

# Introductory Sociology CLEP Prep Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. What is the pluralist view of power in society?:**
  - A. It is concentrated in a select few individuals**
  - B. It is shared by a variety of interest groups**
  - C. It is accessible to everyone**
  - D. It is concentrated in the government**
- 2. In sociology, what are "values"?**
  - A. Personal preferences in lifestyle**
  - B. Absolutes in moral standards**
  - C. Culturally defined behavioral guidelines**
  - D. Economic motivators for actions**
- 3. Which of the following is not part of Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach?**
  - A. Routines**
  - B. Narratives**
  - C. Scripts**
  - D. Structures**
- 4. Which of the following is not a characteristic of emotions?**
  - A. Feelings**
  - B. Moods**
  - C. Preferences**
  - D. Thoughts**
- 5. According to symbolic interactionism, what is the process of social interaction that occurs when two or more people give meaning to one another's behavior?**
  - A. Debate**
  - B. Dialectic**
  - C. Interplay**
  - D. Verbal exchange**

- 6. What is indicated by the term "social disorganization"?**
- A. The increase of social norms in a society**
  - B. The strengthening of social bonds**
  - C. The diminishing of social bonds and norms**
  - D. The establishment of new social norms**
- 7. What is a "subculture" in sociology?**
- A. A group within a larger culture that shares common traits**
  - B. A social movement advocating for change**
  - C. A collection of individuals with no common beliefs**
  - D. A dominant culture influencing smaller groups**
- 8. The term "social role" refers to?:**
- A. A form of government**
  - B. The power held by an elected leader**
  - C. Social behaviors expected by a particular group**
  - D. A physical position within a society**
- 9. What is the term for an individual's status in society?**
- A. Religion**
  - B. Norm**
  - C. Social class**
  - D. Role**
- 10. What is the primary purpose of sociology?**
- A. To explain the origin and development of human society**
  - B. To understand the behavior of individuals**
  - C. To explore the causes of social change**
  - D. To promote social justice and equality**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**



**1. What is the pluralist view of power in society?:**

- A. It is concentrated in a select few individuals
- B. It is shared by a variety of interest groups**
- C. It is accessible to everyone
- D. It is concentrated in the government

The pluralist view of power in society holds that power is shared by a variety of interest groups rather than being concentrated in a select few individuals or solely held by the government. This perspective emphasizes the idea of a diverse range of competing groups with different levels of influence, rather than a singular dominant group or entity holding all of the power. Options A and D are incorrect as they suggest power is concentrated in either a select few individuals or the government, without acknowledging the role of other groups. Option C is also incorrect as it oversimplifies the concept of power and fails to acknowledge the complexities of power dynamics in society.

**2. In sociology, what are "values"?**

- A. Personal preferences in lifestyle
- B. Absolutes in moral standards
- C. Culturally defined behavioral guidelines**
- D. Economic motivators for actions

Values in sociology refer to the culturally defined beliefs that guide behavior and attitudes within a society. They represent what is deemed important, desirable, and worthwhile within a cultural context. Values serve as a framework for individuals and groups in making decisions, guiding their actions, and assessing their experiences in relation to societal norms and expectations. Cultural values can encompass a wide array of beliefs about family, education, work, morality, and social relationships, shaping how individuals perceive their roles within society. For example, a culture that values individualism may promote self-reliance and personal achievement, while a culture that emphasizes collectivism may prioritize community and familial bonds. Understanding values is essential to comprehending the broader social context in which behaviors occur, as they influence social interactions and relationships. This understanding helps sociologists analyze how cultural and social structures impact personal behavior and societal trends.

**3. Which of the following is not part of Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach?**

- A. Routines
- B. Narratives
- C. Scripts
- D. Structures**

Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach focuses on the presentation of self in social situations, using the metaphor of a theatrical performance. Routines, narratives, and scripts are all aspects of this approach, as they refer to the actions, storylines, and pre-written lines used to present oneself to others. Structures, on the other hand, do not specifically relate to the performative aspect of the approach, so it is not considered a part of Goffman's theory. Structures might refer to broader societal systems or institutions, which are not directly involved in the performance of self.

**4. Which of the following is not a characteristic of emotions?**

- A. Feelings**
- B. Moods**
- C. Preferences**
- D. Thoughts**

Emotions are typically defined as a complex psychological state that involves feelings (option A), both positive and negative. They are also different from moods (option B), which are a general state of being that can last for a longer period of time compared to emotions. Thoughts (option D) are often seen as a result of emotions and can influence how we feel, but they are not the same as emotions. Preferences (option C) refer to our choices and desires, which are not technically considered emotions.

