Exam Question Formats
Tips for Taking Exam
CERT DAY PREPARATION

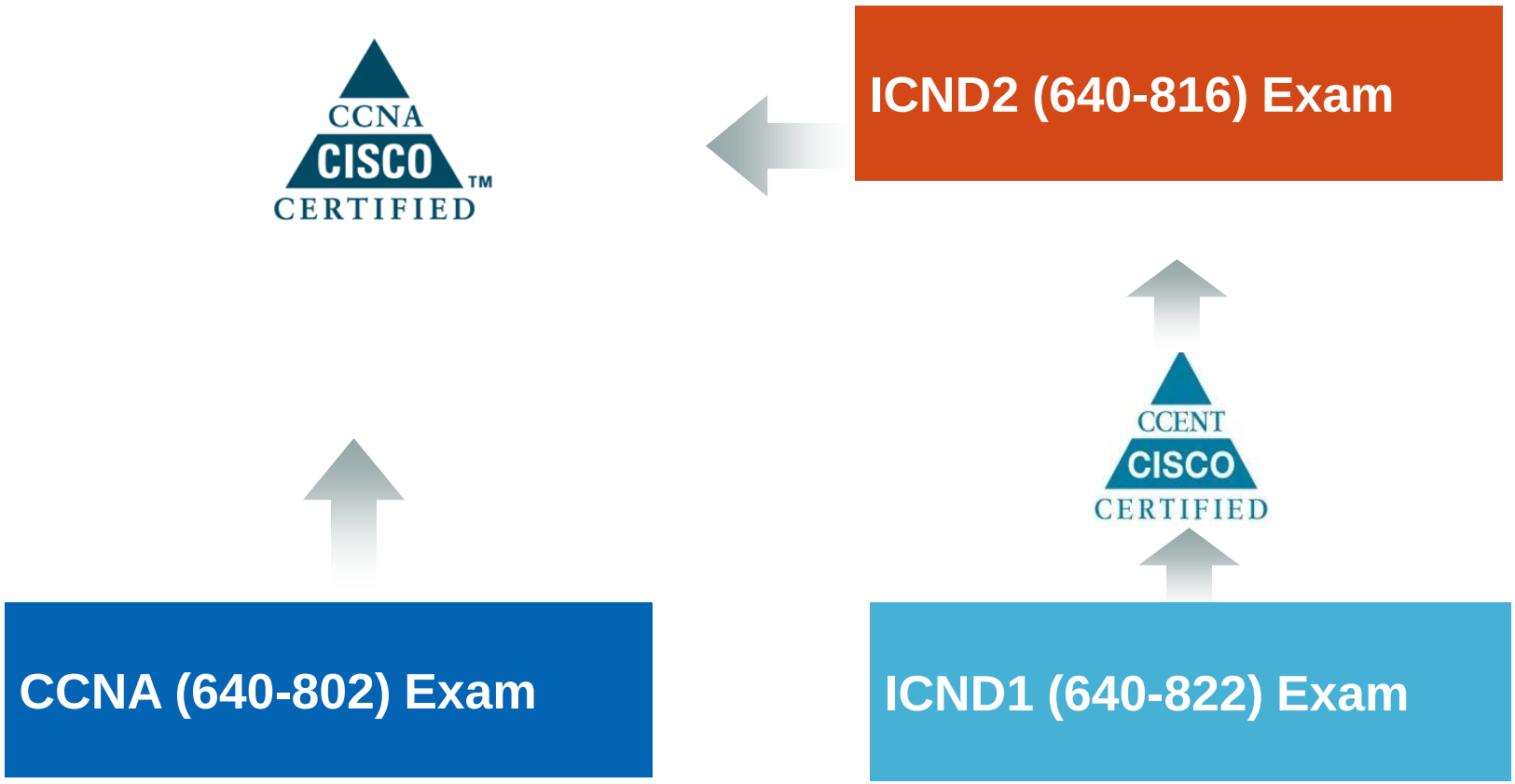
Adapted APAC/Japan Technical Advocacy Team Documents

