

North Carolina Landscape Contractors Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What tool is essential for accurately measuring soil moisture?**
 - A. A soil moisture meter**
 - B. A garden spade**
 - C. A pH meter**
 - D. A soil tester**
- 2. What is a bud consisting of a short, thick stem that emits roots from below?**
 - A. Node**
 - B. Shoot**
 - C. Bulb**
 - D. Tuber**
- 3. What does the term 'crown' refer to in relation to a tree?**
 - A. The area of groundwater surrounding roots**
 - B. The area of the main stem that is just underground**
 - C. The total area of the tree's branches, or canopy**
 - D. The volume of soil that supports the tree**
- 4. What do we call plants that are derived from a single individual through asexual reproduction?**
 - A. Clone**
 - B. Clump**
 - C. Cluster**
 - D. Cambium**
- 5. What is the purpose of soil testing?**
 - A. To determine the color of the soil**
 - B. To analyze the nutrient content and pH of the soil**
 - C. To check for drainage issues only**
 - D. To assess local fauna**

- 6. Name an advantage of using organic fertilizers over synthetic fertilizers.**
- A. They are less expensive to produce**
 - B. They improve soil health and reduce chemical runoff**
 - C. They work faster than synthetic options**
 - D. They are more readily available**
- 7. What climatic conditions are typically conducive to the growth of fungi associated with plant disease?**
- A. Cold days and warm nights**
 - B. Warm days and cool nights**
 - C. Hot days and humid nights**
 - D. Variable temperatures throughout the day**
- 8. Which term refers to a group of plants whose crowns or roots can easily be divided or moved?**
- A. Codominant**
 - B. Clone**
 - C. Caliper**
 - D. Clump**
- 9. What aspect of landscaping has the greatest impact on community aesthetic?**
- A. Overall landscape design and maintenance**
 - B. Choice of soil type**
 - C. Types of irrigation systems used**
 - D. Location of the property**
- 10. Which process involves applying chemicals or grasses to eliminate pests such as insects and fungi?**
- A. Fumigation**
 - B. Germination**
 - C. Girdling**
 - D. Ground cover**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

1. What tool is essential for accurately measuring soil moisture?

A. A soil moisture meter

B. A garden spade

C. A pH meter

D. A soil tester

A soil moisture meter is an essential tool for accurately measuring soil moisture levels. This device functions by providing precise readings of the water content in the soil, which is critical for making informed decisions regarding irrigation and plant health. The moisture meter typically uses electrical resistance or capacitance to determine the moisture level, allowing for immediate feedback that can guide watering schedules and practices. In contrast, while other tools like a garden spade, pH meter, or general soil tester have their roles in gardening and landscaping, they serve different purposes. A garden spade is primarily used for digging and moving soil, not measuring moisture content. A pH meter is utilized to assess the acidity or alkalinity of the soil, which is important for understanding nutrient availability but does not provide information about moisture levels. Similarly, a soil tester can provide various analyses, including texture and nutrient content, but may not specifically measure moisture directly. Thus, for the specific need of measuring soil moisture accurately, the soil moisture meter is the tool of choice.

2. What is a bud consisting of a short, thick stem that emits roots from below?

A. Node

B. Shoot

C. Bulb

D. Tuber

A bud consisting of a short, thick stem that emits roots from below is classified as a bulb. Bulbs are specialized underground storage organs that typically contain a short stem surrounded by fleshy scales (storage leaves) and are adapted for survival during unfavorable conditions. They serve as a means for the plant to store energy and nutrients, allowing it to endure periods of dormancy, such as winter. When the growing conditions become favorable, the bulb can produce shoots above ground while the roots develop below, helping the plant to thrive once again. In contrast, nodes refer to the points on a stem where leaves or branches originate and do not serve the same underground storage purpose. Shoots are the above-ground parts of a plant that develop from buds, which include leaves and stems but do not describe the specific underground growth structure in question. Tubers, while also storage organs like bulbs, arise from the ends of underground stems and have a different structure and function than bulbs, making them distinct as well.

