

# Fifth Business by Robertson Davies Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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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. How do dreams or visions play a role in the character's revelations?**
  - A. They provide humorous commentary**
  - B. They serve as reflections of internal conflicts with moments of clarity**
  - C. They are completely ignored by the characters**
  - D. They only lead to confusion and chaos**
  
- 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. Which character in Fifth Business exemplifies a sense of spirituality and guidance?**
  - A. Padre Balzone**
  - B. Little Madonna**
  - C. Liesl**
  - D. Boy**
  
- 4. Who among the characters is depicted as wise and possibly playful, resembling the archetype of a "trickster"?**
  - A. Dunstan Ramsay**
  - B. Amasa Dempster**
  - C. Gyges**
  - D. Liesl**
  
- 5. How does Dunstan's perspective on his own life change over the course of the novel?**
  - A. From guilt to a quest for power**
  - B. From a focus on responsibility to a focus on pleasure**
  - C. From guilt to a search for reconciliation and understanding**
  - D. From apathy to extreme activism**

- 6. Which character is described as having "eyes like a scarecrow"?**
- A. Dunstan Ramsay**
  - B. Amasa Dempster**
  - C. Gyges**
  - D. Little Madonna**
- 7. How is Dunstan's relationship with Mrs. Dempsey characterized?**
- A. Simple and straightforward**
  - B. Complex, marked by fascination and obligation**
  - C. Antagonistic and competitive**
  - D. Purely pragmatic and transactional**
- 8. How does the character of Boy relate to the theme of duality?**
- A. He represents loyalty and betrayal simultaneously**
  - B. He embodies the tension between inner desires and public persona**
  - C. He illustrates the dual nature of wealth and poverty**
  - D. He symbolizes the intersection of love and hate**
- 9. How does Davies use literary references to enhance the narrative?**
- A. They distract from the main plot of the story**
  - B. They deepen thematic content and emphasize cultural contexts**
  - C. They serve to complicate the narrative unnecessarily**
  - D. They only reference classical literature for no reason**
- 10. Which phrase is associated with the potential end of humanity within the narrative?**
- A. The usual cabal**
  - B. Faith and patience of the saints**
  - C. Five that will make an end of us all**
  - D. Secrets of the past**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. How do dreams or visions play a role in the character's revelations?**

**A. They provide humorous commentary**

**B. They serve as reflections of internal conflicts with moments of clarity**

**C. They are completely ignored by the characters**

**D. They only lead to confusion and chaos**

In "Fifth Business," dreams and visions are pivotal to the development of characters and their understanding of themselves. They serve as reflections of internal conflicts, illuminating issues that the characters might not fully grasp in their waking lives. For example, the protagonist, Dunstan Ramsay, experiences dreams that reveal his psychological struggles and traumas stemming from his childhood. These moments of clarity within the dreams often guide him toward deeper self-awareness and understanding of his relationships and past experiences. The dreams do not merely serve to entertain or confuse the characters; instead, they act as a conduit for personal growth, encouraging them to confront their inner dilemmas. Dunstan's visions allow him to reflect on his role in the events surrounding him and to grapple with themes of guilt, identity, and the concept of being a "fifth business," or essential yet often overlooked character in the lives of others. This mechanism of dreams as reflections of internal conflict enriches the narrative, allowing for profound revelations that contribute significantly to character development and thematic depth in the story.

**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. Which character in Fifth Business exemplifies a sense of spirituality and guidance?**

- A. Padre Balzone**
- B. Little Madonna**
- C. Liesl**
- D. Boy**

Padre Balzone is a character in "Fifth Business" who exemplifies spirituality and guidance through his role as a priest and spiritual mentor. He symbolizes a connection to the divine and serves as a moral compass for several key characters throughout the novel. His insights into the nature of guilt, redemption, and interconnectedness provide a sense of direction not only for himself but also for others grappling with their identities and moral dilemmas. His presence often encourages reflection on deeper existential themes, reinforcing the idea that spiritual beliefs and practices can shape one's understanding of personal experiences and relationships. The way he interacts with the protagonist, Dunstan Ramsay, embodies the essence of spiritual guidance, offering wisdom that helps navigate the complexities of life, influence choices, and ultimately illuminate the path toward self-discovery. In contrast, the other characters may have their own distinct roles and contributions to the narrative, but they do not embody the same level of spirituality or serve as guides in the way Padre Balzone does.

