

IDLA Sociology 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

- 1. What is cultural diffusion?**
 - A. A method of enforcing social norms**
 - B. The process by which cultural elements spread from one society to another**
 - C. A study of cultural practices in isolation**
 - D. A term for societal resistance to change**
- 2. Which of the following is an example of cultural universals?**
 - A. Marriage**
 - B. Capitalism**
 - C. Judaism**
 - D. Racism**
- 3. What educational practice involves dividing students based on their abilities?**
 - A. Standardized testing**
 - B. Tracking**
 - C. Grouping**
 - D. Streaming**
- 4. How are norms primarily maintained in a society?**
 - A. Through legislation**
 - B. Through enforcement of laws**
 - C. Through reinforcement by individuals**
 - D. Through social media influence**
- 5. What societal change has been linked to the rise in divorce rates?**
 - A. Increased social stigma surrounding divorce**
 - B. Changes in divorce laws**
 - C. More support for dual-income households**
 - D. Reduced length of marriages**

- 6. Which term describes the structured systems that enable racialized practices in society?**
- A. Social stratification**
 - B. Institutional racism**
 - C. Racial disparity**
 - D. Ethnic segregation**
- 7. In sociology, what does symbolic interactionism focus on?**
- A. The overall structure of society**
 - B. The meanings individuals attach to social symbols**
 - C. The legal ramifications of deviance**
 - D. Social changes over time**
- 8. Which concept involves assessing another culture without using one's own culture as a standard?**
- A. Cultural relativism**
 - B. Ethnocentrism**
 - C. Social normativity**
 - D. Cultural assimilation**
- 9. What is one effect of anomie on society?**
- A. Increased social cohesion**
 - B. Heightened communication among individuals**
 - C. Increased likelihood of social instability**
 - D. Strengthened adherence to cultural norms**
- 10. How do surveys function in sociology?**
- A. By influencing individual opinions through discussions**
 - B. By collecting data from respondents to analyze behaviors**
 - C. By conducting interviews with elites**
 - D. By observing behaviors in natural settings**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is cultural diffusion?

- A. A method of enforcing social norms
- B. The process by which cultural elements spread from one society to another**
- C. A study of cultural practices in isolation
- D. A term for societal resistance to change

Cultural diffusion is best understood as the process by which cultural elements, such as beliefs, practices, and customs, spread from one society to another. This diffusion can occur through various means, including trade, migration, conquest, and the exchange of ideas and information. It highlights how cultures are not static but rather dynamic and constantly evolving through interactions with one another. When societies come into contact, they can share and adopt different aspects of each other's cultures, leading to a blending of traditions and practices. This process is fundamental to the understanding of how global cultures develop and change over time, contributing to the rich tapestry of human civilization. In contrast, the other options refer to different sociological concepts. Enforcing social norms reflects the mechanisms through which societies maintain behaviors and standards, while studying cultural practices in isolation emphasizes a focus on a single culture without consideration for external influences. Societal resistance to change relates to dynamics where a community or group may oppose or slow down the adoption of new cultural elements or practices. None of these concepts capture the essence of how cultural diffusion functions and its impact on societies.

2. Which of the following is an example of cultural universals?

- A. Marriage**
- B. Capitalism
- C. Judaism
- D. Racism

Cultural universals refer to elements, patterns, traits, or institutions that are common to all human cultures worldwide. These universals emerge from the fundamental experiences and challenges all societies face, such as family structures, social organization, and methods of communication. Marriage is an example of a cultural universal because nearly every society has developed some form of marriage as a way to establish long-term partnerships, regulate sexual relationships, and create families. While the customs, regulations, and meanings surrounding marriage can vary greatly from one culture to another, the concept of forming unions exists universally across cultures. In contrast, capitalism, Judaism, and racism are much more specifically associated with particular cultures or socio-economic systems. Capitalism is an economic system that has developed in various societies but is not found everywhere; Judaism is a specific religious tradition that does not apply to all cultures, and racism is a social construct that arises in particular historical and cultural contexts. Thus, these concepts do not qualify as cultural universals in the same way that marriage does.