3. What does the term 'crown' refer to in relation to a tree?

- A. The area of groundwater surrounding roots**
- B. The area of the main stem that is just underground**
- C. The total area of the tree's branches, or canopy**
- D. The volume of soil that supports the tree**

The term 'crown' in relation to a tree specifically refers to the total area of the tree's branches, or canopy. This is a crucial aspect of tree morphology as the crown is responsible for photosynthesis, providing the tree with the energy it needs to grow and thrive. The crown is also where leaves are located, which play a vital role in the tree's health by converting sunlight into chemical energy through photosynthesis. Furthermore, the crown influences the tree's ability to capture water and nutrients from rain and contributes to the habitat for various organisms, including birds and insects. Understanding the structure and function of the crown helps landscape contractors make informed decisions regarding tree care, including pruning, shaping, and maintenance to ensure optimal growth and health of the tree. The other choices pertain to different aspects of tree anatomy or soil interactions but do not define what the crown actually is within the context of a tree's structure and function.

4. What do we call plants that are derived from a single individual through asexual reproduction?

- A. Clone**
- B. Clump**
- C. Cluster**
- D. Cambium**

Plants that are derived from a single individual through asexual reproduction are referred to as clones. A clone is a genetically identical copy of another plant, which arises from processes such as cuttings, layering, or tissue culture. This method allows for the propagation of plants that maintain the desirable characteristics of the parent plant, such as specific growth habits, flower color, or disease resistance. The term "clump" usually refers to a grouping of plants that have grown together but does not imply that they are genetically identical. "Cluster" typically describes a close grouping or gathering of objects or organisms, which may be close in proximity but not necessarily derived from the same genetic source. "Cambium," on the other hand, is a layer of actively dividing cells in trees and shrubs responsible for secondary growth, which is unrelated to the concept of plant propagation or genetic identity. Thus, the understanding of cloning is crucial in the context of horticultural practices and landscape design, facilitating the strategic reproduction of plants.

5. What is the purpose of soil testing?

- A. To determine the color of the soil
- B. To analyze the nutrient content and pH of the soil**
- C. To check for drainage issues only
- D. To assess local fauna

The purpose of soil testing is primarily to analyze the nutrient content and pH of the soil. This information is crucial for understanding the soil's capabilities and limitations regarding plant growth. By determining the levels of essential nutrients, such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, along with the soil's pH, landscape contractors and gardeners can make informed decisions about fertilization and soil amendments. This ensures that plants receive the necessary nutrients for healthy growth while also maintaining appropriate acidity or alkalinity levels for optimal performance. Soil testing doesn't focus on other aspects like the color of the soil or solely checking for drainage issues. While color might provide some insights into soil types, it doesn't directly inform nutrient content or pH levels. Drainage issues are also important, but they require different assessments beyond basic soil testing. Additionally, assessing local fauna might be relevant for ecological studies or biodiversity assessments, but it does not pertain to the immediate needs for plant nutrition and soil health. Thus, analyzing nutrient content and pH is critical for effective landscape management and successful gardening practices.

6. Name an advantage of using organic fertilizers over synthetic fertilizers.

- A. They are less expensive to produce
- B. They improve soil health and reduce chemical runoff**
- C. They work faster than synthetic options
- D. They are more readily available

Using organic fertilizers offers the distinct advantage of improving soil health and reducing chemical runoff. Organic fertilizers are derived from natural sources, such as plant or animal matter, and they enhance soil structure and microbial activity over time. This improvement in soil health promotes better nutrient cycling and water retention, which can lead to more sustainable plant growth. Additionally, organic fertilizers are less likely to contribute to runoff issues that can lead to water pollution. Synthetic fertilizers, on the other hand, often contain high levels of salts and other chemicals that can leach into waterways, causing harm to aquatic ecosystems. Therefore, choosing organic options not only supports the plants but also benefits the broader environmental health, aligning with sustainable agricultural practices.

