

Iowa International Relations 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. What year is associated with the Treaty of Westphalia, marking the birth of the modern state system?**
 - A. 1776**
 - B. 1648**
 - C. 1815**
 - D. 1945**

- 2. What is the main premise of the theory that helps to illustrate how different phenomena are interrelated?**
 - A. Logic**
 - B. Hypothesis**
 - C. Theory**
 - D. Proposition**

- 3. What percentage of U.S. GDP is typically associated with military expenditures?**
 - A. 1-2%**
 - B. 3-5%**
 - C. 6-8%**
 - D. 9-10%**

- 4. Which theory involves constructing models to evaluate international actions through observation?**
 - A. Normative theory**
 - B. Empirical theory**
 - C. Behavioral theory**
 - D. Constructivist theory**

- 5. What term describes the rightness or wrongness of actions and the justice of their outcomes?**
 - A. Empirical theory**
 - B. Scientific theory**
 - C. Normative theory**
 - D. Descriptive theory**

- 6. Which of the following aspects is likely to be beneficial when considering military alliances?**
- A. Regime type**
 - B. Geographic location**
 - C. Economy**
 - D. Military size**
- 7. What is required for an entity to be considered a state?**
- A. International recognition**
 - B. Patriotism among citizens**
 - C. Internal and external autonomy**
 - D. Economic stability**
- 8. What does globalization emphasize in inter-state relations?**
- A. Isolation of national economies**
 - B. A decrease in cultural exchange**
 - C. Interconnectedness and interdependence among nations**
 - D. National sovereignty above all**
- 9. What was the significance of the Westphalian system in international relations?**
- A. It ended World War I**
 - B. It established principles of territoriality and sovereignty**
 - C. It created the United Nations**
 - D. It introduced human rights law**
- 10. Which of the following is a characteristic of non-governmental organizations (NGOs)?**
- A. They are funded by government revenues**
 - B. They advocate for social change and serve various causes**
 - C. They are primarily military in nature**
 - D. They have no influence in international matters**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What year is associated with the Treaty of Westphalia, marking the birth of the modern state system?

- A. 1776
- B. 1648**
- C. 1815
- D. 1945

The Treaty of Westphalia is recognized for establishing the foundations of the modern state system, primarily concluding the Thirty Years' War in Europe. This series of treaties, signed in 1648, marked a significant turning point in the history of international relations by introducing the principles of sovereign statehood and the legal equality of states. It emphasized the concept of territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states, setting the stage for modern international law and diplomacy. The significance of 1648 lies in its role in ending widespread religious conflicts and promoting political autonomy for states, thus leading to a new order based on the notion of national sovereignty. The subsequent recognition of statehood as a critical framework for international relations can be traced back to the principles established during this period.

2. What is the main premise of the theory that helps to illustrate how different phenomena are interrelated?

- A. Logic
- B. Hypothesis
- C. Theory**
- D. Proposition

The primary premise of a theory in the context of international relations and other fields is that it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and explaining how various phenomena are interconnected. A theory synthesizes observations, data, and concepts to offer insights into patterns and relationships between different variables. For instance, in international relations, a theory might elucidate the connections between state behavior and the influence of economic conditions, or how domestic politics affect foreign policy. This interconnectedness allows researchers and practitioners to predict outcomes based on established relationships within the theory. In contrast, other terms like logic, hypothesis, and proposition serve different functions. Logic provides the reasoning framework that underpins arguments; a hypothesis is a specific, testable prediction derived from a theory; and a proposition is a statement that can be supported or refuted but lacks the comprehensive explanatory power that a theory possesses. Thus, a theory stands out as the concept that effectively integrates and demonstrates the interrelationships among various phenomena.

