

# SQA National 5 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. What role does the amygdala play in emotional processing?**
  - A. Regulates sleep patterns**
  - B. Involved in processing fear and aggression**
  - C. Controls muscle movements**
  - D. Manages digestive processes**
  
- 2. How do individual differences impact psychological research?**
  - A. They ensure that all findings are universally applicable**
  - B. They affect how participants respond to treatments or interventions**
  - C. They minimize variability in the results of a study**
  - D. They have no significant influence on research outcomes**
  
- 3. How do independent and dependent variables differ in an experiment?**
  - A. The independent variable is measured; the dependent is manipulated**
  - B. The independent variable is controlled; the dependent is observed**
  - C. The independent variable is manipulated; the dependent is measured**
  - D. Both variables are controlled by the researcher**
  
- 4. In Asch's study, how many male participants were tested?**
  - A. 20**
  - B. 30**
  - C. 50**
  - D. 70**
  
- 5. What methodology was used in the Dement and Kleitman study?**
  - A. Surveys on participants' sleeping habits**
  - B. Laboratory conditions with EEG to monitor brain activity**
  - C. Case studies on natural sleeping environments**
  - D. Interviews regarding participants' dreams over a week**

- 6. What does the concept of self-efficacy refer to?**
- A. A belief in one's intelligence**
  - B. Belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations**
  - C. A general feeling of confidence**
  - D. A measure of social skills**
- 7. Which of the following are symptoms of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)?**
- A. Excessive optimism about the future**
  - B. Persistent and excessive worry**
  - C. Difficulty in forming social connections**
  - D. Avoidance of all stressors**
- 8. What is classical conditioning?**
- A. A learning process where a neutral stimulus becomes associated with a meaningful stimulus, leading to a conditioned response**
  - B. A method of reinforcement that strengthens behavior through rewards**
  - C. A cognitive learning process that involves solving problems**
  - D. A type of learning that occurs exclusively through direct experience**
- 9. What was the main finding regarding the F1 and F2 generation mice in the study?**
- A. They showed no fear response**
  - B. They developed phobias toward the scent of cherry/almond**
  - C. They exhibited increased aggression**
  - D. They preferred non-threatening environments**
- 10. In Freudian theory, what is "latent content" associated with?**
- A. The physical recovery of the body during sleep**
  - B. The explicit storyline of a dream**
  - C. The underlying meaning of dreams**
  - D. The effect of sleep on cognitive function**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. What role does the amygdala play in emotional processing?

- A. Regulates sleep patterns
- B. Involved in processing fear and aggression**
- C. Controls muscle movements
- D. Manages digestive processes

The amygdala is a crucial structure in the brain that plays a central role in the processing of emotions, particularly fear and aggression. It is part of the limbic system and is involved in detecting emotional significance in stimuli and generating appropriate emotional responses. For instance, when a person encounters a threatening situation, the amygdala activates, preparing the body to respond to danger, which can include triggering a fight-or-flight response characterized by increased heart rate and heightened alertness. The amygdala's involvement in fear and aggression is supported by various studies, including those that illustrate how damage to this area can lead to impairments in recognizing fear in others, as well as alterations in aggressive behaviors. This underscores its critical function in both the perception and expression of emotional states related to safety and threat. In contrast, the other options refer to functions not associated with the amygdala. For instance, regulating sleep patterns relates more to structures like the hypothalamus, controlling muscle movements is primarily the role of the motor cortex and basal ganglia, and managing digestive processes involves the autonomic nervous system and brain regions such as the medulla. This distinction clarifies why the correct answer focuses specifically on the amygdala's significant role in emotion, particularly fear and

## 2. How do individual differences impact psychological research?

- A. They ensure that all findings are universally applicable
- B. They affect how participants respond to treatments or interventions**
- C. They minimize variability in the results of a study
- D. They have no significant influence on research outcomes

Individual differences are crucial in psychological research because they directly influence how participants respond to treatments or interventions. Each individual brings a unique set of characteristics, such as personality traits, past experiences, cognitive styles, and emotional responses, which can all affect their perceptions, behaviors, and reactions in a research setting. For example, two participants may react very differently to the same therapeutic approach based on their previous experiences or inherent traits. Understanding these differences helps researchers tailor interventions that may be more effective for certain groups, thus enhancing the applicability and effectiveness of their findings. The other aspects mentioned in the options do not accurately reflect the nature of individual differences in psychological research. The idea that individual differences ensure findings are universally applicable is misleading because psychological research often reveals how diverse human experiences are. Additionally, minimizing variability is contrary to the fact that variability is a key aspect of understanding psychological phenomena. Lastly, asserting that individual differences have no significant influence overlooks the fundamental ways in which personal characteristics shape behavior and response.

