

Studies of Religion (SOR) External Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

- 1. What is the significance of the Lotus flower in Buddhism?**
 - A. It represents the cycle of life and death**
 - B. It symbolizes purity and enlightenment rising from the mud of ignorance**
 - C. It is a sign of prosperity and abundance**
 - D. It is used in rituals for good fortune**

- 2. What concept do 'The Five Aggregates' in Buddhism describe?**
 - A. The permanence of the self**
 - B. Permanent stages of enlightenment**
 - C. Elements producing a mental being**
 - D. The nature of physical suffering**

- 3. What principle does the Golden Rule emphasize in inter-human relationships?**
 - A. Competition among individuals**
 - B. Forgiveness over justice**
 - C. Inherent human dignity and respect**
 - D. Strict adherence to laws without compassion**

- 4. What do the Kutub refer to in Islam?**
 - A. The belief in divine justice**
 - B. The belief in prophets**
 - C. The holy books**
 - D. The belief in one God**

- 5. What stage of life is represented by Brahmacharya in Hinduism?**
 - A. Householder**
 - B. Student**
 - C. Retirement**
 - D. Renunciation**

- 6. According to Leviticus 19:34, how should one treat foreigners?**
- A. With apathy and distance**
 - B. With kindness and love**
 - C. With suspicion and caution**
 - D. With indifference**
- 7. Why is Salah considered a pillar of Islam?**
- A. It is solely for individual spiritual life**
 - B. It emphasizes a report card of deeds**
 - C. It fosters community participation and connects believers to God**
 - D. It allows flexibility in prayers based on convenience**
- 8. What is Yom Kippur primarily known for?**
- A. A day of feasting and celebration**
 - B. A period of reflection and prayer**
 - C. A time for atonement and cleansing of sins**
 - D. A celebration of the Jewish New Year**
- 9. What does the term "reincarnation" refer to?**
- A. Endless cycle of suffering**
 - B. Final judgement of the soul**
 - C. Rebirth of the soul into new bodies**
 - D. Ascendance to a higher realm**
- 10. Niroda indicates what as it relates to suffering in Buddhism?**
- A. Suffering is unavoidable**
 - B. There is a solution to suffering**
 - C. Suffering is caused by ignorance**
 - D. Suffering should be embraced**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. What is the significance of the Lotus flower in Buddhism?

- A. It represents the cycle of life and death
- B. It symbolizes purity and enlightenment rising from the mud of ignorance**
- C. It is a sign of prosperity and abundance
- D. It is used in rituals for good fortune

The Lotus flower holds profound significance in Buddhism, symbolizing purity and enlightenment. This symbolism arises from the way the lotus grows and blooms: it begins in muddy waters and struggles to rise above the surface, ultimately blossoming into a beautiful flower. This growth process serves as a metaphor for the journey of individuals seeking enlightenment. In Buddhism, this journey often involves transcending worldly desires and ignorance, much like the lotus rises from the mud to achieve its full potential. Thus, the lotus flower beautifully illustrates the aspiration to attain a state of purity and enlightenment, representing how one can overcome the challenges and obstacles of life to achieve spiritual awakening. While the other options reflect some associations that can be found in various cultural contexts, they do not capture the central and specific role that the lotus plays in Buddhist teachings about spiritual growth and enlightenment. The focus on purity and rising above ignorance is what makes this answer the most relevant to the beliefs and values inherent in Buddhism.

2. What concept do 'The Five Aggregates' in Buddhism describe?

- A. The permanence of the self
- B. Permanent stages of enlightenment
- C. Elements producing a mental being**
- D. The nature of physical suffering

The concept of 'The Five Aggregates' in Buddhism describes the components that make up an individual's experience of existence and consciousness. These aggregates are: form (physical matter), feeling (sensations), perception (recognition of what one experiences), mental formations (thoughts, intentions, and emotions), and consciousness (awareness of experiences). Together, these aggregates illustrate how we construct our sense of self and identity, emphasizing that what we perceive as "self" is not a permanent, unchanging entity but rather a collection of these ever-changing components. This understanding helps to highlight that individuals do not possess a fixed identity; rather, they are an amalgamation of experiences and conditions. By recognizing the aggregates, individuals can gain insight into the nature of existence, leading to the realization that attachment to a fixed self can contribute to suffering. The aggregates provide a framework for understanding the nature of the human experience and the causes of suffering in life. The other options presented do not align with this fundamental aspect of the Five Aggregates. For instance, the permanence of the self directly contradicts Buddhist teachings, which emphasize impermanence and non-self. Similarly, the idea of permanent stages of enlightenment and elements producing a mental being do not accurately capture the aggregates' essence as

