SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

LMSW

Diagnostic Assessment

Week 1 Diagnostic

Answer Key & Weakness Map

Scored across six study areas • Original practice questions

Find your weak areas, then study the chapters that matter most

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How to Use This Material

Take this assessment in one sitting with an 80-minute timer, choosing the single BEST answer for each question. It has 40 questions spread across six study areas in proportion to the ASWB Masters exam. Then score it with the separate answer key and fill in the Weakness Map at the end of the key. The interactive version on the Diagnostic page of the LMSW bonus site scores your Weakness Map automatically.

LMSW Week 1 Diagnostic: Answer Key

The best answer for each question, with an explanation and the chapter to review.

1. A Tell her a report is required, explain next steps, and plan for her safety

Visible marks from being hit with a cord create reasonable suspicion of abuse, so the report must be made now, and the student should be told what will happen and helped to stay safe today. Making the report and leaving the explanation to the caseworker meets the legal duty but leaves a frightened teen uninformed by the adult she trusted. Asking for a detailed account before deciding moves into investigation, which belongs to protective services, and the facts already meet the threshold. Arranging for her to stay with a relative is a placement decision outside the school social worker's role and delays a mandatory report.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 4

2. C Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity, a form of construct validity evidence, is shown when a measure does not correlate with measures of concepts that should be unrelated. Finding almost no correlation between resilience scores and verbal ability shows the scale is not simply measuring verbal skill. Convergent validity is the opposite pattern: strong correlations with measures of related concepts such as coping or self-efficacy, which this test did not examine. Concurrent validity is a form of criterion validity, shown when scores agree with an established standard measured at the same time, such as an accepted resilience instrument.

Research, Evaluation, Supervision & Administration · Review: Chapter 19

3. A His paternal aunt, who is not a tribal member

ICWA's foster care preferences, absent good cause or a different tribal order, are first a member of the child's extended family, then a foster home licensed or approved by the tribe, then an Indian foster home licensed by a non-Indian authority. ICWA's definition of extended family includes an adult aunt without requiring Indian status, so Kai's paternal aunt is the first preference. A tribally licensed home is the second preference and becomes first only if no extended family member is available. A state-licensed Indian foster home ranks below the tribal home.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

4. C Discuss the reaction with a supervisor to examine its effect on the work

When personal values may affect practice, the worker uses supervision or consultation to examine and manage them, so the client's self-determination is protected without abandoning the client. The urge has persisted for three sessions despite the worker's efforts, which shows that self-monitoring alone is not enough and supervision is needed. Continuing to set the reaction aside is the right instinct, but it has already proved insufficient. Transferring Tomás may be needed if the conflict cannot be managed, but doing so before trying supervision disrupts his care because of the worker's issue, not his.

Diversity, Equity & Social Justice · Review: Chapter 7

5. A Federal courts recognize a therapist-patient privilege covering clinical social workers

In Jaffee v. Redmond, the Supreme Court recognized a psychotherapist-patient privilege under the Federal Rules of Evidence and expressly extended it to licensed clinical social workers, protecting confidential counseling communications from compelled disclosure in federal cases. The presenter has confused it with Tarasoff: the duty to protect identifiable victims comes from the California Tarasoff decisions and state statutes. Mandated reporting of suspected child abuse rests on state laws shaped by the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, not on any Supreme Court decision. Knowing the source of each rule helps workers explain their obligations accurately.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 4

6. C Have a qualified Quechua interpreter explain the form before she decides

Valid consent to release information requires that the client understands what she is agreeing to, in a language she fully understands. A Quechua interpreter is available by phone, so the worker should have the interpreter explain the form before Rosa decides. A Spanish interpreter would be appropriate if Spanish were her strong language, but her Spanish is limited, so understanding of a legal release cannot be assumed. A written Quechua translation sounds thorough, but Rosa does not read well, and waiting for one delays a decision that an interpreter can support today.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 5

