

GACE SPECIAL EDUCATION READING, ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, AND SOCIAL STUDIES (087) PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	15

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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 best describes the primary purpose of a reading response journal?**
 - A. to check that students completed a reading assignment
 - B. to keep students engaged in independent work
 - C. to capture student-text interactions
 - D. to keep a record of books read throughout the year
- 2. What is the benefit of organizing notes by themes in Social Studies?**
 - A. It helps memorize dates only.
 - B. It makes it harder to see connections.
 - C. It helps synthesize information across sources and identify patterns.
 - D. It eliminates the need to cite sources.
- 3. Which statement correctly distinguishes primary sources from secondary sources?**
 - A. A diary from a participant is a primary source.
 - B. A diary is a secondary source.
 - C. A textbook is a primary source.
 - D. A documentary is not a source type.
- 4. In civics, what is the function of check and balances in government?**
 - A. To prevent the concentration of power by ensuring each branch can limit the others.
 - B. To consolidate power in one branch.
 - C. To remove accountability.
 - D. To abolish other branches.
- 5. Which set of novels best represents the historical fiction genre for middle school?**
 - A. The Giver, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, Copper Sun
 - B. My Brother Sam is Dead, The Hunger Games, The Graveyard Book
 - C. Holes, Stargirl, The Outsiders
 - D. The Lightning Thief, The Graveyard Book, The Hobbit

- 6. Besides word frequency, which is another quantitative measure of text complexity?**
- A. Sentence length
 - B. Thematic relevance
 - C. Tone
 - D. Author's purpose
- 7. Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her bus seat sparked the Montgomery bus boycott, which led to the emergence of which civil rights leader?**
- A. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - B. Malcolm X
 - C. Rosa Parks
 - D. Thurgood Marshall
- 8. Which strategy best enables students to support their ideas with evidence from the text?**
- A. Responding to comprehension questions orally
 - B. Recording student questions on sticky notes
 - C. Illustrating memorable scenes on art paper
 - D. Writing a response in a double-entry journal
- 9. For fifth-grade students who struggle with decoding unfamiliar multisyllabic words, the most appropriate approach is to teach them to**
- A. sound out multisyllabic words phoneme by phoneme
 - B. clap out the number of syllables in multisyllabic words
 - C. memorize grade-appropriate word lists that contain multisyllabic words
 - D. look for affixes and morphemes in multisyllabic words
- 10. Which of the following countries, because its location made it unusually well-placed to control trade during the Renaissance, rose to prominence in the 1700s?**
- A. Great Britain
 - B. France
 - C. Italy
 - D. Portugal

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which best describes the primary purpose of a reading response journal?

- A. to check that students completed a reading assignment
- B. to keep students engaged in independent work
- C. to capture student-text interactions**
- D. to keep a record of books read throughout the year

The main idea being tested is that a reading response journal is meant to capture how students interact with the text as they read. When students write in a response journal, they record their thinking: questions that arise, predictions they consider, connections to personal experiences or other texts, interpretations of characters and events, and evidence from the text that supports their ideas. This shows not just what they read, but how they make sense of it, which helps teachers see how a student understands the material and where they might be unsure. A strong entry might note a specific moment in the writing and explain why it mattered, for example, linking a character's action to a theme and quoting a line from the passage to show how the text supports that interpretation. This kind of record makes thinking visible and provides a basis for feedback, discussion, and targeted instruction. Why the other purposes don't fit as well: journals aren't primarily about checking that a student completed the assignment, nor are they simply tools for keeping students engaged in independent work. They also aren't intended as a year-long log of every book read; that would be more like a reading log. The value of the reading response journal lies in documenting student-text interactions—the thoughtful processing of what the text means and how it affects the reader.

2. What is the benefit of organizing notes by themes in Social Studies?

- A. It helps memorize dates only.
- B. It makes it harder to see connections.
- C. It helps synthesize information across sources and identify patterns.**
- D. It eliminates the need to cite sources.

Organizing notes by themes in Social Studies strengthens your ability to synthesize information across sources and identify patterns. When you group notes under themes like economics, power, culture, or change over time, you can compare how different documents speak to the same issue, notice recurring ideas, and trace how events influence one another. This thematic view makes it easier to connect evidence from newspapers, primary sources, and maps, so you can build a coherent understanding and develop evidence-based arguments. It also helps with recall because related facts are stored together under meaningful ideas rather than as isolated dates. Remember, organizing by theme doesn't remove the need to cite sources; you still credit where your information comes from.

3. Which statement correctly distinguishes primary sources from secondary sources?

- A. A diary from a participant is a primary source.**
- B. A diary is a secondary source.
- C. A textbook is a primary source.
- D. A documentary is not a source type.

Understanding the difference between primary and secondary sources is essential. Primary sources are original, firsthand accounts created by people who witnessed or participated in the event or produced the material at the time. A diary kept by a participant records that person's own experiences and observations as they happened, making it an original, firsthand source. A diary isn't a secondary source because it doesn't reinterpret or summarize events after the fact; it presents the writer's direct experience. Textbooks, on the other hand, collect information from various sources and explain or analyze it for learners, so they are secondary sources rather than primary. A documentary can include original footage or interviews, but it typically analyzes and presents information about events, so it is generally treated as a secondary source rather than a primary one.

4. In civics, what is the function of check and balances in government?

- A. To prevent the concentration of power by ensuring each branch can limit the others.
- B. To consolidate power in one branch.
- C. To remove accountability.
- D. To abolish other branches.

