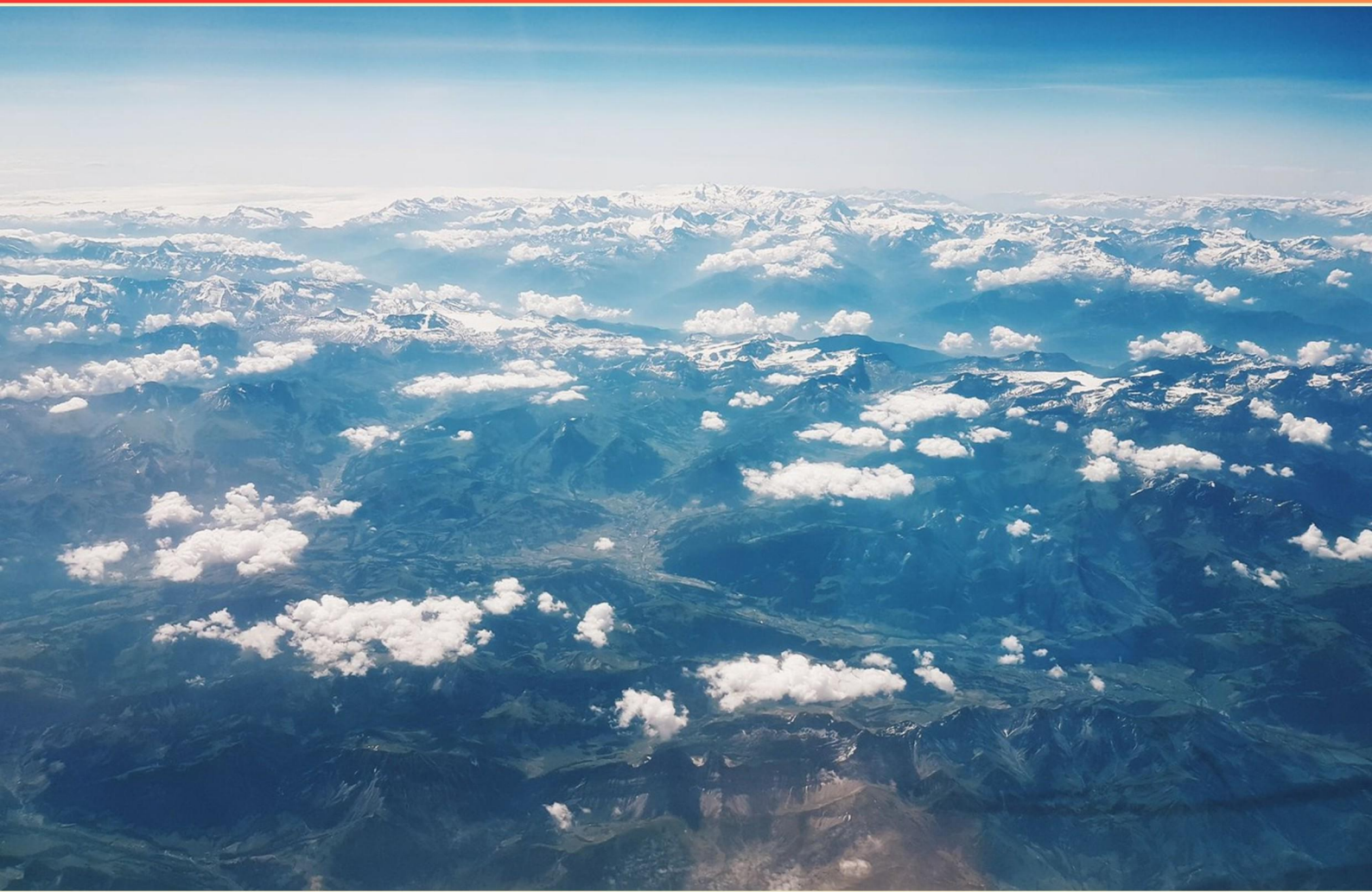


DSST ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



**SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE
WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS**

**VISIT US ONLINE FOR
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 type of forest is characterized by trees that shed their broad leaves in the fall?**
 - A. Taiga
 - B. Tropical Rainforest
 - C. Temperate Deciduous Forests
 - D. Savanna

