SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

LMSW

Diagnostic Assessment

Week 3 Checkpoint

40 Questions • 80 Minutes

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 3 Checkpoint

40 questions • Answer key and Weakness Map in the separate Answer Key file
Choose the single BEST answer for each question. Allow 80 minutes.

1. Valentina, 39, tells a social worker in an employee assistance program that her father, her grandfather, and two uncles all struggled with alcohol, and she worries about her teenage son. The social worker wants a visual tool that will help Valentina see this pattern across generations. Which tool is BEST?

- **A.** A genogram
- **B.** An ecomap
- **C.** A culturagram

2. A researcher at a kinship care agency wants to study grandparents who have raised grandchildren for at least two years without a formal custody order. She reviews the agency's records, selects only caregivers who meet those criteria, and invites them by letter. Recruiting through her own agency is also easier than recruiting citywide. Which sampling method BEST describes her approach?

- **A.** Purposive sampling
- **B.** Snowball sampling
- **C.** Convenience sampling

3. Siobhan Keane, an LMSW child protective services investigator, receives a new assignment and sees that the family lives next door to her. Their children play with hers several times a week. Two other investigators in her unit have room for new cases. What should Siobhan do?

- **A.** Tell the family about the connection at the first visit and proceed
- **B.** Keep the case, with her supervisor reviewing each of her decisions
- **C.** Tell her supervisor about the connection and ask for reassignment

4. At a senior center, Mr. Osei, 77, complains that his memory is failing. On a cognitive screen he often answers 'I don't know' without trying, and he reports losing interest in church and sleeping poorly since his wife died eight months ago. Which explanation should the social worker consider FIRST?

- **A.** Depression that is affecting his memory and concentration
- **B.** Normal age-related decline in short-term memory and recall
- **C.** Early Alzheimer's disease that began after the stress of his loss

5. A hospital social worker is planning discharge for Beatriz, 81, who wants to return home after hip surgery. Her son would prefer a nursing home. Beatriz has decision-making capacity, has already told her son her decision and has asked the worker to arrange services. Physical therapy says she can manage at home with a walker and part-time help and does not need inpatient rehabilitation. What should the social worker do?

- **A.** Arrange a short inpatient rehabilitation stay before she goes home
- **B.** Hold a family meeting so Beatriz and her son can discuss the plan
- **C.** Arrange a home discharge with a walker and part-time home help

6. Through a trained interpreter, LMSW Petra reviews the informed consent form for counseling services with Wang Lei, 66, who speaks Mandarin and came to a senior center counseling program for help with grief. Mr. Wang nods throughout and signs quickly without asking questions. A Mandarin version of the form is available. What should Petra do NEXT?

- **A.** Give Mr. Wang a Mandarin copy of the form to keep for reference
- **B.** Ask Mr. Wang to describe in his own words what he has agreed to
- **C.** Ask the interpreter whether Mr. Wang seemed to understand the form

7. Isabela Costa, 27, is being assessed at an outpatient clinic and mentions that her sister knows a lot about her childhood. The social worker thinks talking with the sister would improve the assessment. Isabela seems hesitant when the idea comes up. What should the social worker do?

- **A.** Explain the purpose of the contact and ask whether she consents to it
- **B.** Note her hesitation and continue the assessment without the sister
- **C.** Suggest a joint session next week so that her sister can attend
- **D.** Contact the sister for background only, without sharing clinical details

8. After a flood damaged their homes, neighbors Mr. Okafor and Mr. Bianchi, both in their 50s, meet with a disaster relief social worker. Their houses sustained similar damage, and neither has a mental health history. Mr. Okafor is organizing repairs and helping others; Mr. Bianchi cannot sleep, feels overwhelmed and cannot make decisions. According to crisis theory, what BEST explains the difference?

- **A.** Mr. Bianchi's greater underlying vulnerability to mental illness
- **B.** Mr. Okafor's use of activity to keep from feeling his losses
- **C.** The differing financial losses each man will face in rebuilding
- **D.** Differences in how each man perceives the event and his resources

9. Leah, 27, a transgender woman, tells a social worker, "Transitioning was about who I am. Now I'm realizing I'm attracted to women, and that's a separate question." The "separate question" Leah describes concerns her:

- **A.** Gender identity
- **B.** Sexual orientation
- **C.** Gender expression

10. Rosa, 58, had planned to retire next year and travel. When her daughter, a single parent in the National Guard, was deployed overseas for a year, Rosa cut her work hours, delayed retirement and took in her two grandchildren. She tells a social worker at a military family support center that her plans changed overnight. Which life course principle BEST explains this change?