3. What educational practice involves dividing students based on their abilities?

- A. Standardized testing
- B. Tracking**
- C. Grouping
- D. Streaming

The practice of dividing students based on their abilities is known as tracking. This method categorizes students into different classes or groups based on their perceived academic capabilities and achievements. Tracking allows educators to tailor the curriculum and instruction to meet the specific needs of each group, with the intention of optimizing learning outcomes. In tracking systems, students might be placed into different academic tracks, such as advanced, regular, or remedial classes, which can significantly impact their educational experiences and future opportunities. By grouping students according to ability levels, tracking aims to provide a learning environment that is well-suited to varying levels of understanding and readiness. While the other options, such as standardized testing, grouping, and streaming, relate to educational practices, they do not specifically focus on the systematic division of students into distinct categories based on their abilities in the same structured manner as tracking does. For example, while grouping can involve creating small clusters for various instructional strategies, it doesn't necessarily follow a long-term, ability-based division like tracking.

4. How are norms primarily maintained in a society?

- A. Through legislation
- B. Through enforcement of laws
- C. Through reinforcement by individuals**
- D. Through social media influence

Norms in society are primarily maintained through reinforcement by individuals. This process involves the ways in which people internalize societal expectations and enact them in their everyday behavior. When individuals adopt norms as part of their identity, they are more likely to uphold and reinforce these norms through their actions, interactions, and socialization processes. For instance, when people observe others adhering to societal norms, they may feel compelled to behave similarly in order to gain acceptance and approval from their peers. This social reinforcement helps ensure that norms remain influential and are passed down through generations. As individuals share their values and behaviors, it fosters a collective understanding of what is considered acceptable or unacceptable within the community. In contrast, while legislation and enforcement of laws can play a role in maintaining order and compliance with norms, these mechanisms are often less effective than the social reinforcement that occurs organically among individuals. Additionally, social media influence can shape perceptions and behaviors, but it primarily acts as a platform for existing norms rather than the foundational means through which norms are maintained in society.

5. What societal change has been linked to the rise in divorce rates?

- A. Increased social stigma surrounding divorce**
- B. Changes in divorce laws**
- C. More support for dual-income households**
- D. Reduced length of marriages**

The rise in divorce rates can be closely linked to changes in divorce laws. Over the past few decades, many societies have undergone significant legal transformations that have made it easier for individuals to obtain a divorce. Notably, the introduction of no-fault divorce laws removed the requirement for couples to prove wrongdoing by one party, simplifying the process and making it more accessible. This legal shift lowered barriers to ending marriages, leading to an increase in divorce rates as individuals felt empowered to leave unsatisfactory or incompatible relationships without the fear of blame or lengthy legal battles. In contrast, societal factors like stigma surrounding divorce have generally decreased, as acceptance of divorce has grown over time. Support for dual-income households may have increased, allowing partners to sustain themselves independently, but this does not inherently lead to higher divorce rates. Lastly, while the length of marriages can be a factor in relationship dynamics, the specific linkage of changed divorce laws directly explains the phenomenon of rising divorce rates more effectively.

6. Which term describes the structured systems that enable racialized practices in society?

- A. Social stratification**
- B. Institutional racism**
- C. Racial disparity**
- D. Ethnic segregation**

Institutional racism is the term that effectively describes the structured systems that enable racialized practices in society. This concept refers to the ways in which societal institutions—such as education, law enforcement, healthcare, and the economy—perpetuate inequities and discriminatory practices against certain racial groups. Rather than being solely based on individual prejudice, institutional racism emphasizes how policies, practices, and cultural norms within institutions can result in systemic disadvantages for specific groups. For instance, institutional racism can manifest in biased hiring practices, unequal educational opportunities, and disparities in legal treatment based on race. These elements work together to maintain power dynamics and social hierarchies based on race, often without the direct involvement or awareness of individuals within those systems. Recognizing institutional racism is crucial for addressing broader societal issues related to race and inequality, as it highlights the need for reforms and systemic change. In contrast, social stratification relates to the structured ranking of entire groups of people and the inequalities that arise from this ranking. Racial disparity refers to the differences in outcomes or conditions experienced by different racial groups but does not specifically address the underlying structures enabling these differences. Ethnic segregation pertains to the physical separation of groups based on ethnicity, which describes a behavioral pattern rather than the broader structural mechanisms in