7. C Early signs that she and people close to her watch for, and agreed steps

A relapse prevention plan for bipolar disorder lists the person's own early warning signs and the steps she and her supports will take, and it must account for the fact that insight often fades as mania begins. Because Teodora did not recognize her last episode, signs that others close to her watch for, with agreed actions, fit her best. An agreement to call when she feels manic relies on the very self-awareness she lacked last time. A daily mood app is useful monitoring, but it also depends on her own ratings and sets out no plan for what to do.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 12

8. C List the workshop she completed without claiming to be an EMDR therapist

Social workers should represent their training accurately and practice only within their competence. Listing the workshop she completed is truthful and does not claim a skill she lacks. Calling herself EMDR-trained suggests completed training when she has only attended an introduction. Leaving the training off is honest, but it is more restrictive than necessary, since accurately stated training can be listed. Supervisor approval does not make an inaccurate title accurate, so calling herself an EMDR therapist would still misrepresent her competence.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 6

9. A Reduce initial distress and support survivors' own coping with practical help

Psychological first aid is an evidence-informed approach for the hours and days after a disaster; its goal is to reduce initial distress and foster short- and long-term adaptive coping through safety, comfort, practical help and connection. Helping survivors put the event into words resembles psychological debriefing, which is not recommended and can increase distress. Identifying acute stress symptoms is part of later screening, but PFA does not center on diagnosis, and most reactions at this stage are expected. Brief counseling is a clinical service for people who need more than PFA, not the goal of first contacts with survivors focused on basic needs.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

10. A Explain that early denial can help him adjust and keep supporting him

Denial early after a terminal diagnosis often protects a person while he absorbs overwhelming news, and it becomes a concern mainly when it blocks needed care or decisions. Mr. Okafor follows his treatment and has no decisions pending, so explaining this to his wife and continuing to support him is best. A joint meeting to review the prognosis would help if urgent planning required it, but pushing now would strip away a defense he still needs. Asking the physician to restate the prognosis has the same problem. Screening for depression is reasonable when mood symptoms appear, but nothing described suggests low mood.

Human Development, Behavior & Trauma · Review: Chapter 8

11. B Ask residents to help choose backup rewards they would want to earn

A token economy works only when tokens can be exchanged for backup rewards the participants actually value. Staff report clear definitions, prompt delivery and easy earning, but residents find the rewards boring, so involving residents in choosing desirable rewards fixes the weak link. Defining behaviors more precisely helps when staff award tokens inconsistently, and giving tokens immediately helps when delivery is delayed, but the stem says both are already in place. Lowering the price of rewards helps when they are valued but hard to reach. Here they are easy to reach and not wanted, so cheaper rewards would not change behavior.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 15

12. A Use a remote Mixtec interpreter by video or telephone today

Parents must understand removal and their rights in their own language, and a qualified interpreter in that language is required even if it must be remote. A remote Mixtec interpreter is available within the hour, so Andrés should use one today. Using a Spanish interpreter with teach-back sounds careful, but the parents' Spanish is very limited, and checking understanding does not fix a language barrier for complex legal information. Waiting for an in-person interpreter would be ideal if time allowed, but the parents need this information now to prepare for a hearing later this week.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 6

13. C A culturagram

The culturagram, developed by Elaine Congress, is designed for assessing immigrant and refugee families. It covers reasons for relocation, legal status, time in the community, language, health beliefs, crisis events, holidays and special events, contact with cultural institutions, and values about education, work, and family. It helps the worker understand each family individually rather than relying on generalizations about a culture. A genogram maps family structure and patterns across generations. An ecomap shows current connections to outside systems. A sociogram maps relationships within a group. Questions about legal status should be asked only when relevant and with care.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 11

14. D Help Fatima move him to a standard option, such as the agency's hardship waiver

Supervisors address a boundary concern in proportion to its seriousness, using the least disruptive step that corrects it. This barter is small, client-initiated and harmless so far, but it is unnecessary because the agency's hardship waiver can meet Mr. Okonkwo's need. Helping Fatima shift him to that option corrects the practice while keeping the relationship intact. Reporting it to compliance treats a teachable lapse as misconduct. Transferring him disrupts care for a minor issue. Documenting and continuing it leaves an avoidable barter in place when a standard fee option exists.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 6

