

PSYCHOLOGY QUALIFYING PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



Prepare with structure. Pass with confidence



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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. Which statement best describes external validity?

- A. Internal validity is the extent to which findings generalize beyond the study.
- B. External validity is the accuracy of the measurement instrument.
- C. Reliability is the stability of measurement.
- D. Face validity is the appearance of a measure.

2. Which term refers to the physical network of nerves and cells that carries information in the body?

- A. Biological (1950-present)
- B. Neuroscience
- C. Nervous System
- D. Observation

3. Which feature is true of REM sleep?

- A. REM sleep is characterized by rapid eye movements and brain activity similar to wakefulness.
- B. REM sleep shows slow, synchronized delta waves.
- C. REM sleep is associated with sleepwalking.
- D. REM sleep is dominated by theta waves with strong muscle tone.

4. Which scientist localized faculties in the brain (phrenology)?

- A. Sigmund Freud
- B. Anton Mesmer
- C. Franz Gall
- D. Charles Darwin

5. Which two psychologists are central to Humanistic psychology?

- A. Noam Chomsky and Jean Piaget
- B. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow
- C. Sigmund Freud
- D. Wilhelm Wundt

- 6. What is the primary focus of psychology in the given definition?**
- A. Thoughts only
 - B. Behavior
 - C. Unconscious drives
 - D. Spiritual experiences
- 7. Which statement is listed as a fundamental characteristic that cautions against assuming things are self-evident?**
- A. Nothing is Self-Evident
 - B. Facts require miracles
 - C. Everything is Self-Evident
 - D. Knowledge is always absolute
- 8. Gestalt psychology emerged around 1912 with which group of researchers?**
- A. Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung
 - B. John B. Watson
 - C. Kurt Koffka, Wolfgang Kohler, and Max Wertheimer
 - D. Wilhelm Wundt
- 9. What is the null hypothesis in hypothesis testing?**
- A. The statement that there is no effect or no difference between groups or conditions.
 - B. The statement that there is an effect in the population.
 - C. The claim that the alternative hypothesis is false.
 - D. The hypothesis that results will be significant regardless of sample size.
- 10. Which psychologist conducted memory experiments that built upon Fechner's ideas about sensation?**
- A. Hermann Ebbinghaus
 - B. Fechner
 - C. Wilhelm Wundt
 - D. William James

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which statement best describes external validity?

- A. Internal validity is the extent to which findings generalize beyond the study.
- B. External validity is the accuracy of the measurement instrument.
- C. Reliability is the stability of measurement.
- D. Face validity is the appearance of a measure.**

External validity is about how well findings generalize beyond the exact people, settings, and times of the study. It asks: would the results hold in other contexts, such as different populations or real-world environments? The statement that best fits this concept is that findings generalize beyond the study. The other ideas refer to different aspects of measurement: accuracy of a measurement instrument describes measurement validity, reliability concerns consistency over time or across raters, and face validity is about whether a measure appears to assess what it's supposed to assess. Internal validity, meanwhile, concerns attributing observed effects to the manipulated variables within the study rather than to confounds, not generalization.

2. Which term refers to the physical network of nerves and cells that carries information in the body?

- A. Biological (1950-present)
- B. Neuroscience
- C. Nervous System**
- D. Observation

Understanding the body's signaling network: the nervous system. The nervous system is the physical network of nerves and specialized cells that carries information throughout the body, coordinating sensation, movement, and internal regulation by transmitting electrical and chemical signals. It includes the brain, spinal cord, and peripheral nerves, forming the infrastructure that underpins all neural communication. Neuroscience, while closely related, is the field that studies how this network functions and develops. Observation is a method of gathering data, not the body's wiring. Therefore, the nervous system is the correct term for the described network.

3. Which feature is true of REM sleep?

- A. REM sleep is characterized by rapid eye movements and brain activity similar to wakefulness.**
- B. REM sleep shows slow, synchronized delta waves.
- C. REM sleep is associated with sleepwalking.
- D. REM sleep is dominated by theta waves with strong muscle tone.

REM sleep features rapid eye movements and brain activity that resembles wakefulness. The brain during this stage shows desynchronized, low amplitude, mixed-frequency activity, similar to being awake, while the eyes move quickly under the lids. At the same time, the body is largely paralyzed to prevent acting out dreams, which distinguishes REM from other sleep stages. In contrast, deep non REM sleep produces slow, delta-dominated activity, and sleepwalking typically occurs during that deep stage. Theta waves with strong muscle tone don't characterize REM sleep. So the rapid eye movements together with wake-like brain activity best identify REM sleep.

4. Which scientist localized faculties in the brain (phrenology)?

- A. Sigmund Freud
- B. Anton Mesmer
- C. Franz Gall**
- D. Charles Darwin

Localization of brain function is the idea that specific mental abilities are tied to particular brain regions. Franz Gall is the scientist who tied this concept to a now-outdated theory called phrenology, proposing that bumps and shapes on the skull reflect the size and health of underlying brain areas responsible for different faculties. He even created maps linking traits like memory, language, and moral character to distinct regions, arguing that the skull's contours could reveal a person's psychological profile. This makes him the best answer, because he originated the claim that brain areas are specialized for different functions and attempted to measure that specialization, laying groundwork for later, more rigorous forms of localization research. Other figures—Freud, Mesmer, and Darwin—are associated with different ideas (psychoanalysis, hypnotic/mesmeric theories, and evolution, respectively) and did not advocate skull-based localization of faculties.

