

SACE Stage 1 Psychology Practice Exam (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. Which of the following describes social inhibition?**
 - A. Performing poorly in the presence of an audience on known tasks**
 - B. Performing better in the presence of an audience on new tasks**
 - C. Performing poorly in the presence of an audience on complex or new tasks**
 - D. Performing better in isolation than in an audience**

- 2. How is attachment defined in developmental psychology?**
 - A. The emotional bond between siblings**
 - B. The emotional bond between a child and caregiver**
 - C. The relationship between peers during adolescence**
 - D. The process of learning social skills from adults**

- 3. What is cognitive dissonance?**
 - A. A state of mental clarity experienced after making decisions**
 - B. The mental discomfort experienced by a person who holds two or more contradictory beliefs, values, or ideas**
 - C. A psychological term for lack of motivation in individuals**
 - D. The positive reinforcement that follows good behavior**

- 4. In operant conditioning, what is the purpose of reinforcement?**
 - A. To increase the likelihood of a behavior being repeated**
 - B. To discourage a behavior from being repeated**
 - C. To measure the effectiveness of a stimulus**
 - D. To eliminate unwanted behaviors completely**

- 5. What ability is characteristic of the Concrete Operations Stage in Piaget's theory?**
 - A. Thinking in abstract concepts**
 - B. Performing mental operations on concrete events**
 - C. Using symbolic language**
 - D. Experiencing the world through sensory impressions**

- 6. What is one major ethical principle in psychological research?**
- A. Financial compensation for participants**
 - B. Confidentiality of data**
 - C. Informed consent**
 - D. Increasing stress for research validity**
- 7. What role does the hippocampus play in memory?**
- A. Storage of long-term memories**
 - B. Regulation of procedural memory**
 - C. Critical for the formation of new memories and learning**
 - D. Processing sensory information**
- 8. What behavior typifies a person engaging in compliance?**
- A. Agreeing with the group silently**
 - B. Expressing differing opinions in public**
 - C. Changing opinions to seek group approval**
 - D. Maintaining personal beliefs while behaving as the group does**
- 9. What primarily distinguishes intrinsic motivation from extrinsic motivation?**
- A. Intrinsic motivation is influenced by social pressure, while extrinsic is not**
 - B. Intrinsic motivation is driven by personal satisfaction, while extrinsic is motivated by external rewards**
 - C. Extrinsic motivation leads to more lasting change than intrinsic motivation**
 - D. Intrinsic motivation requires external validation for effectiveness**
- 10. What is the primary focus of social psychology?**
- A. Studying individual behaviors in isolation**
 - B. Analyzing how external factors influence personal decisions**
 - C. Understanding how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by others**
 - D. Focusing exclusively on developmental stages**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following describes social inhibition?

- A. Performing poorly in the presence of an audience on known tasks
- B. Performing better in the presence of an audience on new tasks
- C. Performing poorly in the presence of an audience on complex or new tasks**
- D. Performing better in isolation than in an audience

Social inhibition refers to the tendency for individuals to perform poorly on complex or new tasks when they are in the presence of others. This phenomenon can occur because the pressure of an audience may cause anxiety or distraction, which impairs performance. In the context of the correct answer, performing poorly on complex or new tasks highlights that the presence of others can negatively impact an individual's ability to concentrate, recall information, or apply new skills effectively. This concept plays a significant role in understanding how social dynamics can affect individual performance, especially in unfamiliar situations where confidence may already be low. Tasks that are complex or new require more cognitive resources and attention. When performing these tasks in front of an audience, the additional scrutiny and expectations can lead to increased stress or self-consciousness, ultimately resulting in subpar performance. In contrast, the other alternatives do not accurately encapsulate the essence of social inhibition as it specifically pertains to the challenges posed by social contexts during complex or unfamiliar activities. For example, performing poorly on known tasks isn't the primary focus of social inhibition; rather, it's the complex or novel aspects that create the most significant challenges in social settings.

2. How is attachment defined in developmental psychology?

- A. The emotional bond between siblings
- B. The emotional bond between a child and caregiver**
- C. The relationship between peers during adolescence
- D. The process of learning social skills from adults

Attachment in developmental psychology is primarily understood as the emotional bond that develops between a child and their caregiver. This bond is crucial for a child's emotional and social development and serves as a foundation for future relationships. The attachment figure, often a parent, provides security and a sense of safety, enabling the child to explore their environment and develop autonomy. This emotional connection is characterized by how the caregiver responds to the child's needs, the consistency of this responsiveness, and the child's perception of the caregiver's availability. The quality of attachment formed during these early years influences various aspects of a child's development, including their ability to form relationships, regulate emotions, and cope with challenges later in life. Other choices represent different types of relationships or social learning processes that do not directly capture the core concept of attachment in developmental psychology. For instance, the bond between siblings, relationships during adolescence, or social skill learning from adults are relevant to social development but do not specifically define attachment as understood in the context of caregiver-child relationships.

