

Penn Foster Anatomy and Physiology for Vet Technicians Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	6
Answers	9
Explanations	11
Next Steps	17

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. Which of the following bones is paired in the skull?**
 - A. Mandible**
 - B. Ethmoid**
 - C. Malleus**
 - D. Vomer**

- 2. What is the name of the skin layer injected during tuberculosis skin tests in cattle?**
 - A. Epidermis**
 - B. Dermis**
 - C. Hypodermis**
 - D. Subcutaneous tissue**

- 3. What is the name of the basic contracting unit of skeletal muscle?**
 - A. Sarcomere**
 - B. Myofibril**
 - C. Actin**
 - D. Myosin**

- 4. Which three structures are found in all mammalian cells?**
 - A. Cell wall, nucleus, and cytoplasm**
 - B. Cytoplasm, nucleus, and cell membrane**
 - C. Nucleus, ribosomes, and mitochondria**
 - D. Cell membrane, cytosol, and organelles**

- 5. What is the main function of calcitonin in the body?**
 - A. Increase blood calcium levels**
 - B. Prevent hypercalcemia**
 - C. Stimulate insulin production**
 - D. Regulate blood pressure**

6. When a dog is placed on its left side for a thoracic radiograph, what view is being taken?

- A. Right lateral view of the thorax**
- B. Left lateral view of the thorax**
- C. Dorsal view of the thorax**
- D. Ventral view of the thorax**

7. What is the name of the hole through which the spinal cord passes?

- A. Spinal foramen**
- B. Foramen magnum**
- C. Vertebral foramen**
- D. Intervertebral foramen**

8. What hormone is known to facilitate the process of ovulation?

- A. Estrogen**
- B. Luteinizing hormone (LH)**
- C. Progesterone**
- D. Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH)**

9. What do ribosomes produce?

- A. Carbohydrates**
- B. Lipids**
- C. Nucleic acids**
- D. Proteins**

10. Which nervous system controls involuntary functions in the body?

- A. Somatic nervous system**
- B. Autonomic nervous system**
- C. Central nervous system**
- D. Peripheral nervous system**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following bones is paired in the skull?

- A. Mandible**
- B. Ethmoid**
- C. Malleus**
- D. Vomer**

The malleus is a paired bone in the skull because there are two malleus bones, one in each middle ear. The malleus, along with the incus and stapes, comprises the auditory ossicles that are essential for hearing. Each malleus articulates with the tympanic membrane (eardrum) on one side and the incus on the other. In contrast, the mandible is a single bone that forms the lower jaw, while the ethmoid and vomer bones are also single structures within the skull. The ethmoid is part of the nasal cavity and the base of the skull, providing support to the nasal structure, and the vomer forms the nasal septum, which separates the left and right nasal passages. Each of these bones serves critical functions in the skull's integrity and the anatomy of the nasal cavity but are not paired as the malleus is.

2. What is the name of the skin layer injected during tuberculosis skin tests in cattle?

- A. Epidermis**
- B. Dermis**
- C. Hypodermis**
- D. Subcutaneous tissue**

The correct answer is the dermis, which is the layer of skin that is injected during tuberculosis skin tests in cattle. This layer contains a rich supply of blood vessels, nerves, and immune cells, making it an ideal area for conducting such tests. The dermis lies beneath the epidermis and contains essential components for immune response, such as lymphocytes, which are important for testing reactions to infections like tuberculosis. When the test is administered, the injected material—the tuberculin—needs to be deposited at a depth where these immune cells can quickly recognize it and respond if the animal has been sensitized to the pathogen. This is why the dermis is targeted instead of the outer epidermis, which mainly acts as a protective barrier and does not have the necessary infrastructure for immune response. The subcutaneous tissue, on the other hand, lies deeper than the dermis and is not typically involved in this specific test.

