



AFLCA

EXAM PREPARATION

PACKAGE

This package is designed to assist you in preparing for and writing the AFLCA exam(s). Please review it carefully.

Included in this package:

AFLCA Learning Objectives (located in manual)
Studying from Learning Objectives
About Multiple Choice Exams
Strategies for Multiple Choice Exams
Reading Multiple Choice Questions
Study Questions

AFLCA Learning Objectives

The AFLCA exams are based on the learning objectives, which were developed in accordance to the National Fitness Leadership Alliance (NFLA) Performance Standards. Exam questions correspond to the learning objectives, therefore if you study based on the objectives and have a good understanding of the material and concepts, you should be adequately prepared for the exam. The learning objectives cover all of the information required to be an effective fitness leader and are specific to Exercise Theory and each of the specialty areas.

Studying from Learning Objectives

In the manual you will find Learning Objectives which pertain to course and exam content. Studying based on the learning objectives is essential in exam preparation. This can be effectively explained through an example:

Take the Exercise Theory learning objective:

Unit Objective V: Ligaments, muscles and their functions
Sub-objective - State the functions of ligaments and their attachments

As stated in the objectives it identifies the information can be found in Chapter 3: Anatomy and Applied Movement Mechanics, Unit 9: Basics of Anatomy.

In studying you simply locate and review the information in the manual:

“Ligaments are bands of fibrous tissue that connect bones together. They function to stabilize the joint by preventing movement in an undesired plane and limit the range or extent of undesired movements. They attach to: one bone, cross one or more articulations, and attach to another bone on the other end.”

Be sure to review all the information related to the learning objectives. Take a few objectives each day and study the related material. This will assist in better retention and understanding instead of studying a great deal of material at one time.

About Multiple Choice Exams

Many students assume that multiple choice exams are easy and do not require in depth study; however, they do have characteristics, which lead to this under estimated difficulty.

These characteristics should be taken into consideration:

- Multiple choice exams typically have many questions therefore students need to be familiar with a broader range of material
- Topics studied are usually scrambled and shuffled - Ideas you learned in the course and manual may be reworded in different ways – i.e. technically, by example or analogy
- Often exam questions are not simply recall of basic ideas but recognition of the answer to a reasoned problem

Your reasoning will make use of what was learned in the course and manual, and require that you apply the knowledge.

- You may need to go beyond memorization
- You cannot simply be familiar with the material – you need to understand it and analyze it

Strategies for Multiple Choice Exams

- **BEGIN STUDYING EARLY** – Multiple choice exams generally focus on details, which are difficult to retain in short term memory.
 - allow plenty of time for repeated reviews
 - learn a small amount each day building information into long term memory
- **READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY AND DO NOT RUSH** – you may need to read the question more than once.
- **DO NOT READ ANYTHING INTO THE QUESTION** - avoid making assumptions about what you think the question is asking.
 - concentrate on its meaning
 - do not apply other information or existing knowledge to the question
- **WATCH FOR KEY WORDS IN QUESTIONS** – multiple choice exams also check your ability to read carefully and thoughtfully. Watch for words like “all”, “always”, “relative”, “main”, “primary”, “major”, etc.
- **RECALL CONCEPTS FROM MEMORY** – or try to determine the answer before reviewing the options. Doing this successfully may help you choose a reasonable answer.
- **TRY THE COVER UP STRATEGY** – read the stem (the question part) and try to answer it prior to looking at the distracters (the alternatives or answer part).

- TIME AND PACE YOURSELF ACCORDINGLY – allocate your time according to the number of questions. Save a few minutes at the end for review and revision if necessary.
- SOMETIMES ALTERNATIVES DIFFER BY ONLY ONE OR TWO WORDS – these types of questions can be confusing.
 - read the stem of the question and cover up all the distracters except for one
 - think through the alternatives by labeling them true or false
 - eliminate those that do not correctly complete the question
- BE PREPARED TO CHANGE YOUR ANSWER – if you can identify a good reason why your initial response is incorrect. Changing answers is neither good nor bad.
- WATCH FOR TERMINOLOGY LINKS – terms in the question will provide links to key areas of the course and manual – this may assist you in thinking the question through.
- CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER - remember you are looking for the best answer, not only a correct one, and one which is true in all cases.

For example take this question:

Active individuals need to:

- a. supplement their diet with increased protein
- b. supplement their diet with increase vitamins
- c. increase their salt intake
- d. replace fluids lost during exercise

Reading this question you would eliminate “c” increasing their salt intake, and “b” supplement their diet with increased vitamins. You may decide that active individuals could benefit from “a” supplementing with increased protein; however, it is not true for all active individuals. The “d” distracter, replacing fluids lost during exercise, on the other hand is the **best** answer and correct one in all cases. All active individuals need to replace lost fluids.

Reading Multiple Choice Questions

Do's:

1. Read the stem of the question carefully for understanding and take note of qualifying words before looking at the distracters.
2. Use your knowledge to identify where in the manual the question may originate and think about the relevant facts.
3. Predict an answer if possible.
4. Read the distracters carefully for understanding not simply recognition. Keep the stem in mind and answer yes, no or maybe/not sure to each alternative.
5. If you know the answer, mark it on the answer sheet.
6. If you do not know the answer, re-read the stem of the question. Narrow your choices eliminating incorrect distracters. If two options seem equally correct

- compare them to the stem again and choose the best answer, which most adequately answers the stem.
7. If you are really stuck, come back to the question later.

Don'ts:

1. Don't select a distracter because you remember a piece of information from the course. It may be correct on its own but not within the context of the question.
2. Don't pick an answer because it makes sense. You are answering based on your knowledge from the course and manual not from general knowledge.
3. Don't pass over a distracter which seems too easy. If you are well prepared the answer may be obvious.
4. Don't be impressed by extravagant terms.
5. Don't pick answers based on past responses. It cannot be "a" since the last three answers were "a".

Examples of Questions

AFLCA multiple choice exams are composed of straight forward type questions which require recall of specific information and application questions which test your knowledge and ability to apply it.

An example of a straight forward question:

What muscles are located in the posterior side of the calf?

An example of an application question:

What is the primary group of muscles responsible for flexion of the elbow?

Also included with this package are study questions, which follow, so you can attain a better understanding of the types of questions you will need to prepare for.

If you have further questions regarding course material or the learning objectives feel free to contact the trainer of your course.

Good luck in writing the exam(s)!

References:

Preparing for Multiple Choice Exams, Counselling and Development Centre, York University, Toronto, Ontario, 1998

Writing a Successful Multiple-choice Exam, Learning Skills Services, The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, September 1998