15. B Case consultation

Consultation is advice from someone with specialized expertise who has no administrative authority over the worker or the case; the worker decides whether to use the advice. The psychologist offers case-specific recommendations Shanice may accept or reject, while her supervisor keeps authority over treatment plans and licensure hours, so the arrangement is case consultation. Clinical supervision involves ongoing authority and responsibility for the worker's practice, which remains with her agency supervisor. Professional mentoring is a broader relationship focused on career growth, which the psychologist does not provide.

Research, Evaluation, Supervision & Administration · Review: Chapter 19

16. B Give him the application details and help him start it if he wants.

When a client can access a resource without barriers, brokering, which means giving information and offering modest help, is the right level of intervention. Samuel is capable, has met no obstacles, and has food covered for a month, so providing the application details and offering to help him start is enough. Requesting expedited review fits households with very little income or money on hand who need food within days, which is not his situation. A food bank referral would help someone facing an immediate gap, but his savings and severance cover him while the application is processed.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

17. B Loss of participants over time, which can leave a less representative group

Longitudinal designs that follow the same people for years are most threatened by attrition, because those who drop out often differ from those who stay. Clients with recent housing loss, illness, or incarceration may be the hardest to find, which would bias results toward better outcomes, so planning for tracking and retention is essential. Cohort effects are a weakness of cross-sectional studies that compare age groups at one time, not of following one group. Regression to the mean is a concern when participants are chosen for unusually high or low scores, but this study enrolls every client who moves in, without selecting on any measure.

Research, Evaluation, Supervision & Administration · Review: Chapter 19

18. D Explore the anniversary pattern with him and build a plan for those dates

Anniversary reactions are a predictable pattern in PTSD, and a good plan anticipates them rather than treating each spike as a new crisis or as failure. Exploring the pattern with Sergeant Lopez and planning for those dates turns a recurring setback into something he can prepare for. Leaving the plan unchanged recognizes that the spike is expected but misses the chance to prepare for next time. A medication review may help some clients, but it is not the first response to a time-limited, recognized pattern. Residential treatment is far more intensive than a brief, predictable rise warrants.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 13

19. B Space the two administrations about two weeks apart instead

A test-retest interval must be long enough that participants do not simply remember their earlier answers, yet short enough that the trait is unlikely to change. Retesting the next day lets people repeat what they recall, which can inflate the correlation, so spacing the administrations about two weeks apart gives a truer estimate. Adding items raises internal consistency, but that is already high and is a different form of reliability. A larger, broader sample improves precision and generalizability, but 150 adults from five shelters is adequate, and size does not remove memory effects.

Research, Evaluation, Supervision & Administration · Review: Chapter 19

20. B I've noticed you cancelled after each time your supervisor praised your work.

Before interpreting a pattern, a worker can first describe it so the client can notice and examine it herself. Noting that Grace cancelled after each instance of praise names the observed pattern and offers no cause, which matches the worker's aim. Wondering whether praise feels risky because it raises expectations is an interpretation; it proposes a reason, which the worker has chosen not to offer yet. Saying many people feel uneasy about praise is universalization; it normalizes a feeling but does not show Grace the specific link between praise and her cancellations.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

21. A Life structure

Levinson's life structure is the underlying pattern or design of a person's life at a given time, formed mainly by relationships with work, family, friends, community and other central commitments. Examining how Daniel's job, marriage, coaching and church roles fit together is examining his life structure. The Dream is a young adult's imagined vision of the life he wants, such as Daniel's early hope of becoming an architect; it can be compared with the life structure but is not the current design itself. A developmental era is one of Levinson's broad seasons of life, such as early or middle adulthood.