- **A.** Human agency
- **B.** Timing of lives
- **C.** Linked lives
- **D.** Historical time and place

11. A social worker is subpoenaed to testify in a family court matter. On the stand, an attorney asks what the client said in sessions about her drinking. The client has not waived privilege, and the judge has not yet ruled. What should the social worker do?

- **A.** Answer the question, since her drinking bears directly on custody
- **B.** Assert privilege for the client and answer only if the judge orders it
- **C.** Answer only in general terms, without repeating the client's own words

12. Two months after her children returned home, Shonda tells the in-home caseworker that she drank alcohol once last weekend. The children were staying with their grandmother at the time, and Shonda called her sponsor the next day. She has been sober since, and the case plan requires the caseworker to review any reported use with the family. What is the BEST response?

- **A.** Praise her honesty and encourage her to keep working with her sponsor
- **B.** Review the children's safety and her recovery plan, then add supports
- **C.** Request an emergency team meeting to consider removing the children
- **D.** Refer her back to her treatment program for a new substance use assessment

13. Oskar, 45, is referred to an employee assistance social worker after a supervisor noted that he never joins team activities. Oskar says he prefers to work and live alone, has little interest in close relationships, and feels indifferent to praise or criticism. He reports no unusual beliefs or perceptions and is not bothered by his solitude. Which personality pattern BEST fits?

- **A.** Avoidant personality disorder
- **B.** Schizotypal personality disorder
- **C.** Schizoid personality disorder

14. Priya, 13, has type 1 diabetes and no learning difficulties. She often leaves class to check her blood sugar with the nurse, and one teacher marks her absent and will not let her make up quizzes. Her grades are dropping. Last week the social worker spoke with the teacher informally, and nothing changed. No one has yet asked the school for a 504 plan. Her mother asks the school social worker for help. What is the BEST action?

- **A.** Refer Priya for a special education evaluation to see whether she needs an IEP for school
- **B.** Speak with the teacher again and ask him to excuse Priya's visits to the nurse
- **C.** Help her mother file a complaint with the federal Office for Civil Rights
- **D.** Help the family request a 504 team meeting to plan accommodations such as make-up work

15. In a crowded hospital elevator, two social workers begin discussing a patient by name, including her diagnosis and her conflict with her family. A third social worker, Adaeze Okafor, is riding with them. Visitors are standing nearby. What should Adaeze do?

- **A.** Note the lapse and raise privacy in public areas at the next team meeting
- **B.** Report the lapse to the hospital privacy officer so that it can be reviewed
- **C.** Speak with both colleagues privately after the ride about public discussions
- **D.** Ask them right away to hold the discussion until they reach a private space

16. Rana, 30, has been meeting with a domestic violence advocate. Her husband has hit her and has threatened to kill her if she ever leaves. She has decided to tell him next week that she is filing for divorce and moving out. Which period should the advocate's safety planning treat as the HIGHEST risk?

- **A.** The tension-building phase before his next violent incident at home
- **B.** The days and weeks right after she tells him that she is leaving
- **C.** The calm period of apologies that tends to follow each incident

17. LMSW Tomasz wants to build his private practice. He is considering several ways of reaching potential clients who have not contacted him. Which plan involves the kind of uninvited solicitation that the NASW Code of Ethics restricts?

- **A.** Mailing a newsletter to physicians who have referred clients before
- **B.** Giving a library talk on stress and handing out cards on request
- **C.** Approaching shelter residents in crisis to offer his services
- **D.** Placing an advertisement for his services in a local newspaper

18. A social worker in a small-city community mental health center is composing a depression therapy group. Two of the candidates turn out to be coworkers on the same eight-person team at a local business. What is the BEST course of action?

- **A.** Discuss the overlap with each and consider placing them in separate groups
- **B.** Accept both and set a clear confidentiality agreement at the first session
- **C.** Place one coworker in the group and offer the other individual sessions

19. Ruth Feldman, 70, receives home-based services. She tells her social worker that, after discussing it with her nephrologist, she has decided to stop dialysis next month. She is alert and has decision-making capacity. She has not yet told her son. The son calls and asks whether his mother has said anything about stopping treatment. Under the NASW Code of Ethics, what governs the worker's response?

- **A.** Disclosure is permitted, since stopping dialysis will lead to serious harm
- **B.** Disclosure is permitted, since her son may be involved in her end-of-life care
- **C.** Disclosure requires consent, since a capable client's treatment choice is hers

20. After an interpreted counseling session at a refugee services agency, the client's adult son, who is listed as an emergency contact, calls the interpreter and asks what his mother discussed. The client has not signed any release for her son. The interpreter asks LMSW Joanne what professional standards require. What should Joanne tell the interpreter?