3. What is cognitive dissonance?

- A. A state of mental clarity experienced after making decisions
- B. The mental discomfort experienced by a person who holds two or more contradictory beliefs, values, or ideas**
- C. A psychological term for lack of motivation in individuals
- D. The positive reinforcement that follows good behavior

Cognitive dissonance is defined as the mental discomfort experienced by a person who holds two or more contradictory beliefs, values, or ideas. This psychological phenomenon occurs when an individual encounters conflicting thoughts or attitudes, leading to feelings of tension or unease. The person is motivated to resolve this discomfort by either changing their beliefs or attitudes, justifying them, or changing their behavior to achieve consistency. For instance, if someone values health but regularly smokes, they may experience cognitive dissonance because smoking contradicts their health beliefs. To alleviate this discomfort, they might quit smoking, downplay the health risks associated with smoking, or highlight other aspects of their behavior that align with their health values. This concept highlights the influence of internal conflicts on behavior and decision-making, emphasizing how individuals seek harmony in their thoughts and beliefs. Understanding cognitive dissonance can also help in contexts such as therapy, marketing, and behavioral change strategies, where addressing these conflicts can lead to more effective outcomes.

4. In operant conditioning, what is the purpose of reinforcement?

- A. To increase the likelihood of a behavior being repeated**
- B. To discourage a behavior from being repeated
- C. To measure the effectiveness of a stimulus
- D. To eliminate unwanted behaviors completely

In operant conditioning, reinforcement serves the crucial purpose of increasing the likelihood that a specific behavior will be repeated in the future. When a behavior is followed by a reinforcing stimulus—such as praise, rewards, or positive outcomes—it strengthens the association between that behavior and the positive consequence. This is fundamental to learning and behavior modification since individuals are more likely to repeat actions that yield favorable results. The other options, although related to behavioral strategies, do not accurately describe the role of reinforcement within operant conditioning. Discouraging a behavior pertains more to punishment, which aims to decrease behavior, while measuring the effectiveness of a stimulus does not directly reflect the reinforcement process. The idea of eliminating unwanted behaviors completely aligns more with aversive strategies rather than the primary goal of reinforcement, which is to encourage behavior repetition.

5. What ability is characteristic of the Concrete Operations Stage in Piaget's theory?

- A. Thinking in abstract concepts**
- B. Performing mental operations on concrete events**
- C. Using symbolic language**
- D. Experiencing the world through sensory impressions**

The Concrete Operations Stage is a crucial part of Piaget's cognitive development theory, typically occurring between the ages of 7 and 11. During this stage, children gain the ability to perform mental operations on concrete objects and events. This means they can understand and manipulate physical materials they can see and touch. For instance, they can solve problems and understand concepts such as conservation (the understanding that quantity doesn't change despite changes in shape or appearance), classification, and seriation (ordering items according to a particular attribute, like size). This stage marks a significant shift from the earlier Preoperational Stage, where children engage more in symbolic play and struggle to perform operations on tangible objects. In contrast, children in the Concrete Operations Stage can think logically about concrete information and are typically much better at reasoning through problems involving actual objects rather than abstract concepts. The other abilities, while essential in their own right, are not specifically indicative of the Concrete Operations Stage. Abstract thinking is characteristic of the next stage, Formal Operations. Symbolic language usage develops in the Preoperational Phase, and experiencing the world through sensory impressions is fundamental to the sensory-motor stage, representing earlier cognitive development.

6. What is one major ethical principle in psychological research?

- A. Financial compensation for participants**
- B. Confidentiality of data**
- C. Informed consent**
- D. Increasing stress for research validity**

Informed consent is a fundamental ethical principle in psychological research that ensures participants are fully aware of the nature of the study, including potential risks and benefits, before agreeing to take part. This principle serves to protect individuals' autonomy and rights, allowing them to make informed decisions about their participation without coercion or undue pressure. By obtaining informed consent, researchers demonstrate respect for their participants and uphold ethical standards in their work. The process involves providing clear, comprehensive information about the study's aims, procedures, and any potential impacts on the participants. It also includes the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. This practice is essential for maintaining trust and integrity in the research process, ensuring that participants are engaged in a manner that prioritizes their well-being. While the other options may touch on important aspects of research ethics, they do not capture the core principle of informed consent, which is vital for ethical participation in research studies.

