US SUPREME COURT CASES 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. Which case overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022?

A. Grutter v. Bollinger

B. Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health

C. Brown v. Board of Education

D. Loving v. Virginia

2. Which case was pivotal in establishing the federal government's ability to enforce civil rights protections in public accommodations under the Commerce Clause?

A. Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States

B. Gideon v. Wainwright

C. United States v. Morrison

D. Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. NRDC

3. Which case established the power to tax and spend for the general welfare and implied powers?

A. McCulloch v. Maryland

B. Gibbons v. Ogden

C. United States v. Lopez

D. Wickard v. Filburn

4. What did Barron v. Baltimore decide about applying of the Bill of Rights?

A. It restrained only national government, not states and cities.

B. The Bill of Rights applied to cities but not states.

C. It restrained both national and state governments.

D. It did not apply to the First Amendment.

5. Which case held that flag burning constitutes protected First Amendment speech?

A. Stromberg v. California

B. Brandenburg v. Ohio

C. Texas v. Johnson

D. Schenck v. United States

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6. Which case determined that state officials violated the First Amendment when they authored a prayer to be recited in schools?

A. Gideon v. Wainwright

B. Engel v. Vitale

C. School District of Abbington Township v. Schempp

D. Griswold v. Connecticut

7. The death penalty framework in Gregg v. Georgia was later reconsidered in which case?

A. Roe v. Wade

B. Zurcher v. Stanford Daily

C. Furman v. Georgia

D. Plyler v. Doe

8. Which case upheld the authority to require individuals to purchase health insurance as a tax?

A. Cooley v. Board of Wardens

B. Miranda v. Arizona

C. Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. NRDC

D. National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius

9. Which case held that government may not compel students to salute the flag or engage in patriotic expression?

A. Schenck v. United States

B. Brown v. Board of Education

C. Dred Scott v. Sandford

D. West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette

10. Which case prohibited mandatory Bible readings in public schools?

A. Engel v. Vitale (1962)

B. Abington School District v. Schempp (1963)

C. Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)

D. Obergefell v. Hodges (2015)

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which case overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022?

A. Grutter v. Bollinger

B. Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health

C. Brown v. Board of Education

D. Loving v. Virginia

The question tests understanding of how the Supreme Court can overturn a prior ruling by reversing the constitutional interpretation it relied on. In 2022, the Court's decision in a case involving Mississippi's abortion law held that there is no longer a federal constitutional right to abortion, thereby overturning Roe v. Wade (and the accompanying Casey framework) and returning the authority to regulate abortion to the states. This is why it's the best answer: it directly and explicitly reversed Roe's protection, changing the national legal landscape rather than addressing a different issue. The other listed cases deal with separate topics—granting admissions preferences, desegregation, and interracial marriage—and did not overturn Roe.

2. Which case was pivotal in establishing the federal government's ability to enforce civil rights protections in public accommodations under the Commerce Clause?

A. Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States

B. Gideon v. Wainwright

C. United States v. Morrison

D. Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. NRDC

The key idea here is that Congress can regulate activities that substantially affect interstate commerce, and that power extends to enforcing civil rights in places like hotels or motels that serve travelers crossing state lines. In Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States, the Supreme Court held that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 could bar racial discrimination in private public accommodations because such discrimination disrupts interstate commerce by deterring people from traveling and using these facilities, which in turn affects the flow of goods and markets between states. The Court rejected the notion that a local motel could evade federal regulation simply by arguing it wasn't itself involved in interstate commerce; instead, discrimination in establishments serving interstate travelers was itself a matter that substantially affected interstate commerce, and Congress could regulate it under the Commerce Clause. This decision marked a pivotal expansion of federal power to enforce civil rights protections in public accommodations. Gideon v. Wainwright concerns the right to counsel in criminal cases, United States v. Morrison raises questions about limits on Commerce Clause authority, and Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. NRDC deals with administrative law and agency deference. None of these establish or hinge on the federal government's authority to regulate civil rights in public accommodations through the Commerce Clause in the same way Heart of Atlanta Motel does.

