

Fifth Business by Robertson Davies Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. Which character is introduced as a major figure in Dunny's adult life?**
 - A. Paul Dempster**
 - B. Leisl**
 - C. Magnus Eisengrim**
 - D. Colborne**

- 2. What emotional response does Dunstan seek to evoke through his art?**
 - A. Indifference and apathy.**
 - B. Joy and amusement.**
 - C. Understanding and compassion.**
 - D. Fear and disappointment.**

- 3. Who in the book is described as being "naked as the dawn, and lovely as the breeze, and madder than a wet hen"?**
 - A. Diana**
 - B. Faustina**
 - C. Liesl**
 - D. Mary Dempster**

- 4. Which character is referenced with the description "wrinkled like a tiny old man"?**
 - A. Magnus Eisengrim**
 - B. Dunny**
 - C. Baby Paul**
 - D. Colborne**

- 5. How does the character of Mary Dempsey serve as a catalyst in the story?**
 - A. She distracts Dunstan from his journey**
 - B. She triggers feelings of guilt and responsibility in Dunstan**
 - C. She has no significant impact on Dunstan's development**
 - D. She represents a mere love interest without deeper implications**

6. How do the notions of fate and free will emerge in Fifth Business?

- A. Characters have absolute control over their destinies**
- B. Fate is portrayed as irrelevant to character choices**
- C. The struggle between fate and free will is a central theme**
- D. Only fate determines the outcomes of all characters**

7. Which character is known for quoting the Bible and discussing its contradictions?

- A. Faustina**
- B. Sam West**
- C. Amasa Dempster**
- D. Liesl**

8. What theme is highlighted through Dunstan Ramsay's journey?

- A. The joy in the pursuit of love**
- B. The struggle against societal approval**
- C. The exploration of personal guilt and responsibility**
- D. The value of financial success**

9. How does the relationship between Dunstan and his childhood friends influence his development?

- A. It leads to a monotonous life without change**
- B. It fosters his sense of empathy and resilience**
- C. It creates an unwavering support system**
- D. It entirely shapes his worldview towards cynicism**

10. What does the recurring motif of the "snowball" represent?

- A. The inevitability of fate**
- B. The start of significant consequences and themes of chance**
- C. The purity of childhood memories**
- D. The importance of community in decision-making**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which character is introduced as a major figure in Dunny's adult life?

- A. Paul Dempster**
- B. Leisl**
- C. Magnus Eisengrim**
- D. Colborne**

The character Magnus Eisengrim plays a pivotal role in Dunny's adult life as he represents a significant connection to the theme of identity and the search for meaning that pervades the narrative of "Fifth Business." Magnus is not only a magician and an illusionist but also a complex figure who embodies the qualities of transformation and the exploration of different selves that resonate deeply with Dunny's own journey. Their relationship illustrates the interplay between art, reality, and personal discovery, emphasizing how Eisengrim influences Dunny's understanding of his own life and the lives of others. While other characters also hold importance in Dunny's life, such as Paul Dempster, who relates closely to Dunny's childhood and familial ties, or Leisl, who introduces elements of romance and complexity, it is Magnus Eisengrim who marks a profound influence as Dunny navigates his identity and explores deeper philosophical questions. Colborne, although a noteworthy character, does not have the same transformative impact on Dunny's journey as Magnus does. The nuanced relationship between Dunny and Magnus serves as a crucial element in the overarching exploration of the themes presented in the novel.

2. What emotional response does Dunstan seek to evoke through his art?

- A. Indifference and apathy.**
- B. Joy and amusement.**
- C. Understanding and compassion.**
- D. Fear and disappointment.**

Dunstan Ramsay, the protagonist of "Fifth Business," seeks to evoke understanding and compassion through his art. Throughout the novel, Dunstan grapples with the complexities of human nature, spirituality, and the interconnectedness of lives. His experiences and storytelling are deeply tied to his reflections on the human condition, aiming to connect with others on an emotional level. By sharing his own struggles and the stories of those around him, Dunstan hopes to foster a sense of empathy and insight in his audience. He believes that art should offer more than mere entertainment; it should encourage self-reflection and a deeper understanding of oneself and others. This desire aligns with his character arc, where he seeks to make sense of his experiences and the lives of those intertwined with his, thus promoting compassion and awareness of the intricacies of human relationships. In contrast, the other options focus on more superficial or negative emotional responses. Indifference and apathy do not align with Dunstan's artistic goals, as he seeks to engage rather than disengage his audience. Joy and amusement may be outcomes, but they are not the central themes Dunstan pursues. Fear and disappointment run counter to the notion of compassion and understanding that are at the heart of Dunstan's artistic

