

MPTC Criminal Investigations Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. Where is the VIN number typically located on a vehicle?**
 - A. Passenger side door**
 - B. Driver's side windshield dash**
 - C. Under the rear bumper**
 - D. In the glove compartment**
- 2. How should dry clothing evidence be packaged for storage?**
 - A. In a non-porous plastic container**
 - B. In a cardboard box or paper bag**
 - C. In an airtight container**
 - D. In a sealed plastic bag**
- 3. What is an essential part of trial preparation in solved crime cases?**
 - A. Conduct interviews with jury members**
 - B. Keep the victim/witness informed of trial dates**
 - C. Focus solely on the prosecutor's strategy**
 - D. Draft a press release about the case**
- 4. What is an overall photograph used for at a crime scene?**
 - A. To capture a wide view of the scene**
 - B. To document individual pieces of evidence**
 - C. To photograph the victims only**
 - D. To highlight forensic personnel**
- 5. What actions can police take against a juvenile between the ages of 12-18?**
 - A. Summons or charge**
 - B. Arrest, summons or charge**
 - C. Only issue a warning**
 - D. Send to juvenile court only**

- 6. What evidence is important in cases involving domestic violence?**
- A. Testimonies from the abuser's friends**
 - B. Any active or expired protective orders**
 - C. Medical opinions about the couple's behavior**
 - D. Community feedback on the relationship**
- 7. Cannabis is derived primarily from which of the following?**
- A. Animal products**
 - B. A variety of plant species**
 - C. Mineral compounds**
 - D. Chemically synthesized materials**
- 8. Which of the following is a sign of CNS stimulants abuse or overdose?**
- A. Increased appetite**
 - B. Significant weight gain**
 - C. Hallucinations and seizures**
 - D. Enhanced sleeping patterns**
- 9. Which of the following defines a substantive dating relationship in domestic violence cases?**
- A. Having a child in common**
 - B. Length of the relationship**
 - C. Type of relationship**
 - D. All of the above**
- 10. What happens to latent fingerprint evidence when exposed to certain chemicals or light technologies?**
- A. It becomes visible**
 - B. It is destroyed**
 - C. It fades away**
 - D. It leaves a trace on the suspect**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

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1. Where is the VIN number typically located on a vehicle?

- A. Passenger side door
- B. Driver's side windshield dash**
- C. Under the rear bumper
- D. In the glove compartment

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is a unique code that serves as a means of identifying individual motor vehicles. The most common location for a VIN is on the driver's side windshield dash. This area is easily visible from outside the vehicle, allowing law enforcement, inspectors, and potential buyers to check the VIN quickly and conveniently. In addition to this location, VINs can also be found in several other places within a vehicle, but the driver's side windshield dash is the primary reference point used for identification. The other locations mentioned, such as the passenger side door and glove compartment, are not the most commonly cited points for VIN visibility, and while some vehicles may have a VIN in places like these, the windshield dash location is standardized and most frequently used for verification purposes. The area under the rear bumper is not an accessible or standard location for VIN placement, making it less practical for purposes of quick identification.

2. How should dry clothing evidence be packaged for storage?

- A. In a non-porous plastic container
- B. In a cardboard box or paper bag**
- C. In an airtight container
- D. In a sealed plastic bag

When packaging dry clothing evidence for storage, the use of a cardboard box or paper bag is appropriate because these materials allow for proper air circulation, which helps to prevent mold and mildew growth. Clothing often retains moisture or may have traces of biological material, so it is essential to allow any residual moisture to evaporate. Non-porous materials, such as plastic containers, can trap moisture and create a favorable environment for microbial growth, which compromises the integrity of the evidence. Cardboard boxes and paper bags are breathable options that ensure the clothing can dry out effectively and remain in a stable condition for analysis. This method demonstrates a precautionary approach to the preservation of evidence that would otherwise deteriorate in an airtight or sealed environment.

