EARTH SCIENCE – EARTH'S WATERS PRACTICE TEST (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.

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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!

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Questions

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1. What energy source drives the water cycle?

A. Sun

B. Moon

C. Wind

D. Gravity

2. What is the typical salinity of seawater in ppt?

A. 35 ppt

B. 30 ppt

C. 40 ppt

D. 25 ppt

3. Which statement best describes the sequence of processes that shape sediment in a river?

A. Erosion wears away banks and bed; transport moves sediment via bedload and suspended load; deposition occurs when velocity drops, forming bars, point bars, and deltas.

B. Deposition occurs when velocity increases, forming bars and deltas.

C. Erosion reduces sediment; transport moves sediment uphill; deposition forms cliffs instantly.

D. Sediment is never transported by rivers.

4. What is the effect of dam construction on sediment transport?

A. Sediment transport increases downstream

B. No effect on sediment

C. Sediment trapping reduces downstream sediment transport, altering channel form and floodplain ecosystems

D. Sediment transport doubles downstream

5. Which process results when water vapor changes to a liquid, forming droplets on a cold surface?

A. Condensation

B. Evaporation

C. Melting

D. Sublimation

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6. Three common types of wetlands?

A. Marshes, swamps, and wetlands

B. Marshes, wetlands, and rivers

C. Ponds, lakes, and wetlands

D. Rivers, marshes, and swamps

7. What is a cone of depression?

A. A localized lowering of the water table around a pumped well, caused by groundwater pumping exceeding recharge.

B. A rising water table around a pumped well.

C. A surface depression due to evaporation.

D. An area of groundwater warming.

8. Which pair consists of heating processes?

A. Melting and Evaporation

B. Condensation and Freezing

C. Melting and Condensation

D. Evaporation and Freezing

9. Which term describes the lowest point of a wave?

A. Crest

B. Trough

C. Wavelength

D. Amplitude

10. What surface property gives water its characteristic 'skin'?

A. Surface tension

B. Boiling point

C. Viscosity

D. Density

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What energy source drives the water cycle?

A. Sun

B. Moon

C. Wind

D. Gravity

The Sun powers the water cycle. Solar radiation heats surface water in oceans, rivers, and soils, causing evaporation. Plants also contribute through transpiration, adding water vapor to the air. As this water vapor rises and cools, it condenses into clouds, and when the clouds become saturated, precipitation falls back to Earth, continuing the cycle. Gravity plays a supporting role by pulling rain downward and driving infiltration and runoff, but it isn't the energy source that drives evaporation and cloud formation. Wind results from temperature differences created by solar heating and helps transport moisture, yet the energy behind the cycle comes from the Sun's heat.

2. What is the typical salinity of seawater in ppt?

A. 35 ppt

B. 30 ppt

C. 40 ppt

D. 25 ppt

Salinity measures how much dissolved salt is in seawater, usually expressed in parts per thousand. In the open ocean, the average salinity is about 35 practical salinity units, which is essentially 35 ppt. This is the standard value you'll see in most global ocean datasets, though local conditions can push it a bit higher or lower (evaporation can raise salinity toward ~40 ppt in some regions, while freshwater input lowers it in estuaries and coastal areas). The other options are either too dilute or too saline for the typical open-ocean value, so the best answer is 35 ppt.

3. Which statement best describes the sequence of processes that shape sediment in a river?

A. Erosion wears away banks and bed; transport moves sediment via bedload and suspended load; deposition occurs when velocity drops, forming bars, point bars, and deltas.

B. Deposition occurs when velocity increases, forming bars and deltas.

C. Erosion reduces sediment; transport moves sediment uphill; deposition forms cliffs instantly.

D. Sediment is never transported by rivers.

The main idea is that river sediment is shaped by a sequence of erosion, transport, and deposition. Erosion wears away the river's banks and bed, using the moving water to grind and loosen/material. Once sediment is loosened, it is carried by the flow in two main ways: as bedload, where coarser particles roll or slide along the bottom, and as suspended load, where finer particles are carried within the water itself. The amount and form of sediment the river can carry depend on the flow's velocity and energy. When the flow slows, its carrying capacity drops and sediment settles out, piling up to create features like bars in the channel, point bars on inner bends, and deltas at the mouth where the river enters a larger body of water. Deposition happens as velocity decreases, not increases, and rivers don't transport sediment uphill or deposit cliffs instantly. This sequence—erosion, transport, deposition—is what continually reshapes river sediment and channels.

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4. What is the effect of dam construction on sediment transport?