7. What role does the hippocampus play in memory?

- A. Storage of long-term memories
- B. Regulation of procedural memory
- C. Critical for the formation of new memories and learning**
- D. Processing sensory information

The hippocampus plays a crucial role in the formation of new memories and learning. It is primarily involved in the consolidation process, which is the transformation of short-term memories into long-term memories. When new information is acquired, the hippocampus helps encode this information before it is transferred to other areas of the brain for long-term storage. One of the key functions associated with the hippocampus is its involvement in declarative memory, which includes facts and events that can be consciously recalled. This aspect of memory relies heavily on the hippocampus in the initial stages of processing. Without a properly functioning hippocampus, an individual may find it challenging to form new memories, demonstrating the importance of this brain structure in learning and remembering new information. In contrast, while aspects of memory storage and procedural memory (which involves skills and actions) are important in the broader context of memory systems, they do not specifically highlight the primary function of the hippocampus. Additionally, the processing of sensory information occurs in different parts of the brain, such as the sensory cortices, rather than being a direct function of the hippocampus.

8. What behavior typifies a person engaging in compliance?

- A. Agreeing with the group silently
- B. Expressing differing opinions in public
- C. Changing opinions to seek group approval**
- D. Maintaining personal beliefs while behaving as the group does

A person engaging in compliance is often motivated by the desire to fit in or be accepted by a group, leading them to change their opinions or behaviors to align with the group's norms or expectations. This change can happen even if the individual internally disagrees with the group's stance. When someone complies, they may outwardly adopt the group's beliefs or attitudes, even if they do not genuinely hold those views. This behavior is characterized by making modifications to one's own opinions or actions primarily to gain approval or avoid conflict, demonstrating a clear change in personal beliefs for the sake of social cohesion. On the other hand, agreeing with the group silently can reflect superficial agreement without active change in belief, while expressing differing opinions in public shows a commitment to one's own beliefs, not compliance. Likewise, maintaining personal beliefs while behaving like the group indicates a level of internal conflict, as the person is not truly compliant but rather pretending to conform while secretly preserving their own attitudes.

9. What primarily distinguishes intrinsic motivation from extrinsic motivation?

- A. Intrinsic motivation is influenced by social pressure, while extrinsic is not**
- B. Intrinsic motivation is driven by personal satisfaction, while extrinsic is motivated by external rewards**
- C. Extrinsic motivation leads to more lasting change than intrinsic motivation**
- D. Intrinsic motivation requires external validation for effectiveness**

Intrinsic motivation is characterized by engaging in a behavior or activity for its own sake, driven by personal satisfaction, interest, or enjoyment. This type of motivation comes from within the individual, meaning that the behavior itself is rewarding. For example, someone who reads a book simply out of love for reading is driven by intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation involves engaging in a behavior to earn external rewards or avoid negative outcomes. This might include working hard at a job for a paycheck, studying to get good grades, or participating in sports to win trophies. Unlike intrinsic motivation, which is about personal fulfillment, extrinsic motivation is contingent on external factors. This distinction helps to clarify why intrinsic motivation is more focused on personal satisfaction and internal rewards, whereas extrinsic motivation hinges on external validation and rewards, such as praise, money, or recognition.

10. What is the primary focus of social psychology?

- A. Studying individual behaviors in isolation**
- B. Analyzing how external factors influence personal decisions**
- C. Understanding how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by others**
- D. Focusing exclusively on developmental stages**

Social psychology primarily focuses on understanding how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the presence, thoughts, or actions of other people. This discipline examines how social contexts, group dynamics, social interactions, and cultural factors shape individuals' psychological processes. For instance, it looks at phenomena such as conformity, persuasion, group behavior, and interpersonal relationships, highlighting the interplay between the individual and their social environment. The other options do not align with the core focus of social psychology. Studying individual behaviors in isolation disregards the influence that social contexts have on those behaviors. Analyzing how external factors influence personal decisions is a broader perspective that could apply to various fields beyond social psychology, such as behavioral economics or environmental psychology. Focusing exclusively on developmental stages relates more closely to developmental psychology, which examines the changes in psychological functioning over the course of a lifespan. Therefore, the choice encompassing how social factors influence individual psychology is the most accurate representation of social psychology.

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://sacestage1psychology.examzify.com>

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

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