3. What principle does the Golden Rule emphasize in inter-human relationships?

- A. Competition among individuals
- B. Forgiveness over justice
- C. Inherent human dignity and respect**
- D. Strict adherence to laws without compassion

The Golden Rule is a fundamental ethical principle that emphasizes treating others as one would like to be treated. This idea underscores the importance of inherent human dignity and respect in inter-human relationships. By promoting empathy and understanding, the Golden Rule encourages individuals to consider the feelings and perspectives of others, thereby fostering a sense of community and mutual respect. This principle transcends cultural and religious boundaries, appearing in various forms across multiple traditions, which highlights its universal applicability and relevance. By focusing on the treatment of others, it inherently values each person's dignity, suggesting that everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and respect. The aspect of recognizing our shared humanity is essential to understanding the essence of inter-human relationships as described by the Golden Rule. The other options present ideas that, while significant in their own rights, do not encapsulate the core message of the Golden Rule. Competition among individuals could lead to conflict and disregard for others' dignity, while prioritizing forgiveness over justice may overlook the importance of accountability. Strict adherence to laws without compassion can result in rigid and potentially unjust interactions among people, going against the spirit of empathetic treatment that the Golden Rule advocates.

4. What do the Kutub refer to in Islam?

- A. The belief in divine justice
- B. The belief in prophets
- C. The holy books**
- D. The belief in one God

The term "Kutub" refers to the holy books in Islam, which are considered divinely revealed texts that guide the faith and practices of Muslims. The foundational texts, primarily the Qur'an, are regarded as the literal word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Alongside the Qur'an, other significant scriptures recognized in Islamic tradition include the Torah (Tawrat), Psalms (Zabur), and Gospel (Injil), each associated with different prophets sent to guide humanity. Understanding this term within the broader context of Islamic belief is essential. The other concepts presented in the options—such as divine justice, belief in prophets, and the belief in one God—are central tenets of Islamic faith but do not specifically pertain to the classification or the notion of "Kutub." This distinction highlights that "Kutub" is explicitly focused on the written texts that serve as the scripture of Islam, setting it apart from general beliefs of faith or theology.

5. What stage of life is represented by Brahmacharya in Hinduism?

A. Householder

B. Student

C. Retirement

D. Renunciation

Brahmacharya represents the stage of life associated with the student phase in Hinduism. This stage emphasizes education, learning, and the acquisition of knowledge, particularly in spiritual matters. During Brahmacharya, individuals are expected to focus on their studies, often residing in a guru's ashram and living a life of discipline and celibacy. This period is seen as foundational, where students cultivate values, self-discipline, and intellectual skills before moving on to the responsibilities of adulthood and family life. In contrast, the other stages, such as the Householder stage, involve fulfilling familial and societal duties, focusing on career and family. The Retirement stage refers to a period of withdrawal from worldly life to reflect and prepare for the end of life, while the Renunciation stage embodies a complete withdrawal from material life to pursue spiritual enlightenment. These stages come after Brahmacharya and highlight the continuum of life's progression in Hindu teachings.

6. According to Leviticus 19:34, how should one treat foreigners?

A. With apathy and distance

B. With kindness and love

C. With suspicion and caution

D. With indifference

The teaching in Leviticus 19:34 emphasizes the importance of treating foreigners with kindness and love. This directive underscores a significant principle in the Hebrew Scriptures regarding the treatment of others, particularly those who may be vulnerable or marginalized, such as foreigners or strangers. The verse itself instructs the Israelites to love the foreigner as themselves, reminding them of their own experience as outsiders in Egypt. This call to empathy and compassion reflects a broader ethical standard that promotes inclusivity and respect within the community. The focus on kindness and love highlights the necessity for individuals to actively engage with and support those who are different from them, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect. Such teachings have been pivotal in shaping moral conduct and community values throughout religious and cultural contexts, reinforcing the idea that everyone, regardless of their background, deserves dignity and kindness.