3. What is an essential part of trial preparation in solved crime cases?

- A. Conduct interviews with jury members**
- B. Keep the victim/witness informed of trial dates**
- C. Focus solely on the prosecutor's strategy**
- D. Draft a press release about the case**

The essential part of trial preparation in solved crime cases involves keeping the victim and witnesses informed of trial dates. This communication is crucial for several reasons. First, it ensures that all parties are aware of the proceedings and can prepare adequately to participate in the trial process. Victims and witnesses play key roles in the trial, providing testimonies that can influence the outcome of the case. Ensuring that they are informed helps reduce their anxiety and allows them to prepare for their roles appropriately. Moreover, keeping victims and witnesses updated on trial dates promotes their engagement and cooperation, which are vital for a smooth trial process. If they are not informed, there is a risk of missed appearances, which could potentially delay the trial or impact the effectiveness of the evidence presented. The other options do not align directly with the essential components of trial preparation. Conducting interviews with jury members, for instance, is not permissible and could compromise the integrity of the trial. Focusing solely on the prosecutor's strategy overlooks the collaborative nature of trial preparation, which involves understanding various perspectives and preparing witnesses effectively. Drafting a press release, while useful for public relations, does not contribute to the practical aspects of preparing for the trial itself and might not be appropriate in all cases.

4. What is an overall photograph used for at a crime scene?

- A. To capture a wide view of the scene**
- B. To document individual pieces of evidence**
- C. To photograph the victims only**
- D. To highlight forensic personnel**

An overall photograph is utilized at a crime scene primarily to capture a wide view of the scene, showcasing the context and layout in which the crime occurred. This wide shot is crucial because it allows investigators to understand the relationship between various elements at the scene, such as the position of evidence, the location of any victims, and the surroundings that might have contributed to the situation. Having a comprehensive visual representation helps in the documentation process, setting the stage for subsequent more focused investigation steps. It serves as a reference point for understanding how specific pieces of evidence relate to one another within the broader scene. In contrast, the other choices focus on more specific aspects of photography, such as individual evidence, victims, or personnel, which do not encompass the overall perspective that is vital for an initial understanding of the crime scene. Overall photographs are essential for presenting the scene to others, including juries or other members of the investigative team, providing context that detailed shots cannot convey alone.

5. What actions can police take against a juvenile between the ages of 12-18?

- A. Summons or charge**
- B. Arrest, summons or charge**
- C. Only issue a warning**
- D. Send to juvenile court only**

The selection of the answer indicating that police can take actions such as arrest, summons, or charge against a juvenile between the ages of 12-18 is accurate because it reflects the legal framework governing juvenile justice. In many jurisdictions, law enforcement has the authority to address offenses committed by juveniles in several ways. Arresting a juvenile may occur when a serious offense has been committed or when a juvenile poses a danger to themselves or others. Alternatively, police might choose to issue a summons for less severe offenses, allowing the juvenile and their guardians to appear in court on a scheduled date without the need for custody. Additionally, charging a juvenile with an offense can lead to further legal proceedings, putting them into the juvenile justice system to determine an appropriate response, which may include counseling, community service, or other rehabilitative measures. The other options are limited in nature, as they do not encompass the full range of actions that law enforcement can take in these situations. For example, merely issuing a warning limits law enforcement's ability to address more serious behavior, while sending a juvenile to court exclusively without the option of arrest or summons overlooks the flexibility police have in handling juvenile cases. Thus, the comprehensive nature of the correct answer reflects the multifaceted approach law enforcement

6. What evidence is important in cases involving domestic violence?

- A. Testimonies from the abuser's friends**
- B. Any active or expired protective orders**
- C. Medical opinions about the couple's behavior**
- D. Community feedback on the relationship**

In cases involving domestic violence, having evidence of any active or expired protective orders is particularly significant. Protective orders are legal documents that are issued by a court to restrict an individual's contact with another person, typically due to threats or acts of violence. The existence of such orders can demonstrate a recognized pattern of abusive behavior and show that the victim has sought help from the legal system. This can be pivotal in substantiating claims of ongoing danger, thus aiding law enforcement and prosecutors in understanding the severity and context of the situation. Protective orders are an official acknowledgment of the risk posed by the abuser, and they can also serve as a mechanism for accountability. Their presence can affect the legal responses to the abuser's behavior, as violations of these orders can lead to serious legal consequences. In contrast, testimonies from the abuser's friends, medical opinions about the couple's behavior, and community feedback may not hold the same weight in a legal context, as they often lack the formal recognition of systemic abuse provided by protective orders.