3. Who in the book is described as being "naked as the dawn, and lovely as the breeze, and madder than a wet hen"?

- A. Diana**
- B. Faustina**
- C. Liesl**
- D. Mary Dempster**

The character being described as "naked as the dawn, and lovely as the breeze, and madder than a wet hen" is Faustina. This vivid description captures her free-spirited and eccentric nature, highlighting both her beauty and her unpredictability. Throughout "Fifth Business," Faustina is portrayed as a strong and passionate woman who embodies both sensuality and a certain chaotic energy. Faustina's character plays a significant role in the development of other characters, particularly Dunstan Ramsay, as her presence influences and challenges societal norms. The imagery of her being "naked as the dawn" emphasizes her natural beauty and purity, while "madder than a wet hen" showcases her unconventional personality, making her an unforgettable and dynamic figure in the narrative. The other options represent different characters in the book but do not align with this specific descriptive passage. Their traits and roles contribute to the richness of the story, but they do not encompass the distinct combination of beauty and whimsy that characterizes Faustina in this context.

4. Which character is referenced with the description "wrinkled like a tiny old man"?

- A. Magnus Eisengrim**
- B. Dunny**
- C. Baby Paul**
- D. Colborne**

The description "wrinkled like a tiny old man" aptly refers to Baby Paul in "Fifth Business." This characterization highlights his frailty and vulnerability, presenting him as an old soul trapped in a child's body. This particular image serves to evoke sympathy and a sense of the profound impact of his circumstances, particularly as he is a child coping with the effects of his mother's beliefs and the surrounding environment. In the context of the novel, Baby Paul's physical appearance emphasizes the themes of innocence and the burdens that are imparted onto children, often without their understanding. The reflection of his condition strengthens the emotional resonance of the story and underscores the contrast between his appearance and the experiences he endures, providing a poignant moment in the narrative. Other characters, such as Magnus Eisengrim, Dunny, and Colborne, do not carry this particular image or association. Their traits and descriptions are more aligned with their specific roles and personal journeys in the story, thus making them less fitting for this specific description.

5. How does the character of Mary Dempsey serve as a catalyst in the story?

- A. She distracts Dunstan from his journey**
- B. She triggers feelings of guilt and responsibility in Dunstan**
- C. She has no significant impact on Dunstan's development**
- D. She represents a mere love interest without deeper implications**

Mary Dempsey plays a crucial role in Dunstan Ramsay's journey throughout "Fifth Business" by triggering deep-seated feelings of guilt and responsibility within him. Her presence and the circumstances surrounding her character compel Dunstan to confront his past and examine the consequences of his actions. The pivotal moment when she becomes part of the narrative, particularly through the event involving her son and her struggles, forces Dunstan to reflect on his own moral dilemmas and his intricate ties to the people around him. While some might view her as a mere distraction or a love interest, Mary Dempsey's character embodies the theme of responsibility. As Dunstan grapples with his feelings of guilt regarding the incident with her son, her significance transcends romantic implications, as she becomes a catalyst for his internal conflict and transformation. In essence, she is instrumental in shaping Dunstan's identity and choices, solidifying the importance of moral accountability in his life.

6. How do the notions of fate and free will emerge in Fifth Business?

- A. Characters have absolute control over their destinies**
- B. Fate is portrayed as irrelevant to character choices**
- C. The struggle between fate and free will is a central theme**
- D. Only fate determines the outcomes of all characters**

The correct choice emphasizes that the struggle between fate and free will is indeed a central theme in "Fifth Business." Throughout the narrative, characters grapple with their circumstances and the roles they feel destined to play, while also exercising their ability to make choices that influence their paths. The protagonist, Dunstan Ramsay, constantly reflects on how his life is shaped by both his choices and the external forces acting upon him, such as societal expectations and the consequences of others' actions. This interplay highlights how characters are neither fully controlled by fate nor entirely autonomous in their decision-making, suggesting a complex relationship between the two concepts. The narrative illustrates that while certain events might seem predetermined, individual agency plays a significant role in shaping outcomes, reinforcing the idea that characters navigate a delicate balance between destiny and self-determination.