3. What is the name of the basic contracting unit of skeletal muscle?

A. Sarcomere

B. Myofibril

C. Actin

D. Myosin

The basic contracting unit of skeletal muscle is the sarcomere. Each sarcomere is defined as the segment between two Z lines and contains the necessary components for muscle contraction. It is within the sarcomere that the proteins actin and myosin interact, enabling muscle fibers to generate force. The arrangement of these proteins allows for the sliding filament mechanism, where myosin heads bind to actin filaments, pulling them inward and shortening the muscle. Myofibrils, although essential components of muscle fibers, are made up of many sarcomeres arranged end to end. Actin and myosin are the contractile proteins found within the sarcomere that facilitate this contraction but are not the complete unit themselves. Therefore, recognizing that the sarcomere encompasses the structural and functional unit of contraction is vital for understanding skeletal muscle physiology.

4. Which three structures are found in all mammalian cells?

A. Cell wall, nucleus, and cytoplasm

B. Cytoplasm, nucleus, and cell membrane

C. Nucleus, ribosomes, and mitochondria

D. Cell membrane, cytosol, and organelles

The correct answer focuses on the essential components that are universally found in all mammalian cells. The cytoplasm, nucleus, and cell membrane play critical roles in maintaining cellular structure and function. The cell membrane, also known as the plasma membrane, serves as the barrier that defines the boundaries of the cell, controls the movement of substances in and out of the cell, and facilitates communication with other cells. This is crucial for the cell's interaction with its environment. The nucleus is often referred to as the control center of the cell because it houses the genetic material (DNA) and is involved in regulating gene expression and cell division. All mammalian cells contain a nucleus, which is vital for the replication and function of the cell. Cytoplasm, which includes the jelly-like fluid and the organelles within the cell, is the site where many cellular processes occur, including metabolic pathways and protein synthesis. It supports and suspends the organelles, ensuring that they function correctly. In summary, the inclusion of the cytoplasm, nucleus, and cell membrane is essential to the definition of mammalian cells, as these components are fundamental to their survival and operation. While the other choices include elements that are important in various contexts of cellular biology, they do not represent structures

5. What is the main function of calcitonin in the body?

- A. Increase blood calcium levels
- B. Prevent hypercalcemia**
- C. Stimulate insulin production
- D. Regulate blood pressure

Calcitonin primarily functions to prevent hypercalcemia, which refers to elevated levels of calcium in the blood. It is a hormone secreted by the parafollicular cells (or C cells) of the thyroid gland in response to high blood calcium levels. When released, calcitonin acts to lower blood calcium levels by inhibiting osteoclast activity in the bones, which are responsible for bone resorption and the release of calcium into the bloodstream. Additionally, it enhances the excretion of calcium through the kidneys. By promoting these actions, calcitonin plays a crucial role in maintaining calcium homeostasis in the body, ensuring that calcium levels remain within a narrow and healthy range. This is essential for various physiological processes, including muscle contraction, nerve function, and blood clotting. Therefore, the main function of calcitonin, as represented by the correct choice, is to prevent hypercalcemia.

6. When a dog is placed on its left side for a thoracic radiograph, what view is being taken?

- A. Right lateral view of the thorax
- B. Left lateral view of the thorax**
- C. Dorsal view of the thorax
- D. Ventral view of the thorax

When a dog is placed on its left side for a thoracic radiograph, the view being taken is a left lateral view of the thorax. In this positioning, the left side of the dog faces the x-ray plate, allowing the x-rays to penetrate from the right side through the thoracic cavity onto the plate. This positioning provides a clear image of the structures within the thorax, including the heart and lungs, from a perspective that is particularly useful for evaluating conditions affecting the left side. The left lateral view is often utilized as it helps in identifying specific pathology that may not be visible in other views. This perspective is advantageous for assessing certain lung lobes, the position of the heart, and any abnormalities present in that area. Other views such as the right lateral, dorsal, and ventral would involve different orientations of the dog's body and would demonstrate the thorax from different angles, which could obscure or alter the view of any potential issues that may be present on the left side.

