SOCIAL STRATIFICATION 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. In Weber's framework, do all classes have unique behaviors?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Only the middle class

D. Only the lower class

2. What is meritocracy?

A. Meritocracy is the idea that social rewards are distributed according to merit (talent and effort).

B. Meritocracy is a system where rewards are distributed based on wealth and birth.

C. Meritocracy is a system where rewards are shared equally regardless of effort.

D. Meritocracy is a system where social rewards are distributed according to random assignment.

3. Which of the following is NOT a listed source of power?

A. Control over Resources

B. Political/Authority

C. Physical Force

D. Public opinion

4. Which statement correctly contrasts dependency theory with modernization theory in explaining global inequality?

A. Modernization theory argues wealthier nations exploit poorer ones, keeping them underdeveloped; dependency theory posits internal modernization and steps toward development.

B. Dependency theory argues wealthier nations exploit poorer ones, keeping them underdeveloped; modernization theory posits that all countries can progress through similar development steps with internal modernization and adaptation.

C. Both theories agree that wealthier nations can independently progress without exploitation.

D. Modernization theory asserts that global inequality is solely due to cultural differences.

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5. Why is there social inequality?

A. Because society is organized by hierarchies of class, race, and gender that unequally distribute access to resources and rights.

B. Because everyone earns the same.

C. Because there is no competition for resources.

D. Because it is random.

6. What does conflict theory attribute stratification to?

A. Lack of opportunity and discrimination against marginalized groups.

B. Innate talent differences.

C. Pure meritocracy.

D. Random chance.

7. What does the Lorenz curve illustrate in relation to income distribution?

A. The cumulative share of income across percentiles; deviations from the 45-degree line indicate the level of inequality.

B. It shows unemployment trends over time.

C. It maps the distribution of educational attainment across groups.

D. It represents total national GDP by sector.

8. Which concept describes the idea that overlapping social identities create unique experiences of inequality that cannot be understood by examining any single category alone?

A. Intersectionality is the idea that overlapping social identities (race, gender, class, etc.) create unique experiences of advantage or disadvantage that cannot be understood by examining any single category alone

B. Intersectionality claims that a single category determines social outcomes

C. Intersectionality denies any role for race in inequality

D. Intersectionality is a measure of occupational prestige

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9. The matrix of domination contends that stratification is an overarching system across multiple axes such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, with each system reinforcing others. Which statement best captures this concept?

A. Each type of stratification (race, gender, class, sexuality) is part of an overarching system of beliefs that some groups are superior while others are inferior; each system relies on the others.

B. Stratification is determined by a single factor such as class alone.

C. It denies any interaction between different forms of oppression.

D. It asserts that inequality is entirely natural and not connected to beliefs.

10. Identify two education policy mechanisms to reduce intergenerational inequality.

A. Expanding high-quality early childhood education and reducing tracking or unequal school funding to ensure equal opportunities across generations.

B. Increasing tracking and reducing school funding.

C. Removing all public schools.

D. Focusing solely on college subsidies.

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. In Weber's framework, do all classes have unique behaviors?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Only the middle class

D. Only the lower class

Weber's view connects class to life chances—the opportunities and constraints shaped by one's economic position—and shows these differences push people into distinct patterns of behavior. Because wealth, education, and social networks vary by class, each stratum tends to develop its own typical way of living, working, spending, and relating to others. So, there are distinctive behavioral tendencies associated with different classes, even though individuals within a class can still vary. The idea that all behavior is the same, or that only one class has unique behavior, doesn't fit Weber's emphasis on how different life chances across strata guide actions.

2. What is meritocracy?

A. Meritocracy is the idea that social rewards are distributed according to merit (talent and effort).

B. Meritocracy is a system where rewards are distributed based on wealth and birth.

C. Meritocracy is a system where rewards are shared equally regardless of effort.

D. Meritocracy is a system where social rewards are distributed according to random assignment.

Meritocracy means rewards and advancement are earned through merit—talent, ability, and effort—rather than by birth or wealth. It rests on the idea that opportunities, status, and resources should go to those who can demonstrate capability and hard work, aligning rewards with personal performance. This is what makes it the best description: it specifically captures the claim that success comes from what someone can do and how hard they try, not from who they are born to or random chance. In contrast, systems based on wealth or birth distribute rewards based on inheritance or status, arrangements that divide rewards equally regardless of effort bypass individual performance, or random assignment ties outcomes to luck rather than merit.

