

Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science Comprehensive 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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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

- 1. Which courts have the authority to review decisions made by lower courts?**
 - A. Trial courts**
 - B. Appellate courts**
 - C. Supreme courts**
 - D. Municipal courts**
- 2. What standard is used for measuring grave dimensions?**
 - A. Metric system**
 - B. Standard units of measurement**
 - C. International standards**
 - D. Household dimensions**
- 3. What is defined as a process that helps reorganize life after a loss?**
 - A. Therapy**
 - B. Mourning**
 - C. Coping**
 - D. Healing**
- 4. In terms of neuronal signals, what does 'efferent' refer to?**
 - A. Receives signals**
 - B. Processes signals**
 - C. Carries signals**
 - D. Sends signals**
- 5. Eye shadow should ideally match which part of the makeup?**
 - A. Skin tone**
 - B. Lips**
 - C. Iris**
 - D. Eyebrows**

- 6. What type of suture is used to gather in and turn under excess tissues, running parallel to the incision?**
- A. Continuous suture**
 - B. Locking suture**
 - C. Double intradermal suture**
 - D. Worm suture**
- 7. Which book is acknowledged as the first embalming textbook published in the United States?**
- A. The Undertaker's Manual**
 - B. The Embalmer's Guide**
 - C. Mortuary Practices**
 - D. Principles of Embalming**
- 8. What is the area about the altar of the church, typically enclosing clergy and officials, called?**
- A. Sanctuary**
 - B. Chancel**
 - C. Vestibule**
 - D. Narthex**
- 9. What is the first exit off the aorta?**
- A. Subclavian artery**
 - B. Brachiocephalic artery**
 - C. Coronary artery**
 - D. Carotid artery**
- 10. What is the term for a contract law concept involving payment to release from a debt obligation?**
- A. Release and waiver**
 - B. Accord and satisfaction**
 - C. Settlement agreement**
 - D. Debt forgiveness**

Answers

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

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Explanations

1. Which courts have the authority to review decisions made by lower courts?

A. Trial courts

B. Appellate courts

C. Supreme courts

D. Municipal courts

Appellate courts are specifically designed to review and assess decisions made by lower courts. Their primary function is to examine the record from the trial court to ensure that the law was applied correctly and that legal procedures were followed properly. In the appellate process, these courts do not conduct new trials; instead, they evaluate the written record and listen to oral arguments from both sides to determine whether to uphold or overturn the lower court's decision. The role of appellate courts is crucial in the judicial system as they help maintain the integrity of the law and ensure uniform application of legal standards across different cases. They provide a mechanism for correcting errors that may have occurred at the trial level and ensure that defendants receive a fair trial, thereby protecting the rights of individuals and upholding justice. While supreme courts can also review decisions made by lower courts, they typically serve as the highest appellate court within a jurisdiction and often focus on cases of significant legal importance. Thus, calling out appellate courts accurately refers to the general level of courts that primarily function to review decisions from lower courts, making this the best answer.

2. What standard is used for measuring grave dimensions?

A. Metric system

B. Standard units of measurement

C. International standards

D. Household dimensions

The standard used for measuring grave dimensions is the standard units of measurement. This approach typically utilizes imperial measurements such as feet and inches, which are commonly adopted in the United States for various applications, including those in the field of mortuary science. These units provide a clear and consistent framework that aligns with local customs and practices regarding burial plots. Using standard units of measurement ensures that all parties involved in cemetery management, families, and funeral professionals have a shared understanding of the necessary grave dimensions. For instance, in many cemeteries, grave sizes might commonly be specified as 4 feet wide by 8 feet long, which reflects typical standards used for single graves. Other measurement systems like the metric system or international standards might be relevant in a broader context, especially in countries that predominantly use those systems. However, in the specific practice of measuring grave dimensions within certain regions, standard units remain the prevalent choice to maintain consistency and familiarity within the community. Household dimensions, while familiar, do not apply to the specific context of grave measurements.

3. What is defined as a process that helps reorganize life after a loss?

- A. Therapy**
- B. Mourning**
- C. Coping**
- D. Healing**

The process that helps reorganize life after a loss is best described as mourning. Mourning encompasses the social and personal aspects of grieving, where individuals express their sorrow and begin to understand their feelings following a significant loss. It involves various activities and rituals that facilitate the acknowledgment of the loss and ultimately assist in the adaptation to life without the deceased. Mourning allows individuals to process their emotions and experience grief in a supportive environment, whether through cultural practices, shared experiences with others who have similar losses, or personal reflection. This process is essential for the healing journey, as it helps individuals to navigate their new reality, remember those they have lost, and find ways to integrate their memories into their daily lives. While therapy, coping, and healing may play roles in the broader context of dealing with loss, mourning specifically refers to the outward expression of grief and the societal means through which individuals can express their pain and start the journey towards reorganization of their lives.

4. In terms of neuronal signals, what does 'efferent' refer to?

- A. Receives signals**
- B. Processes signals**
- C. Carries signals**
- D. Sends signals**

The term 'efferent' in the context of neuronal signals refers specifically to signals that are sent away from the central nervous system to target organs or muscles. These signals are responsible for transmitting commands to stimulate actions, such as muscle contractions or glandular secretions. In the nervous system, efferent neurons are crucial for carrying out the responses that result from processed information. While 'carries signals' mentions the transportation of signals, which is somewhat related, it lacks the specificity of the action being performed, namely the act of sending commands to effect change in the body. Therefore, 'sends signals' is the most precise choice, accurately reflecting the role of efferent neurons in conveying information from the brain and spinal cord to different parts of the body.