7. In sociology, what does symbolic interactionism focus on?

- A. The overall structure of society**
- B. The meanings individuals attach to social symbols**
- C. The legal ramifications of deviance**
- D. Social changes over time**

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological perspective that emphasizes the significance of symbols and the meanings individuals ascribe to them in their daily interactions. This framework posits that human behavior and the social world are shaped through interactions, where individuals interpret and redefine their experiences based on shared symbols, such as language, gestures, and norms. By focusing on the meanings that individuals attach to these social symbols, symbolic interactionism reveals how personal identities, social roles, and relationships are constructed. This approach allows sociologists to explore how everyday interactions contribute to the formation of social reality and how individuals navigate their social environment. In contrast, the other options emphasize different aspects of sociology: the overall structure of society refers to larger sociological theories like functionalism and conflict theory; the legal ramifications of deviance relate more to the fields of criminology or legal studies; while social changes over time would align with historical or macro-level sociological perspectives. Therefore, the focus on meanings and interactions makes the selected answer the most representative of symbolic interactionism.

8. Which concept involves assessing another culture without using one's own culture as a standard?

- A. Cultural relativism**
- B. Ethnocentrism**
- C. Social normativity**
- D. Cultural assimilation**

Cultural relativism is the concept that emphasizes understanding and evaluating a culture based on its own values and practices rather than comparing it to one's own culture. This perspective encourages an appreciation of cultural differences and helps to avoid ethnocentric bias, which can occur when one's own cultural norms and values are seen as the standard against which all other cultures are measured. By utilizing cultural relativism, sociologists and anthropologists can better understand the complexities and richness of diverse cultural practices. This approach promotes an open-minded view that recognizes the validity of different cultural beliefs and practices, allowing for a more nuanced and respectful understanding of how various societies operate. In contrast, ethnocentrism involves viewing one's own culture as superior and using it as a benchmark for judging other cultures. Social normativity suggests adherence to social norms prevalent in a society, whereas cultural assimilation refers to the process whereby individuals or groups from one culture adopt the practices of another culture, often at the expense of their original cultural identity.

9. What is one effect of anomie on society?

- A. Increased social cohesion
- B. Heightened communication among individuals
- C. Increased likelihood of social instability**
- D. Strengthened adherence to cultural norms

Anomie, a concept developed by sociologist Émile Durkheim, refers to a state of normlessness or social instability that arises when individuals feel disconnected from the collective values and norms that guide society. When anomie occurs, it often leads to confusion about social expectations, diminishing the overall stability of social structures. The increased likelihood of social instability is a direct consequence of anomie because it can create an environment where there is a breakdown of social norms. In such situations, individuals may turn to alternative behavior patterns, leading to increased deviance, crime, and a general sense of social disorder. The weakening of shared values can result in greater conflict among different social groups, as individuals may no longer agree on what is considered acceptable or desirable behavior. In contrast, factors like increased social cohesion, heightened communication among individuals, or strengthened adherence to cultural norms are generally seen as outcomes that counteract the effects of anomie. When social cohesion and shared values are strong, individuals are more likely to experience a sense of belonging and stability, making it less likely for social instability to arise.

10. How do surveys function in sociology?

- A. By influencing individual opinions through discussions
- B. By collecting data from respondents to analyze behaviors**
- C. By conducting interviews with elites
- D. By observing behaviors in natural settings

Surveys are a fundamental tool in sociology for gathering data from a large number of respondents in a systematic way. They function by asking individuals specific questions related to their beliefs, feelings, or behaviors, which allows researchers to capture a snapshot of social attitudes and trends. The structured nature of surveys ensures that data can be quantitatively analyzed, making it easier to identify patterns, correlations, and differences among various demographic groups. This method is particularly valuable because it can reach a diverse population and provide insights into complex social issues. The ability to analyze the collected data statistically empowers sociologists to draw conclusions that can inform theories, policies, or further research. Unlike other research methods that might focus on qualitative insights or in-depth analyses of a limited number of subjects, surveys enable the collection of broader data sets that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of societal dynamics.

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://idlasociology.examzify.com>

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