**5. According to symbolic interactionism, what is the process of social interaction that occurs when two or more people give meaning to one another's behavior?**

- A. Debate**
- B. Dialectic**
- C. Interplay**
- D. Verbal exchange**

Social interaction is a complex process in which individuals, their actions, and the meanings attributed to those actions all play a role. According to symbolic interactionism, this process is understood as interplay, where two or more individuals give meaning to each other's behavior through social interaction. This is different from a debate, which involves opposing viewpoints and arguments, or a dialectic, which is a logical discussion between two or more people with different opinions or ideas. While a verbal exchange may be a part of social interaction, it is not the sole focus or definition of the process according to symbolic interactionism. Therefore, the correct answer is C Interplay.

**6. What is indicated by the term "social disorganization"?**

- A. The increase of social norms in a society**
- B. The strengthening of social bonds**
- C. The diminishing of social bonds and norms**
- D. The establishment of new social norms**

The term "social disorganization" refers to a situation in which social bonds, norms, and structures within a community become weakened or disrupted. This can lead to a breakdown in social order, increase in crime, and a general decline in societal cohesion. When social bonds and norms are diminished, individuals may feel less connected to their community and less guided by shared values, which can result in negative social outcomes. This phenomenon is often studied in sociology to understand the relationship between social structures and individual behavior. For instance, in areas where social disorganization is prevalent, there may be an increase in deviant behavior as societal controls weaken. In contrast, the other options reflect more stable or improving social conditions. An increase in social norms or the strengthening of social bonds indicates a cohesive community, while the establishment of new social norms suggests adaptation or evolution rather than disorganization. Thus, the correct answer accurately captures the essence of what social disorganization signifies in sociological terms.

## 7. What is a "subculture" in sociology?

- A. A group within a larger culture that shares common traits**
- B. A social movement advocating for change**
- C. A collection of individuals with no common beliefs**
- D. A dominant culture influencing smaller groups**

A "subculture" in sociology is defined as a group within a larger culture that shares distinct values, norms, traditions, and practices that set it apart from the dominant culture. Members of a subculture often exhibit unique characteristics or behaviors that reflect their particular interests, backgrounds, or lifestyles. For example, various communities such as goths, punks, or skateboarders represent subcultures that have their own fashion, music preferences, and social norms, while still existing within the broader context of society. The other options presented do not accurately capture the essence of a subculture. A social movement advocating for change relates to collective action aimed at societal transformation, which is distinct from the concept of a subculture. A collection of individuals with no common beliefs does not form a cohesive group and thus cannot be classified as a subculture. Lastly, the idea of a dominant culture influencing smaller groups touches on cultural hegemony but does not specifically define a subculture, which is characterized by the unique cultural attributes of the smaller group itself rather than the influence exerted by the dominant culture.

## 8. The term "social role" refers to?:

- A. A form of government**
- B. The power held by an elected leader**
- C. Social behaviors expected by a particular group**
- D. A physical position within a society**

A social role refers to the expected behaviors and actions that individuals are expected to perform within a particular group or society. This can include expectations for how one interacts with others, their responsibilities, and their social status. Options A, B, and D all refer to specific aspects such as forms of government, leadership, and physical positions, but they do not fully encompass the concept of social roles. Therefore, they are not the correct answer.

## 9. What is the term for an individual's status in society?

- A. Religion**
- B. Norm**
- C. Social class**
- D. Role**

An individual's status in society is typically determined by their occupation, education, income, and other factors that make up their social class. Religion is the set of beliefs and practices associated with a particular group or community. Norms refer to the shared expectations and behaviors of a group or society. Role is the set of expectations and behaviors associated with a particular position or social identity. While religion, norms, and role all play a role in an individual's life and can influence their status in society, they are not the specific term used to describe an individual's overall social standing. Thus, the correct term for an individual's status in society is role.

**10. What is the primary purpose of sociology?**

**A. To explain the origin and development of human society**

**B. To understand the behavior of individuals**

**C. To explore the causes of social change**

**D. To promote social justice and equality**

Sociology is a field of study that aims to examine and explain the social world and human behavior within it. This includes understanding how societies and social structures develop, how they function, and how they change over time. While the other options may be related to sociology, they do not accurately capture its primary purpose. Option B focuses on the individual, which is only one component of sociology. Option C focuses primarily on social change, while option D focuses on the social outcomes that sociology may strive for, rather than its main purpose. Therefore, the primary purpose of sociology is to explain the origin and development of human society.