7. What climatic conditions are typically conducive to the growth of fungi associated with plant disease?

- A. Cold days and warm nights**
- B. Warm days and cool nights**
- C. Hot days and humid nights**
- D. Variable temperatures throughout the day**

The growth of fungi associated with plant disease is typically encouraged by warm daytime temperatures combined with cool nighttime conditions. This scenario promotes a conducive environment for fungi as the warm temperatures during the day allow for increased metabolic activity and sporulation, while the cool nights can create the necessary moisture through condensation and high humidity. The balance of warm and cool temperatures fosters an environment that is often seen in the late summer and early fall, where the likelihood of fungal diseases in plants increases significantly. In this context, while cold days can inhibit fungal growth, hot days and humid nights can lead to an environment that may also promote certain types of fungi, but the exact combination of warm days and cool nights remains particularly favorable. Variable temperatures throughout the day do not provide the consistent conditions that fungi thrive in, making them less favorable for sustained fungal activity.

8. Which term refers to a group of plants whose crowns or roots can easily be divided or moved?

- A. Codominant**
- B. Clone**
- C. Caliper**
- D. Clump**

The term that refers to a group of plants whose crowns or roots can easily be divided or moved is "clump." In horticulture, a clump typically describes a group of plants that grow together in a tight formation, sharing roots or overlapping crowns. This growth pattern makes it convenient to dig up and transplant the entire group, as their interconnected systems can be managed as a single unit. Clumps are particularly common in perennial plants or certain shrubs that form dense root systems, making propagation and relocation easier as compared to solitary plants. When clumps are divided, it can also promote healthier growth in the remaining sections and the newly transplanted parts. Other terms such as codominant, clone, and caliper do not describe this specific characteristic. Codominant refers to trees with two or more leaders of equal size. A clone refers to a genetically identical group of plants produced from a single parent, often through vegetative means. Caliper is a measurement used to determine the trunk diameter of a tree, which is unrelated to the growing habits or movement of plant groups.

9. What aspect of landscaping has the greatest impact on community aesthetic?

- A. Overall landscape design and maintenance**
- B. Choice of soil type**
- C. Types of irrigation systems used**
- D. Location of the property**

The aspect of landscaping that has the greatest impact on community aesthetic is overall landscape design and maintenance. This is because landscape design encompasses the arrangement and selection of plants, hardscaping elements, and overall layout, which collectively shape the visual appeal of a community. A well-thought-out design ensures harmony and balance, creating an engaging and pleasing environment for residents and visitors alike. Moreover, maintenance is crucial; neglected landscapes can lead to overgrown vegetation, untrimmed trees, and litter, all of which degrade the aesthetic value of a space. Regular maintenance keeps the landscape looking attractive, tidy, and inviting, enhancing the overall visual experience for the community. The choice of soil type may influence plant health and growth but does not directly dictate the aesthetic quality of the landscape in a visible or cultural sense. Similarly, types of irrigation systems play a role in sustaining plant health but do not significantly affect how the landscape is perceived aesthetically. The location of the property can offer advantages or disadvantages regarding natural beauty and surroundings, yet it is the thoughtful design and ongoing maintenance that have the most direct and visible effect on the community's overall aesthetic appeal.

10. Which process involves applying chemicals or grasses to eliminate pests such as insects and fungi?

- A. Fumigation**
- B. Germination**
- C. Girdling**
- D. Ground cover**

The process that involves applying chemicals or specific grasses to eliminate pests such as insects and fungi is known as fumigation. This technique is highly effective in controlling pests by introducing gases or vapors that are toxic to the unwanted organisms. Fumigation is commonly used in agricultural settings, as well as in stored products and structures, to ensure a thorough treatment that targets pests throughout all life stages. In contrast, germination refers to the process wherein seeds develop into new plants, which does not involve pest control. Girdling, which is the removal of a strip of bark around a tree, can affect the health of the plant and possibly control growth, but it is not intended for pest elimination. Ground cover is related to the practice of planting low-growing plants to cover soil, providing aesthetic benefits and minimizing erosion, but it does not involve the use of chemicals to control pests. These distinctions help clarify why fumigation is the correct process for the elimination of pests as described in the question.