- **A.** Confirm only that his mother attended her scheduled appointment
- **B.** Share general themes, since he is listed as her emergency contact
- **C.** Share nothing about the session and refer his call to the agency

21. A social worker in an aging services program has been helping Mr. Okafor, 78, follow a plan to reduce isolation by attending a senior center twice a week. At the sixth meeting, his daughter says he has been forgetting appointments and once got lost walking to the center. She adds that his physician evaluated these changes two weeks ago and diagnosed early-stage Alzheimer's disease. Mr. Okafor says he still wants to go to the center. What should the social worker do NEXT?

- **A.** Request a medical evaluation of the recent memory and orientation changes
- **B.** Discuss assisted living options with Mr. Okafor and his daughter
- **C.** Revisit the plan with them, adding supports such as rides and reminders
- **D.** Continue the current plan, since he still wants to attend the center

22. A social worker at a family service center is screening members for a closed group for men who recently divorced. One candidate, Paul, 44, is still married and unsure whether he wants to separate. If he joins, what is the MOST likely risk?

- **A.** He may build cohesion by offering a very different perspective
- **B.** He may feel out of step and become a group deviant or drop out
- **C.** He may take over the group by giving hope to the newly divorced

23. Rosa, 52, attended weekly sessions at a community clinic for depression for four months, then missed three appointments in a row without calling. Her LMSW has no information suggesting she is in danger, and the clinic has a waiting list. Clinic policy allows closing a case after three missed sessions. What should the social worker do?

- **A.** Keep her weekly slot open for another month before taking action
- **B.** Close the case and mail Rosa a closure letter with the clinic's phone number
- **C.** Contact Rosa to check in and offer a closing session or other services

24. Lorna Begay, 40, is starting services at a family agency after a year with another provider. She tells the social worker that at her last agency, 'They decided everything and just told me what to do.' She says she wants to work on finding steady housing but wants a say this time. Which feature of contracting MOST directly addresses her concern?

- **A.** It sets a clear time frame for reviewing progress and ending
- **B.** It spells out the worker's tasks, so the worker can be held to them
- **C.** It makes her an active partner in choosing her goals and tasks

25. A researcher spends eight months at an emergency shelter for families. She attends house meetings, eats meals with residents and staff, and takes detailed field notes on the shelter's routines, unwritten rules and relationships. Her goal is to describe the shelter's culture as members experience it, not to build a new theory or to study one shared experience in depth. Which research approach is she using?

- **A.** Phenomenology
- **B.** Ethnography
- **C.** Grounded theory

26. Destiny, 9, has changed schools four times this year as her family moved between relatives' homes after an eviction; they now share an apartment with her aunt. Her teacher refers her for a learning disability evaluation because of reading gaps. No one at the school has asked about her living situation. What should the school social worker do FIRST?

- **A.** Check her McKinney-Vento eligibility and weigh the effect of her school moves
- **B.** Support the evaluation referral so that a disability can be ruled out
- **C.** Arrange reading tutoring through the school's intervention program
- **D.** Refer the family to the housing authority for help finding an apartment

27. A home visiting social worker notices a small bruise on the cheek of Mateo, 3 months old, who is not yet rolling over. His parents say they are not sure how it happened. Mateo is feeding well and seems content, and the family has been engaged in the program. What should the social worker do?

- **A.** Ask the parents to take Mateo to his pediatrician for a check this week
- **B.** Explore with the parents who has cared for Mateo and how it may have happened
- **C.** Make a report to child protective services and arrange a medical evaluation

28. After a thorough assessment at a family services agency, the social worker concludes that Kwame, 27, has passive suicidal thoughts with no plan, intent or past attempts and has several protective factors. They complete a safety plan together. What should the social worker do NEXT?

- **A.** Refer Kwame to an intensive outpatient program for closer monitoring
- **B.** Document the assessment, his risk level, the reasoning and the plan
- **C.** Set up daily check-in calls with Kwame for the coming week

29. A neighborhood coalition holds an evening community forum to learn about residents' needs. About 60 people attend, most of them longtime homeowners, and several speak at length about parking and property taxes. What is the MAIN limitation of relying on this forum's results?