### 3. How do independent and dependent variables differ in an experiment?

- A. The independent variable is measured; the dependent is manipulated
- B. The independent variable is controlled; the dependent is observed
- C. The independent variable is manipulated; the dependent is measured**
- D. Both variables are controlled by the researcher

In an experiment, the independent variable serves as the factor that the researcher alters or manipulates to observe its effects. This variable is under the control of the experimenter and is intentionally changed to see how it impacts other factors. In contrast, the dependent variable is the outcome or response that is measured during the experiment. It reflects the effect of the changes made to the independent variable. For instance, if a researcher is studying how varying levels of sunlight affect plant growth, the amount of sunlight would be the independent variable that is manipulated, while the plant growth (measured in height or number of leaves, for example) would be the dependent variable that is observed. This distinction is crucial in experimental research, as it allows researchers to establish causal relationships between variables and draw informed conclusions based on their observations.

### 4. In Asch's study, how many male participants were tested?

- A. 20
- B. 30
- C. 50**
- D. 70

Asch's study on conformity involved a total of 123 male participants. However, when considering many reports that relate specifically to the original studies, it is often cited that he tested approximately 50 males in his key experiments, which have been analyzed in various contexts. This figure is significant, as Asch's research aimed to examine the impact of group pressure on individual judgments, particularly in a setting where the majority provided unanimous but incorrect responses. The number of participants is key to understanding the dynamics of group influence. It's essential to note how this research design, with a controlled number of participants, allowed for a clearer observation of conformity behaviors. The other choices reflect either inflated or undercounted numbers, which do not align with the most commonly reported figures from Asch's research. An understanding of the specific number of participants is crucial as it impacts the generalization of the results and the strength of the conclusions regarding conformity.

**5. What methodology was used in the Dement and Kleitman study?**

- A. Surveys on participants' sleeping habits**
- B. Laboratory conditions with EEG to monitor brain activity**
- C. Case studies on natural sleeping environments**
- D. Interviews regarding participants' dreams over a week**

The Dement and Kleitman study employed a laboratory methodology that included the use of EEG (electroencephalography) to monitor participants' brain activity while they were asleep. This approach allowed the researchers to investigate the relationship between rapid eye movement (REM) sleep and dreaming in a controlled environment. By placing participants in a sleep lab and using EEG to track their physiological responses, the researchers could gather precise data about sleep cycles and the nature of dreams, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of their findings. This methodological choice is particularly significant because it provided a clear, scientific framework for exploring the dynamics of sleep, particularly REM stages, which are closely associated with vivid dreaming. The use of laboratory conditions also helped eliminate variables that might interfere with the natural sleep patterns of participants in less controlled settings.

**6. What does the concept of self-efficacy refer to?**

- A. A belief in one's intelligence**
- B. Belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations**
- C. A general feeling of confidence**
- D. A measure of social skills**

The concept of self-efficacy refers specifically to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task. It emphasizes the perception of one's capabilities in relation to particular challenges or goals, which can significantly influence one's motivation, behavior, and emotional responses. High self-efficacy can lead to greater persistence and resilience when faced with obstacles, as individuals are more likely to approach tasks with confidence in their ability to succeed. The other options, while related to elements of confidence, do not capture the nuanced meaning of self-efficacy. For example, believing in one's intelligence relates to a broader sense of cognitive ability rather than the specific confidence in handling particular tasks. A general feeling of confidence is too vague and does not reflect the targeted nature of self-efficacy. Similarly, measuring social skills does not pertain to personal beliefs about one's ability to succeed in various situations, which is the core of self-efficacy. Thus, the correct answer highlights this specific aspect of belief that motivates individual actions and achievements.

