

Stumbo, N. J. & Folkerth, J. E. (2005). *Study guide for the therapeutic recreation specialist certification examination* (3rd ed). Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing. 181 pages. \$34.95. ISBN: 1-57167-554-x.

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Sitting for a certification examination is a daunting prospect for most emerging professionals. The therapeutic recreation specialist certification examination, developed and administered by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) in conjunction with Educational Testing Service, is no exception. Whether a person has been out of school for two months or ten years, there is often a great deal of anxiety reported in the preparation for this exam.

Study Guide for the Therapeutic Recreation Specialist Certification Examination, third edition, was developed by Stumbo and Folkerth to assist in this preparation and reduce the anxiety of potential test-takers. This user-friendly guide is designed to orient the user to both the content and layout of the exam, as well as help the user to understand how the exam was created and what it is intended to measure.

Study Guide is divided into two sections. The first two chapters in section 1 introduce the study guide and its intended use and explain how the exam was developed. Chapter 3 provides basic strategies for preparing for and taking the exam, including what to be prepared for when arriving at the test site on the day of the exam. All of the strategies are intended to reduce test-taking anxiety and increase successful completion of the exam. Perhaps most importantly, the final chapter in section 1 (chapter 4) presents the NCTRC knowledge areas and the exam content outline, on which the exam was created. This outline includes the percentage of exam content from each area. Following the outline, the authors break down, in detail, what is meant by every item on the outline for each of the eight knowledge areas and clarify what those percentages mean in terms of actual test questions. These thorough reviews are intended to refresh the user's knowledge in each content area. At the conclusion of each section in this chapter the authors have included a list of relevant and current references so that the user can access additional information.

Section 2 consists of three chapters, all of which contain sample test questions, for a total of more than 500 sample questions. While the sample questions are representative of actual test items, the authors repeatedly acknowledge that they are not the exact items that will appear on the exam. Score sheets and a scoring key are provided.

ed at the end of each chapter. Chapter 5 consists of 90 'warm-up' questions intended to acquaint the user with taking multiple choice exams and to introduce the user to the types of questions which will be included on the exam. Chapter 6 provides two full-length practice tests. Both practice tests are designed to reflect the same proportion of questions for each knowledge area as the user will see on the actual exam. Users are encouraged to simulate real test taking conditions to better prepare for the actual exam. When scoring their practice test, users will note the scoring key is arranged according to knowledge area to better identify which of those eight areas they may need to review in greater detail. Finally, chapter 7 is designed to provide extra practice in areas where the user may be weak. Thirty questions are provided for each of the eight knowledge areas. The user can utilize any or all of these 'mini-tests' to strengthen their familiarity with any of the knowledge areas.

Significant improvements have been made from the second edition. Two merit specific mention. First, the third edition contains many additional sample questions (even an entire additional practice test), and all questions have been updated to reflect the NCTRC 2004 exam content outline. Secondly, chapter 4, has been significantly expanded, providing the user with rich detail of what is included within each area of the NCTRC exam content outline.

If *Study Guide* has a weakness, it is the absence of practice tests on CD. While the pen and paper practice tests are useful tools, the advent of computer testing has created a new category of test anxiety. If feasible, the availability of computerized practice tests may help address this anxiety by providing a more realistic practice test experience.

Study Guide serves dual purposes. As previously identified, for the therapeutic recreation practitioner preparing to sit for the therapeutic recreation specialist certification examination, the book is an invaluable tool. *Study Guide*, however, is also useful for the therapeutic recreation educator. In addition to serving as a reference for aligning curriculum with NCTRC standards, *Study Guide* can serve as a companion text in a senior-level therapeutic recreation course. The incorporation of *Study Guide* within a course helps to foster professional development of students and can serve to both review and integrate knowledge from therapeutic recreation, recreation, and supportive coursework. In all, *Study Guide* is both well-conceptualized and well-written and does an excellent job in fulfilling its purpose.