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3. Which case established the power to tax and spend for the general welfare and implied powers?

A. McCulloch v. Maryland

B. Gibbons v. Ogden

C. United States v. Lopez

D. Wickard v. Filburn

The main idea here is recognizing Congress's authority to tax and spend for the general welfare and to exercise powers not explicitly listed in the Constitution through the Necessary and Proper Clause. McCulloch v. Maryland is the case that solidified that framework, ruling that Congress has implied powers to carry out its enumerated powers and that taxation and spending are legitimate means to pursue the general welfare. The decision also upheld the constitutionality of a national bank as a valid instrument for carrying out federal objectives, and it established that state actions attempting to tax or obstruct federal institutions can be struck down due to the supremacy of federal law. This text-and-context combination is what makes it the foundational case for broad federal taxing and spending power and for implied powers. The other cases focus on different aspects: Gibbons v. Ogden centers on interstate commerce regulation, United States v. Lopez limits Congress's reach under the Commerce Clause, and Wickard v. Filburn deals with how far the Commerce Clause can extend to intrastate activities, not the general-welfare power itself.

4. What did Barron v. Baltimore decide about applying of the Bill of Rights?

A. It restrained only national government, not states and cities.

B. The Bill of Rights applied to cities but not states.

C. It restrained both national and state governments.

D. It did not apply to the First Amendment.

Barron v. Baltimore shows that the Bill of Rights originally restrained only the federal government, not state or local governments. In the case, Barron argued that the Fifth Amendment's protections should apply to actions by Maryland, but the Court held that the Constitution did not bind the states to the Bill of Rights at that time. So the decision maintained that the federal government alone was limited by the Bill of Rights, not the states or cities. It wasn't until the Fourteenth Amendment and later incorporation cases that many of these rights began to apply to the states, but Barron set the precedent that the original protections did not reach state actions.

5. Which case held that flag burning constitutes protected First Amendment speech?

A. Stromberg v. California

B. Brandenburg v. Ohio

C. Texas v. Johnson

D. Schenck v. United States

The main idea tested is that symbolic acts conveying political messages are protected as First Amendment speech. In Texas v. Johnson, the Supreme Court held that burning the U.S. flag as part of a political protest is protected expressive conduct. The Court explained that the act communicates a political message, and punishing it because the symbol is controversial would suppress dissent and suppress a viewpoint the government doesn't like. The decision reinforces that the government can regulate demonstrations in time, place, and manner, but it cannot criminalize the desecration of a flag merely to suppress a particular message. This ruling established that flag desecration, when chosen as a form of protest, falls within protected speech.

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6. Which case determined that state officials violated the First Amendment when they authored a prayer to be recited in schools?

A. Gideon v. Wainwright

B. Engel v. Vitale

C. School District of Abbington Township v. Schempp

D. Griswold v. Connecticut

The key idea is that government action in public schools cannot promote religion. When state officials write and require a prayer to be recited in a public, government-run setting, it amounts to government endorsement of religion, which the First Amendment's Establishment Clause forbids. In Engel v. Vitale, the Supreme Court ruled that a state-created, school-sponsored prayer violated the First Amendment. Even though the prayer was non-denominational and participation was voluntary, letting the government compose and initiate a prayer for use in schools treated the school as an official religious advocate, which the Constitution does not allow. The decision stands for the principle that public schools cannot sponsor or lead religious activities. The other cases deal with related issues but not the exact scenario. Gideon v. Wainwright addresses the right to counsel in criminal cases; Griswold v. Connecticut concerns privacy and contraception; Schempp v. Abington Township deals with Bible readings in public schools. Engel specifically targets the problem of state-authored prayer in schools, making it the correct reference for this situation.

