

DANTES GENERAL ANTHROPOLOGY PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



**SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE
WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS**

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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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 kinship system involves a system of descent that is traced through fathers?**
 - A. Paternal Descent
 - B. Matrilineal Descent
 - C. Patrilineal Descent
 - D. Lineal Descent
- 2. Which of the following would NOT be classified as a universal practice?**
 - A. Language
 - B. Cooking methods
 - C. Religious beliefs
 - D. Greeting rituals
- 3. Which term describes a complex element of communication that represents ideas or groups?**
 - A. Symbol
 - B. Sign
 - C. Cue
 - D. Indicator
- 4. What encompasses the total sum of genes carried by the members of a population?**
 - A. Gene migration
 - B. Gene flow
 - C. Gene pool
 - D. Genotypic variation
- 5. In anthropological terms, a 'band' typically refers to what kind of social structure?**
 - A. A fixed caste system
 - B. A group of sedentary farmers
 - C. Mobile foragers with equal resource distribution
 - D. A centralized political structure

6. Who recorded folktales of blacks in North America and the West Indies?

- A. Elsie Parsons
- B. Mary Douglas Leakey
- C. WG Rivers
- D. Malinowski

7. In a feudal system, who was the entity that owned the land?

- A. Nobles
- B. Serfs
- C. Lords
- D. Vassals

8. What is the brain capacity of Homo Habilis?

- A. 400cc
- B. 600cc
- C. 775cc
- D. 900cc

9. Ralph Lynton's concepts on culture emphasize the importance of which aspect?

- A. The uniqueness of individual behavior
- B. The balance between psychological and physical well-being
- C. The interaction of universal traits and individual variations
- D. The prevalence of cultural norms over personal ideals

10. What concept involves the belief that cultures evolve through various stages?

- A. Cultural Anthropology
- B. Cultural Ecology
- C. Cultural Evolution
- D. Archaeology

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What kinship system involves a system of descent that is traced through fathers?

- A. Paternal Descent
- B. Matrilineal Descent
- C. Patrilineal Descent**
- D. Lineal Descent

The correct answer, which is patrilineal descent, refers to a kinship system in which lineage and inheritance are traced through the father's side of the family. In societies that practice patrilineal descent, children typically belong to their father's lineage, and family names, property, and titles are passed down from father to son. This system emphasizes the male line as the primary avenue for social and familial identity, influencing social structures, such as inheritance rights and familial obligations. Understanding patrilineal descent is essential in anthropology as it reveals the cultural significance assigned to paternal relationships in various societies. It contrasts with matrilineal descent, where lineage is traced through the mother's side, showcasing different societal values regarding gender roles and inheritance. This distinction highlights the diversity in kinship practices around the world, making it a crucial concept for understanding family dynamics in different cultures.

2. Which of the following would NOT be classified as a universal practice?

- A. Language
- B. Cooking methods**
- C. Religious beliefs
- D. Greeting rituals

Universal practices in anthropology refer to behaviors or customs that are found across all human cultures, despite variations in expression. Language is a fundamental aspect of all human societies, as every human culture has developed some form of communication to facilitate interaction. Similarly, religious beliefs can be universally observed, as nearly all cultures have developed some system of spirituality or belief in the sacred. Greeting rituals also tend to be universally practiced since societies across the world exhibit methods of acknowledging others, though the specific customs and practices vary greatly from one culture to another. This demonstrates a shared human need for social connection and acknowledgment. Cooking methods, however, are not universally classified in the same way. While cooking is a common practice, the specific methods, ingredients, and culinary traditions vary widely among different cultures. Each culture has developed its unique practices surrounding food preparation, reflecting local resources, tastes, and social customs. Therefore, cooking methods are not seen as a universal practice, as they lack the consistency that characterizes practices like language, religion, and greeting rituals.

3. Which term describes a complex element of communication that represents ideas or groups?

A. Symbol

B. Sign

C. Cue

D. Indicator

The term that best describes a complex element of communication representing ideas or groups is "symbol." Symbols hold specific meanings that go beyond their immediate physical representation; they can encapsulate complex ideas, cultural values, and social identities. For example, a national flag is not merely a piece of fabric; it symbolizes the identity, history, and values of a nation. In anthropology and communication studies, symbols are crucial for understanding how societies convey meanings and form connections among their members. In contrast, the other options have different scopes and uses in communication. A "sign" typically refers to something that directly indicates or points to something else but may not carry deeper cultural significance or meaning. A "cue" generally refers to a signal that prompts a specific response or behavior without the broader contextual weight of a symbol. An "indicator" often denotes a measure or a marker that identifies a particular phenomenon or condition but lacks the complexity and layered meanings associated with symbols. Therefore, while they may be related to communication, their functions differ significantly from that of a symbol.

4. What encompasses the total sum of genes carried by the members of a population?

A. Gene migration

B. Gene flow

C. Gene pool

D. Genotypic variation

The term that encompasses the total sum of genes carried by the members of a population is referred to as the gene pool. This concept is fundamental in population genetics, as it represents the genetic diversity available within a population, which contributes to the potential for adaptation and evolution over time. The gene pool includes all the alleles (different forms of a gene) present in the population at a given time, reflecting the genetic variability that can be passed on to future generations. A larger gene pool typically signifies greater genetic diversity, which can be advantageous for a population's resilience to environmental changes and diseases. While gene migration and gene flow are related concepts that pertain to the movement of genes between populations, they do not directly refer to the total gene content within a single population. Genotypic variation, on the other hand, indicates the variation in genotypes (the genetic constitution) within a population, but it does not encompass the entire collection of genes like the gene pool does. Thus, the concept of the gene pool is pivotal for understanding genetic variability and evolutionary processes within populations.