Checks and balances is a system that prevents any one part of government from becoming too powerful by giving each branch ways to limit the others. This keeps government officers accountable and helps protect people's liberties. In action, each branch has tools to curb the others. The legislative branch makes laws and oversees government activity; the executive can veto laws and appoint officials or judges; the judiciary can review laws and executive actions to ensure they fit the Constitution. When a branch oversteps, the others can respond—vetoes can be overridden, appointments can be approved or blocked, impeachment can remove officials, and courts can strike down unconstitutional actions. The overall aim is to distribute power and provide accountability, rather than concentrating power, eliminating accountability, or abolishing branches.

5. Which set of novels best represents the historical fiction genre for middle school?

- A. The Giver, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, Copper Sun
- B. My Brother Sam is Dead, The Hunger Games, The Graveyard Book
- C. Holes, Stargirl, The Outsiders
- D. The Lightning Thief, The Graveyard Book, The Hobbit

Historical fiction presents stories set in real past times, using actual events or ways of life to shape the characters and plots. In this set, two books fit that idea clearly. One is set during World War II and follows a child's experience, which helps readers understand the Holocaust era through a personal perspective. The other depicts life during slavery in early America, bringing the transatlantic slave trade to a middle school audience with relatable characters and real historical context. The remaining book belongs to a different genre entirely—dystopian science fiction about a future society—so it doesn't illustrate historical fiction. Because this set centers on past events and settings, it represents historical fiction for middle school best. Other sets mix in fantasy or contemporary stories, which don't align as closely with historical fiction.

6. Besides word frequency, which is another quantitative measure of text complexity?

- A. Sentence length
- B. Thematic relevance
- C. Tone
- D. Author's purpose

Quantitative measures of text complexity include sentence length. By looking at the average number of words per sentence (and how much that length varies), you get a numerical handle on how syntactically dense the text is. Longer sentences often require tracking more ideas and clauses, which increases processing demands for readers. This kind of measurement is used in readability formulas because it provides a concrete, countable indicator of complexity. The other aspects—thematic relevance, tone, and the writer's purpose—describe content or mood and aren't numeric measures of how hard a text is to read. So sentence length is the best fit here.

7. Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her bus seat sparked the Montgomery bus boycott, which led to the emergence of which civil rights leader?

A. Martin Luther King, Jr.

B. Malcolm X

C. Rosa Parks

D. Thurgood Marshall

Rosa Parks' refusal sparked a mass protest, and the Montgomery Bus Boycott became the proving ground for a new kind of leadership in the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. emerged as the prominent leader during this time, guiding the boycott with a commitment to nonviolent resistance and clear, inspirational rhetoric. His role helped elevate him to national prominence and shaped the direction of the movement for years to come. While Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, and Thurgood Marshall all played important parts in civil rights history, the leadership that grew out of the Montgomery Bus Boycott is most closely associated with King.

8. Which strategy best enables students to support their ideas with evidence from the text?

A. Responding to comprehension questions orally

B. Recording student questions on sticky notes

C. Illustrating memorable scenes on art paper

D. Writing a response in a double-entry journal

This item tests the ability to use textual evidence to back up ideas. A double-entry journal is designed for that exact purpose: one column captures quotes or precise references from the text, and the other column has the student's explanation of how that evidence supports their claim, analysis of author choices, and connections to their interpretation. This setup makes the link between what the text says and what the student thinks explicit, strengthens close-reading habits, and creates a written record students can use to defend their ideas with specific evidence. Other strategies can promote understanding or creativity, or surface questions, but they don't consistently require students to anchor each idea to concrete textual evidence in a structured, written format.

9. For fifth-grade students who struggle with decoding unfamiliar multisyllabic words, the most appropriate approach is to teach them to

A. sound out multisyllabic words phoneme by phoneme

B. clap out the number of syllables in multisyllabic words

C. memorize grade-appropriate word lists that contain multisyllabic words

D. look for affixes and morphemes in multisyllabic words

The main idea here is using affixes and morphemes to unlock how a multisyllabic word sounds and what it means. When students learn to spot common prefixes, suffixes, and root morphemes, they can chop the word into meaningful parts. This helps them predict pronunciation and infer meaning even when the whole word is unfamiliar, making decoding faster and more accurate. For example, recognizing a prefix like un-, a root word, and a suffix like -able can guide both how to say the word and what it means. Relying on sounding out every phoneme in a long word can be slow and error-prone for learners who struggle with decoding, so this morphemic approach offers a more efficient strategy. Clapping syllables helps with rhythm but doesn't provide a route to pronunciation or understanding. Memorizing lists tackles only known words and doesn't teach how to approach new ones. Focusing on affixes and morphemes gives students a flexible tool they can apply to many unfamiliar words.

10. Which of the following countries, because its location made it unusually well-placed to control trade during the Renaissance, rose to prominence in the 1700s?

A. Great Britain

B. France

C. Italy

D. Portugal

Think about how geography influences trade power over time. Being an island nation with ready access to the Atlantic and to global sea routes gave Britain a strong advantage for controlling commerce, especially as ship technology and global trade networks expanded in the 18th century. A powerful navy, extensive coastal ports, and a vast empire allowed Britain to dominate sea lanes, protect crucial trade routes, and finance rapid economic growth. That combination explains why Britain rose to prominence in the 1700s. During the Renaissance, trade power was concentrated in Mediterranean crossroads where Italian city-states like Venice and Genoa controlled harbor networks and overland routes. Portugal played a leading role in early exploration and maritime routes around Africa, which shaped its influence, but Britain's geographic position and naval strength became decisive later on. France held significant prestige and resources but did not achieve the same level of maritime dominance as Britain in the 1700s.

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://gace087.examzify.com>

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

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