7. Cannabis is derived primarily from which of the following?

- A. Animal products**
- B. A variety of plant species**
- C. Mineral compounds**
- D. Chemically synthesized materials**

Cannabis is primarily derived from a variety of plant species, particularly from the *Cannabis sativa*, *Cannabis indica*, and *Cannabis ruderalis* plants. These plants contain cannabinoids, the active compounds that produce psychoactive effects, as well as a range of other substances like terpenes and flavonoids that contribute to the plant's characteristics. This botanical origin distinguishes it from the other options, as cannabis is not derived from animal products, mineral compounds, or synthetically produced materials. Understanding the source of cannabis is essential for recognizing its biological and chemical makeup, which has significant implications in both medicinal and recreational contexts.

8. Which of the following is a sign of CNS stimulants abuse or overdose?

- A. Increased appetite**
- B. Significant weight gain**
- C. Hallucinations and seizures**
- D. Enhanced sleeping patterns**

Hallucinations and seizures are significant indicators of central nervous system (CNS) stimulant abuse or overdose. CNS stimulants, such as cocaine or amphetamines, can cause excessive stimulation of the brain, leading to severe psychological and physiological effects. These effects may manifest as hallucinations, where an individual perceives things that are not actually present, and seizures, which are a result of the brain's heightened activity and can lead to convulsions. In the context of overdose, the risk of these severe symptoms increases due to the overwhelming effects of the drugs on the neural pathways. Thus, experiencing hallucinations and having seizures are critical signs that indicate the potential for serious harm and the necessity for immediate medical attention. Other options, such as increased appetite, significant weight gain, and enhanced sleeping patterns, are typically not associated with CNS stimulant abuse; in fact, these substances often lead to reduced appetite and insomnia in users.

9. Which of the following defines a substantive dating relationship in domestic violence cases?

- A. Having a child in common**
- B. Length of the relationship**
- C. Type of relationship**
- D. All of the above**

A substantive dating relationship in domestic violence cases typically encompasses various aspects that contribute to defining the nature and context of the relationship. This comprehensive definition includes having a child in common, which demonstrates a significant connection and ongoing involvement between the individuals. Additionally, the length of the relationship plays a critical role, as a longer duration often signifies a deeper emotional connection and can influence the dynamics of power and control often present in domestic violence situations. Moreover, the type of relationship is also a factor, as the classification of the relationship—whether it is romantic, casual, or serious—can impact the legal considerations and the perception of the relationship by law enforcement and courts. Each of these elements is integral to understanding the full scope of a substantive dating relationship in the context of domestic violence, making the collective definition encompassing all three aspects crucial for accurate identification and response by authorities.

10. What happens to latent fingerprint evidence when exposed to certain chemicals or light technologies?

- A. It becomes visible**
- B. It is destroyed**
- C. It fades away**
- D. It leaves a trace on the suspect**

When latent fingerprint evidence is exposed to certain chemicals or light technologies, it becomes visible. This visibility allows investigators to examine and collect the prints more effectively. Latent fingerprints are typically not readily visible to the naked eye, as they are formed by the natural oils and sweat on a person's fingers. Certain processes, such as fuming with cyanoacrylate (super glue), dusting with powders, or using ultraviolet light, interact with the components in the fingerprint left on surfaces, making them stand out against their backgrounds. This process is crucial in crime scene investigations, as it enables law enforcement to capture prints for comparison and identification purposes. The techniques used can vary depending on the surface on which the prints are found and the condition of the surface, but the end result is that the prints become observable, facilitating further analysis and aiding in the investigation.