7. Why is Salah considered a pillar of Islam?

- A. It is solely for individual spiritual life
- B. It emphasizes a report card of deeds
- C. It fosters community participation and connects believers to God**
- D. It allows flexibility in prayers based on convenience

Salah, or the practice of ritual prayer in Islam, is considered a pillar of Islam primarily because it fosters community participation and establishes a direct connection between believers and God. This practice is one of the five core obligations of a Muslim, known as the Five Pillars of Islam, which are fundamental to the faith and identity of Muslims. Salah is performed five times a day, serving as a constant reminder of faith and an opportunity for Muslims to reflect on their relationship with God. The communal aspect of Salah is especially emphasized during the Friday congregational prayer, where believers gather to worship together, strengthening their community bonds and reinforcing their collective identity as Muslims. This shared experience of prayer not only enhances personal spirituality but also builds a sense of unity and mutual support among members of the community. In contrast, other options do not capture the essence of Salah's significance as a pillar. For instance, while individual spirituality is a component of Salah, it is not solely focused on personal development. The notion of a "report card of deeds" relates to accountability in Islam but is not the primary function of Salah. Furthermore, Salah is structured with specific times and formats, allowing little flexibility in terms of convenience, as the prescribed times are meant to maintain discipline and regularity.

8. What is Yom Kippur primarily known for?

- A. A day of feasting and celebration
- B. A period of reflection and prayer
- C. A time for atonement and cleansing of sins**
- D. A celebration of the Jewish New Year

Yom Kippur, also known as the Day of Atonement, is primarily recognized as a time for atonement and cleansing of sins in the Jewish tradition. It is the holiest day of the year in Judaism, emphasizing the themes of repentance, prayer, and reflection. During this day, individuals engage in fasting and intensive prayer, acknowledging their sins and seeking forgiveness from God. The day is dedicated to spiritual cleansing and reconciliation, both with oneself and with others, making atonement a central aspect of its observance. The focus on atonement is rooted in the belief that Yom Kippur presents an opportunity to repent for one's wrongdoings over the past year and to strive for a more virtuous path in the year to come. This solemn observance connects deeply with Jewish theology, emphasizing the importance of accountability and moral rectitude. In contrast, a day of feasting and celebration would be misaligned with the serious and reflective nature of Yom Kippur. Similarly, while reflection and prayer are integral components of the day's practices, the supreme emphasis on atonement is distinct and paramount, defining the essence of this important day. Lastly, the celebration of the Jewish New Year pertains to Rosh Hashanah.

9. What does the term "reincarnation" refer to?

- A. Endless cycle of suffering
- B. Final judgement of the soul
- C. Rebirth of the soul into new bodies**
- D. Ascendance to a higher realm

The term "reincarnation" specifically refers to the belief in the rebirth of the soul into new bodies after death. This concept is a fundamental aspect of various religious traditions, particularly in Hinduism and Buddhism, where it highlights the ongoing cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, known as samsara. The process is often viewed as a means for the soul to evolve and learn through different experiences across lifetimes. In the context of reincarnation, the soul is thought to transcend physical death, moving into another form of existence, which might be human, animal, or even divine, depending on the actions and karma accumulated in previous lives. This cyclical nature implies a continuous journey of the soul, with the potential for growth and development over successive lifetimes. Other choices, while related to spiritual concepts, do not accurately define reincarnation. The notion of an endless cycle of suffering pertains more to the suffering experienced within samsara rather than the specific idea of reincarnation. The final judgment of the soul aligns more closely with beliefs in an afterlife and divine judgment present in different religious traditions, which do not necessarily incorporate the idea of rebirth. Ascendance to a higher realm may also imply a form of spiritual elevation or liberation but does not

10. Niroda indicates what as it relates to suffering in Buddhism?

- A. Suffering is unavoidable
- B. There is a solution to suffering**
- C. Suffering is caused by ignorance
- D. Suffering should be embraced

In Buddhism, the term "Niroda" specifically refers to the cessation or ending of suffering. It is a fundamental concept from the Four Noble Truths, which outline the nature of suffering, its cause, the possibility of stopping it, and the path leading to its cessation. Therefore, the idea that there is a solution to suffering aligns with the essence of Niroda, as it signifies that suffering can be overcome through understanding and practice, ultimately leading to enlightenment or Nirvana. While the other options relate to aspects of suffering in Buddhism, they do not directly define Niroda. For instance, while suffering is indeed an unavoidable part of existence (as referenced in the first option), and it can be attributed to ignorance (as noted in the third option), these concepts are more aligned with the broader teachings instead of the specific notion of cessation that Niroda focuses on. Furthermore, the idea that suffering should be embraced does not reflect the Buddhist teaching, which aims for overcoming suffering rather than accepting it as a desirable state. Thus, recognizing Niroda as the solution to suffering provides clarity on this important aspect of Buddhist philosophy.

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://sorexternal.examzify.com>

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