SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK (SWK) CONTENT EXAM 184 PRACTICE (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. Under FERPA, who has the rights to inspect and review education records?

A. Both parents and eligible students have rights to inspect and review education records.

B. Only school administrators have access.

C. Only the student has rights.

D. No one has rights.

2. What type of trauma includes repetitive, prolonged and cumulative trauma such as neglect by primary caregivers at developmentally vulnerable ages?

A. Acute trauma

B. Chronic trauma

C. Complex trauma

D. Vicarious trauma

3. A recent survey at FrankField middle school shows teachers lack awareness of the school social worker's resources. Which approach is most effective to inform teachers quickly?

A. Prepare and distribute a brief letter containing contact information and an outline of the resources offered by the social worker

B. meet individually with each teacher to explain the resources they offer and discuss specific students for which those resources might be appropriate

C. Send all teachers an email welcoming them to make an appointment with the social worker if they would like more information about the resources she provides

D. Require all teachers to attend a series of classes to educate them about the resources that the social worker has to offer

4. Which scenario would most likely qualify for protection under Section 504 but not the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?

A. A student who is in a wheelchair, but has no other disabilities

B. A student who has an auditory disorder that affects her ability to learn

C. A student who has an emotional disability that prevents him from functioning in a normal classroom

D. A student with ADHD who cannot concentrate on assignments

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5. A genogram is primarily used to identify patterns across generations.

A. Medical history of a single individual

B. Family relationships and patterns across generations

C. School grades across grades

D. Family income trends

6. For a student with a mild hearing impairment in a mainstream classroom, which adaptation is most appropriate to ensure that instructions are understood?

A. Refer the student for special education services because she cannot succeed in a mainstream classroom

B. Ask the student's teachers to stand very near the student and speak very loudly at all times

C. Give the student extra homework so that her parents can explain the lessons to her

D. Ask the teacher to ensure that instructions are delivered in a loud and clear voice, and to go back over the main points with the student after instruction is given to ensure that she heard and understood it

7. To conduct an initial ADHD screening of a 5th-grade student, which approach is most appropriate?

A. Have the student complete a written assessment

B. Call the student's parents in to discuss behavior at home

C. Ask the student's teacher to complete an observational assessment during instruction

D. Visit the student's classroom and personally conduct an observational assessment of the student's behavior

8. In which decade did school social workers deal with more diverse populations in the profession?

A. 1980s

B. 1970s

C. 1990s

D. 2000s

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9. Which of the following is important when providing counseling to children of diverse cultural backgrounds

A. Developing a trusting relationship

B. Avoiding discussion of culture

C. Relying on translator alone

D. Standardizing therapy methods regardless of culture

10. Which of the following exemplify methods used to allocate school social work staff?

A. Only the Number of Students

B. The Calendar Year

C. Numbers of Buildings Served; Numbers of Students; Numbers of Districts Served; Students Grouped by Age; Numbers of Teachers/Staff Served; Types of Problems/Issues/Concerns; Categories of Students; Specific Expertise of the Staff

D. The District Budget

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Under FERPA, who has the rights to inspect and review education records?

A. Both parents and eligible students have rights to inspect and review education records.

B. Only school administrators have access.

C. Only the student has rights.

D. No one has rights.

FERPA ensures that the right to inspect and review education records belongs to the parents or guardians of a minor student and to the student themselves once they are an eligible student (typically age 18 or attending a postsecondary institution). This means both the parents of a younger student and the student who meets eligibility can review the records. School officials may access records for legitimate educational reasons, but the explicit right to inspect rests with the parents/guardians and the eligible student, not only with administrators. So, the combination of parental rights for a minor and student rights upon reaching eligibility best captures who can inspect and review education records.

2. What type of trauma includes repetitive, prolonged and cumulative trauma such as neglect by primary caregivers at developmentally vulnerable ages?

A. Acute trauma

B. Chronic trauma

C. Complex trauma

D. Vicarious trauma

Trauma that is ongoing and cumulative over time—especially when it comes from a caregiver during childhood or other sensitive developmental periods—is described as chronic trauma. In this scenario, neglect by primary caregivers represents repeated exposure to harmful conditions that accumulate effects on development, rather than a single event. It's not about a one-time incident (acute trauma), nor is it about secondary exposure to others' injuries (vicarious trauma). While complex trauma can involve ongoing abuse and attachment disruptions, the straightforward fit for repetitive, prolonged caregiver neglect during vulnerable years is chronic trauma.

