

# Pennsylvania End-of-Course Knowledge (PECK) 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. Who takes over for the president in the event of a vacancy?**
  - A. The speaker of the house**
  - B. The vice president**
  - C. The secretary of state**
  - D. The chief justice**
  
- 2. What is the primary role of a cell?**
  - A. To function as a compound**
  - B. To act as a basic structural and functional unit of life**
  - C. To serve as a building block for tissues**
  - D. To produce energy exclusively**
  
- 3. How often are elections held for members of the House of Representatives?**
  - A. Every year**
  - B. Every two years**
  - C. Every four years**
  - D. Every six years**
  
- 4. What was accomplished at the Constitutional Convention in 1787?**
  - A. The Articles of Confederation were established**
  - B. The Constitution was written**
  - C. The Bill of Rights was ratified**
  - D. The election system was created**
  
- 5. Who is the chief executive officer of the state of Pennsylvania?**
  - A. Josh Shapiro**
  - B. Tom Corbett**
  - C. Tom Wolf**
  - D. Dave Stockdale**

- 6. In writing, what is often found in the introduction of an essay?**
- A. The conclusion**
  - B. The thesis statement**
  - C. The bibliography**
  - D. The counterargument**
- 7. Which of the following best describes enzymes?**
- A. They are consumed during reactions and not reused**
  - B. They are proteins that facilitate biochemical reactions**
  - C. They are carbohydrates that store energy**
  - D. They are nucleic acids that transmit genetic information**
- 8. How many judges serve on the Supreme Court?**
- A. 7**
  - B. 9**
  - C. 11**
  - D. 13**
- 9. What is considered the Supreme law of the land?**
- A. The Declaration of Independence**
  - B. The Constitution**
  - C. The Bill of Rights**
  - D. Federal Statutes**
- 10. In which city is the capital of Pennsylvania located?**
- A. Pittsburgh**
  - B. Harrisburg**
  - C. Philadelphia**
  - D. Reading**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. Who takes over for the president in the event of a vacancy?

- A. The speaker of the house
- B. The vice president**
- C. The secretary of state
- D. The chief justice

In the event of a vacancy in the presidency, the Vice President takes over the responsibilities and powers of the office. This transition is established by the Presidential Succession Act and the Constitution. The primary role of the Vice President is to serve as a successor to the president, and if the president can no longer fulfill their duties due to resignation, death, or removal, the Vice President is next in line to assume the presidency. This continuity of leadership is critical for maintaining government functionality and stability during unexpected changes in the administration. The other options, while important political positions, do not have the authority to step into the presidency. The Speaker of the House is next in line after the Vice President, but is not the first to succeed the president. The Secretary of State holds a significant role in foreign affairs but does not have presidential succession. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is an essential figure in the judicial branch but does not have a defined role in presidential succession. Therefore, the Vice President is the correct answer as they are specifically designated to take over the presidency when a vacancy occurs.

## 2. What is the primary role of a cell?

- A. To function as a compound
- B. To act as a basic structural and functional unit of life**
- C. To serve as a building block for tissues
- D. To produce energy exclusively

The primary role of a cell is to act as a basic structural and functional unit of life. This definition is fundamental in biology, as all living organisms are composed of cells, which carry out the essential processes necessary for life. Cells can carry out functions such as metabolism, growth, and reproduction, making them the basic units through which all biological activities occur. While cells do serve as building blocks for tissues and play a role in energy production, these are specific functions that arise from their overarching role as the foundational units of life. Understanding this context emphasizes the significance of cells; they are not only structural components but also integral to the overall functioning of organisms across various levels of complexity.

### 3. How often are elections held for members of the House of Representatives?

- A. Every year
- B. Every two years**
- C. Every four years
- D. Every six years

Members of the House of Representatives serve two-year terms, which is why elections for this chamber are held every two years. This system ensures that representatives remain closely accountable to their constituents, as they need to campaign regularly to maintain support and address the changing needs and concerns of their districts. The constitutional framework established by the Founding Fathers emphasizes the importance of frequent elections in a representative democracy, allowing voters the opportunity to re-evaluate their representatives and make changes as needed. Since House elections coincide with one another, they are typically conducted on Election Day, which is set for the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. This two-year cycle contributes to a dynamic political landscape, with potential shifts in control of the House based on public sentiment and voter turnout during each election cycle.

### 4. What was accomplished at the Constitutional Convention in 1787?

- A. The Articles of Confederation were established
- B. The Constitution was written**
- C. The Bill of Rights was ratified
- D. The election system was created

The accomplishment at the Constitutional Convention in 1787 was the drafting of the Constitution. This gathering of delegates from various states aimed to address the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, which had proven inadequate in governing the newly formed United States effectively. The result was a new framework for the government that established the branches of government, checks and balances, and fundamental principles of federalism. It was at this convention that the document which would serve as the foundation of American law and governance was meticulously created, debated, and ultimately adopted. The Constitution would later be ratified by the states, but its genesis occurred during the convention itself.

