

# NCE Purple Book 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

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- 1. What is Erikson's psychosocial stage for age 65 and older?**
  - A. Generativity vs. Stagnation**
  - B. Ego Integrity vs. Despair**
  - C. Identity vs. Role Confusion**
  - D. Initiative vs. Guilt**
  
- 2. Which two cultural dimensions are identified as the counselor's primary concerns?**
  - A. Political culture and Economic culture**
  - B. National culture and Ecological culture**
  - C. Religious culture and Linguistic culture**
  - D. Global culture and Subculture**
  
- 3. The acronym NLP stands for which of the following?**
  - A. Neurological Processing Language**
  - B. Neuro-Linguistic Psychology**
  - C. Neurolinguistic Programming**
  - D. Neuro Linguistic Programming**
  
- 4. Which theorist argued that cognitive development unfolds primarily through educational intervention and social guidance rather than natural progression?**
  - A. Lawrence Kohlberg**
  - B. Lev Vygotsky**
  - C. John B. Watson**
  - D. Erik Erikson**
  
- 5. A counselor who repeats what a client has stated in the counselor's own words is using what technique?**
  - A. Paraphrasing**
  - B. Reflecting**
  - C. Interpreting**
  - D. Summarizing**

- 6. Freud's Oedipus complex occurs during which psychosexual stage?**
- A. Oral stage**
  - B. Anal stage**
  - C. Latency stage**
  - D. Phallic stage**
- 7. In Harlow's famous monkey experiments, frightened infant monkeys raised with cloth and wire surrogate mothers predominantly did what when frightened?**
- A. Ignored both surrogates and hid**
  - B. Ran over and clung to the cloth and wire surrogate mothers**
  - C. Sought social contact only with other monkeys**
  - D. Reached for food from a separate source**
- 8. Gestalt therapists sometimes utilize the exaggeration experiment which most closely resembles paradox as practiced by which figures?**
- A. Freud, Jung, Adler**
  - B. Frankl, Haley, or Erickson**
  - C. Rogers, Maslow, Skinner**
  - D. Bandura, Piaget, Vygotsky**
- 9. The two basic classes of intermittent reinforcement schedules are based on the number of responses and the time elapsed. Which pair correctly names these classes?**
- A. Fixed ratio and variable interval**
  - B. Interval and ratio**
  - C. Continuous reinforcement**
  - D. Ratio and Interval**
- 10. Which statement about Piagetian conservation is true?**
- A. It develops before counting**
  - B. It develops during the concrete operational stage**
  - C. It has no relation to weight**
  - D. It appears in the sensorimotor stage**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What is Erikson's psychosocial stage for age 65 and older?**

- A. Generativity vs. Stagnation**
- B. Ego Integrity vs. Despair**
- C. Identity vs. Role Confusion**
- D. Initiative vs. Guilt**

In late adulthood, Erikson's final psychosocial stage centers on how you view your life as a whole. You either reach ego integrity, accepting your life with a sense of completeness and meaning, or fall into despair, feeling regret and a sense of missed opportunities. This stage is about coming to terms with aging, mortality, and the legacy you leave. If you achieve integrity, you feel satisfied with the choices you made, you trust your memories, and you maintain a sense of wholeness. If you struggle, you might experience despair, with bitterness, a fear of death, and a sense that life was not well spent. The other options reflect stages from earlier periods of life: generativity versus stagnation occurs in middle adulthood and centers on contributing to society and guiding the next generation; identity versus role confusion is the adolescent stage, about developing a stable sense of self; initiative versus guilt is early childhood, about asserting independence and planning activities.