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3. A recent survey at FrankField middle school shows teachers lack awareness of the school social worker's resources. Which approach is most effective to inform teachers quickly?

A. Prepare and distribute a brief letter containing contact information and an outline of the resources offered by the social worker

B. meet individually with each teacher to explain the resources they offer and discuss specific students for which those resources might be appropriate

C. Send all teachers an email welcoming them to make an appointment with the social worker if they would like more information about the resources she provides

D. Require all teachers to attend a series of classes to educate them about the resources that the social worker has to offer

Getting staff informed about available supports works best when you provide a concise, accessible message that reaches everyone at once. A brief letter that lays out contact information and a clear outline of the social worker's resources does exactly that. It gives all teachers the same, easy-to-reference summary they can skim quickly, save, and revisit whenever needed. The format is efficient to distribute—through campus mail, a staff portal, or a quick handout at a meeting—and it avoids placing extra time burdens on teachers or requiring them to participate in trainings just to learn what's available. Including concrete examples of when to involve the social worker and how to contact them helps teachers know how to use the resources in real situations. In contrast, meeting individually, sending only a general invitation by email, or mandating lengthy trainings would take more time and effort and may not reach everyone promptly.

4. Which scenario would most likely qualify for protection under Section 504 but not the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?

A. A student who is in a wheelchair, but has no other disabilities

B. A student who has an auditory disorder that affects her ability to learn

C. A student who has an emotional disability that prevents him from functioning in a normal classroom

D. A student with ADHD who cannot concentrate on assignments

Section 504 protects students with disabilities from discrimination and requires accommodations to access the learning environment, even if they don't need specialized instruction. A mobility impairment, like being in a wheelchair, classifies as a disability that substantially limits a major life activity (ambulation). In this case, the school would provide accommodations (accessible classrooms, seating, transportation, etc.) so the student can participate in school. IDEA, on the other hand, covers students who need specially designed instruction because their disability directly affects learning and falls into one of the IDEA categories. If the student's situation doesn't involve a learning impairment that requires individualized instruction, they wouldn't qualify for an IEP under IDEA. That's why this scenario is most consistent with Section 504 protections rather than IDEA.

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5. A genogram is primarily used to identify patterns across generations.

A. Medical history of a single individual

B. Family relationships and patterns across generations

C. School grades across grades

D. Family income trends

Genograms map a family across generations to show how people are related and what has happened in previous generations. This visual tool highlights patterns in health, behavior, family roles, and significant life events that recur over time, helping a school social worker understand hereditary risks, family dynamics, and the supports a student might need. Focusing on the medical history of a single individual misses the broader family context and the connections across generations. Looking at school grades centers on one person's academic performance rather than family patterns. Tracking family income trends deals with economics and, while potentially informative, does not capture the relational and generational patterns a genogram is designed to reveal.

6. For a student with a mild hearing impairment in a mainstream classroom, which adaptation is most appropriate to ensure that instructions are understood?

A. Refer the student for special education services because she cannot succeed in a mainstream classroom

B. Ask the student's teachers to stand very near the student and speak very loudly at all times

C. Give the student extra homework so that her parents can explain the lessons to her

D. Ask the teacher to ensure that instructions are delivered in a loud and clear voice, and to go back over the main points with the student after instruction is given to ensure that she heard and understood it

Clear, accessible communication during instruction and explicit checks for understanding are key when supporting a student with a mild hearing impairment in a mainstream classroom. Delivering instructions in a loud and clear voice helps ensure the student can hear the information the first time, reducing missed details. Going back over the main points after instruction reinforces understanding, gives the student a chance to confirm receipt of the core ideas, and allows for quick clarification if something wasn't clear. This approach keeps the student integrated in the classroom while actively supporting comprehension. Refering the student for special education services isn't necessary for a mild impairment in many cases, and could pull the student out of the mainstream setting unnecessarily. Standing very near and speaking loudly all the time isn't practical or always effective—it can be socially awkward, tiring, and doesn't ensure that the student grasps the main ideas. Relying on extra homework for parents to explain lessons shifts responsibility away from in-class supports and doesn't address understanding during instruction. So, delivering directions in a clear, well-modulated voice and summarizing the key points afterward directly targets understanding during instruction and supports ongoing access to learning.