## 7. Which of the following are symptoms of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)?

- A. Excessive optimism about the future
- B. Persistent and excessive worry**
- C. Difficulty in forming social connections
- D. Avoidance of all stressors

The correct choice highlights one of the hallmark characteristics of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), which is persistent and excessive worry about various aspects of life. Individuals with GAD experience anxiety that is difficult to control and is associated with a range of everyday issues, such as health, work, and relationships. This worry is often disproportionate to the actual events or challenges the person faces, leading to significant distress and impairment in daily functioning. GAD is marked by this pervasive anxiety and worry that can manifest physically, including symptoms like restlessness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, and sleep disturbances. Recognizing the chronic nature of this anxiety is crucial to diagnosing and understanding GAD, as it distinguishes it from more situational or short-term anxiety responses. In comparison, the other options do not accurately reflect the symptoms of GAD. Excessive optimism about the future contradicts the anxious outlook typical of individuals with GAD. Difficulty in forming social connections may be a characteristic of social anxiety or other disorders but does not directly encapsulate GAD. Avoidance of all stressors may suggest a coping mechanism but is not a specific symptom of GAD, which can involve facing stressors while feeling overwhelmed by excessive worry rather than simply avoiding them altogether.

## 8. What is classical conditioning?

- A. A learning process where a neutral stimulus becomes associated with a meaningful stimulus, leading to a conditioned response**
- B. A method of reinforcement that strengthens behavior through rewards
- C. A cognitive learning process that involves solving problems
- D. A type of learning that occurs exclusively through direct experience

Classical conditioning is a fundamental concept in psychology that describes a learning process in which an initially neutral stimulus, when paired with a meaningful stimulus, eventually triggers a conditioned response. This process was famously demonstrated by Ivan Pavlov through his experiments with dogs, where the sound of a bell, which was originally neutral, became associated with food, a meaningful stimulus. As a result, the dogs began to salivate in response to the bell alone, demonstrating that they had learned to associate the two stimuli. In this context, the correct answer accurately encapsulates the essence of classical conditioning by highlighting the connection between the neutral stimulus, the meaningful stimulus, and the resulting conditioned response. The emphasis on association is critical, as it showcases how learning occurs not through direct reinforcement or cognitive processing but through the establishment of links between stimuli in the environment.

**9. What was the main finding regarding the F1 and F2 generation mice in the study?**

- A. They showed no fear response**
- B. They developed phobias toward the scent of cherry/almond**
- C. They exhibited increased aggression**
- D. They preferred non-threatening environments**

In the study concerning F1 and F2 generation mice, the main finding was that these mice developed phobias toward the scent of cherry/almond. This finding underscores the impact of learned behaviors and genetic influences on the expression of fear responses in the next generations. Specifically, the association between certain scents and negative experiences can be passed down, suggesting that fear responses may not only be individual experiences but can also stem from inherited traits or learned behaviors from parental generations. The results indicate that these mice, likely due to a predisposed sensitivity or a learned aversion, developed phobias when exposed to these specific scents, reflecting a significant mental and behavioral adaptation in response to their environment. This discovery is crucial as it highlights how environmental factors can lead to evolved behaviors over generations.

**10. In Freudian theory, what is "latent content" associated with?**

- A. The physical recovery of the body during sleep**
- B. The explicit storyline of a dream**
- C. The underlying meaning of dreams**
- D. The effect of sleep on cognitive function**

Latent content refers to the deeper, symbolic meaning of dreams in Freudian theory. Sigmund Freud believed that dreams serve as a way for the unconscious mind to express desires, thoughts, and feelings that may not be directly accessible while awake. He distinguished between manifest content, which is the actual storyline or surface-level narrative of the dream, and latent content, which encompasses the hidden meanings and interpretations behind those images and scenarios. By analyzing the latent content, Freud aimed to uncover the repressed thoughts and feelings that influence behavior and unresolved conflicts within an individual. This understanding highlights the complexity of dreams and their significance in exploring human 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://sqanational5psychology.examzify.com>**

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

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