Human Development, Behavior & Trauma · Review: Chapter 8

22. B Teaching grounding and coping skills and building their relationship

When a client has dissociative symptoms and is not ready to discuss the trauma, initial work focuses on safety, grounding and the therapeutic relationship. Grounding and coping skills address her zoning out and prepare her for later trauma-focused work. A trauma narrative is a core part of some effective treatments, but starting it now goes against her request. A survivors' group can help, but she prefers individual sessions. A medication evaluation for nightmares would fit a client who wanted it, and she has said she does not.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 13

23. A State laws generally protect people who report in good faith, whatever the outcome

State reporting laws generally give immunity from civil and criminal liability to people who report suspected abuse in good faith, whether or not the investigation later confirms it. Rosa's earlier unsubstantiated report does not change that, and an angry family's threat does not remove the protection. Tying immunity to substantiation would defeat the purpose of reporting on reasonable suspicion rather than proof. Immunity also does not depend on who files; it attaches to the good-faith reporter, and an agency filing on her behalf is not a condition of protection.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 5

24. C Give clear, directive guidance on next steps, such as visits and court

In acute crisis, people often cannot organize their thinking, and crisis theory calls for a more active, directive approach with concrete next steps. Rashida is overwhelmed and is asking what to do, and the hearing is three days away, so clear guidance on visits and court is what she needs now. A parent partner offers valuable peer support and can be added soon, but it does not answer her immediate questions. Waiting a week to plan would pass the hearing date. Exploring the events and her feelings is part of later case work, but at this moment it adds to her overwhelm rather than restoring her ability to act.

Human Development, Behavior & Trauma · Review: Chapter 9

25. A Problems are assessed together with the client's capacities and resources

The strengths perspective holds that every client has capacities, resources and past successes, and that assessment should identify them alongside problems so they can be used in the work. Adding questions about skills, supports and times when things went better after each problem area puts that view into practice. Seeing problems as products of person-environment fit describes the ecological or life model perspective, which may coexist with strengths work but is not what these questions add. Defining problems in measurable terms describes behavioral goal setting and evaluation.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 11

26. C Give naloxone, call 911, support his breathing, and stay with him.

Signs of opioid overdose, such as unresponsiveness, slow breathing and blue lips, call for immediate naloxone, a 911 call, breathing support and staying with the person. Naloxone is within reach and the worker is trained, so giving it at once along with calling 911 is best. Calling 911 and using the recovery position is right when no naloxone is available, but here it delays a reversal agent at hand. CPR compressions are for a person without a pulse, and Kevin has one. Waiting to call 911 until naloxone fails is unsafe, because naloxone can wear off and he needs medical evaluation regardless.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

27. A Ask Harold to describe a recent time his daughter took over

When a client's statement is vague, clarifying with a request for a concrete example comes before reflecting, screening, or planning. Asking Harold to describe a recent time his daughter took over will show whether the concern is help with tasks, control of money, or something else. Reflecting his frustration is empathic, but it leaves the worker guessing about the actual problem. Screening for financial exploitation jumps to one serious explanation before the facts support it. Inviting the daughter to a session may later be useful, but it is premature before the worker understands Harold's concern and his wishes.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 11

28. B Enmeshment

Enmeshment describes diffuse boundaries in which closeness overrides individuality, so members feel each other's emotions and have trouble acting independently. Mrs. Lindqvist speaks for Freya, Freya cannot make simple choices alone, and her world is limited to the family. A cross-generational coalition is a parent-child alliance against the other parent, but her parents rarely disagree and no one is being opposed. Parentification gives a child adult responsibilities or makes her a parent's caretaker, which is not described. Triangulation draws a third person into a two-person conflict, and no such conflict appears here.

Human Development, Behavior & Trauma · Review: Chapter 8

29. C An accidental spill of hot liquid

Burn pattern helps distinguish accidental from inflicted injury. A spill from above produces irregular edges, uneven depth that is deepest where the liquid first hit, downward drip marks, and splash spots, which matches this child's burn. Forced immersion causes sharp, even waterlines, uniform depth, and no splash marks, often on both hands or feet in a glove or stocking pattern. Contact with a hot object such as a curling iron leaves a clear outline in the shape of that object. Knowing the features of each pattern lets a social worker judge whether the caregiver's explanation fits the injury.

