

Florida Statewide Science Assessment (SSA) Practice Exam (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. Which term describes all water on Earth's surface, including oceans and lakes, and sometimes water in clouds?**
 - A. Geosphere/Lithosphere**
 - B. Cryosphere**
 - C. Hydrosphere**
 - D. Biosphere**

- 2. What occurs when the Moon passes directly between the Sun and Earth and casts a shadow over part of Earth?**
 - A. Solar eclipse**
 - B. Lunar eclipse**
 - C. Seasons**
 - D. Phases of the Moon**

- 3. What term describes passing of traits from parents to offspring?**
 - A. Heredity**
 - B. Genetics**
 - C. Evolution**
 - D. Reproduction**

- 4. A carnivore that eats secondary consumers.**
 - A. Primary consumer**
 - B. Tertiary consumer**
 - C. Secondary consumer**
 - D. Quaternary consumer**

- 5. In a study, the plan to test a hypothesis by manipulating a factor and observing the effect is called**
 - A. Observation**
 - B. Hypothesis**
 - C. Trend**
 - D. Experiment**

- 6. What term refers to a pattern of change over time in data?**
- A. Observation**
 - B. Trend**
 - C. Experiment**
 - D. Replication**
- 7. Which organelle is found in plant and algae cells and is the site of photosynthesis?**
- A. Chloroplast**
 - B. Mitochondrion**
 - C. Vacuole**
 - D. Ribosome**
- 8. What do you call a group of tissues that work together to perform closely related functions?**
- A. Organ**
 - B. Organ System**
 - C. Tissue**
 - D. Cell**
- 9. Which body system breaks down food into smaller molecules and absorbs nutrients?**
- A. Circulatory system**
 - B. Digestive system**
 - C. Nervous system**
 - D. Endocrine system**
- 10. What is the term for the movement of carbon from the nonliving environment into living things and back?**
- A. limiting factor**
 - B. carbon cycle**
 - C. organ system**
 - D. Tides**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which term describes all water on Earth's surface, including oceans and lakes, and sometimes water in clouds?

- A. Geosphere/Lithosphere**
- B. Cryosphere**
- C. Hydrosphere**
- D. Biosphere**

All water on Earth in every state and location belongs to the hydrosphere. This includes oceans, lakes, rivers, groundwater, ice, and even water vapor in clouds. The term encompasses water in liquid, solid, and gaseous forms as part of the planet's water system. The other terms refer to different parts of the Earth: the geosphere is the solid earth like rocks and soil, the cryosphere is frozen water such as ice and snow, and the biosphere covers living organisms and their environments. So, the hydrosphere best describes the water component of Earth, including water in clouds as vapor.

2. What occurs when the Moon passes directly between the Sun and Earth and casts a shadow over part of Earth?

- A. Solar eclipse**
- B. Lunar eclipse**
- C. Seasons**
- D. Phases of the Moon**

When the Moon sits directly between the Sun and Earth, it blocks some or all of the Sun's light from reaching part of Earth. That is a solar eclipse. The Moon's shadow on Earth has two parts: the dark inner umbra, where the Sun is completely covered for observers in that narrow path, producing a total solar eclipse, and the lighter penumbra, where the Sun is only partly blocked, producing a partial eclipse. If the Moon is farther away, it may not completely cover the Sun, leaving a bright ring around it called an annular eclipse. These events only occur during specific alignments near new Moon when the Moon's orbit crosses the Sun-Earth line. A lunar eclipse, by contrast, happens when Earth lies between the Sun and the Moon, casting Earth's shadow onto the Moon. Phases of the Moon describe the changing appearance of the Moon, which aligns with solar eclipses only during new Moon.

3. What term describes passing of traits from parents to offspring?

- A. Heredity**
- B. Genetics**
- C. Evolution**
- D. Reproduction**

Heredity describes how traits are passed from parents to offspring. Traits such as eye color or blood type are carried by genes on chromosomes, and each parent contributes one set of genes to their offspring. The result is inherited similarities plus potential variation due to how different alleles combine. Genetics is the study of how this inheritance works, but the act of passing traits from parent to child is heredity. Evolution refers to changes in trait frequencies over many generations in populations, not the direct transfer from parent to offspring. Reproduction is the process of producing offspring, which enables heredity to occur, but it isn't the term for the transmission of traits itself.

