

SOCIAL WORK QUALIFYING PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED 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. 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 Stage 1 of Kohlberg's Preconventional level?**
 - A. Judgments are based on whether behavior is rewarded or punished.
 - B. Judgments are based on whether consequences result in benefits for self or others.
 - C. Judgments are based on whether authorities approve or disapprove.
 - D. Judgments are based on whether the behavior upholds/violates laws of society.
- 2. Group Polarization results in what?**
 - A. Group Polarization leads to more moderate positions after group discussion.
 - B. Group Polarization leads to more extreme positions when the majority determines the direction.
 - C. Group Polarization has no effect on positions.
 - D. Group Polarization only occurs in small groups.
- 3. Which of the following describes the two common types of theories?**
 - A. Explanatory theories describe relationships observed; predictive theories predict relationships
 - B. Explanatory describes data; predictive describes ethics
 - C. Explanatory predicts outcomes; predictive describes individuals
 - D. Explanatory and predictive theories are unrelated
- 4. Which is a listed Intervention technique?**
 - A. Dream analysis
 - B. Cognitive restructuring
 - C. Systematic desensitization
 - D. Dream rehearsal
- 5. Which of the following is a major Ego Psychology proponent?**
 - A. Sigmund Freud
 - B. Carl Rogers
 - C. B.F. Skinner
 - D. Erik Erikson

6. Which statement best describes Stage 3 in Kohlberg's Moral Development?

- A. Based on rewards/punishments.
- B. Based on whether consequences benefit self or others.
- C. Based on approval of authorities.
- D. Based on universal ethical principles.

7. Which is a commonly cited weakness of psychosocial theory?

- A. It has perfect cross-cultural elaboration
- B. The idea of a specific number of life stages is disputed
- C. It provides detailed neurological mechanisms
- D. It is completely empirically unsupported

8. Exception questions in Solution Focused Therapy are used to:

- A. Identify triggers
- B. Explore exceptions and resources
- C. Label disorder
- D. Confirm diagnosis

9. Which statement about motivation in Motivational Interviewing is accurate?

- A. Motivation to change can be imposed externally
- B. All people are motivated to change some things
- C. Motivation to change is often impeded by ambivalence
- D. Ambivalence is rare

10. Which statement best describes Stage 2 of Kohlberg's Preconventional level?

- A. Based on punishments and rewards.
- B. Based on whether consequences result in benefits for self or others.
- C. Based on whether authorities approve or disapprove.
- D. Based on whether laws are upheld.

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which statement best describes Stage 1 of Kohlberg's Preconventional level?

- A. Judgments are based on whether behavior is rewarded or punished.**
- B. Judgments are based on whether consequences result in benefits for self or others.
- C. Judgments are based on whether authorities approve or disapprove.
- D. Judgments are based on whether the behavior upholds/violates laws of society.

Stage 1 centers on avoiding punishment. In this early Preconventional stage, moral judgments are driven by external consequences: is the behavior rewarded or punished? If something leads to punishment, it's wrong; if it avoids punishment or brings a reward, it's acceptable. This focus on external outcomes and obedience to power figures is why the statement about judgments based on whether behavior is rewarded or punished best captures Stage 1. The other options reflect motivations that appear in later stages: acting to gain personal rewards or reciprocity (Stage 2), seeking approval from authorities (Stage 3 or beyond), or following laws to maintain social order (Stage 4).

2. Group Polarization results in what?

- A. Group Polarization leads to more moderate positions after group discussion.
- B. Group Polarization leads to more extreme positions when the majority determines the direction.**
- C. Group Polarization has no effect on positions.
- D. Group Polarization only occurs in small groups.

Group polarization is the tendency for a group's discussion to push members toward more extreme positions in the direction the group already favors. When the majority leans one way, the conversation tends to amplify that stance, moving everyone to a more extreme version of it. This happens because members encounter new arguments that support the group's view (informational influence) and because they want to align with the group and appear committed (normative influence). It leads to stronger, not more moderate, positions after discussion. Polarization can occur in various group sizes, not just in small groups. Hence, the best description is that more extreme positions emerge when the majority determines the direction.

3. Which of the following describes the two common types of theories?

- A. Explanatory theories describe relationships observed; predictive theories predict relationships**
- B. Explanatory describes data; predictive describes ethics
- C. Explanatory predicts outcomes; predictive describes individuals
- D. Explanatory and predictive theories are unrelated

The key idea is understanding the distinction between explanatory and predictive theories. Explanatory theories describe relationships observed between variables and aim to explain why those relationships occur. Predictive theories use those relationships to forecast outcomes in new situations or populations. The statement that best fits this is that explanatory theories describe relationships observed, while predictive theories predict relationships. The other options mix up what theories describe or rely on unrelated domains, or claim the two types are unrelated, which doesn't fit how prediction usually follows from explained relationships.

4. Which is a listed Intervention technique?

- A. Dream analysis
- B. Cognitive restructuring
- C. Systematic desensitization**
- D. Dream rehearsal

Systematic desensitization is a listed intervention technique used in behavioral therapy. It trains the client in relaxation and then applies gradual exposure to feared stimuli through an anxiety hierarchy, pairing the exposure with the learned relaxation so the anxiety response decreases over time. This stepwise, structured method is what makes it a clear intervention technique aimed at changing behavior. Dream analysis and dream rehearsal come from psychodynamic or dream-focused approaches and aren't standardized procedural techniques for behavioral change. Cognitive restructuring is a cognitive therapy technique centered on changing distorted thoughts, which belongs to a different therapeutic approach.

