

GRE Basic Vocabulary 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

1. If something is described as "burgeoning," it is likely to?
 - A. Decline and diminish
 - B. Grow and flourish
 - C. Remain static
 - D. Stop and stagnate
2. What quality is characterized by skill in deception?
 - A. Sincerity
 - B. Cunning
 - C. Honesty
 - D. Naivety
3. What does the term "adulterate" primarily refer to?
 - A. To enhance the quality of something
 - B. To corrupt, debase, or make impure
 - C. To purify a substance
 - D. To strengthen an argument
4. What does the word "spurious" signify?
 - A. Authentic and true
 - B. Plausible but false
 - C. Unusual and unique
 - D. Ambiguous and unclear
5. Which word describes something that is unlikely to cause harm?
 - A. Malicious
 - B. Benign
 - C. Innocuous
 - D. Hostile
6. What does it mean to 'forestall' something?
 - A. To allow it to happen freely
 - B. To keep it from happening
 - C. To delay it without consequence
 - D. To encourage its occurrence

- 7. Which word describes someone characterized by intense emotion?**
- A. Indifferent**
 - B. Fervent**
 - C. Apathetic**
 - D. Somber**
- 8. What does it mean to belabor a point?**
- A. To overview briefly and concisely**
 - B. To work on excessively; to thrash soundly**
 - C. To express uncertainty**
 - D. To ignore important details**
- 9. If someone is described as compliant, they are likely to be _____.**
- A. Rebellious**
 - B. Submissive**
 - C. Assertive**
 - D. Defiant**
- 10. Which word describes someone who is easily irritated or annoyed?**
- A. A complacent**
 - B. B petulant**
 - C. C cheerful**
 - D. D relaxed**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. If something is described as "burgeoning," it is likely to?

A. Decline and diminish

B. Grow and flourish

C. Remain static

D. Stop and stagnate

The term "burgeoning" refers to something that is rapidly growing or developing. It conveys a sense of vitality and expansion, often associated with new beginnings or a flourishing state. When something is described as burgeoning, it typically indicates that it is experiencing a period of dynamic growth, whether that be in terms of size, influence, or success. In the context of the options provided, "grow and flourish" encapsulates the essence of what it means to burgeon—indicating a positive and robust increase rather than a decline or stagnation. The other options describe states that are in direct contrast to growth: declining, remaining static, or stopping altogether, none of which align with the lively connotation of the word "burgeoning." Therefore, the choice that reflects the meaning of the word most accurately is to grow and flourish.

2. What quality is characterized by skill in deception?

A. Sincerity

B. Cunning

C. Honesty

D. Naivety

The quality characterized by skill in deception is cunning. This term refers to the ability to achieve one's goals through cleverness and deceit. A cunning individual often uses their intelligence and resourcefulness to manipulate situations or people to their advantage, which inherently involves some level of deception. Sincerity and honesty represent qualities of truthfulness and integrity, which stand in direct opposition to deception. Naivety, on the other hand, refers to a lack of experience or sophistication, often resulting in a person being easily deceived rather than skilled in deception themselves. In contrast, cunning specifically denotes a proactive ability to deceive or manipulate, making it the most appropriate answer in this context.

3. What does the term "adulterate" primarily refer to?

A. To enhance the quality of something

B. To corrupt, debase, or make impure

C. To purify a substance

D. To strengthen an argument

The term "adulterate" primarily refers to the act of corrupting, debasing, or making something impure. This is often used in contexts where a substance, such as food or drink, is mixed with inferior or harmful components, thereby diminishing its quality or purity. The process of adulteration can have negative implications, as it compromises the integrity of the original product. In contrast, enhancing the quality of something, purifying a substance, or strengthening an argument focuses on improvement or integrity rather than degradation. Therefore, these other choices do not align with the true meaning of "adulterate." The concept centers around the introduction of unwanted elements, which directly ties into the definition of making something impure.

4. What does the word "spurious" signify?

- A. Authentic and true
- B. Plausible but false**
- C. Unusual and unique
- D. Ambiguous and unclear

The word "spurious" is commonly used to describe something that appears to be genuine or valid but is actually false or deceptive. Therefore, the significance of "spurious" aligns perfectly with the meaning of plausible but false. This term can refer to arguments, claims, or even objects that may seem plausible on the surface yet lack authenticity or truth upon closer inspection. In contrast, the other choices do not accurately capture the meaning of "spurious." "Authentic and true" directly opposes the concept of spuriousness, as it represents genuine and reliable qualities. "Unusual and unique" does not relate to authenticity or deception; it describes something that stands out but does not inherently indicate truthfulness or validity. Finally, "ambiguous and unclear" suggests a lack of clarity, which does not reflect the essence of spuriousness, as spurious items can sometimes appear clear or convincing while still being false. Thus, the best choice that encapsulates the meaning of "spurious" is the option that connotes something that is seemingly credible yet fundamentally untrue.

