

Western Governors University (WGU) PHIL1020 D265 Critical Thinking: Reason and Evidence 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 is meant by the term 'truth' in logical propositions?**
 - A. It is a subjective claim**
 - B. Truth can only be assessed through deductive reasoning**
 - C. Truth is an objective property of propositions**
 - D. Truth varies based on cultural perspectives**

- 2. What does 'critical reading' consist of?**
 - A. Reading quickly to grasp main ideas**
 - B. Analyzing and evaluating texts to engage thoughtfully with material**
 - C. Memorizing texts for exams**
 - D. Accepting information at face value without analysis**

- 3. What is a false premise?**
 - A. A premise that weakens an argument**
 - B. A premise that is based on an invalid assumption**
 - C. A premise that has no relation to the conclusion**
 - D. A premise that is inherently true**

- 4. What is a common form of reasoning that criticizes the origin of a claim instead of the claim itself?**
 - A. Ad hominem fallacy**
 - B. Genetic fallacy**
 - C. Straw man fallacy**
 - D. Suspension of disbelief**

- 5. What is an 'expert opinion' in argumentation?**
 - A. An unqualified guess about a subject**
 - B. A perspective based on hearsay and general knowledge**
 - C. An authoritative stance provided by a knowledgeable individual**
 - D. An opinion that lacks evidence and justification**

6. In which type of argument is the best available explanation chosen as the correct one?

- A. Deduction**
- B. Induction**
- C. Abduction**
- D. Validity**

7. Which term describes a statement that is self-contained and can be either true or false?

- A. Complex proposition**
- B. Simple proposition**
- C. Premise**
- D. Conclusion**

8. What does a strong argument map emphasize in terms of premises?

- A. All premises must support the conclusion directly**
- B. There should be a clear vertical pattern of support**
- C. Only one premise needs to be sound**
- D. Premises can be introduced without any structure**

9. What does the term "exhort" mean as used in critical communication?

- A. To discourage someone**
- B. To strongly urge or encourage someone**
- C. To disregard suggestions**
- D. To provide a detailed explanation**

10. What term describes an appeal that includes unrelated reasons to support an argument?

- A. Irrelevant Appeal**
- B. Direct Appeal**
- C. Conditional Appeal**
- D. Logical Appeal**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is meant by the term 'truth' in logical propositions?

- A. It is a subjective claim
- B. Truth can only be assessed through deductive reasoning
- C. Truth is an objective property of propositions**
- D. Truth varies based on cultural perspectives

The term 'truth' in logical propositions refers to an objective property of those propositions. In the context of logic, a proposition is considered true if it accurately corresponds to reality or if it holds under a given set of circumstances. This objectivity means that truth is not reliant on personal feelings or opinions; rather, it can be determined through logical analysis and factual verification. Logical propositions are evaluated based on their truth values, which are traditionally categorized as either true or false. This lends itself to a standardized way of assessing arguments and reasoning, enabling shared understanding and coherent discourse. In contrast to subjective claims or those that are influenced by cultural perspectives, the notion of truth in this context maintains consistency and universality, allowing for definite conclusions within logical frameworks. Therefore, the assertion that truth is an objective property of propositions aligns with the foundational principles of logical reasoning, emphasizing the importance of clarity and certainty in evaluating claims.

2. What does 'critical reading' consist of?

- A. Reading quickly to grasp main ideas
- B. Analyzing and evaluating texts to engage thoughtfully with material**
- C. Memorizing texts for exams
- D. Accepting information at face value without analysis

Critical reading involves analyzing and evaluating texts, which allows you to engage thoughtfully with the material. This process includes questioning the arguments presented, assessing the evidence provided, and considering the author's intentions and biases. By doing so, readers can develop a deeper understanding of the text and draw more informed conclusions. Engaging critically with a text promotes active rather than passive reading, enabling the reader to form their own perspectives and critiques based on careful consideration rather than simply absorbing information. This skill is essential for academic success, as it leads to more nuanced and sophisticated discussions and analyses in various fields of study.

3. What is a false premise?

- A. A premise that weakens an argument
- B. A premise that is based on an invalid assumption**
- C. A premise that has no relation to the conclusion
- D. A premise that is inherently true

A false premise refers to a statement or assumption in an argument that is not true or valid. When an argument includes a false premise, it is built on an erroneous foundation, which can undermine the argument's overall validity. Choosing an answer that indicates a premise based on an invalid assumption accurately captures this concept, highlighting that the premise does not hold true in reality, which can lead to faulty conclusions. In logical reasoning, the accuracy of premises is crucial because if any premise is false, the argument may fail to lead to a sound conclusion even if the reasoning process is logically valid. A premise based on an invalid assumption suggests that the argument is inherently flawed from the start, thus aligning perfectly with the definition of a false premise. The focus on invalid assumptions, as opposed to merely stating that a premise weakens the argument or has no relevance to the conclusion, emphasizes the foundational aspect that a false premise inherently disrupts the logical structure of the argument. By recognizing this, one can identify and challenge faulty reasoning in discussions or debates effectively.

4. What is a common form of reasoning that criticizes the origin of a claim instead of the claim itself?

- A. Ad hominem fallacy
- B. Genetic fallacy**
- C. Straw man fallacy
- D. Suspension of disbelief

The genetic fallacy is a reasoning error that occurs when the origin or source of a claim is scrutinized instead of addressing the claim's merits or evidence. It suggests that the validity of a claim is dependent solely on its source rather than on the logic or evidence supporting it. For instance, if a claim is dismissed simply because it originated from a particular person or group, rather than evaluating the claim based on its content and reasoning, this is an example of the genetic fallacy. This method of reasoning can lead to unfair conclusions and prevent a rational assessment of the actual arguments presented. While the other options also represent different forms of flawed reasoning, they focus on other aspects. For instance, the ad hominem fallacy targets the individual making the argument rather than the argument itself, while the straw man fallacy misrepresents an opponent's position to make it easier to attack. The suspension of disbelief is a practice often discussed in the context of literature and film, where an audience allows for the acceptance of fantastical elements. Thus, the genetic fallacy specifically highlights the flaw of misjudging a claim based solely on its origin, making it the correct choice in this context.

