

Tips I Find to Be Most Helpful

- 1) Read the question 3-4 times before answering:
 - a. 1st time to understand the situation
 - b. 2nd time to breakdown the question/situation
 - c. 3rd and 4th time to compare your answers to the question, to ensure that they align
- 2) NEVER second-guess yourself!!!!!! This will cause your anxiety to increase, which can destroy your confidence throughout the rest of the exam
 - a. Negative self-talk/self-doubt while preparing and throughout the exam
- 3) Identify a way to reset your mind when you find it starts wandering or when you are feeling anxious
- 4) TRUST YOURSELF and base your answers and prep on what works best for YOU, NOT someone else
 - a. DO NOT overwhelm yourself with materials, techniques, and strategies
- 5) Develop a routine, because it will allow for you to know what to expect and keep your anxiety in check. With clarification, comes comfortability
 - a. Adding details to the questions/applying their real-life clients to them
- 6) Invest in yourself and allow for yourself to have leeway when preparing. DO NOT expect perfection when preparing for or taking the exam. YOU ARE A HUMAN and will make mistakes and get things wrong
- 7) DO NOT let the little things distract you or destroy the big picture
 - a. Allowing previous questions and/or exams dictate how you navigate current questions
- 8) It is alright to feel COMFORTABLE and CONFIDENT!!
- 9) You do NOT need to be 100% one way or another, but make sure it is the right way for YOU
- 10) Reflect on your process/prep during and towards the end of it

Types of Questions:

- 1) **Recall**: Where we need to identify specific social work terms, theories, concepts etc. They tend to be more specific and ask for one-worded answers.
 - a. Ex) Freudian Theory, Medications, Diagnoses, Kohlberg's etc.
 - b. These are the content-based questions that everyone LOVES!!!
- 2) **Application**: Where we need to APPLY the specific social work terms, theories, concepts, and ideologies to specific client situations. These tend to be clinical write-ups and ask for the social worker to respond in an appropriate manner.
 - a. A client presents with depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, they are homeless, utilizing substances and have high blood pressure. Where does the social worker start?
 - b. FIRST, NEXT, BEST, MOST, should
- 3) **Reasoning**: Where we need to come up with a specific solution to a problem. Typically, these questions require that we break down an ethical dilemma or address a problem within a client interaction.
 - a. Research questions, ethical questions, and clinical decision-making situations.
 - b. FIRST, NEXT, BEST, MOST, should

Demystifying the Types of Words That Can Be Used on the Exam: (They all mean the SAME THING) 😊

- 1) **FIRST**: What should the social worker start with in the situation?
- 2) **NEXT**: What should the social worker start with when reacting to the situation that has already been described?
- 3) **BEST**: What should the social worker do first when responding to the situation?
- 4) **MOST**: What is the best explanation or appropriate action the social worker should take in the situation?

Six Key Considerations When Breaking Down Questions:

- 1) Who are you? I.e., What type of social worker are you?
 - a. Outpatient: Assess, Stabilize, Maintain, and Discharge
 - b. Hospital: Assess, Stabilize, and Discharge
 - c. School: Assess, Stabilize, Monitor, Monitor, repeat
- 2) Where are you? I.e., What setting are you in?
 - a. Office: Social workers base all of their information on what the client tells them, as well as how the client is presenting themselves during treatment.
 - b. Community: Social workers base all of their information on what the client tells them, as well as what they observe while meeting with the client (Home environment, financial situation, supports, safety etc.)
- 3) Who is/are your client(s)? I.e., who is providing the information and who is it about?
 - a. The client will often be in the correct answer and allow for you to be able to connect the answer back to the question.
 - b. The question will often tell you or be focused on the client of interest.
- 4) What lengths of time are present in the question? I.e., Intake, 2 months, 6 months etc.
 - a. The length(s) of time will help you better understand where your client has been in the past, where they are at today and where they would like to go.
 - b. Often, people will lose track of the length(s) of time and confuse past information for current situations and assume answers.
- 5) What is being presented in the situation? I.e., symptoms, situations, considerations being brought up/discussed in the question.
 - a. Often, we will be shown multiple factors in the question, and we will need to know how to prioritize them.
- 6) What can we do and/or what does the question want us to do about the situation and/or symptoms? I.e., How do we react to the symptoms, and/or situations that the client presents with?
 - a. The last sentence of the question can help guide the answer, HOWEVER, stick with your gut and trust yourself. Identify what **YOUR CLIENT** needs in the current situation.