**4. Who among the characters is depicted as wise and possibly playful, resembling the archetype of a "trickster"?**

- A. Dunstan Ramsay**
- B. Amasa Dempster**
- C. Gyges**
- D. Liesl**

The character that embodies the qualities of wisdom and playfulness, resonating with the archetype of a "trickster," is Liesl. Throughout "Fifth Business," she is portrayed as a savvy and perceptive individual who often engages with other characters in ways that reveal deeper truths and encourage introspection. Liesl has a complex personality that combines mischief with insight, allowing her to navigate the intricacies of relationships with a playful cunning. Her interactions frequently challenge the status quo and provoke thought, positioning her as a catalyst for transformation among the other characters. Her role as a muse and her enigmatic nature contribute to her alignment with the trickster archetype, as she brings both wisdom and a lighthearted aspect to her engagements. This duality enhances her character and allows her to influence Dunstan Ramsay and others, encouraging them to confront their own beliefs and identities. The other characters mentioned may possess various attributes, but it is Liesl's unique combination of wisdom and playfulness that distinctly identifies her with the trickster role.

**5. How does Dunstan's perspective on his own life change over the course of the novel?**

- A. From guilt to a quest for power**
- B. From a focus on responsibility to a focus on pleasure**
- C. From guilt to a search for reconciliation and understanding**
- D. From apathy to extreme activism**

Dunstan Ramsay's journey throughout "Fifth Business" is marked by a profound evolution in his self-awareness and understanding of his place in the world. Initially burdened by guilt stemming from his childhood experiences, particularly his role in the incident that led to the injury of his friend Paul Dempsey, Dunstan grapples with the weight of responsibility and the repercussions of his actions. As the narrative unfolds, this guilt propels him toward a deeper quest for meaning and reconciliation. He seeks to understand the significance of his experiences and the impact they have had on his identity. Dunstan's exploration of his past, including his relationships with figures like Mrs. Dempsey and his connection to the concepts of saintliness and myth, reflects a shift from merely feeling guilty to actively pursuing a more profound comprehension of his life's purpose. By the end of the novel, Dunstan has transformed not just in how he views his past decisions but also in his perception of himself as a person capable of growth and change. His insights allow him to reconcile with his past and embrace a more holistic understanding of his life, which underscores the theme of personal redemption and the search for self in the face of guilt. This journey from guilt to reconciliation is central to Dunstan

**6. Which character is described as having "eyes like a scarecrow"?**

- A. Dunstan Ramsay**
- B. Amasa Dempster**
- C. Gyges**
- D. Little Madonna**

The character described as having "eyes like a scarecrow" is Amasa Dempster. This description captures Amasa's unsettling presence and reflects his role as a symbol of dislocation and neglect within the novel. His eyes convey a sense of otherness and his haunted life experiences, particularly his tragic fate and the impact it has on those around him. This vivid imagery also helps to evoke a visual parallel to his spiritual and emotional state, reinforcing themes of suffering, perception, and the complexities of human nature in the story. While Dunstan Ramsay, Gyges, and Little Madonna are significant characters in "Fifth Business," their descriptions and contexts do not match the unsettling imagery associated with a scarecrow, which emphasizes Amasa's unique and haunting character traits.

**7. How is Dunstan's relationship with Mrs. Dempsey characterized?**

- A. Simple and straightforward
- B. Complex, marked by fascination and obligation**
- C. Antagonistic and competitive
- D. Purely pragmatic and transactional

Dunstan's relationship with Mrs. Dempsey is characterized as complex, marked by fascination and obligation. Their interactions showcase a deep intrigue on Dunstan's part, as he finds Mrs. Dempsey a captivating figure, embodying a certain glamor and vivacity that attracts him. However, this fascination is not without complications, as Dunstan often feels a sense of duty towards her, influenced by the broader themes of sacrifice and responsibility that permeate his life. Moreover, this relationship reflects Dunstan's own struggles with his identity and his past, particularly concerning what he feels he owes to others and to himself. His feelings toward Mrs. Dempsey oscillate between admiration and a recognition of the burdens that come with such admiration. This dynamic contrasts sharply with other relationships in the novel where interactions are more one-dimensional or rooted in clear-cut emotions. The other choices portray the relationship in ways that do not fully capture its richness; for instance, describing it as simple overlooks the layers of psychological interplay, and a purely pragmatic view ignores the emotional and existential connections that Dunstan experiences. Thus, the complexity of their relationship embodies themes of longing, obligation, and the search for understanding within oneself and others.