Agenda

- Exam Overview & Options
- Study Resources
- Exam Question Formats
- Tips for Taking the Exams
- Legends/Truths
- Time Budgeting

Exam Overview and Options

Certification:
1-Step or 2-Step

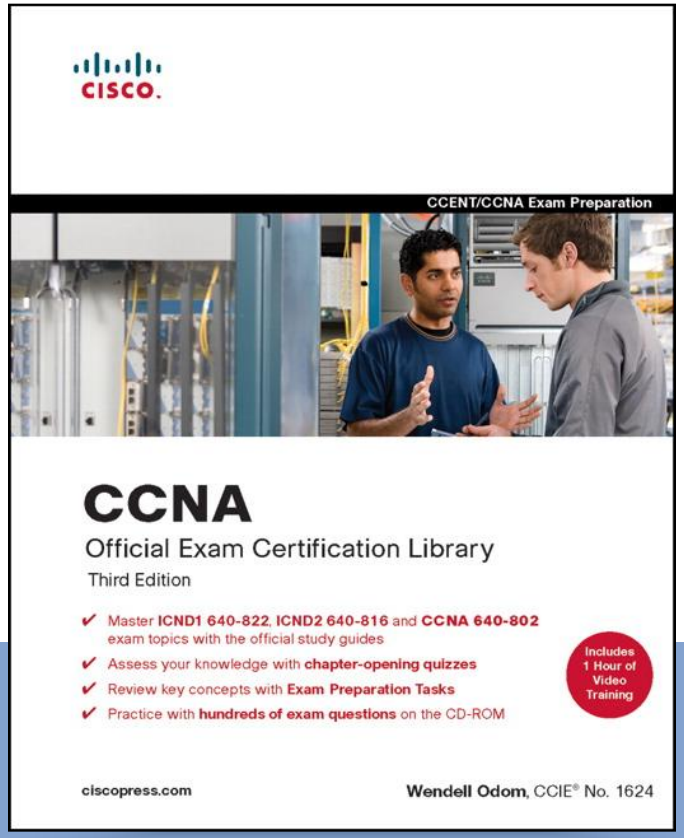


CCNA Exam (640-802)

- From an exam day perspective …
  - You may see more ICND2 than ICND1, because some ICND2 skills require ICND1 skills plus more
  - e.g., An ICND2-level question using VLSM may also prove ICND1-level subnetting knowledge and ICND2-level subnetting knowledge

Study Resources

CCNA Exam Recommended Reading

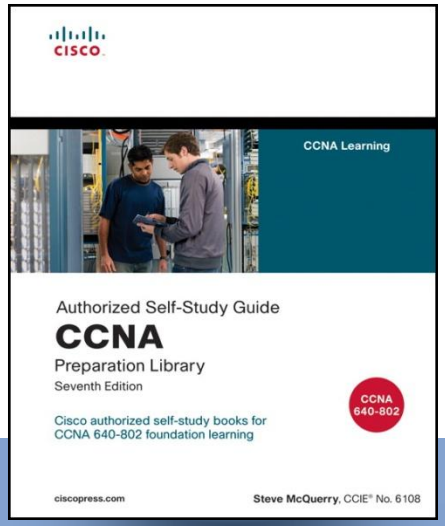


- *CCENT/CCNA ICND1 Official Exam Certification Guide*, Second Edition
- *CCNA ICND2 Official Exam Certification Guide*, Second Edition
- 1 Hour of Video Training