3. Which of the following is NOT a listed source of power?

A. Control over Resources

B. Political/Authority

C. Physical Force

D. Public opinion

Power comes from different sources that allow someone to influence others directly. Controlling resources gives you economic leverage, since access to materials, money, or wealth lets you reward or punish others. Political authority provides legitimacy to make and enforce decisions within a system. The ability to use physical force offers coercive power, enabling you to compel actions through threats or sanctions. Public opinion, while powerful in shaping what is acceptable or supported and influencing leaders' decisions, isn't a direct tool you wield to compel or control others. It's a social pressure that can support or constrain actions but doesn't itself grant the means to enforce rules, allocate resources, or coerce behavior.

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4. Which statement correctly contrasts dependency theory with modernization theory in explaining global inequality?

A. Modernization theory argues wealthier nations exploit poorer ones, keeping them underdeveloped; dependency theory posits internal modernization and steps toward development.

B. Dependency theory argues wealthier nations exploit poorer ones, keeping them underdeveloped; modernization theory posits that all countries can progress through similar development steps with internal modernization and adaptation.

C. Both theories agree that wealthier nations can independently progress without exploitation.

D. Modernization theory asserts that global inequality is solely due to cultural differences.

The main idea here is how global inequality is explained: through external forces and history, or through internal pathways of development. Dependency theory says wealthier nations maintain their advantage by exploiting poorer ones, shaping trade and investment so that underdevelopment in poorer regions persists. Modernization theory, on the other hand, argues that all countries can progress along a similar path of development by making internal changes—adopting market institutions, technology, and cultural shifts that move societies from traditional to modern stages. This contrast matters because it highlights two different mechanisms. Dependency theory emphasizes structural constraints created by powerful economies—historical exploitation, unequal exchange, and dependence that hinders growth. Modernization theory envisions a universal route to development, where internal reforms and adaptation drive progress regardless of a country's starting point. So the statement that best captures the contrast is that dependency theory emphasizes external exploitation that keeps some countries underdeveloped, while modernization theory emphasizes internal modernization and a common set of steps toward development. The other ideas either mix up who is doing the exploiting, claim there's no exploitation, or reduce inequality to culture alone.

5. Why is there social inequality?

A. Because society is organized by hierarchies of class, race, and gender that unequally distribute access to resources and rights.

B. Because everyone earns the same.

C. Because there is no competition for resources.

D. Because it is random.

Social inequality comes from how society is organized into hierarchies—based on class, race, and gender—that give some groups greater access to resources and rights than others. Because these hierarchies shape who can earn income, get quality education, receive decent healthcare, own property, and hold political power, opportunities and rewards are distributed unevenly. Institutions like schools, labor markets, laws, and media reinforce these gaps by creating and maintaining advantages for some and barriers for others, so the pattern persists over time and across generations. That structured, systemic view explains why inequality is widespread and durable, rather than something random or solely due to individual effort. The other ideas don't fit because they imply universal equality, no competition, or randomness, none of which reflect how social arrangements continuously produce unequal outcomes.

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6. What does conflict theory attribute stratification to?

A. Lack of opportunity and discrimination against marginalized groups.

B. Innate talent differences.

C. Pure meritocracy.

D. Random chance.

Conflict theory explains stratification as a result of power and control over resources. It argues that dominant groups maintain their advantages by creating and enforcing systems that limit opportunities for others, leading to persistent inequality through discriminatory practices, unequal access to education and jobs, and political influence. This perspective emphasizes how social structure and power dynamics shape who gets rewards, rather than attributing inequality to natural talent, a flawless merit system, or randomness.

7. What does the Lorenz curve illustrate in relation to income distribution?

A. The cumulative share of income across percentiles; deviations from the 45-degree line indicate the level of inequality.