5. Which two psychologists are central to Humanistic psychology?

- A. Noam Chomsky and Jean Piaget
- B. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow**
- C. Sigmund Freud
- D. Wilhelm Wundt

Humanistic psychology emphasizes the individual's subjective experience, personal growth, and the belief that people have an inherent drive toward self-actualization. The two psychologists most associated with this perspective are Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Rogers developed client-centered therapy, which centers on unconditional positive regard, empathic understanding, and creating a nonjudgmental space that helps a person access their own inner resources for growth. Maslow proposed a hierarchy of needs, culminating in self-actualization, to describe how people are motivated to realize their fullest potential. Together, these ideas highlight personal agency, growth, and the positive view of human potential that defines this approach. Other influential figures come from different traditions: Noam Chomsky and Jean Piaget are central to linguistics and cognitive development, focusing on language rules and how thinking unfolds, while Sigmund Freud is associated with psychoanalysis and unconscious conflicts, and Wilhelm Wundt with early experimental psychology. Their work contrasts with the humanistic emphasis on conscious experience and growth, helping to map out how the field evolved alongside different ways of understanding people.

6. What is the primary focus of psychology in the given definition?

- A. Thoughts only
- B. Behavior**
- C. Unconscious drives
- D. Spiritual experiences

The main idea being tested is that psychology centers on behavior as its primary focus. When a definition emphasizes observable actions and responses—the things a person or animal does in different situations—it highlights behavior as the central object of study. Behavior is the most measurable and verifiable part of psychology, which is why it's described this way. Thoughts and mental processes are important, but they are often inferred from behavior or studied indirectly, making them secondary to the emphasis on observable actions. Unconscious drives and spiritual experiences may appear in some theories or topics, but they aren't the core focus when the definition points to observable behavior as the central concern.

7. Which statement is listed as a fundamental characteristic that cautions against assuming things are self-evident?

- A. Nothing is Self-Evident**
- B. Facts require miracles
- C. Everything is Self-Evident
- D. Knowledge is always absolute

The main idea being tested is skepticism about obviousness: you shouldn't assume something is obvious without justification. Saying nothing is self-evident captures that cautious stance, reminding you to seek reasons and evidence for beliefs rather than treating them as givens. This is why it's the best fit—the statement directly cautions against taking things for granted. The other ideas push different extremes or nonsensical positions. Claiming everything is self-evident contradicts the aim of avoiding unwarranted assumptions. Saying knowledge is always absolute implies certainty without room for doubt or revision. Suggesting that facts require miracles isn't a standard principle and doesn't address the habit of assuming things are obvious.

8. Gestalt psychology emerged around 1912 with which group of researchers?

- A. Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung
- B. John B. Watson
- C. Kurt Koffka, Wolfgang Kohler, and Max Wertheimer**
- D. Wilhelm Wundt

Gestalt psychology centers on the idea that perception and experience are organized wholes, not just the sum of separate sensations. It emerged around 1912 through the work of Kurt Koffka, Wolfgang Köhler, and Max Wertheimer, who demonstrated that people perceive organized patterns and meaningful forms—often illustrated by phenomena like apparent motion and insight learning in animals. This approach contrasted with more element-focused traditions like structuralism (led by Wundt) and with Freudian psychoanalysis or behaviorism (as advanced by Watson). The term Gestalt reflects the mind's tendency to impose a coherent form or configuration on sensory input.

9. What is the null hypothesis in hypothesis testing?

- A. The statement that there is no effect or no difference between groups or conditions.**
- B. The statement that there is an effect in the population.
- C. The claim that the alternative hypothesis is false.
- D. The hypothesis that results will be significant regardless of sample size.

In hypothesis testing, the null hypothesis is the default claim that there is no effect or no difference between groups or conditions. It sets the baseline we test against and represents the status quo. The alternative hypothesis is the claim that there is an effect or a difference. We use data to assess how likely the observed results would be if the null were true, producing a p-value and a pre-specified significance level. If the p-value is small enough, we reject the null and conclude there's evidence for an effect; if not, we fail to reject the null, which doesn't prove there is no effect—just that the data didn't provide strong enough evidence against it. This null statement can cover no difference between means, no difference between groups, or zero correlation, depending on the test being used. The other options mix up roles: asserting there is an effect aligns with the alternative hypothesis; claiming the null is false about the alternative isn't how hypothesis testing is framed; and expecting results to be significant regardless of sample size ignores how statistical significance actually depends on sample size and data variability.

10. Which psychologist conducted memory experiments that built upon Fechner's ideas about sensation?

A. Hermann Ebbinghaus

B. Fechner

C. Wilhelm Wundt

D. William James

Fechner showed that mental phenomena can be measured with precision by relating stimuli to sensations. Hermann Ebbinghaus took that same quantitative mindset and applied it to memory. He designed strict, repeatable experiments using nonsense syllables to minimize prior knowledge, then tracked how much was retained over time and how memory declined—the forgetting curve—and he introduced the savings method to quantify memory. This work extended Fechner's emphasis on measurement into the study of memory, making Ebbinghaus the one who conducted the classic memory experiments in this tradition. The other figures contributed in different areas—Fechner in psychophysics, Wundt in structuralist psychology, James in functionalism—so the memory-focused experiments built on Fechner's approach came from Ebbinghaus.

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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://psychqualifying.examzify.com>

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

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