Human Development, Behavior & Trauma · Review: Chapter 8

30. C Make sure the tribe is notified so it can decide whether Kayla is eligible

Under ICWA, only the tribe determines whether a child is a member or eligible for membership, so when there is reason to know a child may be an Indian child, the tribe must be notified. The father's report of an enrolled grandmother calls for inquiry with the tribe, which alone can say whether he or Kayla is a member or eligible; appearance or distance of ancestry is irrelevant. The Bureau of Indian Affairs may help locate a tribe when it is unknown, but it does not decide membership. The court relies on the tribe's answer rather than deciding membership from family documents.

Diversity, Equity & Social Justice · Review: Chapter 7

31. B Review the evidence, seek training in newer approaches, and consult her supervisor

The Code expects social workers to keep current with emerging knowledge and to base practice on the best available evidence, while building competence before adopting new methods. Mirela should review the evidence, seek training in newer approaches, and consult her supervisor. Tracking outcomes with a standard measure is good practice, but it does not respond to evidence that a better approach exists. Discussing the research and letting clients choose respects their values, but she cannot yet offer the newer method competently. Starting the newer approach with all new clients next month acts on a single conference session before she has training or has appraised the evidence.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 4

32. A Enter the sex listed with Riley's insurer and record their identity and pronouns in the chart

When a required administrative field cannot reflect a client's identity, the worker meets the legal and billing requirement while making the client's identity visible wherever the record allows. Entering the sex on file with the insurer prevents a denied claim, and recording Riley's identity and pronouns in the chart guides respectful care. Asking IT to add a nonbinary option is worthwhile advocacy, but holding a required field delays registration and billing now. Asking Riley to choose an option sounds respectful, yet any choice that differs from the insurer's record will cause the claim to fail, and using it throughout would still not show their pronouns.

Diversity, Equity & Social Justice · Review: Chapter 7

33. B The responding paramedics, to the extent needed to treat the seizure

42 CFR Part 2 allows disclosure without consent to medical personnel to the extent necessary to meet a bona fide medical emergency. The paramedics treating his seizure fit that exception, limited to what they need. Coordinating medications with his primary care physician and confirming coverage with a billing office are treatment and payment purposes that the 2024 amendments let a patient authorize with a single consent, so they would be permitted if he had signed one. He has signed no such consent, so those disclosures must wait for it.

Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning · Review: Chapter 11

34. C Public participation

The Code's standard on public participation asks social workers to facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions, and helping residents understand a proposal and speak for themselves is a direct example. Social and political action is closely related but centers on social workers' own advocacy for policy change and equal access to resources; here the focus is on enabling residents to participate. The social welfare standard is broader, addressing the general welfare of society from local to global levels.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 4

35. D Lower tolerance after abstinence makes his former dose potentially fatal

The period right after release carries a sharply higher risk of fatal overdose, because tolerance falls during abstinence while the person may return to a former dose. This mortality risk is the most important topic for Darnell, along with access to naloxone. Coverage gaps and unstable housing are real reentry risks, but the stem shows both have been addressed: his Medicaid is active and he will live with his sister. Cravings triggered by old friends are a genuine relapse concern worth planning for, yet a relapse can be survived and treated, while an overdose at his old dose may not be. Safety outranks other relapse factors.