- 2. Which benefit do fungi provide in food production?**
 - A. They increase the nutritional content of meats
 - B. They add gas to food to make it rise
 - C. They enhance the coloration of fruits
 - D. They produce seeds for various crops

- 3. What does salinity refer to in aquatic ecosystems?**
 - A. The depth of the water
 - B. The temperature of the water
 - C. The amount of dissolved salts in the water
 - D. The speed of water currents

- 4. Infant mortality can significantly impact which of the following?**
 - A. National GDP
 - B. Overall life expectancy
 - C. Healthcare access
 - D. Quality of education

- 5. What is commensalism?**
 - A. A relationship in which both species are harmed
 - B. A relationship in which one species benefits and the other is neither helped nor harmed
 - C. A relationship where both species benefit
 - D. A type of competition for resources

- 6. Which of the following energy sources is NOT classified as alternative energy?**
- A. Wind energy
 - B. Geothermal energy
 - C. Coal
 - D. Solar energy
- 7. What does acid precipitation contain?**
- A. A low concentration of acids
 - B. A high concentration of acids
 - C. No acids at all
 - D. A mixture of minerals
- 8. Which of the following best defines a biome?**
- A. A large region characterized by a specific type of climate and certain types of plants and animal communities
 - B. A specific geographical area that has distinct human activity
 - C. A community of living organisms in a particular area
 - D. An artificial environment created for agricultural purposes
- 9. What is the most abundant element in the universe?**
- A. Oxygen
 - B. Carbon
 - C. Nitrogen
 - D. Hydrogen
- 10. What is eutrophication in aquatic ecosystems?**
- A. An increase in clarity of water bodies
 - B. An increase in the amount of nutrients in the water
 - C. A process of water purification
 - D. A decrease in aquatic biodiversity

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What type of forest is characterized by trees that shed their broad leaves in the fall?

- A. Taiga
- B. Tropical Rainforest
- C. Temperate Deciduous Forests**
- D. Savanna

The type of forest characterized by trees that shed their broad leaves in the fall is known as a temperate deciduous forest. This ecosystem primarily exists in regions with distinct seasonal changes, where the temperature drops significantly during winter. The trees in these forests—such as oaks, maples, and beeches—have adapted to the changing seasons by developing broad leaves that can capture sunlight effectively during the growing season. As autumn approaches and temperatures decrease, these trees undergo a process called leaf abscission, where they shed their leaves to conserve water and energy during the cold, dry winter months. This leaf-shedding process also contributes to the nutrient cycle, as the fallen leaves decompose and enrich the soil. In contrast, taiga forests consist of coniferous trees that retain their needles year-round, tropical rainforests have a different structure where trees are evergreen and do not seasonally shed leaves, and savannas are grasslands characterized by scattered trees, which do not exhibit the same leaf-shedding behavior typical of temperate deciduous forests. Understanding the differences among these forest types helps in comprehending how diverse ecosystems function across various climates.

2. Which benefit do fungi provide in food production?

- A. They increase the nutritional content of meats
- B. They add gas to food to make it rise**
- C. They enhance the coloration of fruits
- D. They produce seeds for various crops

Fungi play a critical role in food production, particularly in the fermentation processes used in many foods. Yeasts, a type of fungus, are essential for processes that involve the leavening of bread. During fermentation, yeasts consume sugars and produce carbon dioxide gas as a byproduct. This gas gets trapped in the dough, causing it to rise and become light and airy. This leavening action is crucial for the texture and quality of many baked goods, making the contribution of fungi particularly significant in this context. The production of gas by yeasts not only affects baking but also plays a role in the brewing and winemaking industries, where carbon dioxide contributes to the effervescence of beverages.