B. It shows unemployment trends over time.

C. It maps the distribution of educational attainment across groups.

D. It represents total national GDP by sector.

The Lorenz curve visually represents how income is distributed across the population and how unequal that distribution is. It plots the cumulative share of income earned by the bottom portion of people (the population percentiles) against the cumulative share of people themselves. If everyone had exactly the same income, the curve would sit right on the 45-degree line, showing perfect equality. When inequality exists, the curve bows below that line—the more it bows, the more income is concentrated among a smaller group at the top. The larger the deviation from the diagonal, the higher the inequality, with the Gini coefficient describing that gap. This is why the statement about the cumulative share of income across percentiles and deviations from the 45-degree line best captures what the Lorenz curve illustrates. The other options describe different phenomena—unemployment trends, distribution of educational attainment, or GDP by sector—which are not what the Lorenz curve is used to depict.

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8. Which concept describes the idea that overlapping social identities create unique experiences of inequality that cannot be understood by examining any single category alone?

A. Intersectionality is the idea that overlapping social identities (race, gender, class, etc.) create unique experiences of advantage or disadvantage that cannot be understood by examining any single category alone

B. Intersectionality claims that a single category determines social outcomes

C. Intersectionality denies any role for race in inequality

D. Intersectionality is a measure of occupational prestige

Intersectionality describes how overlapping social identities—such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability—combine to create unique experiences of inequality that cannot be understood by looking at any single category in isolation. Because these identities interact, they shape access to resources, opportunities, and social power in ways that are not simply additive; the combined effect can amplify or alter discrimination and privilege in context-specific ways. For example, the challenges faced by a Black woman in the workplace can differ from those faced by a Black man or a white woman, reflecting how race and gender together create distinct dynamics of bias and opportunity. This framework emphasizes that outcomes of inequality emerge from the interplay of multiple identities rather than from any one category alone. Choices that suggest a single category determines outcomes miss the point, since intersectionality centers how identities interlock. Saying race plays no role contradicts the idea that overlapping identities shape experience. Describing intersectionality as a measure of occupational prestige shifts focus away from identity-based dynamics to a different concept altogether.

9. The matrix of domination contends that stratification is an overarching system across multiple axes such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, with each system reinforcing others. Which statement best captures this concept?

A. Each type of stratification (race, gender, class, sexuality) is part of an overarching system of beliefs that some groups are superior while others are inferior; each system relies on the others.

B. Stratification is determined by a single factor such as class alone.

C. It denies any interaction between different forms of oppression.

D. It asserts that inequality is entirely natural and not connected to beliefs.

The main idea here is that domination is built from interlocking systems of oppression that reinforce each other across race, gender, class, sexuality, and more. These forms of stratification don't operate in isolation; they share beliefs, institutions, and practices that keep some groups at the top and others at the bottom, and each system helps sustain the others. That's why the statement describing an overarching set of beliefs that some groups are superior while others are inferior, with each form of oppression relying on the others, best captures the concept. In real life, people who belong to multiple marginalized groups experience how racism and sexism, for example, amplify barriers in work, education, and daily life in ways that can't be understood by looking at one axis alone. The matrix of domination highlights this interdependence and the ideological rationale that supports it. Choices that suggest stratification comes from a single factor, deny interaction between oppressions, or claim inequality is natural and unconnected to beliefs misrepresent how intertwined and ideologically grounded these systems are.

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10. Identify two education policy mechanisms to reduce intergenerational inequality.

A. Expanding high-quality early childhood education and reducing tracking or unequal school funding to ensure equal opportunities across generations.

B. Increasing tracking and reducing school funding.

C. Removing all public schools.

D. Focusing solely on college subsidies.

This item tests how education policy can break the cycle of disadvantage across generations. The strongest approach combines expanding high-quality early childhood education with reducing tracking and unequal school funding. Early childhood education sets foundational skills and social development on a solid trajectory, and high-quality programs are shown to yield long-term gains in learning, earnings, and opportunities, which helps limit how much a family's status is passed down. At the same time, reducing tracking keeps students in more diverse, whole-class settings and broadens access to advanced coursework, while addressing unequal funding ensures schools serving disadvantaged communities have the resources to offer comparable opportunities. Together, these two mechanisms tackle both the early formation of abilities and the school environment that shapes subsequent outcomes, making intergenerational inequality less likely to persist. Choosing options that increase tracking or cut funding would likely widen gaps rather than close them, removing all public schools would create unequal access and instability, and focusing only on college subsidies ignores early-life disadvantages that set the stage for later outcomes.

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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://socialstratification.examzify.com

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

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