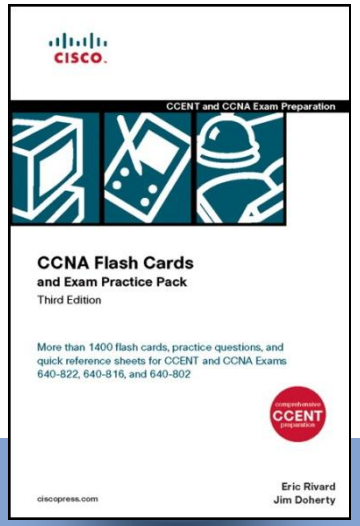
CCNA Exam Recommended Reading

31 Days Before Your CCNA Exam second edition
By Allan Johnson (640-802)

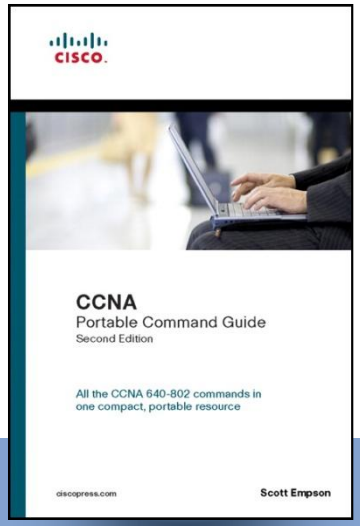
Video Learning and Lab Assistance



Foundation Learning



Test Review and Practice



Hands on Application

Exam Question Formats

Multiple Choice, Single Answer

- May test simple recall of pertinent facts
- May require analysis and understanding of complex scenarios
- If you click a 2nd answer, it automatically unchecks the previous answer

Which OSI model layer is concerned with routing?

A. Layer 1
B. Layer 3
C. Layer 5
D. Layer 7

Multiple Choice, Multiple Answer

- Question states the number of right answers
- Exam engine reminds about too few, too many answers

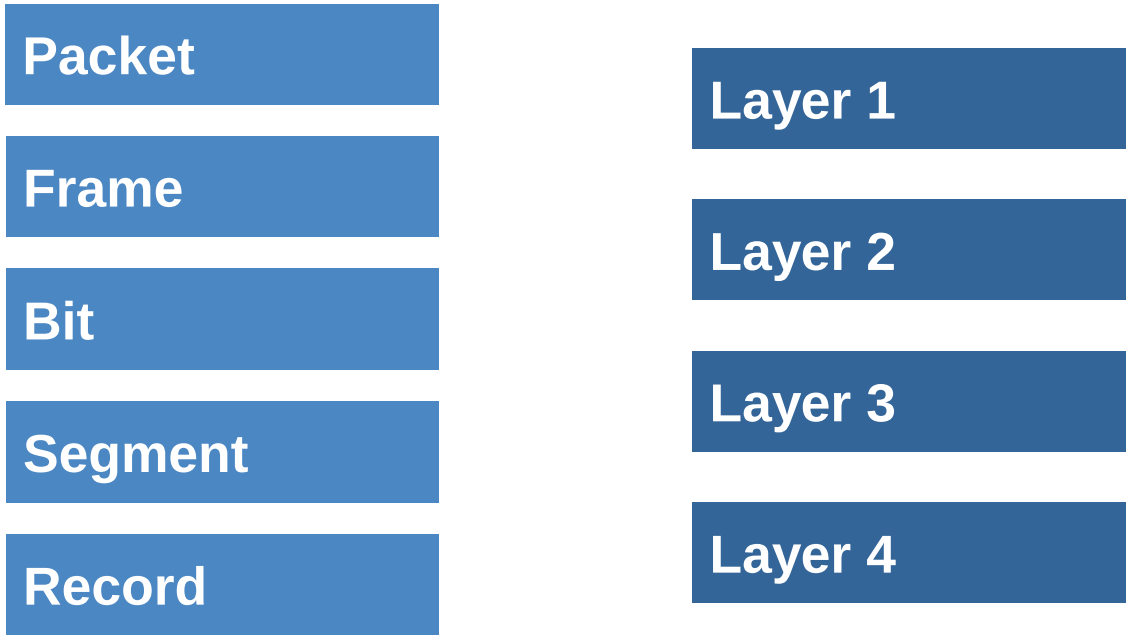
Which cable in the campus LAN should be a crossover cable (Choose 2)?