3. What does salinity refer to in aquatic ecosystems?

- A. The depth of the water
- B. The temperature of the water
- C. The amount of dissolved salts in the water**
- D. The speed of water currents

Salinity refers to the concentration of dissolved salts in water, which is a critical factor in aquatic ecosystems. It influences various biological and chemical processes, including the types of organisms that can inhabit a particular environment. For example, organisms in freshwater systems, like rivers and lakes, are adapted to lower salinity levels, while those in marine environments, such as oceans and seas, thrive in higher salinity conditions. Salinity affects the density of water, impacting buoyancy and circulation patterns, which can further influence the distribution of nutrients and organisms within an aquatic ecosystem. Understanding salinity is essential in environmental science, especially when studying habitats, species distributions, and the impacts of human activities on water quality. This central concept is vital in both freshwater and marine contexts, shaping the ecological dynamics of these environments.

4. Infant mortality can significantly impact which of the following?

- A. National GDP
- B. Overall life expectancy**
- C. Healthcare access
- D. Quality of education

Infant mortality has a significant impact on overall life expectancy because it directly influences the average lifespan of a population. High rates of infant mortality can lower the average life expectancy, as the deaths of infants contribute to a lower average age at death when calculated across the entire population. This measure indicates the health and wellbeing of a society, and high infant mortality rates are often associated with inadequate healthcare, poor maternal health, and inadequate nutrition, all of which contribute to reduced life expectancy. In contrast, while infant mortality may relate to national GDP, healthcare access, and quality of education, the most direct and clear connection is with overall life expectancy. By examining life expectancy, one can understand the broader implications of infant mortality on societal health and development. High infant mortality rates can signal deeper systemic issues affecting the entire population's health, emphasizing the need for comprehensive healthcare and social support systems to improve outcomes for future generations.

5. What is commensalism?

- A. A relationship in which both species are harmed
- B. A relationship in which one species benefits and the other is neither helped nor harmed**
- C. A relationship where both species benefit
- D. A type of competition for resources

Commensalism is defined as a symbiotic relationship between two species where one species benefits while the other is neither helped nor harmed. This form of interaction is critical in understanding ecological dynamics, as it illustrates how various species can coexist within the same habitat without direct competition or detriment to one another. An example of commensalism is barnacles attaching to a whale; the barnacles gain mobility to different feeding areas while the whale remains unaffected by their presence. This illustrates the unique nature of commensal relationships, highlighting the complexity of ecosystems where various interactions shape the environment. Other options present contrasting concepts, such as mutualism, which involves both species benefiting, and competition, which indicates a struggle between organisms for limited resources. Therefore, understanding commensalism enriches our comprehension of ecological interdependencies and biodiversity.

6. Which of the following energy sources is NOT classified as alternative energy?

- A. Wind energy
- B. Geothermal energy
- C. Coal**
- D. Solar energy

The answer identifies coal as the energy source that is not classified as alternative energy. Alternative energy refers to sources of energy that are considered more sustainable and environmentally friendly compared to conventional fossil fuels. Wind energy, geothermal energy, and solar energy are all examples of alternative energy sources because they harness natural processes to generate power and typically produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Coal, on the other hand, is a fossil fuel that has been used as a primary energy source for electricity and industrial processes for many years. Its extraction and combustion release significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other pollutants into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change and air quality issues. Due to these negative environmental impacts, coal does not fit the criteria for alternative energy, which aims to reduce reliance on such polluting sources and promote cleaner energy options.