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7. To conduct an initial ADHD screening of a 5th-grade student, which approach is most appropriate?

A. Have the student complete a written assessment

B. Call the student's parents in to discuss behavior at home

C. Ask the student's teacher to complete an observational assessment during instruction

D. Visit the student's classroom and personally conduct an observational assessment of the student's behavior

Observing the student in the actual classroom during instruction provides in-context information about how they manage attention, follow directions, stay seated, and complete tasks when the demands of learning are present. This live observational data shows how behaviors unfold over typical school activities, across transitions, and during tasks that require sustained focus, which are precisely the areas where ADHD symptoms manifest and impair functioning in school. A direct classroom observation by a trained observer yields objective, real-time evidence of the student's behavior in the learning environment. It helps determine whether patterns of inattention, hyperactivity, or impulsivity are pervasive enough to interfere with academic performance and social interaction, which guides whether a fuller evaluation is warranted. Relying on a written self-report from a fifth grader is less reliable for screening ADHD because young students may have limited self-awareness or may under- or over-report symptoms. Gathering information solely from home can be helpful for context, but home behavior does not substitute for school functioning, and ADHD symptoms must be evident across settings. Having a teacher complete an observational assessment is valuable, but direct, in-person observation in the classroom provides more comprehensive, immediate, and context-rich data to inform initial screening and next steps. Therefore, this in-context, live observation is the most appropriate first approach.

8. In which decade did school social workers deal with more diverse populations in the profession?

A. 1980s

B. 1970s

C. 1990s

D. 2000s

Diversity in student populations and families expanded in the 1990s due to immigration and demographic shifts, so school social workers began routinely engaging with linguistic and cultural differences across communities. This era pushed practice toward cultural competence, family engagement, and community partnerships, with supports tailored to varied backgrounds and languages. As a result, more diverse populations became a central part of daily school social work, making the 1990s the decade when this broadened diversity was most prominent in practice.

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9. Which of the following is important when providing counseling to children of diverse cultural backgrounds

A. Developing a trusting relationship

B. Avoiding discussion of culture

C. Relying on translator alone

D. Standardizing therapy methods regardless of culture

Establishing a trusting relationship is essential because trust creates a safe space where a child can openly share thoughts, feelings, and experiences that are shaped by culture. When trust is present, the counselor can attend respectfully to cultural values, beliefs, and family dynamics, tailor interventions appropriately, and engage the child and family in collaborative problem-solving. This alliance reduces fear or defensiveness that can arise from cultural differences and helps ensure the child feels understood and valued. Discussing culture is important because culture shapes how distress is expressed and what supports are considered acceptable; avoiding culture can lead to misinterpretation and disengagement. Relying on a translator alone is insufficient because language is just one piece of meaning—translation can miss context, nonverbal cues, and trust-building, potentially introducing bias or misunderstandings. Standardizing therapy methods regardless of culture ignores differences in beliefs, family structure, and communication styles, which can reduce relevance and effectiveness.

10. Which of the following exemplify methods used to allocate school social work staff?

A. Only the Number of Students

B. The Calendar Year

C. Numbers of Buildings Served; Numbers of Students; Numbers of Districts Served; Students Grouped by Age; Numbers of Teachers/Staff Served; Types of Problems/Issues/Concerns; Categories of Students; Specific Expertise of the Staff

D. The District Budget

Allocating school social work staff relies on workload and service needs rather than a single metric. In practice, districts look at multiple indicators to determine how many social workers are needed and where they should be assigned. This includes the number of buildings the team must cover, the total number of students, the number of districts served, and how students are grouped by age. It also considers how many teachers and staff the social workers will collaborate with, the types of problems or concerns students are facing, categories of students with specific needs, and the particular expertise of the staff. Together, these factors create a fuller picture of demand and capacity, guiding staffing in a way that matches service needs across settings. Relying on only the number of students misses important differences in school structure and demand; the calendar year doesn't capture workload dynamics, and the district budget, while influential, doesn't directly specify how to allocate staff based on case load and service needs.

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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:

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

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