

# Sherpa Level 1 Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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## **Questions**

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- 1. Which term describes something meant to be understood by a small group of people?**
  - A. Obscure**
  - B. Cryptic**
  - C. Esoteric**
  - D. Ambiguous**
- 2. What does 'inimical' suggest about the environment?**
  - A. Encouraging and supportive**
  - B. Harmful and hostile**
  - C. Warm and inviting**
  - D. Neutral and passive**
- 3. What does "dogmatic" imply about a person's beliefs?**
  - A. They are flexible and open to change**
  - B. They are based on proven facts only**
  - C. They are assertive and unproven**
  - D. They are explained with clear evidence**
- 4. What word means to turn away from the main topic of a conversation?**
  - A. Discourse**
  - B. Disavow**
  - C. Digress**
  - D. Dismantle**
- 5. What is the definition of "propriety"?**
  - A. Sharpness in taste or smell**
  - B. Polite behavior**
  - C. The act of producing many offspring**
  - D. To withdraw a belief**

- 6. What is a characteristic of something described as incendiary?**
- A. Soothing**
  - B. Provoking conflict or controversy**
  - C. Calming tensions**
  - D. Creating harmony**
- 7. Which word indicates doubt regarding the truth of something?**
- A. Skeptical**
  - B. Sanctimonious**
  - C. Schism**
  - D. Severance**
- 8. What is the synonym for urging someone to commit an offense?**
- A. Encourage**
  - B. Assist**
  - C. Instigate**
  - D. Exhort**
- 9. Which word describes a state of confusion or bewilderment?**
- A. Nonplused**
  - B. Clear-headed**
  - C. Sure**
  - D. Lucid**
- 10. What does it mean if a statement is described as cogent?**
- A. It is lacking in clarity**
  - B. It is appealing to the intellect**
  - C. It is harsh and critical**
  - D. It is related to agreement with deceitful intent**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which term describes something meant to be understood by a small group of people?**

- A. Obscure**
- B. Cryptic**
- C. Esoteric**
- D. Ambiguous**

The term "esoteric" specifically refers to knowledge, information, or concepts that are intended for or likely to be understood by only a small and specialized group of people. This term is often used in contexts such as philosophy, religion, and various specialized fields where intricate or complex ideas are not meant for general public understanding. The essence of being esoteric lies in its exclusivity; it implies that the knowledge is not just difficult but specifically tailored or relevant to a niche audience. In contrast, "obscure" refers to something that is not clear or hard to understand, which might apply broadly to the general quality of information. "Cryptic" similarly indicates something that has a hidden meaning, often clouded in mystery, but does not necessarily convey the idea of a targeted audience. "Ambiguous" describes something that can be interpreted in multiple ways, lacking a definitive interpretation. While all these terms point to some form of complexity or difficulty in understanding, "esoteric" uniquely captures the aspect of intentional exclusivity in communication.

**2. What does 'inimical' suggest about the environment?**

- A. Encouraging and supportive**
- B. Harmful and hostile**
- C. Warm and inviting**
- D. Neutral and passive**

The term 'inimical' conveys a sense of hostility or opposition, often suggesting that something is harmful or detrimental to one's well-being or success. In the context of describing an environment, if it is labeled as 'inimical,' it implies that the conditions are adverse, unfriendly, or detrimental, leading to challenges or dangers for individuals or entities within that environment. This aligns closely with the idea of being harmful and hostile, which is essential in understanding how such an environment could affect behavior or outcomes. Thus, recognizing 'inimical' as indicating a negative, oppressive atmosphere helps clarify why the notion of being harmful and hostile is the correct interpretation.

### 3. What does "dogmatic" imply about a person's beliefs?

- A. They are flexible and open to change
- B. They are based on proven facts only
- C. They are assertive and unproven**
- D. They are explained with clear evidence

The term "dogmatic" characterizes beliefs or opinions that are held firmly and often arrogantly, without consideration for evidence or the opinions of others. When someone is described as dogmatic, it implies that they assert their beliefs emphatically and insist that they are true, even in the absence of proof. This rigid stance suggests a refusal to entertain alternative viewpoints or to adapt their beliefs based on new information, which aligns with the idea of being assertive and unproven in their convictions. In contrast, the other options describe more open-minded or evidence-based approaches to belief systems, which are not consistent with the definition of dogmatism. Therefore, understanding "dogmatic" as embodying assertiveness in holding unproven beliefs provides clarity on the nature of such perspectives.

### 4. What word means to turn away from the main topic of a conversation?

- A. Discourse
- B. Disavow
- C. Digress**
- D. Dismantle

The term "digress" is used to describe the action of temporarily straying from the main topic of discussion. When someone digresses in a conversation, they may introduce an unrelated subject or provide additional information that diverges from the primary focus. This often happens in casual conversations or presentations when a speaker goes off on a tangent, whether to elaborate on a point or share a related anecdote. The essence of digression is that it moves away from the intended path of discussion, hence fulfilling the requirement of the question.