5. What is an 'expert opinion' in argumentation?

- A. An unqualified guess about a subject
- B. A perspective based on hearsay and general knowledge
- C. An authoritative stance provided by a knowledgeable individual**
- D. An opinion that lacks evidence and justification

An 'expert opinion' in argumentation is recognized as an authoritative stance provided by a knowledgeable individual. This signifies that the opinion comes from someone who has substantial experience, education, or insight into a specific area, thereby lending credibility to their viewpoints. Experts are often consulted to offer insights based on their specialized knowledge, enabling a more informed and reasoned argument. Such opinions can help clarify complex issues, provide evidence, and support claims, ultimately enhancing the argument's persuasive power. In the context of critical thinking and constructing coherent arguments, relying on expert opinions can strengthen your position, as it underscores the importance of evidence and sound reasoning supported by those who have a deep understanding of the topic at hand.

6. In which type of argument is the best available explanation chosen as the correct one?

- A. Deduction
- B. Induction
- C. Abduction**
- D. Validity

Abduction is a form of reasoning where one infers the best or most likely explanation for a set of observations or facts. It is often referred to as "inference to the best explanation." In this type of argument, rather than establishing a guaranteed conclusion from premises (as in deduction) or making a generalization based on specific instances (as in induction), the thinker analyzes the evidence at hand and posits the explanation that accounts for the observed phenomena most logically and effectively. This process involves considering several potential explanations and selecting the one that seems most plausible based on the available data. It is commonly used in scientific reasoning, everyday decision-making, and problem solving. Therefore, when one seeks to identify the best possible explanation given a set of observations, they are engaging in abductive reasoning.

7. Which term describes a statement that is self-contained and can be either true or false?

- A. Complex proposition**
- B. Simple proposition**
- C. Premise**
- D. Conclusion**

The term that best describes a statement that is self-contained and can be either true or false is a simple proposition. A simple proposition is a declarative sentence that asserts a single idea and does not contain any logical connectives, such as "and," "or," or "not," which could link it to other statements. For instance, a simple proposition could be "The sky is blue," which can be directly evaluated as true or false based on observation. This clarity and independence in meaning make it straightforward to assess its truth value. In contrast, complex propositions involve combinations of simple propositions using logical connectives or multiple ideas, making them potentially true or false based on the truth values of their components. Premises and conclusions often serve specific roles within logical arguments rather than standing alone as self-contained statements. A premise supports an argument, while a conclusion represents what follows from the premises. Therefore, the definition of a simple proposition aligns perfectly with the requirement of being self-contained and attributable with a truth value.

8. What does a strong argument map emphasize in terms of premises?

- A. All premises must support the conclusion directly**
- B. There should be a clear vertical pattern of support**
- C. Only one premise needs to be sound**
- D. Premises can be introduced without any structure**

A strong argument map emphasizes that there should be a clear vertical pattern of support, illustrating how the premises relate to one another and to the conclusion. This vertical arrangement allows for an organized representation of how each premise contributes to the overall argument. By clearly showing the connections and hierarchical relationships between the premises and the conclusion, one can assess the strength of the argument more effectively. In an argument map, each premise should build upon or support others, culminating in a coherent conclusion that follows logically from the premises. This structure not only clarifies the reasoning behind the argument but also aids in identifying any potential weaknesses or points of confusion. A well-constructed argument map will demonstrate a logical flow of ideas, helping to ensure that the argument is robust and compelling.

9. What does the term "exhort" mean as used in critical communication?

- A. To discourage someone**
- B. To strongly urge or encourage someone**
- C. To disregard suggestions**
- D. To provide a detailed explanation**

The term "exhort" in the context of critical communication refers to the act of strongly urging or encouraging someone to take a particular action or adopt a specific stance. This implies a passionate or earnest persuasion aimed at motivating individuals to pursue a goal or adhere to advice. The emphasis is on encouragement, often conveyed with enthusiasm or urgency, which aligns with the core definition of the term. In critical communication, this element of exhortation is significant as it seeks to inspire action or change in thinking among individuals or groups, making it a vital tool for effective dialogue and persuasive discourse.

10. What term describes an appeal that includes unrelated reasons to support an argument?

- A. Irrelevant Appeal**
- B. Direct Appeal**
- C. Conditional Appeal**
- D. Logical Appeal**

The term that describes an appeal that includes unrelated reasons to support an argument is an "Irrelevant Appeal." This concept arises in logical discussions when individuals attempt to persuade others by introducing points that do not adequately connect to or directly support the main argument. Such reasoning can distract from the actual issue being discussed and undermine the argument's credibility. In contrast, a direct appeal typically involves relevant and straightforward reasoning that closely ties to the argument's central point. A conditional appeal hinges on if-then scenarios and is usually rooted in propositions that establish a condition for an argument to hold. Meanwhile, a logical appeal is based on sound reasoning and evidence, ensuring that the argument presented is cogent and relevant. The "Irrelevant Appeal" fundamentally demonstrates the pitfalls of introducing unrelated reasons, highlighting the importance of coherence in effective argumentation.

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://wgu-phil1020-d265.examzify.com>

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

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