5. Eye shadow should ideally match which part of the makeup?

- A. Skin tone**
- B. Lips**
- C. Iris**
- D. Eyebrows**

Eye shadow should ideally complement the color of the iris. The reason for this is that when eye shadow is chosen based on the shade of the eyes, it enhances their natural beauty and draws attention to them. This practice helps create a harmonious and cohesive look, allowing the eyes to stand out as a central feature of the face. Different colors can be used to make the eyes pop or to create a desired emotional effect. For instance, for blue eyes, warmer tones like copper and peach can be striking, while purples and mauves can make green eyes appear more vivid. By selecting eye shadow based on the iris color, makeup can truly enhance the wearer's overall appearance. While matching eye shadow with skin tone or other facial features can lead to aesthetically pleasing results, the primary focus of eye shadow is to accentuate the eyes themselves. Each choice in the context aims at achieving an appealing overall look, but the specific target for eye shadow is the iris's color.

6. What type of suture is used to gather in and turn under excess tissues, running parallel to the incision?

- A. Continuous suture**
- B. Locking suture**
- C. Double intradermal suture**
- D. Worm suture**

The worm suture, often referred to as a "horizontal mattress suture," is specifically designed to manage excess tissue by gathering and turning it under, effectively bringing the edges of an incision closer together. This type of suture is particularly useful for areas where there might be a need to reduce bulk or when dealing with skin that is loose or redundant, allowing for a more aesthetically pleasing closure by distributing tension evenly along the wound. Worm sutures create a series of loops along the incision site, which not only helps in managing the excess tissue effectively but also facilitates healing by aligning the tissue layers properly. This makes it an ideal choice for specific surgical situations where the management of skin tension and aesthetics is a priority. Other suture types, while useful in their own contexts, do not serve the same function as the worm suture. Continuous sutures provide a rapid way of closing incisions but do not gather excess tissue. Locking sutures provide resistance to tissue pull but are used primarily to maintain tension rather than to manipulate excess tissue. Double intradermal sutures are used to conceal the suture line but are not meant for gathering excess tissue beneath the skin. Therefore, the worm suture stands out as the most appropriate choice for the

7. Which book is acknowledged as the first embalming textbook published in the United States?

A. The Undertaker's Manual

B. The Embalmer's Guide

C. Mortuary Practices

D. Principles of Embalming

The first embalming textbook published in the United States is "The Undertaker's Manual." This book played a significant role in standardizing embalming practices during a time when the profession was evolving, particularly in the context of the Civil War, where the need for embalming increased due to the large number of deceased soldiers. "The Undertaker's Manual" provided essential techniques, guidelines, and insights into the art and science of embalming, making it a pivotal resource for early funeral directors and embalmers. While other titles mentioned have contributed to the field of embalming and funeral services, they were published later or focused on different aspects of the practice. Understanding the historical context of these publications and their impact on professional practices in mortuary science is crucial for recognizing their importance in the field.

8. What is the area about the altar of the church, typically enclosing clergy and officials, called?

A. Sanctuary

B. Chancel

C. Vestibule

D. Narthex

The area about the altar of the church that typically encloses clergy and officials is known as the chancel. This part of the church is significant because it is often elevated and serves as the focal point for the liturgical activities and ceremonies that take place during worship. Within the chancel, you will find the altar, the pulpit, and often the choir area, all of which are critical to the worship service. The chancel is distinct from other areas of a church. The sanctuary, while similar, typically refers to the entire area around the altar including the chancel itself and is considered a holy space. A vestibule is an entrance area or lobby that leads into the main part of the church, while a narthex is traditionally the entryway or lobby at the western end of the church, serving as a space for transitions between the outside world and the sacred space. Understanding these distinctions helps to deepen knowledge of liturgical architecture and the roles each area plays in worship practices.

9. What is the first exit off the aorta?

- A. Subclavian artery
- B. Brachiocephalic artery**
- C. Coronary artery
- D. Carotid artery

The first exit off the aorta is the brachiocephalic artery. This artery branches off from the aortic arch and is responsible for supplying blood to the right arm and the head and neck. It divides into two major arteries: the right subclavian artery, which serves the right arm, and the right common carotid artery, which supplies blood to the right side of the head and neck. Understanding the anatomy of the aorta and its branches is crucial for recognizing how blood is distributed throughout the upper body. The positioning of the brachiocephalic artery as the first major branch makes it a key structure in the vascular system, especially as it ensures adequate blood flow to vital areas. The other arteries mentioned serve specific regions; the subclavian artery typically branches off the brachiocephalic artery on the right side, the coronary arteries originate directly from the aorta but are not classified as the first exit off the aorta, and the carotid arteries, which supply blood to the head and neck, branch off differently based on whether they are left or right. Thus, their separation from the aorta occurs after the brachiocephalic artery has already formed.

10. What is the term for a contract law concept involving payment to release from a debt obligation?

- A. Release and waiver
- B. Accord and satisfaction**
- C. Settlement agreement
- D. Debt forgiveness

The term "accord and satisfaction" refers to a specific legal contract concept that allows parties to settle a dispute over a debt obligation by agreeing to new terms. In this context, "accord" is the new agreement where the creditor and debtor agree to an alternative arrangement, which differs from the original obligation. "Satisfaction" occurs when the agreed-upon performance is completed, thereby discharging the original debt. This concept is significant in contract law because it ensures that both parties can come to a mutual agreement that may be more advantageous or feasible than the original terms. This process could involve partial payment or a different form of consideration that the creditor accepts to relinquish the original debt. Understanding "accord and satisfaction" is fundamental because it helps resolve disputes and offers a route for debtors to negotiate their obligations without the need for litigation, contributing to more flexible financial arrangements. The other options relate to different aspects of contract law and debt but do not describe the process of creating a new agreement that resolves an existing debt through negotiation.

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:

<https://pimscomprehensive.examzify.com>

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