- **A.** Counts of service users miss residents who never come in for help
- **B.** Area statistics show rates but not how residents see their needs
- **C.** The views heard may not represent residents who did not attend

30. The parents of Diego, 13, describe him as 'a liar, always has been.' Their social worker, who uses a narrative approach, asks about a time Diego told the truth even though he knew it would get him in trouble. In narrative terms, the worker is:

- **A.** Using an exception question to build a plan from what already works
- **B.** Searching for a unique outcome that can anchor an alternative story
- **C.** Challenging the cognitive distortion known as overgeneralization

31. After hearing about a lawsuit against another agency, a director proposes that clinicians stop documenting clients' statements about suicidal thoughts unless the client reports a plan, to reduce liability. Agency counsel has already advised that the change would increase liability, but the director still favors it. Note length is not a concern. Yusuf, an LMSW, is the agency's quality manager. What is his BEST response?

A. Ask agency counsel to review the proposal before a final decision
B. Recommend keeping full documentation of suicidal statements and risk
C. Propose a standardized suicide screening form to replace narrative notes

32. Arjun, 34, in couples counseling with an LMSW under supervision, texts his partner many times a day for reassurance, worries she will leave him, and becomes distraught when she travels for work, though she has given him no reason for doubt. Which adult attachment style does this pattern BEST reflect?

A. Fearful-avoidant
B. Preoccupied
C. Dismissing
D. Secure

33. After a school bus crash with no serious injuries, Mateo, 15, is sitting on the curb crying uncontrollably and breathing fast. He does not respond when asked questions. Paramedics have already checked him and found no injuries, and a teacher he knows is sitting beside him. Using psychological first aid, what should the social worker do?

A. Speak calmly, help him notice his surroundings, and guide him to breathe more slowly
B. Call his parents so they can come to the scene and take him home to rest
C. Give him some time and space to let his emotions run their course before approaching him
D. Ask the paramedics to transport him to the emergency department for evaluation

34. Bao Tran, a family service social worker, has reasonable suspicion that a 4-year-old client is being neglected after repeated home visits find the child alone and unfed. Her supervisor thinks the situation is not serious enough and tells her not to report. The state places the reporting duty on each individual mandated reporter. What should Bao do?

A. File a complaint against the supervisor with the state licensing board today
B. Make the report herself, because the duty to report is her own
C. Present the case at the next team meeting to reach a group decision first
D. Follow the supervisor's direction and document that she disagreed with it

35. Peter Novak, an LMSW at a family agency, is asked by a parent's attorney to perform a child custody evaluation for court. He has counseling experience with families but no forensic evaluation training. What should he do?

A. Decline, since custody evaluation requires forensic training he lacks
B. Accept and consult a forensic evaluator while he prepares the report
C. Accept and limit the report to his direct observations of the family

36. Rafael, 18, who is nonbinary and uses they/them pronouns, refuses to return to the city's only adult emergency shelter, where staff repeatedly misgendered them. They are now sleeping in a friend's car and have nowhere else to stay. What is the outreach social worker's BEST response?

A. Advocate with shelter leadership so that staff use Rafael's name and pronouns
B. Respect the refusal and look for affirming housing options with Rafael now
C. Accept the refusal and give Rafael a list of warming centers and meal sites

37. An agency manual contains this passage: "Before releasing any client record, staff complete Form 12, verify the requester's identity with photo ID, and log the release in the records database within 24 hours." In agency administration, this passage is BEST described as a

- **A.** procedure
- **B.** policy
- **C.** mission statement

38. Arjun, 42, sees a social worker at a family service agency who uses a psychodynamic approach. Over several sessions, the worker helps him notice that he goes silent whenever his wife criticizes him, just as he did as a boy when his father criticized him. The PRIMARY purpose of helping Arjun develop this insight is to help him:

- **A.** identify and dispute the irrational beliefs that produce his emotional distress
- **B.** notice painful thoughts and accept them without acting to change them
- **C.** understand how earlier experiences and unconscious patterns shape his behavior

39. Jasmine, 24, is in her first year as a high school teacher. She tells her supervisor in a teacher support program that a senior colleague encourages her goals, guides her through school politics, and treats her as a future peer. She expects she will eventually need less of this guidance. In Levinson's model, this colleague BEST fits the role of:

- **A.** A secure base from which she explores her new role
- **B.** A mentor who supports her pursuit of the Dream
- **C.** A more knowledgeable other scaffolding her new skills

40. Avery, 18, assigned female at birth, sees an LMSW at a college counseling center. Avery describes intense distress about their chest, wears a binder daily, and says, 'I've never felt like a girl.' Avery asks whether these feelings are 'normal.' What should the LMSW do FIRST?

- **A.** Refer Avery to the campus health center to discuss gender-affirming medical options.
- **B.** Screen Avery for an eating disorder, given the intense focus on body shape.
- **C.** Ask Avery to describe their experience of gender and how it connects to the distress.