7. What is the name of the hole through which the spinal cord passes?

- A. Spinal foramen**
- B. Foramen magnum**
- C. Vertebral foramen**
- D. Intervertebral foramen**

The hole through which the spinal cord passes is called the **foramen magnum**. This large opening is located at the base of the skull and connects the cranial cavity with the spinal canal, allowing the continuation of the spinal cord as it exits the brain. The foramen magnum is a key anatomical structure because it serves as a critical junction between the central nervous system housed in the skull and the spinal nerves that extend down the vertebral column. In the context of the other terms: the spinal foramen typically refers to the space within each vertebra through which the spinal cord travels, often used to describe a specific section rather than the primary opening at the skull's base. The vertebral foramen is the collective term for the openings formed by the stacked vertebrae which encase the spinal cord. The intervertebral foramen, on the other hand, are the openings between the adjacent vertebrae that allow spinal nerves to exit the spinal canal, but they are not where the spinal cord itself passes. Each of these terms describes different aspects or locations related to the spinal cord and vertebrae, while the foramen magnum specifically denotes the crucial entry point into the vertebral foramen from the cranial cavity.

8. What hormone is known to facilitate the process of ovulation?

- A. Estrogen**
- B. Luteinizing hormone (LH)**
- C. Progesterone**
- D. Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH)**

Luteinizing hormone (LH) plays a crucial role in the process of ovulation, particularly in females. During the menstrual cycle, a surge in LH triggers the release of a mature egg from the ovarian follicle, a key event in ovulation. This hormone is produced by the anterior pituitary gland, and its release is stimulated by a rising level of estrogen as the ovarian follicles mature. The peak in LH levels that occurs mid-cycle is what causes the follicle to rupture and release the egg, making it essential for normal reproductive function. In contrast, estrogen regulates various aspects of the reproductive system, including the preparation of the uterine lining and the maturation of follicles, but it does not directly trigger ovulation. Progesterone is primarily involved in the preparation of the uterus for a potential pregnancy after ovulation has occurred. Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) is important for the growth and maturation of ovarian follicles but does not initiate ovulation itself. Therefore, the role of LH is specifically tied to the ovulatory process, confirming its status as the critical hormone for facilitating ovulation.

9. What do ribosomes produce?

- A. Carbohydrates**
- B. Lipids**
- C. Nucleic acids**
- D. Proteins**

Ribosomes are essential cellular structures that play a crucial role in protein synthesis, which is the process of translating genetic information into functional proteins. They facilitate the translation of messenger RNA (mRNA) into a specific sequence of amino acids, thereby creating polypeptides that fold into functioning proteins. The ribosomes read the mRNA sequence in groups of three nucleotides, known as codons, and match each codon with the corresponding transfer RNA (tRNA) that carries an amino acid. This assembly of amino acids occurs in the ribosome to form polypeptide chains, which ultimately become proteins that are vital for various cellular functions, including structural roles, enzymatic activities, and regulation. The other choices—carbohydrates, lipids, and nucleic acids—are produced by different cellular processes and structures. Carbohydrates are typically synthesized in the cytoplasm through processes involving enzymes specific to carbohydrate metabolism; lipids are produced through fatty acid synthesis and other mechanisms in the endoplasmic reticulum; and nucleic acids, such as DNA and RNA, are synthesized by specific polymerases during the replication and transcription processes. Thus, while these molecules are critical to cellular function, ribosomes specifically produce proteins, making this the correct answer.

10. Which nervous system controls involuntary functions in the body?

- A. Somatic nervous system**
- B. Autonomic nervous system**
- C. Central nervous system**
- D. Peripheral nervous system**

The autonomic nervous system is responsible for controlling involuntary functions in the body, such as heart rate, digestion, respiratory rate, and reflex actions. It operates without conscious control, meaning it regulates essential bodily functions automatically. This system is crucial for maintaining homeostasis, as it manages the body's responses to internal and external stimuli without requiring voluntary effort from the individual. The autonomic nervous system is further divided into two branches: the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. The sympathetic nervous system activates the "fight or flight" response, increasing heart rate and energy mobilization, while the parasympathetic nervous system promotes "rest and digest" activities, slowing the heart rate and enhancing digestion. Together, these components help coordinate involuntary responses to ensure bodily functions are performed smoothly. In contrast, the somatic nervous system is responsible for voluntary movements and the control of skeletal muscles. The central nervous system, which includes the brain and spinal cord, processes information and coordinates activities throughout the body, but it does not directly control involuntary functions. The peripheral nervous system includes all the nerves outside the central nervous system, connecting it to the rest of the body, but it encompasses both the autonomic and somatic systems.

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:

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

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