**2. Which two cultural dimensions are identified as the counselor's primary concerns?**

- A. Political culture and Economic culture**
- B. National culture and Ecological culture**
- C. Religious culture and Linguistic culture**
- D. Global culture and Subculture**

Understanding a client in counseling requires looking at large-scale cultural influences: national culture and ecological culture. National culture covers the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that come from the country or cultural group a client identifies with, including language, family roles, communication styles, and attitudes toward authority and help-seeking. Ecological culture refers to how people live within their environmental context—the social and physical surroundings, community resources, economic conditions, and policies that shape daily life and stressors. Together, these dimensions shape how clients interpret problems, express distress, and access support, which in turn guides how a counselor conducts assessment and designs interventions. For example, national norms might influence whether family members are involved in decisions, while ecological factors determine what resources are realistically available or how feasible certain treatment options are in a given community. Focusing on these two dimensions helps the counselor connect with clients in a culturally responsive way and tailor strategies to both the broad cultural backdrop and the environmental realities of the client's life.

**3. The acronym NLP stands for which of the following?**

- A. Neurological Processing Language
- B. Neuro-Linguistic Psychology
- C. Neurolinguistic Programming**
- D. Neuro Linguistic Programming

NLP refers to how language patterns interact with brain processes to shape thinking and behavior. The term captures three ideas: neuro- (brain), linguistic (language), and programming (modeling and applying patterns). The spelling Neurolinguistic Programming is the standard form shown here, with Neuro-Linguistic Programming being a very common variant; both express the same concept. The other options don't match the established term: they change programming to psychology, or use a different root like neurological, which isn't the recognized phrase in this field.

**4. Which theorist argued that cognitive development unfolds primarily through educational intervention and social guidance rather than natural progression?**

- A. Lawrence Kohlberg
- B. Lev Vygotsky**
- C. John B. Watson
- D. Erik Erikson

Cognitive growth is shaped by social interaction and guided learning, not just what a learner can figure out alone. Lev Vygotsky argued that thinking develops through cultural tools and language shared within a community, with instruction playing a central role. He introduced the Zone of Proximal Development, the range of tasks a learner can tackle with help but cannot yet do independently. With guidance from a more knowledgeable other, students acquire strategies and ways of thinking, which are gradually internalized as independent skills. This perspective emphasizes that education and social guidance can steer and accelerate cognitive development more than relying on natural maturation alone. Other thinkers emphasize different aspects: one is known for moral reasoning and stages, another for learning through conditioned responses, and another for psychosocial development across the lifespan. But the focus on cognitive change driven by social interaction and instructional support is the hallmark of Vygotsky's approach.

**5. A counselor who repeats what a client has stated in the counselor's own words is using what technique?**

- A. Paraphrasing**
- B. Reflecting**
- C. Interpreting**
- D. Summarizing**

Paraphrasing is restating what the client has expressed in the counselor's own words to check accuracy and show understanding. It helps verify you've heard the message correctly and clarifies meaning without adding new interpretation. For example, if the client says, "I'm overwhelmed at work and I'm afraid I'll mess up," you might reply, "You're feeling overwhelmed by your workload and anxious about making mistakes." That restatement keeps the same idea but in new wording, which helps the client hear it again and correct any misreadings. This differs from reflecting, which includes the emotional tone and feelings behind the words; paraphrasing focuses on the content itself. It also differs from summarizing, which would condense longer statements, and from interpreting, which adds meaning not explicitly stated by the client.

**6. Freud's Oedipus complex occurs during which psychosexual stage?**

- A. Oral stage**
- B. Anal stage**
- C. Latency stage**
- D. Phallic stage**

Freud's theory organizes development into stages where the focus of pleasure shifts to different parts of the body. The Oedipus complex shows up when the child's sexual energy centers on the genitals and intense feelings toward the opposite-sex parent arise, paired with rivalry toward the same-sex parent. This particular pattern happens during the phallic stage, roughly ages three to six. In boys, the mood includes desires for the mother and competitive tension with the father, along with anxiety about losing the father's affection. The way this tension is resolved is by identifying with the father, which helps internalize moral standards and build the superego. Earlier stages involve different issues: the oral stage centers on feeding and dependence, the anal stage on control and discipline, and the latency period is a time of relative dormancy before puberty. So the specific conflicts and resolutions that define the Oedipus complex are tied to the phallic stage.