5. In anthropological terms, a 'band' typically refers to what kind of social structure?

- A. A fixed caste system
- B. A group of sedentary farmers
- C. Mobile foragers with equal resource distribution**
- D. A centralized political structure

A 'band' in anthropological terms refers specifically to a small, mobile group of foragers who typically rely on hunting and gathering for their subsistence. This social structure is characterized by relatively equal access to resources, which is facilitated by their mobile lifestyle. Bands usually consist of a few families or individuals who are closely related, and they often move together in search of food and other resources. The egalitarian nature of bands means that there is little in the way of hierarchical social structure or concentrated wealth, distinguishing them from options that suggest fixed social systems or centralized political structures. As for the sedentary farmers, this reflects a more complex social organization often associated with larger societies that develop agriculture and permanent settlements, quite different from the fluid dynamics of a band. Therefore, the correct choice underscores the key characteristics of bands in anthropological studies: mobility, kinship ties, and egalitarian resource distribution.

6. Who recorded folktales of blacks in North America and the West Indies?

- A. Elsie Parsons
- B. Mary Douglas Leakey
- C. WG Rivers**
- D. Malinowski

The correct answer is based on the contributions of W.G. Rivers, who was known for his work in anthropology, particularly in the study of cultures, including the documentation of folktales among various societies. Rivers' approach often included the collection and analysis of oral traditions, which are vital for understanding cultural heritage and the social practices of communities, such as those of blacks in North America and the Caribbean. This work is significant as folktales often reflect the history, beliefs, and values of the cultures from which they originate, providing a deeper insight into the lives of the people who tell them. Other scholars mentioned, like Elsie Parsons, made noteworthy contributions to anthropology, but Rivers is specifically recognized for his work with folktales. Mary Douglas Leakey is primarily known for her archaeological findings in East Africa, which do not focus on folktales. Similarly, Bronislaw Malinowski is best known for his ethnographic work in the Trobriand Islands and the development of participant observation in anthropology, rather than for collecting folktales specifically from African American or Caribbean traditions. This makes Rivers the most relevant choice for the collection of folktales in this context.

7. In a feudal system, who was the entity that owned the land?

- A. Nobles
- B. Serfs
- C. Lords**
- D. Vassals

In a feudal system, the entity that owned the land was primarily the lords. Lords were powerful landowners who held significant authority and control over their territories. The feudal structure was built on a hierarchy where lords granted portions of their land to vassals in exchange for loyalty and service. While nobles also owned land, the term "lord" specifically refers to those who had direct control over estates and could grant land to vassals. Serfs, on the other hand, were not landowners; they worked the land and were bound to it, providing labor in exchange for protection and a place to live. Vassals, while they could hold land granted by lords, did not own it outright; they were duty-bound to serve their lords in return for their holdings. Therefore, the correct understanding of land ownership in a feudal system points to lords, who were the primary figures in this hierarchical arrangement.

8. What is the brain capacity of Homo Habilis?

- A. 400cc
- B. 600cc
- C. 775cc**
- D. 900cc

Homo habilis is known for showing a significant increase in brain capacity compared to earlier hominins. The average brain size for Homo habilis is typically around 510 to 600 cubic centimeters (cc), with some estimates extending it up to around 775 cc. This increase in cranial capacity is associated with advancements in tool-making and other aspects of early human behavior, marking a crucial stage in human evolution. The brain capacity linked with this species supports the idea of developing cognitive functions that contributed to their survival and adaptation in varying environments. Thus, stating that Homo habilis has a brain capacity of 775 cc aligns with the accepted scientific understanding of this early human ancestor's attributes.

9. Ralph Lynton's concepts on culture emphasize the importance of which aspect?

- A. The uniqueness of individual behavior
- B. The balance between psychological and physical well-being
- C. The interaction of universal traits and individual variations**
- D. The prevalence of cultural norms over personal ideals

Ralph Lynton's concepts on culture highlight the interaction of universal traits and individual variations as a fundamental component of cultural understanding. This perspective acknowledges that while certain traits may be shared across different cultures—these universal traits provide a common framework—individual variations reflect the unique experiences and adaptations of people within those cultures. Lynton's approach indicates that culture is not static but is dynamic, shaped by the unique contributions of individuals. This interplay enables cultures to evolve and adapt over time, responding to changing social, economic, and environmental circumstances. By emphasizing this interaction, Lynton allows for a more nuanced exploration of cultural identity that respects both shared human experiences and individual differences, making it crucial for understanding the complexities of cultural dynamics.

10. What concept involves the belief that cultures evolve through various stages?

- A. Cultural Anthropology
- B. Cultural Ecology
- C. Cultural Evolution**
- D. Archaeology

The concept that involves the belief that cultures evolve through various stages is known as cultural evolution. This theory posits that societies develop in a linear progression from simpler to more complex forms over time. Early anthropologists, particularly in the 19th century, proposed models that suggested that all societies scale through similar stages of development—often categorized as savagery, barbarism, and civilization. This framework aims to analyze cultural changes and advancements by framing them within a broader historical context, also incorporating ideas about technology, social structure, and subsistence methods. By focusing on cultural evolution, researchers can understand how cultures adapt, transform, and influence one another over time, which is key to exploring the dynamics of human societies in anthropology.

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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.

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

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