7. The death penalty framework in Gregg v. Georgia was later reconsidered in which case?

A. Roe v. Wade

B. Zurcher v. Stanford Daily

C. Furman v. Georgia

D. Plyler v. Doe

The main idea here is how the Court's approach to the death penalty changed through the early 1970s. In Furman v. Georgia, the Court struck down existing death-penalty statutes because the way sentences were being imposed was arbitrary and thus unconstitutional under the Eighth Amendment. That ruling forced a complete rethinking of how death sentences could be validly issued, leading to revised statutes and procedures. When those revisions were challenged, the Court upheld them in Gregg v. Georgia, allowing the death penalty to continue under a guided-discretion framework. So Furman v. Georgia is the case that set the reconsideration in motion, prompting the Gregg framework. The other listed cases address topics unrelated to death penalty jurisprudence.

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8. Which case upheld the authority to require individuals to purchase health insurance as a tax?

A. Cooley v. Board of Wardens

B. Miranda v. Arizona

C. Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. NRDC

D. National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius

The situation tests how Congress can use its taxing power to shape behavior, not just the Commerce Clause. In this case, the Supreme Court held that the requirement to have health insurance could be sustained because the penalty for not buying insurance functions as a tax that the government can impose and collect through the IRS. The critical idea is that a law's label isn't decisive; what matters is the nature and operation of the obligation. If the consequence is a tax raising revenue, within Congress's power to tax, then it can be constitutional even if it also affects behavior. The decision also clarified that the Medicaid expansion portion of the broader law exceeded constitutional bounds under the Spending Clause, though that part isn't about the tax itself. Cooley v. Board of Wardens, Miranda v. Arizona, and Chevron U.S.A. v. NRDC address different topics—federalism and local commerce regulation, Miranda rights, and administrative deference, respectively—so they don't govern the issue of using a tax to enforce health insurance purchase.

9. Which case held that government may not compel students to salute the flag or engage in patriotic expression?

A. Schenck v. United States

B. Brown v. Board of Education

C. Dred Scott v. Sandford

D. West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette

The case tests a person's right not to be forced into expressing beliefs or patriotic sentiments by the government. It holds that in public schools, students cannot be compelled to salute the flag or participate in patriotic rituals because doing so would amount to forcing them to express a view they may not hold. In this decision, the Court struck down a state requirement that students salute the flag and recite the pledge, noting that forcing students to pledge allegiance violated their First Amendment freedoms of speech and, in effect, their freedom of conscience. The ruling emphasized that the government cannot compel individuals to convey messages or beliefs, especially in a setting like a school where personal beliefs and religious convictions may differ. This decision marked a limit on state power to compel certain expressions, protecting students' autonomy over their own beliefs. For additional context, this case overturned a prior wartime ruling that allowed compulsory flag salute, clarifying that the First Amendment protections extend to students and that compelled patriotic expression is unconstitutional. Other listed cases address different constitutional issues—one deals with the limits on speech during wartime, another with racial segregation in education, and another with the moral and legal status of enslaved people—so none specifically establish the rule about compulsory patriotic expression in schools.

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10. Which case prohibited mandatory Bible readings in public schools?

A. Engel v. Vitale (1962)

B. Abington School District v. Schempp (1963)

C. Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)

D. Obergefell v. Hodges (2015)

The key idea is that government-sponsored religious activities in public schools violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Abington School District v. Schempp held that requiring students to read Bible passages or participate in devotional readings during the school day is unconstitutional because it endorses religion and coerces participation, effectively putting the state's stamp of approval on religious exercise. The Court emphasized that public schools, as government institutions, cannot compel religious practice or compel students to engage in religious activities. This builds on Engel v. Vitale, which struck down the practice of a state-sponsored prayer in public schools, reinforcing the principle against government-directed religious exercises. Lemon v. Kurtzman later provided a framework for evaluating Establishment Clause challenges, but the direct answer to prohibiting mandatory Bible readings comes from Abington. The other option, Obergefell v. Hodges, concerns same-sex marriage and is not about religion in schools.

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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://ussupremecourtcases.examzify.com

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

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