- 1) A social worker in a family agency has been working with a 10-year-old boy for the past 2 months to help him cope with his parent's divorce. Throughout treatment the boy has been identifying ways to communicate his needs and express his emotions in a healthy manner. During the intake assessment the boy reported that when people ignore him and when he feels unheard that he will physically harm them. During the most recent session the boy's father accompanies him to the session. The boy reports that recently while staying with his mother, she has been yelling at him and he does not want to be there. The boy's father reports that his son has been texting him to come home when he is at his mother's house. What should the social worker do FIRST in this situation? Application
- A. Inform the boy and his father of the necessity of contacting Child Protective Services regarding the emotional abuse that was disclosed to ensure the boy remains safe (Intervene)
 - B. Gather information regarding the text messages that the boy has sent his father to better understand the situation before proceeding (Assess)
 - C. Validate the family's concerns and gather information regarding how they would like to proceed to ensure that they feel heard (Feelings/BAD MOVES)
 - D. Facilitate discussion around the boy's experience of being at his mother's house to better understand the situation before proceeding (Feelings)
- 2) A social worker in an outpatient clinic has been working with a 26-year-old female for the past 3 months regarding a domestic violence charge. The woman engaged in services after she pushed her partner down a flight of stairs while under the influence of alcohol and marijuana. Throughout treatment the woman has been utilizing strategies to maintain sobriety and cope with her emotions. During the most recent session the woman reports that she has been feeling more stressed than normal because her father keeps asking her for favors. The woman feels guilty for telling her father no due to her behavior when she was actively using drugs. What is the BEST thing for the social worker to do in this situation? Application
- A. Validate the woman's feelings and offer to refer her to a substance use therapy group at the agency to obtain more support (Facilitate)
 - B. Provide information to the woman regarding boundary setting and work with her to identify ways to set boundaries in the future (Educate)
 - C. Provide information to the woman regarding common triggers for relapse to allow for her to become better informed (Educate)
 - D. Gather information regarding the stress that the woman has been experiencing to reduce the likelihood that she relapses (Assess)

- 3) A social worker in a community mental health clinic has been working with a 41-year-old transgender male with avoidant personality disorder for biweekly sessions for the past month. During the intake assessment the man reported finding it difficult to form relationships with people because he spends the majority of his time in his apartment. The man reported that he works his job remotely which makes it difficult to interact with other people. During the most recent session the man reports that his friends have been reaching out to him and that he has been ignoring them. The man reports feeling overwhelmed and like he is letting everyone down. What should the social worker do NEXT in this situation? Application

- A. Gather information regarding why the man has been ignoring his friends to better understand his perspective before proceeding (Feelings)
- B. Validate the man's feelings and gather information why he feels like he is letting everyone down to better understand his perspective before proceeding (Feelings)
- C. Encourage the man to reach out to his friends to allow for him to utilize the skills he has learned in treatment to strengthen the relationships in his life (Intervene)
- D. Facilitate discussion around the relationships that the man has with his friends to better understand his perspective before proceeding (Assess)

Application Questions Only	
Safety	Savvy
Feelings	Farmer
Assess	Aladin
Refer	Raises
Educate	Expensive
Advocate	Apples
Facilitate	From
Intervene	India
1. Who are you?	
2. Where are you at?	
3. Who are you helping/ who told you the info?	
4. What lengths of time are in the question?	
5. What are they presenting with?	
6. What can you do/does your client want you to do?	

- 4) A school social worker has been meeting with a 12-year-old girl for the past 4 months upon request of her teacher regarding behavioral issues she was having in class. The girl's teacher referred her to the social worker after she stopped turning in her schoolwork and consistently put her head down throughout class. During the intake assessment the girl reported that her father overdosed on heroin last month and that it has been difficult for her to cope with his death. During the most recent session the girl reports that she has been using drugs with her friends to help cope with her emotions and how it has been helping her. The girl shares how she has been completing her schoolwork and staying more focused during class. What should the social worker do in this situation? Application

- A. Inform the girl of the necessity of contacting Child Protective Services regarding the drug use she disclosed to ensure she remains safe in the future (Intervene)
- B. Facilitate discussion around the girl's drug use and work with her to identify alternative coping skills she can utilize to cope with her emotions in the future (Assess)
- C. Work with the girl to explore her drug use and identify what caused her to start using them to better understand the situation (Assess)
- D. Validate the girl's feelings and commend her for completing her schoolwork and being more engaged in class to meet her where she is at (Feelings/BAD MOVES)