A. Sediment transport increases downstream

B. No effect on sediment

C. Sediment trapping reduces downstream sediment transport, altering channel form and floodplain ecosystems

D. Sediment transport doubles downstream

Dam construction changes sediment transport by creating a reservoir where water slows and sediments settle out. This traps large amounts of sediment that would normally travel downstream, so less material moves downriver. With reduced sediment supply downstream, the river can erode its bed and banks more easily, which alters the channel's shape. This sediment-starved condition also affects floodplain ecosystems that rely on regular sediment deposition for nutrients and habitat structure. Over time, these processes can lead to changes in channel form, such as incision or altered meandering, and disrupt floodplain habitats. The other options don't fit because they imply more sediment moves downstream or no change at all, which isn't consistent with how reservoirs trap sediment.

5. Which process results when water vapor changes to a liquid, forming droplets on a cold surface?

A. Condensation

B. Evaporation

C. Melting

D. Sublimation

Condensation occurs when water vapor in the air loses enough energy to become a liquid, especially as it meets a surface that is cooler than the surrounding air. The cold surface lowers the vapor's energy, causing the gas molecules to slow and stick together, forming tiny liquid droplets—this is why you see dew on a cold window or beads on a chilled glass. This happens when the air is near or at its dew point, so the vapor can no longer stay as a gas. Evaporation would be liquid turning into vapor, typically when a liquid is exposed to warmth or reduced pressure. Melting is solid turning into liquid. Sublimation is solid turning directly into gas. Hence condensation is the process that forms droplets on a cold surface.

6. Three common types of wetlands?

A. Marshes, swamps, and wetlands

B. Marshes, wetlands, and rivers

C. Ponds, lakes, and wetlands

D. Rivers, marshes, and swamps

Wetlands are water-saturated environments that include distinct forms with characteristic plants and soils. The three common types you'll encounter are marshes, swamps, and bogs (peat-forming wetlands, sometimes including fens). Marshes are dominated by grasses, reeds, and other herbaceous plants and often have open water or shallow areas. Swamps feature woody plants—trees and shrubs—growing in flooded soils. Bogs and similar peatlands are acidic, waterlogged places where peat builds up from partially decomposed plant material, supporting specialized vegetation. This set fits the topic better than options that list general bodies of water like rivers or lakes, which are not wetlands themselves. The term wetlands describes the ecosystem category, while marshes, swamps, and peat-forming wetlands like bogs or fens are the classic types within that category.

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7. What is a cone of depression?

A. A localized lowering of the water table around a pumped well, caused by groundwater pumping exceeding recharge.

B. A rising water table around a pumped well.

C. A surface depression due to evaporation.

D. An area of groundwater warming.

A cone of depression occurs when groundwater is pumped faster than it can be recharged, causing the water table to drop locally around the pumped well. As water is removed, the surrounding groundwater flows toward the well, pulling the water table down more near the center and less far away, which in cross-section looks like a cone dipping toward the well. This is a sign of drawdown from pumping. The other options describe a rise in the water table, surface evaporation features, or groundwater warming, none of which match the effect of sustained pumping on the water table.

8. Which pair consists of heating processes?

A. Melting and Evaporation

B. Condensation and Freezing

C. Melting and Condensation

D. Evaporation and Freezing

Endothermic phase changes absorb heat, so a pair that includes two processes requiring energy input is the one that's being tested. Melting, where a solid becomes a liquid, needs energy to weaken the crystal structure; evaporation, where a liquid becomes a gas, also needs energy to allow molecules to escape into the vapor phase. That means both steps in the pair are heating processes. In the other options, at least one step releases heat rather than absorbing it. Condensation (gas to liquid) and freezing (liquid to solid) are exothermic, releasing heat as the substance changes state. So they aren't both heating processes. Similarly, mixing a heating process with a cooling one in the remaining pairs shows they aren't both heating either.

9. Which term describes the lowest point of a wave?

A. Crest

B. Trough

C. Wavelength

D. Amplitude

In waves, the lowest point is the trough. Imagine waves on the ocean surface moving up and down around a flat, calm water level—the top of a wave is called the crest, and the bottom is the trough. Wavelength is the distance from one crest to the next crest (or from one trough to the next trough), while amplitude is how high the wave rises from the rest level to the crest (or how deep it drops to the trough). So, the term for the lowest point is trough.

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10. What surface property gives water its characteristic 'skin'?

A. Surface tension

B. Boiling point

C. Viscosity

D. Density

Surface tension is the property that creates water's skin. It comes from the cohesive forces between water molecules, especially hydrogen bonds, which pull the molecules at the surface inward toward the bulk. Because surface molecules have fewer neighbors to attract to, they experience a net inward force, forming a tight, elastic-like layer at the surface. This "skin" lets water form droplets, supports lightweight items on the surface, and gives water its characteristic surface behavior. The other properties—boiling point, viscosity, and density—describe temperature for phase change, flow resistance, and mass per volume, but they don't produce the surface film that water's skin comes from.

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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://earthscienceearthswaters.examzify.com

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

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