5. Which word describes something that is unlikely to cause harm?

- A. Malicious
- B. Benign
- C. Innocuous**
- D. Hostile

The word that best describes something that is unlikely to cause harm is "innocuous." This term refers to actions, substances, or behaviors that are harmless or not likely to provoke any adverse effects. When something is classified as innocuous, it conveys a sense of safety and a lack of potential danger, making it a fitting choice for this definition. "Benign" is also related to being gentle or harmless, particularly in a medical context, but "innocuous" more directly emphasizes a lack of harmfulness in a broader sense. The terms "malicious" and "hostile," however, suggest harmful intentions or aggressiveness, which directly contrasts with the idea of not causing harm. Thus, "innocuous" is the most appropriate choice given the context of the question.

6. What does it mean to 'forestall' something?

- A. To allow it to happen freely
- B. To keep it from happening**
- C. To delay it without consequence
- D. To encourage its occurrence

To 'forestall' something means to take action in advance to prevent it from happening or to hinder its occurrence. The term is often used in contexts where someone anticipates a potential problem or event and proactively intervenes to ensure it does not happen. For example, if a manager foresees a drop in team motivation, they might implement new team-building activities to forestall any decline in productivity. In this case, the correct choice directly aligns with the definition of 'forestall,' highlighting the proactive nature of the action taken. The other options either suggest a passive approach or indicate behaviors that contradict the fundamental meaning of 'forestall.' Allowing events to unfold freely, delaying something without managing its outcome, or encouraging the occurrence of an event are all contrary to the intent of taking steps to stop or prevent an event from transpiring.

7. Which word describes someone characterized by intense emotion?

- A. Indifferent
- B. Fervent**
- C. Apathetic
- D. Somber

The term "fervent" refers to someone who displays intense emotion, passion, or enthusiasm. This word is often used to describe individuals who possess a deep, heartfelt commitment to their beliefs or interests, leading them to express strong feelings. For instance, a fervent supporter of a cause might demonstrate zeal and an unwavering dedication, exhibiting emotional intensity in their advocacy. This makes "fervent" the most fitting choice to describe someone characterized by intense emotion. In contrast, "indifferent" suggests a lack of interest or concern, indicating a dispassionate or apathetic stance. "Apathetic" also reinforces this idea of emotional disengagement or lack of feeling. "Somber," on the other hand, relates more to a serious or gloomy demeanor rather than intense emotion itself, as it can describe a state of being subdued or reflective rather than one of passion or fervor.

8. What does it mean to belabor a point?

- A. To overview briefly and concisely
- B. To work on excessively; to thrash soundly**
- C. To express uncertainty
- D. To ignore important details

To belabor a point means to work on something excessively, often to the point of being tedious or redundant. This term is often used when someone continues to argue or explain an idea far beyond what is necessary, thereby exhausting the listener with the repetition or over-explanation of that idea. By overemphasizing a particular point, the speaker may lose the attention of their audience, as the original significance can be diminished through excessive focus. In contrast, the other options indicate different actions. To overview briefly and concisely would imply summarizing or stating something clearly without superfluous detail, which is the opposite of belaboring. Expressing uncertainty suggests a lack of conviction or confidence regarding a point, which does not align with the idea of over-explaining it. Ignoring important details would also diverge from belaboring a point, as it would involve omitting information rather than excessively elaborating on certain aspects. Thus, the correct understanding of "belabor a point" is well captured by the definition of working on it too much and thrashing it soundly.

9. If someone is described as compliant, they are likely to be _____.

- A. Rebellious
- B. Submissive**
- C. Assertive
- D. Defiant

When someone is described as compliant, it means they are inclined to obey or yield to others' wishes or rules. This characteristic aligns closely with the notion of being submissive, which involves a willingness to conform or go along with the expectations or demands of others without resistance. Compliance suggests a certain level of acceptance and acquiescence, which is effectively captured by the term "submissive." The other options reflect attitudes that are contrary to compliance: rebellious describes a tendency to resist authority, assertive involves confidently expressing one's own opinions or desires often in a way that seeks to influence others, and defiant indicates a bold disobedience and challenge to authority. These terms highlight traits that oppose the essence of being compliant, making "submissive" the most fitting choice.

10. Which word describes someone who is easily irritated or annoyed?

- A. A complacent**
- B. B petulant**
- C. C cheerful**
- D. D relaxed**

The term that best captures someone who is easily irritated or annoyed is "petulant." This word conveys a sense of peevishness or sulkiness, often associated with a child-like irritability and a tendency to become upset over trivial matters. A petulant person is characterized by a lack of patience and frequent displays of annoyance, making it an apt description for someone who quickly becomes irritated. In contrast, the other choices indicate different dispositions. "Complacent" refers to a self-satisfied attitude, often without awareness of potential dangers or deficiencies, which does not imply irritability. "Cheerful" describes a happy and optimistic disposition, while "relaxed" suggests a calm and laid-back demeanor. Neither of these choices aligns with the idea of being easily annoyed; rather, they indicate a sense of contentment or ease. Hence, "petulant" is the most fitting choice for a person who frequently exhibits irritation or annoyance.

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://grebasicvocab.examzify.com>

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