**8. How does the character of Boy relate to the theme of duality?**

- A. He represents loyalty and betrayal simultaneously
- B. He embodies the tension between inner desires and public persona**
- C. He illustrates the dual nature of wealth and poverty
- D. He symbolizes the intersection of love and hate

The character of Boy demonstrates the theme of duality through his embodiment of the tension between inner desires and public persona. Throughout "Fifth Business," Boy is depicted as a character who grapples with conflicting aspects of his identity. On one hand, he presents a certain image to the world, often striving for acceptance and admiration within societal norms. On the other hand, his inner desires and true self frequently contradict this polished exterior. This duality is significant as it reflects broader human experiences, where individuals often navigate between social expectations and personal truths. Boy's journey illustrates how these conflicting aspects can create internal conflict and affect relationships, resonating with the complexity of human nature. The other choices focus on different themes that might be present in the story but do not capture the essence of Boy's dual nature as effectively. While loyalty and betrayal, wealth and poverty, or the intersection of love and hate can also be explored within the narrative, they do not specifically highlight the central dualism within Boy's character as the tension between his inner desires and his public persona does.

**9. How does Davies use literary references to enhance the narrative?**

- A. They distract from the main plot of the story**
- B. They deepen thematic content and emphasize cultural contexts**
- C. They serve to complicate the narrative unnecessarily**
- D. They only reference classical literature for no reason**

Robertson Davies effectively uses literary references throughout "Fifth Business" to deepen thematic content and emphasize cultural contexts. By integrating various literary works and references, he creates layers of meaning that enrich the narrative and provide insight into the characters' motivations and the broader themes of the novel. For instance, references to mythology, religious texts, and classical literature allow the reader to draw parallels between the characters' experiences and broader human themes such as guilt, redemption, and the search for identity. This intertextual approach not only highlights the characters' struggles but also situates their personal journeys within a larger cultural and historical framework. The literary allusions serve as a tool for both reflection and irony, elevating the narrative beyond a mere personal story to one that touches on universal themes and human conditions. The other options do not accurately capture the role of literary references in the narrative. The references do not distract from the plot; rather, they enhance it by providing depth. Similarly, while some might argue that they complicate the narrative, the complexity they add is purposeful and serves to enrich the readers' understanding of the characters and themes, rather than complicating the story for its own sake. Furthermore, the allusions are not limited to classical literature but span a wide

**10. Which phrase is associated with the potential end of humanity within the narrative?**

- A. The usual cabal**
- B. Faith and patience of the saints**
- C. Five that will make an end of us all**
- D. Secrets of the past**

The phrase "Five that will make an end of us all" is significant in the narrative of Fifth Business as it encapsulates a sense of impending doom and a foreshadowing of dire consequences that humanity faces. This phrase resonates with the themes of fate, interconnectedness, and the broader existential challenges that the characters encounter. It highlights the precariousness of human existence and suggests that certain actions or truths have the power to lead to catastrophic outcomes. Within the context of the story, this phrase relates to various motifs of conflict and crisis that permeate the narrative, suggesting that there are pivotal elements or decisions that could lead to detrimental consequences not only for individuals but for society as a whole. This thematic depth enhances the reader's understanding of the psychological and social dilemmas faced by the characters. Other phrases, while important to the narrative, do not carry the same weighted implication of humanity's potential end. "The usual cabal," for instance, may imply conspiratorial behavior but lacks the dire existential connotation. "Faith and patience of the saints" is more about resilience and spiritual endurance. "Secrets of the past" refers to hidden truths that shape characters' lives but does not inherently denote an end or a conclusion. Therefore, the chosen phrase stands

## 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](mailto: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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