**7. In Harlow's famous monkey experiments, frightened infant monkeys raised with cloth and wire surrogate mothers predominantly did what when frightened?**

- A. Ignored both surrogates and hid**
- B. Ran over and clung to the cloth and wire surrogate mothers**
- C. Sought social contact only with other monkeys**
- D. Reached for food from a separate source**

When monkeys are frightened, the need for contact comfort drives attachment. In Harlow's setup, the soft cloth surrogate provides a soothing, comforting presence, whereas the wire surrogate offers nourishment but not the comforting touch. So frightened infants rapidly seek out the cloth surrogate and cling to it for security, using it as a safe base to feel calm. This demonstrates that emotional security and tactile comfort are key factors in forming attachments, not just the availability of food. The wire surrogate's nutritional benefit doesn't override the soothing reassurance the cloth surrogate provides.

**8. Gestalt therapists sometimes utilize the exaggeration experiment which most closely resembles paradox as practiced by which figures?**

- A. Freud, Jung, Adler**
- B. Frankl, Haley, or Erickson**
- C. Rogers, Maslow, Skinner**
- D. Bandura, Piaget, Vygotsky**

The exaggeration experiment in Gestalt therapy uses deliberate overstatement of a behavior or feeling to push awareness and reveal how it functions in the client's life. This approach mirrors paradoxical interventions, where a therapist intentionally uses a paradox to provoke change by shifting the client's perspective or expectations. Viktor Frankl, Milton Erickson, and Jay Haley are the figures most associated with this kind of paradoxical work. Frankl's paradoxical intention, Erickson's strategic paradoxical techniques, and Haley's use of paradox in family therapy all aim to disrupt resistance by getting the client to engage with the symptom in a way that creates distance or new meaning, often leading to a natural reduction in the symptom. Other major theorists listed aren't known for this paradoxical approach in the same way. Freud, Jung, and Adler focus on psychodynamic insight and conflicts; Rogers, Maslow, and Skinner emphasize humanistic growth or behaviorism; Bandura, Piaget, and Vygotsky center on learning, development, and cognition.

**9. The two basic classes of intermittent reinforcement schedules are based on the number of responses and the time elapsed. Which pair correctly names these classes?**

**A. Fixed ratio and variable interval**

**B. Interval and ratio**

**C. Continuous reinforcement**

**D. Ratio and Interval**

Intermittent reinforcement schedules are defined by what controls reinforcement: the number of responses or the passage of time. When reinforcement depends on a certain number of responses, it's a ratio schedule. When it depends on time elapsed, it's an interval schedule. The option that lists both broad categories directly—ratio and interval—matches this fundamental distinction. The other choices mix specific subtypes with these classes, point to continuous reinforcement (not intermittent), or just swap the order of the two terms. So, ratio and interval is the correct pairing.

**10. Which statement about Piagetian conservation is true?**

**A. It develops before counting**

**B. It develops during the concrete operational stage**

**C. It has no relation to weight**

**D. It appears in the sensorimotor stage**

Piagetian conservation is the understanding that a quantity remains the same even when its appearance changes—like the amount of liquid staying the same when poured into a differently shaped container. This awareness emerges when children enter the concrete operational stage, roughly ages 7 to 11, because they begin to use reversible thinking and decenter their view. They can imagine the steps backward and consider more than one dimension at once, so they can see that the amount of liquid, or the number of items, or the weight, remains invariant despite changes in shape, height, or arrangement. Before this stage, in the preoperational period, children tend to focus on a single perceptual feature (centration) and can't reverse or systematically manipulate mental representations, so they typically give the incorrect answer on conservation tasks. In the sensorimotor stage, infants are just learning through actions and do not yet grasp the invariance concepts. By the time reasoning becomes more abstract in the formal operational stage, conservation is already understood for concrete situations, though can extend to more hypothetical reasoning. So, the statement that conservation develops during the concrete operational stage is the most accurate reflection of how this understanding typically emerges in Piaget's sequence.

## 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://ncepurplebook.examzify.com>**

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

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