Human Development, Behavior & Trauma · Review: Chapter 8

36. B Review the hospital's procedures for raising ethics and billing concerns

The Code directs social workers to be familiar with established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical conduct, including those of employers, licensing bodies and professional organizations, before acting. Priyanka has already spoken with her colleague, so the next step is formal, and knowing the hospital's procedures tells her where and how to raise billing fraud. A licensing board complaint may be appropriate later, but filing it first skips channels designed for this problem. Pulling billing records on her own may exceed her authorized access and is an investigative task for compliance staff, not the reporting worker.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 5

37. B "The family is going deep under the sand. They're staying hidden."

In child-centered play therapy the worker follows the child's lead and tracks and reflects her play and feelings, trusting the child to work through experiences at her own pace. Describing the family going under the sand and staying hidden does that without adding the worker's meaning. Linking the hiding to the scary move is an interpretation, which fits psychodynamic play therapy and may be accurate, but it imposes an adult explanation in a nondirective model. Building a new house and unpacking redirects the play toward a resolution the mother wants, which is a directive technique and moves faster than Noor has chosen to go.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 14

38. C Help him identify triggers and try simpler steps, offered choices and a better time of day

Resistance to care in dementia often comes from fear, confusion, discomfort or feeling rushed, so caregiver coaching focuses on identifying triggers and adapting the task: breaking it into simple steps, offering choices, and choosing a calmer time. Asking the doctor about pain or illness is an important step when a medical cause has not been checked, but a full checkup last week found none. A home health aide is a good option for a caregiver who wants or needs to hand off bathing, but Mr. Mahmoud wants to keep doing it himself, so skills that reduce the conflict fit his goal.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

39. D Explore her feelings about ending and review the skills that helped.

A temporary return of symptoms as termination approaches is common and often reflects feelings about ending rather than true relapse. Bianca's mild episodes began the week the end date was confirmed, and her skills still work, so exploring her feelings about ending and reviewing the skills that helped is best. Extending services may be right if symptoms persist or worsen, but deciding that now could undercut her confidence in her own skills. A medication evaluation fits severe or persistent symptoms, not two mild episodes she partly managed. Referring her to a new therapist disrupts a working relationship at a sensitive moment.

Intervention Methods & Practice Settings · Review: Chapter 17

40. C Emergency resources near his home and a support person to contact in a crisis

Remote services require an emergency plan tied to the client's actual location, because the worker cannot respond in person and local services may differ from the agency's. That plan names nearby emergency resources and a support person the worker can contact. An agreement to call 988 is a useful part of safety planning, but it relies on him reaching out and does not tell the worker who can help locally. Check-in calls add support, but they are not a crisis plan and do not address emergencies at his location.

Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct · Review: Chapter 4

Your Weakness Map

Count your correct answers per study area. Under 60% = **Focus first**; 60–79% = **Review**; 80% or more = **Maintain**.

Study area	Questions	Correct	Study if below 80%
Ethics, Confidentiality & Professional Conduct Content area I	11	____ of 11	Chapter 4: Ethical Foundations and Decision-Making Chapter 5: Confidentiality, Informed Consent and Legal Duties Chapter 6: Boundaries, Professional Conduct and Ethical Service Delivery
Diversity, Equity & Social Justice Content area I	3	____ of 3	Chapter 7: Diversity, Equity and Social Justice
Human Development, Behavior & Trauma Content area II	6	____ of 6	Chapter 8: Human Development Across the Lifespan Chapter 9: Human Behavior in the Social Environment Chapter 10: Abuse, Neglect, Violence and Exploitation
Assessment, Diagnosis & Planning Content area II	7	____ of 7	Chapter 11: Assessment Methods Chapter 12: Mental Health, Substance Use and Medications Chapter 13: From Assessment to Plan
Intervention Methods & Practice Settings Content area III	9	____ of 9	Chapter 14: Engagement and the Helping Relationship Chapter 15: Practice Models and Evidence-Based Interventions Chapter 16: Working with Families and Groups Chapter 17: Case Management, Crisis and Practice Across Settings Chapter 18: Communities, Organizations, Policy and Advocacy
Research, Evaluation, Supervision & Administration Content area III	4	____ of 4	Chapter 19: Research, Evaluation, Supervision and Administration

With 4 to 10 questions per area, treat these percentages as a guide to where to focus, not a prediction of your exam score. Take the Week 3 Checkpoint on Day 15 of the 21-Day Blueprint to check your progress.