### 5. What is the definition of "propriety"?

- A. Sharpness in taste or smell
- B. Polite behavior**
- C. The act of producing many offspring
- D. To withdraw a belief

The definition of "propriety" relates to social norms and the expectations of behavior in a given context. Specifically, it refers to conforming to accepted standards of morals or behavior, which often encompasses polite and appropriate conduct in various settings. This term is frequently used to indicate that someone is behaving in a manner that is deemed appropriate for the situation or social environment they are in, highlighting the importance of etiquette and decorum in interpersonal interactions. In this context, the other definitions provided do not align with the definition of "propriety." The concept is not about sharpness in taste or smell, nor does it involve reproductive aspects or the act of withdrawing beliefs, as those topics relate to entirely different areas of meaning. Thus, the association of propriety with polite behavior accurately captures its essence and application in social interactions.

**6. What is a characteristic of something described as incendiary?**

**A. Soothing**

**B. Provoking conflict or controversy**

**C. Calming tensions**

**D. Creating harmony**

Something described as incendiary typically indicates that it tends to provoke conflict or controversy. This term is often used in contexts related to speech, writing, or actions that can ignite emotions, particularly anger or unrest, among individuals or groups. For instance, an incendiary piece of rhetoric might stir up strong feelings or lead to heated debates. The other options suggest calming or soothing effects, which contrast sharply with the nature of something incendiary. In fact, the essence of being incendiary revolves around generating intense reactions rather than fostering peace or harmony.

**7. Which word indicates doubt regarding the truth of something?**

**A. Skeptical**

**B. Sanctimonious**

**C. Schism**

**D. Severance**

The word that indicates doubt regarding the truth of something is "skeptical." When someone is skeptical, they tend to question the validity or truthfulness of a concept, claim, or idea rather than simply accepting it at face value. This term encapsulates a mindset of inquiry and doubt, suggesting that the individual is not easily convinced without further evidence or reasoning. In the context of the other choices, "sanctimonious" refers to a display of excessive righteousness or moral superiority, "schism" describes a split or division, often within a group or organization, and "severance" relates to the act of cutting off or breaking a connection. None of these convey the idea of doubt or questioning truth, making "skeptical" the most fitting choice for this particular query.

**8. What is the synonym for urging someone to commit an offense?**

- A. Encourage**
- B. Assist**
- C. Instigate**
- D. Exhort**

The term that best fits the definition of urging someone to commit an offense is "instigate." To instigate means to incite or stir up someone to take action, particularly one that involves wrongdoing or an illicit act. This word carries a connotation of provoking or initiating a negative action in another person, making it the most accurate synonym for urging someone to engage in misconduct. While "encourage," "assist," and "exhort" may imply support or motivation, they do not necessarily have the same implication of instigating wrongdoing. "Encourage" generally refers to promoting or motivating positive behavior, "assist" indicates providing help without the connotation of wrongdoing, and "exhort" means to strongly urge someone to do something. However, exhortation can be positive or negative, but it's not specifically tied to committing an offense like "instigate" is. Therefore, "instigate" specifically captures the intent of prompting someone to carry out an illegal or immoral act.

**9. Which word describes a state of confusion or bewilderment?**

- A. Nonplused**
- B. Clear-headed**
- C. Sure**
- D. Lucid**

The term that describes a state of confusion or bewilderment is "nonplused." This word indicates a situation where someone is perplexed or at a loss for words, often due to being confronted with something unexpected or challenging to understand. When a person feels nonplused, they experience an overwhelming sense of confusion that can leave them unsure of how to proceed or what to say. In contrast, "clear-headed," "sure," and "lucid" all connote a sense of clarity and understanding. These words suggest being mentally sharp, decisive, or able to think effectively, which are the opposite of confusion. Thus, "nonplused" is the appropriate choice for conveying a state of bewilderment.

**10. What does it mean if a statement is described as cogent?**

- A. It is lacking in clarity
- B. It is appealing to the intellect**
- C. It is harsh and critical
- D. It is related to agreement with deceitful intent

When a statement is described as cogent, it signifies that the argument presented is compelling and well-structured, appealing directly to the intellect and reason of the audience. Cogency involves a combination of clarity and logical consistency, making it effective in persuading others. Essentially, a cogent statement is one that is not only clear but also has sufficient evidence and rationale to support its claims, thereby engaging the audience's intellectual faculties. While clarity is a component of cogency, merely lacking clarity does not contribute to the statement being cogent. Harshness and critical nature are not relevant to the constructive quality of a cogent argument, as cogency is rooted in reasoned discourse rather than emotional expressions. Furthermore, any notion of deceitful intent does not apply to cogent arguments, which aim for honest and logical persuasion instead. Thus, the defining characteristic of a cogent statement is its appeal to intellect through clarity and substantiation.