A. SW1 – SW2
B. PC1 – SW2
C. AP1 – SW1
D. R1 – SW2
E. PC2 – PC3

Drag-and-Drop

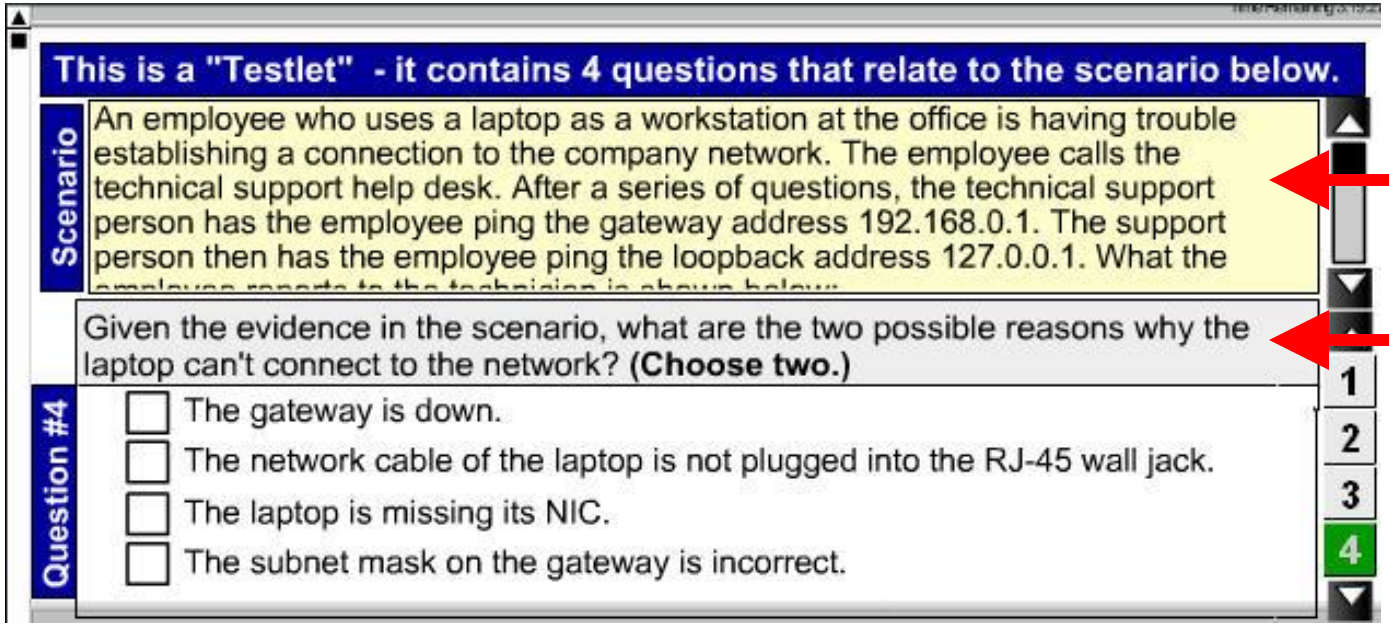
- List of items to be dragged on the left
- Drag to the boxes on the right

Click and drag the unit of information on the left to the OSI Layer to which it best corresponds on the right. Not all apply.