**5. Who is the chief executive officer of the state of Pennsylvania?**

**A. Josh Shapiro**

**B. Tom Corbett**

**C. Tom Wolf**

**D. Dave Stockdale**

The correct answer is Josh Shapiro, who currently serves as the chief executive officer of the state of Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, the governor is the chief executive officer, responsible for overseeing the state government, implementing state laws, and managing the executive branch. Josh Shapiro took office in January 2023, following the gubernatorial election, and his role includes addressing important state issues, proposing budgets, and leading various initiatives for the welfare of Pennsylvania residents. While Tom Corbett and Tom Wolf have served as governors in the past, they are not in office currently. Dave Stockdale is not a known figure in regard to Pennsylvania's governorship. Understanding the role of the governor helps clarify why the answer is Josh Shapiro, as he is the official in current authority over the state's executive functions.

**6. In writing, what is often found in the introduction of an essay?**

**A. The conclusion**

**B. The thesis statement**

**C. The bibliography**

**D. The counterargument**

The introduction of an essay serves several important purposes, one of which is to present the thesis statement. The thesis statement is a clear, concise declaration of the main point or argument the author intends to make in the essay. It not only provides direction for the essay but also engages the reader by outlining what to expect in the subsequent paragraphs. This statement typically appears at the end of the introductory paragraph, making it a key element in establishing the framework of the argument or perspective that the essay will explore. In contrast, the conclusion is found in the final section of the essay, summarizing the key points and restating the significance of the argument. The bibliography is a list of sources referenced throughout the essay, usually placed at the end, while the counterargument, which presents opposing views to the main argument, is typically addressed within the body of the essay and not in the introduction. Therefore, the inclusion of the thesis statement in the introduction is essential for guiding the reader and clarifying the essay's purpose.

**7. Which of the following best describes enzymes?**

- A. They are consumed during reactions and not reused**
- B. They are proteins that facilitate biochemical reactions**
- C. They are carbohydrates that store energy**
- D. They are nucleic acids that transmit genetic information**

Enzymes are best described as proteins that facilitate biochemical reactions because they serve as catalysts in various chemical processes within living organisms. By lowering the activation energy required for a reaction to occur, enzymes make it easier and faster for reactions to take place, ultimately aiding in vital biological functions such as metabolism and DNA replication. Being proteins means that enzymes are made up of long chains of amino acids, which fold into specific three-dimensional shapes crucial for their activity. This specific shape allows them to bind to substrates—the molecules upon which they act—at their active sites, resulting in the conversion of substrates into products. The other options describe concepts that are either inaccurate or not related to enzymes. Enzymes are not consumed in reactions; they can be reused multiple times to catalyze reactions. They also are not carbohydrates; carbohydrates are primarily involved in energy storage and supply, rather than acting as biological catalysts. Furthermore, nucleic acids, such as DNA and RNA, are essential for genetic information transmission, but they do not function as enzymes in biochemical reactions. Thus, the characterization of enzymes as proteins that facilitate biochemical reactions is the most accurate and comprehensive description.

**8. How many judges serve on the Supreme Court?**

- A. 7**
- B. 9**
- C. 11**
- D. 13**

The Supreme Court of the United States is composed of nine justices. This structure has been in place since the Judiciary Act of 1869, which established the number of justices and has remained unchanged. Each justice is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, serving lifetime appointments unless they choose to retire or are removed through impeachment. The composition of nine justices allows for a balance of opinions and a diversity of perspectives when hearing cases that have significant constitutional and legal implications. This number is crucial for providing conclusive rulings, as an odd number of justices helps prevent ties in decision-making.

## 9. What is considered the Supreme law of the land?

- A. The Declaration of Independence
- B. The Constitution**
- C. The Bill of Rights
- D. Federal Statutes

The Constitution is recognized as the supreme law of the land because it establishes the foundational legal framework of the United States government. It outlines the structure of government, delineates the powers and responsibilities of each branch, and sets forth the rights of citizens. This status is affirmed by the Supremacy Clause, found in Article VI of the Constitution, which dictates that the Constitution and federal laws made pursuant to it take precedence over state laws and constitutions. While the Declaration of Independence is a historical document asserting the colonies' separation from British rule, it does not serve as a governing legal framework. The Bill of Rights, which comprises the first ten amendments to the Constitution, guarantees individual rights but is part of the Constitution rather than a separate source of supreme law. Federal statutes are laws enacted by Congress, but they must align with the Constitution; if they conflict, the Constitution prevails. Therefore, it is the Constitution that holds the highest authority in the legal hierarchy of the United States.

## 10. In which city is the capital of Pennsylvania located?

- A. Pittsburgh
- B. Harrisburg**
- C. Philadelphia
- D. Reading

The capital of Pennsylvania is Harrisburg. This city was designated as the capital in 1812 and is located in the central part of the state along the Susquehanna River. Harrisburg serves as the political hub of the state, housing the Pennsylvania State Capitol building where legislative activities take place, and it is also the center for state government agencies and offices. Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Reading, while significant cities in Pennsylvania, do not serve as the capital. Pittsburgh is known for its steel industry and cultural institutions, Philadelphia is famous for its historical significance and is home to the Liberty Bell, while Reading is a city with its own distinct characteristics and history. However, none of these cities fulfill the role of the capital for the state, making Harrisburg the correct answer.

## 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://papeck.examzify.com>**

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

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