacy and protections. Sentencing guidelines are related to the consequences imposed after a conviction rather than pre-trial processes. The processes for closing police cases deal with the operational aspects of law enforcement and investigations, not directly with bail or pre-trial detention. Thus, the focus of the Bail Reform Act is clearly on pre-trial detention and bail conditions.

9. What are the two primary types of self-regulatory mechanisms outlined in criminology?

- A. Self rewards or self punishments**
- B. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation**
- C. Goals and intentions**
- D. Positive and negative reinforcement**

The identification of self-rewards or self-punishments as the two primary types of self-regulatory mechanisms in criminology captures the essence of how individuals manage their behavior through internal controls. This concept is central to understanding how people may regulate their actions based on the potential rewards they give themselves for good behavior or the punishments they impose for undesirable actions. Self-rewards can enhance motivation and reinforce positive behavior, acting as a positive feedback loop that encourages desirable conduct. Conversely, self-punishment serves as a deterrent against deviant actions, as individuals reflect on their behavior and impose consequences on themselves to avoid future missteps. This self-regulation framework is particularly relevant in criminology, where understanding motivation can provide insights into criminal behavior and the ways individuals might choose to conform to societal norms versus engaging in deviance. Other options, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, goals and intentions, and positive and negative reinforcement, while related to behavior regulation, do not specifically categorize the act of self-regulation in the same direct manner as self-rewards and self-punishments. Each of those other concepts plays a role in behavioral motivation but does not focus exclusively on the internal mechanisms of reward and punishment that drive self-regulation in the context of

10. What does "stare decisis" emphasize in legal contexts?

- A. Creating new laws to address current issues**
- B. Adhering to established rulings in previous cases**
- C. Ignoring past case law in favor of current norms**
- D. Overruling decisions made by lower courts**

"Stare decisis" is a fundamental legal doctrine that emphasizes the importance of adhering to established rulings in previous cases. This principle ensures consistency and predictability in the law by requiring courts to follow the legal precedents set by prior decisions. By doing so, it promotes stability in the legal system, allowing individuals and entities to rely on established case law when making decisions and navigating legal matters. When courts apply "stare decisis," they give weight to previous judicial decisions, which helps to maintain a coherent body of law over time. This approach encourages fairness by ensuring that similar cases are treated alike, thereby fostering confidence in the legal system. It is not about creating new laws or ignoring past rulings; instead, it reinforces the significance of the accumulated wisdom of the judiciary by upholding previously established legal interpretations.

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://criminology.examzify.com>

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