7. Which character is known for quoting the Bible and discussing its contradictions?

- A. Faustina**
- B. Sam West**
- C. Amasa Dempster**
- D. Liesl**

The character recognized for quoting the Bible and exploring its contradictions in "Fifth Business" is Sam West. Sam West is a professor and a man of intellect who engages in deep discussions about the Bible and its interpretative challenges. His quotations from Scripture serve as a reflection of his scholarly pursuits, illustrating the complexities and contradictions inherent in religious texts. This characteristic highlights his role as a thinker who grapples with theological and philosophical questions, making him a key character in the narrative that sheds light on the themes of faith, knowledge, and the nature of good and evil. The other characters, while they may have their own distinct traits and roles, do not primarily focus on biblical discourse or its contradictions in the same way Sam does.

8. What theme is highlighted through Dunstan Ramsay's journey?

- A. The joy in the pursuit of love**
- B. The struggle against societal approval**
- C. The exploration of personal guilt and responsibility**
- D. The value of financial success**

Dunstan Ramsay's journey in "Fifth Business" profoundly illustrates the exploration of personal guilt and responsibility. Throughout the narrative, Dunstan grapples with the consequences of his actions and the lingering guilt stemming from critical events in his life, particularly the accidental snowball incident that led to the death of Mrs. Dempster's child. This incident sets the stage for a lifelong reflection on his feelings of culpability. As Dunstan delves into the lives of others and his own past, he confronts not only the repercussions of his choices but also the weight of a responsibility he feels toward Mrs. Dempster, among other characters. His journey reflects a search for meaning and redemption as he attempts to reconcile his guilt with his desire to understand his identity and role in the world. The narrative intricately weaves this theme into Dunstan's development and the relationships he forms, underscoring how personal guilt shapes motivations and life paths. The other themes, while present, do not resonate as strongly with the core element of Dunstan's character development, which is significantly affected by his exploration of guilt and responsibility.

9. How does the relationship between Dunstan and his childhood friends influence his development?

- A. It leads to a monotonous life without change
- B. It fosters his sense of empathy and resilience**
- C. It creates an unwavering support system
- D. It entirely shapes his worldview towards cynicism

In "Fifth Business," the relationship between Dunstan Ramsay and his childhood friends significantly contributes to his personal growth and the development of his character. The experiences he shares with his friends, particularly with figures like Boy Staunton and Paul Dempster, provide him with profound lessons that foster his empathy and resilience. Dunstan's interactions with Boy and others push him to confront the complexities of human nature and morality. For example, his understanding of Boy's ambitious but shallow nature, contrasted with Paul Dempster's struggles as the "messianic" figure, allows Dunstan to develop a deeper sense of empathy towards the suffering of others. These relationships challenge him and force him to reflect on the themes of goodness, guilt, and personal responsibility throughout his life. Moreover, Dunstan's ability to cope with the emotional turmoil stemming from these relationships cultivates his resilience. The trials he faces, such as dealing with Boy's ruthlessness and the societal pressures surrounding his friendship with Paul, teach him how to navigate life's difficulties with a greater sense of strength and understanding. This foundational influence from his childhood friendships becomes essential in shaping Dunstan's identity, helping him evolve into a more complex, empathetic, and resilient individual throughout the narrative.

10. What does the recurring motif of the "snowball" represent?

- A. The inevitability of fate
- B. The start of significant consequences and themes of chance**
- C. The purity of childhood memories
- D. The importance of community in decision-making

The recurring motif of the "snowball" in *Fifth Business* symbolizes the start of significant consequences and themes of chance. This motif reflects how small actions can lead to a cascade of events that shape the characters' lives and their destinies. The act of throwing the snowball is not just a minor incident; it triggers the main conflict of the story and profoundly affects multiple characters, particularly Dunstan Ramsay. The idea that one small, seemingly inconsequential action can lead to larger ramifications speaks to the theme of chance throughout the novel. It underscores how life often hinges on random events, suggesting that fate may be influenced by these chance occurrences. The snowball represents the interconnectedness of choices and their consequences, which resonates with the broader narrative about how people navigate their lives and the complexities of their relationships. While the other options touch on important themes within the novel, they do not encapsulate the essence of the snowball motif as effectively. The inevitability of fate, the purity of childhood memories, and the importance of community in decision-making are indeed present in the story, but the snowball directly aligns with the critical concept of how one decision can lead to transformative and unforeseen results in the lives of the characters.

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://fifthbusiness.examzify.com>

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

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