Testlet

- One general scenario
- Multiple different multiple choice questions
- Can move around between the questions



Text of overall scenario

Text of each question here…

based on which question is clicked here

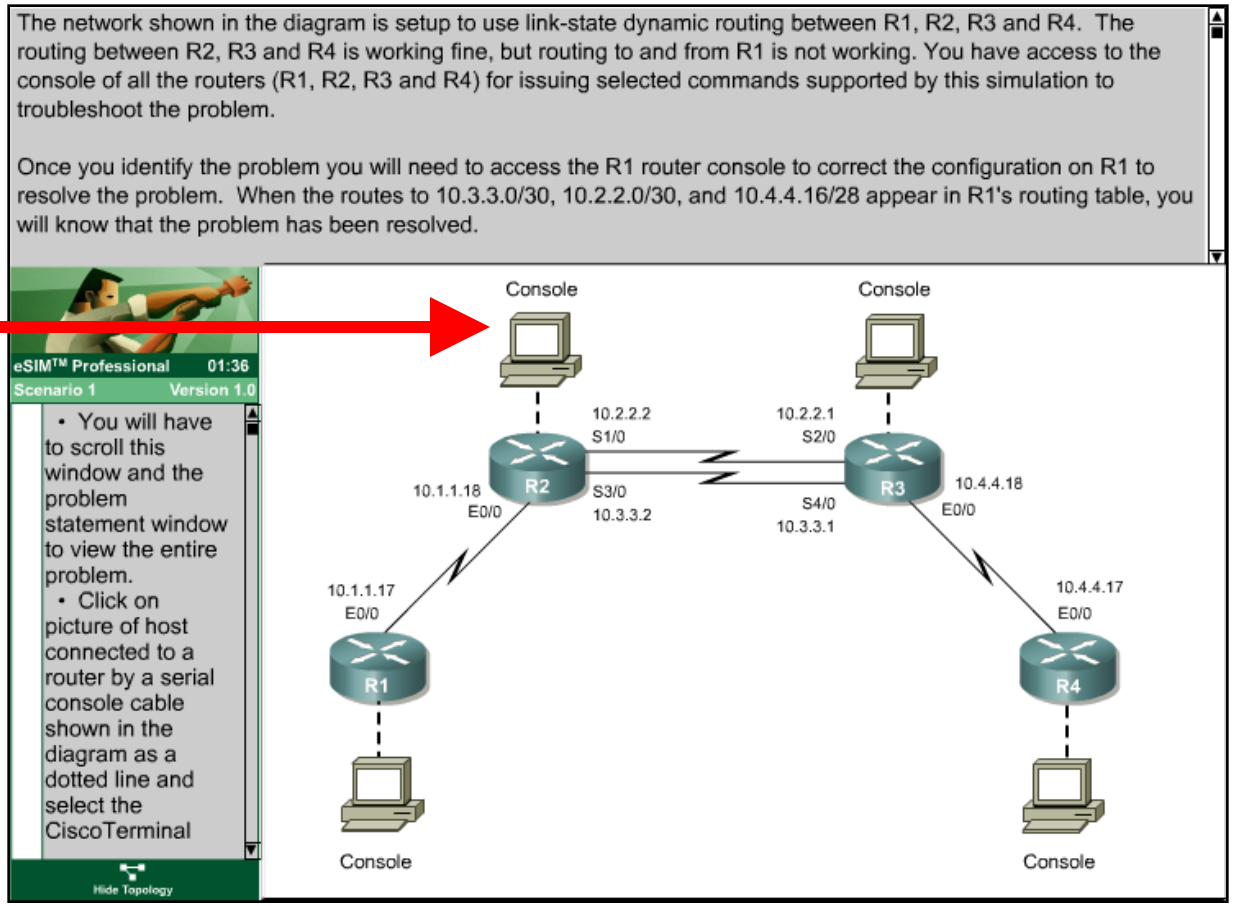
Simulations (Sims)

- Problem Statement, with Goal
- Objective: Complete or Fix the Configuration
- Must Access and Use the CLI
- Click a PC icon to (virtually) Use an Emulator to Connect to Router/Switch
- support:
  - Help (?)
  - Abbreviated commands
  - Tab key to complete commands/keywords