4. A carnivore that eats secondary consumers.

- A. Primary consumer
- B. Tertiary consumer**
- C. Secondary consumer
- D. Quaternary consumer

Think about the flow of energy through trophic levels. Producers (plants) are eaten by primary consumers (herbivores). Primary consumers are eaten by secondary consumers (carnivores that feed on herbivores). If a carnivore hunts and eats those secondary consumers, it sits one level higher—the tertiary consumer. So this description matches the tertiary consumer. For contrast, a primary consumer eats producers, a secondary consumer eats primary consumers, and a quaternary consumer eats tertiary consumers.

5. In a study, the plan to test a hypothesis by manipulating a factor and observing the effect is called

- A. Observation
- B. Hypothesis
- C. Trend
- D. Experiment**

Testing a hypothesis by changing a factor and watching what happens is called an experiment. In an experiment, you actively manipulate one variable—the factor you think will cause a change—and measure the effect on another variable. This setup helps reveal cause-and-effect relationships by comparing results to a baseline or control where the factor isn't altered. Observing something without changing it is just observation. A hypothesis is the statement you're testing, not the plan to test. A trend is a pattern seen in data over time, not the method of testing.

6. What term refers to a pattern of change over time in data?

- A. Observation
- B. Trend**
- C. Experiment
- D. Replication

When data are collected over successive time points, the overall direction the values take is called a trend. A trend shows whether the measurements tend to increase, decrease, or stay about the same as time goes on, revealing long-term changes rather than just a single point. This helps us understand how something changes over time—for example, plant height measured each week might show an upward trend as the plant grows. An observation is simply recording data without interpreting a pattern over time. An experiment is a controlled test to see what effect changing a variable has. Replication means repeating a study or measurement to check if results are consistent. So the term that describes a pattern of change over time in data is trend.

7. Which organelle is found in plant and algae cells and is the site of photosynthesis?

A. Chloroplast

B. Mitochondrion

C. Vacuole

D. Ribosome

Chloroplasts are the organelles responsible for photosynthesis in plant and algae cells. They contain chlorophyll, the pigment that captures light energy. This energy drives the transformation of carbon dioxide and water into glucose, with oxygen released as a byproduct. Chloroplasts have a double membrane and internal compartments—the thylakoid membranes where light-dependent reactions happen and the stroma where the Calvin cycle occurs—and they contain their own DNA. All of this explains why chloroplasts are found in plant and algae cells and serve as the site of photosynthesis. The other options don't perform photosynthesis: mitochondria generate ATP through respiration, vacuoles store water and other substances, and ribosomes build proteins.

8. What do you call a group of tissues that work together to perform closely related functions?

A. Organ

B. Organ System

C. Tissue

D. Cell

A group of tissues that work together to perform closely related functions is an organ. Tissues are made of similar cells that carry out a specific task. When several different tissues come together in one structure to carry out a broader function, that structure becomes an organ. For example, the heart contains muscle tissue to contract, nerve tissue to control the rhythm, and connective tissue to hold everything in place, all collaborating to pump blood. This differs from a cell (the basic unit of life) and a tissue (a collection of similar cells). It also sits above a tissue in the levels of organization, with organ systems formed by groups of organs that work together, such as the digestive or circulatory systems.

9. Which body system breaks down food into smaller molecules and absorbs nutrients?

A. Circulatory system

B. Digestive system

C. Nervous system

D. Endocrine system

Digestion and nutrient absorption are carried out by the digestive system. It uses both mechanical actions (like chewing and stomach muscles stirring) and chemical ones (enzymes and stomach acid) to break food into tiny molecules such as sugars, amino acids, and fatty acids. The walls of the small intestine, with their tiny finger-like villi, absorb these nutrients into the bloodstream. The circulatory system then carries them to cells throughout the body. The nervous and endocrine systems help regulate digestion, but they don't perform the breaking-down or absorbing themselves.

10. What is the term for the movement of carbon from the nonliving environment into living things and back?

- A. limiting factor**
- B. carbon cycle**
- C. organ system**
- D. Tides**

The term for moving carbon from the nonliving environment into living things and back is the carbon cycle. This cycle describes how carbon travels through air, water, soil, and living organisms. Plants take in carbon dioxide during photosynthesis to make sugars, moving carbon from the atmosphere into plant tissue. Animals obtain carbon by eating plants or other animals, transferring it into their bodies. Through respiration, decomposition, and microbial activity, carbon is released back into the air or soil as carbon dioxide or stored in organic matter, and the oceans exchange carbon with the atmosphere as well. Human activities, like burning fossil fuels, add extra carbon to the cycle, altering balances. Other terms don't fit this idea: a limiting factor is about something that restricts growth, an organ system is a group of organs in an organism, and tides refer to rhythmic rises and falls of ocean water.

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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://floridassa.examzify.com>

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

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