3. What percentage of U.S. GDP is typically associated with military expenditures?

- A. 1-2%
- B. 3-5%**
- C. 6-8%
- D. 9-10%

The typical percentage of U.S. GDP associated with military expenditures is around 3-5%. This range is consistent with historical data, indicating that defense spending has generally hovered within these levels over the past few decades. Factors influencing this percentage include the overall size of the economy, the global security environment, and legislative budget decisions regarding defense. It is also important to note that military expenditures encompass various costs, including personnel, operations, infrastructure, and procurement of equipment. While there are periods of increased spending due to specific conflicts or military engagements, as well as times of drawdown, the 3-5% range generally reflects a stable commitment to defense in relation to the total economic output of the United States. This insight helps to contextualize U.S. defense policy within broader economic and strategic frameworks.

4. Which theory involves constructing models to evaluate international actions through observation?

- A. Normative theory
- B. Empirical theory**
- C. Behavioral theory
- D. Constructivist theory

The correct answer is empirical theory, which focuses on the observation and analysis of actual events and data to understand international relations. Empirical theory relies on evidence gathered from real-world occurrences and aims to construct models that can explain or predict behaviors in the international system. By utilizing methods such as statistical analysis, case studies, and systematic observation, scholars and practitioners can evaluate international actions and derive insights that reflect the complexities of global interactions. This approach stands in contrast to normative theory, which is more concerned with how things ought to be based on a set of ethical or moral standards rather than based on observation. Similarly, behavioral theory emphasizes the study of behavior rather than direct observation of actions and empirical data, while constructivist theory focuses on the social constructions of international relations and how ideas shape global politics, rather than purely observational data. Therefore, the emphasis on observation and model construction makes empirical theory the most accurate choice in this context.

5. What term describes the rightness or wrongness of actions and the justice of their outcomes?

- A. Empirical theory**
- B. Scientific theory**
- C. Normative theory**
- D. Descriptive theory**

The term that describes the rightness or wrongness of actions and the justice of their outcomes is normative theory. Normative theory is foundational in disciplines like ethics and political philosophy, focusing on what ought to be rather than what is. It evaluates moral principles, values, and the justice of various actions and policies. In the context of international relations, normative theory helps in assessing the ethical implications of state behavior, international agreements, and humanitarian interventions, guiding policymakers and scholars in advocating for just practices in the global arena. Through normative analysis, one can question the legitimacy of actions taken by states and explore the ethical frameworks that underpin international law and relations. While empirical theory concerns itself with observation and evidence, scientific theory involves the formulation of hypotheses based on empirical data, and descriptive theory simply aims to explain phenomena without prescribing judgments, none of these capture the essence of evaluating morality and justice as clearly as normative theory does.

6. Which of the following aspects is likely to be beneficial when considering military alliances?

- A. Regime type**
- B. Geographic location**
- C. Economy**
- D. Military size**

The consideration of regime type in the context of military alliances is significant due to the impact that governance structures have on the stability and reliability of alliances. Regime type influences how countries approach foreign policy, including issues of diplomacy and military cooperation. Democratic countries may share common values and be more inclined to trust each other, making them more reliable allies. They are often more transparent in their decision-making processes, which fosters trust among partners. Moreover, regime type can dictate a nation's willingness to engage in collective defense measures and inter-state cooperation. Autocratic regimes, on the other hand, might prioritize short-term strategic interests over long-term commitments, potentially leading to instability within an alliance. Therefore, regime type shapes the dynamics of trust, shared values, and the likelihood of collaboration among countries, making it a critical factor to consider when forming military alliances. While geographic location, economy, and military size are also important in forming alliances, they don't necessarily guarantee the same level of cooperative behavior or shared strategic interests that regime type can create. Geographic location might affect defense logistics and perceptions of threat, an economy can support military expenditures, and military size might provide direct military capabilities. However, these factors do not inherently ensure compatibility in decision-making or strategic priorities, which are often guided by

7. What is required for an entity to be considered a state?

- A. International recognition
- B. Patriotism among citizens
- C. Internal and external autonomy**
- D. Economic stability