7. What does acid precipitation contain?

- A. A low concentration of acids
- B. A high concentration of acids**
- C. No acids at all
- D. A mixture of minerals

Acid precipitation, commonly referred to as acid rain, is characterized by a high concentration of acids, primarily sulfuric and nitric acids. These acids are formed when sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) are released into the atmosphere, often as a result of industrial emissions and vehicle exhaust. These pollutants react with water vapor in the atmosphere, resulting in precipitation that has a lower pH than that of neutral rainwater. The key reason that identifying a high concentration of acids is correct lies in the environmental impact associated with acid precipitation. This kind of rain can significantly alter the pH of soil and water bodies, affecting plant life, aquatic ecosystems, and overall environmental health. The concept also contrasts sharply with the other provided options, underscoring the seriousness of acid precipitation as an environmental issue. A low concentration of acids or no acids at all would not accurately reflect the environmental phenomenon known as acid rain. Additionally, while a mixture of minerals may be present in precipitation, it does not encapsulate the defining characteristic of acid rain, which is the elevated acidity due to significant acid content.

8. Which of the following best defines a biome?

- A. A large region characterized by a specific type of climate and certain types of plants and animal communities
- B. A specific geographical area that has distinct human activity
- C. A community of living organisms in a particular area
- D. An artificial environment created for agricultural purposes

A biome is best defined as a large region characterized by a specific type of climate and certain types of plants and animal communities. This definition encompasses both the climatic conditions—such as temperature and precipitation patterns—and the biological aspects, which include the dominant vegetation and the types of animals that inhabit the area. Different biomes, such as deserts, forests, grasslands, and tundras, are distinguished by these distinct climate features and ecological communities. The other options do not accurately convey the broad ecological and climatic characteristics that define a biome. Specific geographical areas impacted by human activity highlight cultural or anthropogenic factors rather than ecological ones. Importantly, while a community of living organisms is part of a biome, it does not encompass the wider climatic and ecological context. Additionally, artificial environments like those for agriculture do not reflect the natural and complex interactions found within true biomes. Thus, the correct answer succinctly captures the essence of what a biome truly represents in environmental science.

9. What is the most abundant element in the universe?

- A. Oxygen
- B. Carbon
- C. Nitrogen
- D. Hydrogen

Hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe, comprising roughly 75% of the elemental mass of the universe. It is the primary building block of stars, which are formed from clouds of hydrogen gas that undergo gravitational collapse, leading to nuclear fusion. This process not only makes hydrogen essential for star formation, but it also plays a vital role in the synthesis of heavier elements through stellar nucleosynthesis. Hydrogen's abundance is a result of its simplicity and lightness, allowing it to be the first element formed after the Big Bang. As the universe expanded and cooled, hydrogen atoms combined to form the first stars, perpetuating its dominance. In contrast, elements like oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen, while important for terrestrial life and stellar processes, are far less abundant in the cosmos. They are typically produced within stars and supernova events, which occur much later in the universe's timeline compared to the formation of hydrogen. This process of element creation underscores the unique and foundational role hydrogen plays in the cosmos.

10. What is eutrophication in aquatic ecosystems?

- A. An increase in clarity of water bodies
- B. An increase in the amount of nutrients in the water**
- C. A process of water purification
- D. A decrease in aquatic biodiversity

Eutrophication in aquatic ecosystems refers to the process where water bodies, such as lakes and rivers, become enriched with nutrients, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus. This increase in nutrient levels often stems from various sources, including agricultural runoff, sewage discharge, and industrial waste. As a result of this nutrient enrichment, the growth of algae can be stimulated, leading to algal blooms. These blooms can block sunlight from penetrating the water, adversely affecting the photosynthesis of aquatic plants below. Additionally, when the algal blooms eventually die and decompose, it can lead to oxygen depletion in the water, creating dead zones where aquatic life cannot survive. The process of eutrophication can significantly alter the dynamics of aquatic ecosystems, often resulting in decreased biodiversity, as some species may thrive while others decline due to the changing conditions. It is essential to recognize that while nutrient enrichment is a natural process, human activities have accelerated it, leading to detrimental impacts on water quality and aquatic life.

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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://dsstenvironmentalsci.examzify.com>

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

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