5. Which of the following is a major Ego Psychology proponent?

- A. Sigmund Freud
- B. Carl Rogers
- C. B.F. Skinner
- D. Erik Erikson**

Ego Psychology centers on the ego as an active, organizing force in personality, emphasizing its adaptive functions, coping mechanisms, and development across the lifespan. Erik Erikson is a key figure here because he expanded the idea of how the ego helps people interact with their social world, not just how instincts drive behavior. He articulated eight psychosocial stages, each presenting a crisis that shapes identity and functioning as a person grows—from trust and autonomy in early life to integrity in old age. This focus on ongoing development, social context, and the ego's capacity to adapt fits Ego Psychology's emphasis on how people cope with real-world demands and maintain psychological balance over time. In contrast, Sigmund Freud laid the groundwork for psychoanalysis with a focus on psychosexual drives, Carl Rogers highlights a humanistic emphasis on self-actualization, and B.F. Skinner centers on observable behavior and conditioning. So Erik Erikson stands out as the major proponent among these options for Ego Psychology.

6. Which statement best describes Stage 3 in Kohlberg's Moral Development?

- A. Based on rewards/punishments.
- B. Based on whether consequences benefit self or others.
- C. Based on approval of authorities.**
- D. Based on universal ethical principles.

Stage three focuses on how people behave to gain social approval and fit in with others' expectations. In this stage, morality is rooted in wanting to be seen as a "good" person by important others—peers, family, teachers—and to maintain good relationships. Actions are judged by how they will be perceived by those around you, and you conform to norms to earn praise and avoid disapproval. This emphasis on interpersonal approval sits between the more rule- and consequence-based levels and the later stage that centers on abstract principles. That helps explain why this choice fits best: it describes acting to gain approval from others rather than merely seeking rewards or avoiding punishment, or following rules out of fear of punishment, or adhering to universal ethical principles. The pre-conventional option is about rewards/punishments, the next option centers on self-interest or reciprocity, and the highest option covers universal principles.

7. Which is a commonly cited weakness of psychosocial theory?

- A. It has perfect cross-cultural elaboration
- B. The idea of a specific number of life stages is disputed**
- C. It provides detailed neurological mechanisms
- D. It is completely empirically unsupported

The main idea being tested is that psychosocial theory's use of a fixed set number of life stages is a common critique. Psychosocial theory—like Erikson's eight-stage model—posits distinct stages across the lifespan, each with a central conflict. The weakness critics point to is that insisting on a specific, finite sequence can be overly rigid and culturally biased. People in different cultures or with varied life paths may not experience these stages in the same order, at the same ages, or even as discrete, neatly separated conflicts. Development can be non-linear, simultaneous, or prolonged, so a fixed number of stages may oversimplify how growth actually unfolds. This critique is why the idea of a precise count of stages is frequently cited as a limitation of psychosocial theory. For context, this doesn't mean the theory has no value or that there's no empirical work at all, but the stage-based, universal progression is the aspect most often challenged.

8. Exception questions in Solution Focused Therapy are used to:

- A. Identify triggers
- B. Explore exceptions and resources**
- C. Label disorder
- D. Confirm diagnosis

Exception questions in Solution Focused Therapy focus on moments when the problem was not present or was less intense. The aim is to uncover these exceptions and the resources, strategies, or supports the person used during those times. By identifying what was different in those successful moments, the therapist helps the client notice existing strengths and effective coping skills, creating an evidence-based foundation to expand on in the future. This keeps the work oriented toward solutions and growth rather than dwelling on the problem. This approach is not about pinpointing triggers, labeling a disorder, or confirming a diagnosis. Triggers are typically explored to understand what activates the problem, which is more diagnostic or problem-focused. Labeling a disorder and confirming a diagnosis are clinical assessments, not techniques used to elicit hope and practical resources through exception exploration.

9. Which statement about motivation in Motivational Interviewing is accurate?

- A. Motivation to change can be imposed externally
- B. All people are motivated to change some things**
- C. Motivation to change is often impeded by ambivalence
- D. Ambivalence is rare

Motivation in Motivational Interviewing comes from the client and can be strengthened through a collaborative, reflective conversation rather than imposed from outside. People aren't simply moved by force; the therapist taps into what the client already values and wants to change, helping them articulate reasons for change and cultivate those motivations. Ambivalence is a normal, expected part of the change process in MI. Rather than a barrier, it signals areas to explore—pros and cons, values, and goals—to move toward change. Because of that, the idea that everyone is motivated to change some things fits MI's view: even if a client isn't ready to change the specific behavior under discussion, there are other aspects of life where motivation exists. External pressure often undermines motivation and can trigger resistance, which is why imputing change from outside the client isn't consistent with MI. Ambivalence being rare is also incorrect; MI treats it as common and something to address.

10. Which statement best describes Stage 2 of Kohlberg's Preconventional level?

- A. Based on punishments and rewards.
- B. Based on whether consequences result in benefits for self or others.**
- C. Based on whether authorities approve or disapprove.
- D. Based on whether laws are upheld.

Stage 2 centers on an instrumental, self-oriented view: actions are judged by whether they bring personal benefits or lead to a favorable exchange with others. This means doing something if it benefits me now or if I'll get a payoff later, or if helping someone might lead them to reciprocate. It's not about avoiding punishment (that's Stage 1), nor is it about seeking approval from authorities or strictly obeying laws (those align with later stages). So the idea that consequences are evaluated by whether they bring benefits for self or others best captures Stage 2 reasoning.

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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://socialworkqualifying.examzify.com>

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

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