For an entity to be considered a state in international relations, it must meet certain fundamental criteria. One of the most critical elements is internal and external autonomy. This means that the entity has a defined territory and population, and it possesses a government that exercises full control over its domestic affairs (internal autonomy). Additionally, it must engage in foreign relations independently, meaning it can enter agreements and interact with other states without external interference (external autonomy). Autonomy is fundamental to the concept of statehood as it enables an entity to function independently as a political unit. While factors like international recognition can enhance a state's legitimacy and enable it to participate fully in global affairs, recognition itself is not a prerequisite for statehood. Similarly, patriotism and economic stability, while important for a state's cohesion and development, do not define its status as a state. The requirement for a defined government, territory, and population, along with the capability to interact with other entities, highlights why internal and external autonomy is the correct answer for defining a state.

8. What does globalization emphasize in inter-state relations?

- A. Isolation of national economies
- B. A decrease in cultural exchange
- C. Interconnectedness and interdependence among nations**
- D. National sovereignty above all

Globalization emphasizes interconnectedness and interdependence among nations, which is a central tenet of its impact on inter-state relations. This concept reflects the ways in which countries are increasingly linked through trade, investment, technology, and communication. As economies become more integrated, the actions and policies of one nation can significantly influence others, creating a web of mutual dependency. This interconnectedness manifests in various forms, such as international trade agreements, transnational corporations operating across borders, and global issues like climate change that require collaborative responses. The emphasis on interdependence highlights how nations must work together to address shared challenges, leading to a more cooperative international environment. In contrast, the other options suggest a retreat from interaction, which runs counter to the very nature of globalization. National economies isolating themselves or a decrease in cultural exchange would diminish the benefits gained from globalization, such as economic growth and the sharing of ideas and innovations. Additionally, prioritizing national sovereignty above all implies a focus on isolationist policies, which would undermine the collaborative spirit that globalization fosters. Thus, the emphasis on interconnectedness and interdependence accurately captures the essence of globalization in shaping contemporary inter-state relations.

9. What was the significance of the Westphalian system in international relations?

- A. It ended World War I
- B. It established principles of territoriality and sovereignty**
- C. It created the United Nations
- D. It introduced human rights law

The Westphalian system is significant in international relations because it established the foundational principles of territoriality and sovereignty. This framework emerged from the Peace of Westphalia treaties in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe. The treaties recognized the rights of states to govern their territories free from external interference, laying the groundwork for modern statehood and international law. This emphasis on sovereignty means that states have the authority to manage their own affairs without external control, which has been a critical factor in how countries interact with one another in the international system. It set a precedent that territorial boundaries and centralized control within those borders are paramount in international relations today. While other options mention significant developments in international relations, such as the end of World War I and the creation of the United Nations or the introduction of human rights law, these events and concepts were influenced by or evolved after the principles established by the Westphalian system. However, the system's direct contribution to sovereignty and territoriality remains foundational to the structure of international politics as we know it.

10. Which of the following is a characteristic of non-governmental organizations (NGOs)?

- A. They are funded by government revenues
- B. They advocate for social change and serve various causes**
- C. They are primarily military in nature
- D. They have no influence in international matters

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are characterized by their focus on advocacy and social change, addressing a wide range of causes such as human rights, environmental issues, education, and health. They operate independently of government funding, often relying on donations, grants, and volunteer efforts, which allows them to promote their missions freely and influence policy and public opinion. This advocacy role positions NGOs as crucial players in civil society, working to hold governments and organizations accountable and driving initiatives for positive social transformation. In contrast, elements like government funding fundamentally differentiate NGOs from state-run entities, military characteristics are not fitting with the purpose and mission of NGOs, and asserting that they lack influence in international matters disregards the significant role many NGOs play in global governance, humanitarian efforts, and advocacy on international issues. Thus, the option highlighting the advocacy for social change accurately captures the essence of what defines NGOs.

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://iainternationalrelations.examzify.com>

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

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