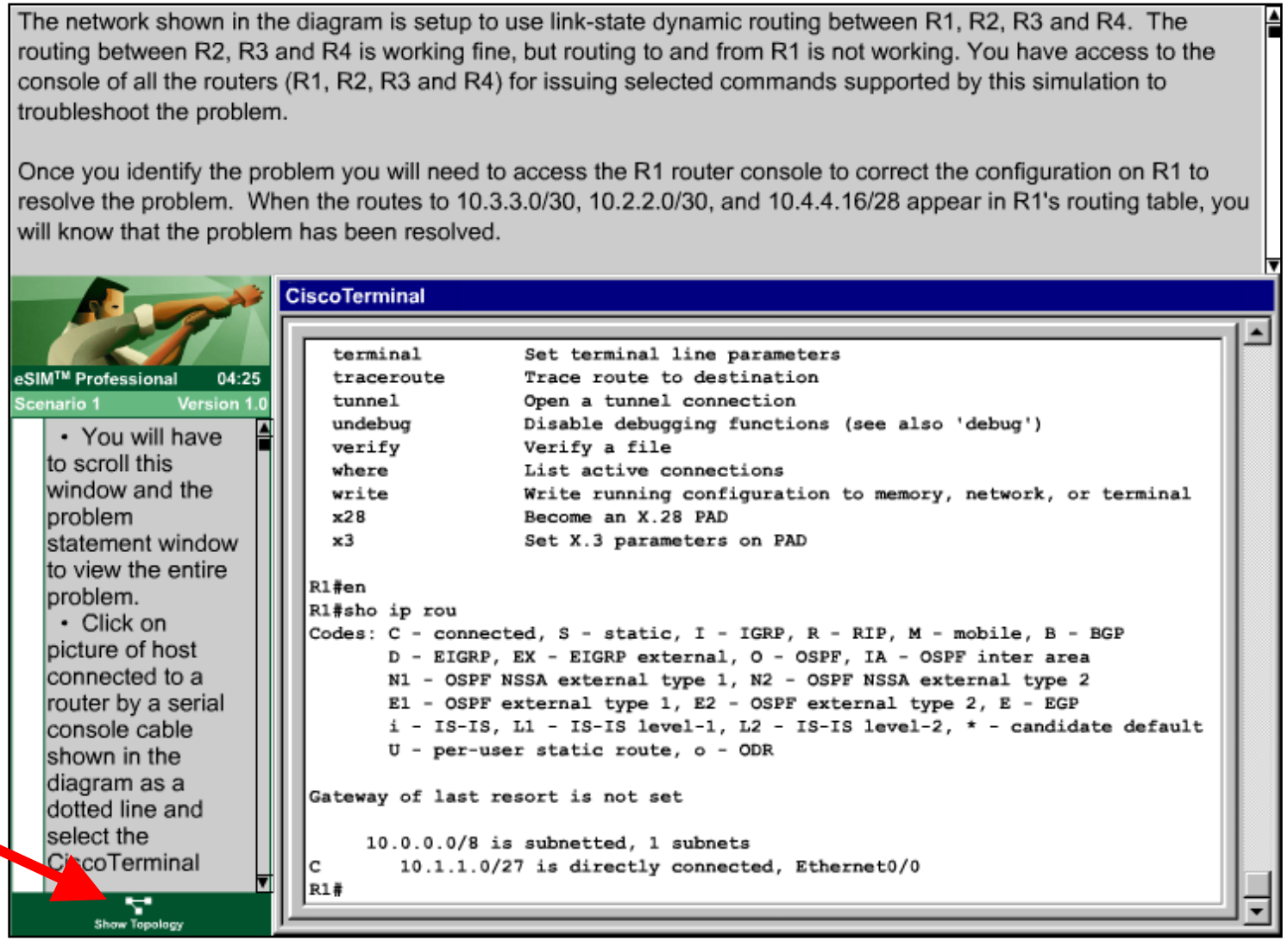
Sim Topology View

Problem Statement

Dashed Line Implies to Click this PC to reach R2's CLI



Sim With CLI Visible



Toggle Between CLI View and Topology View Here

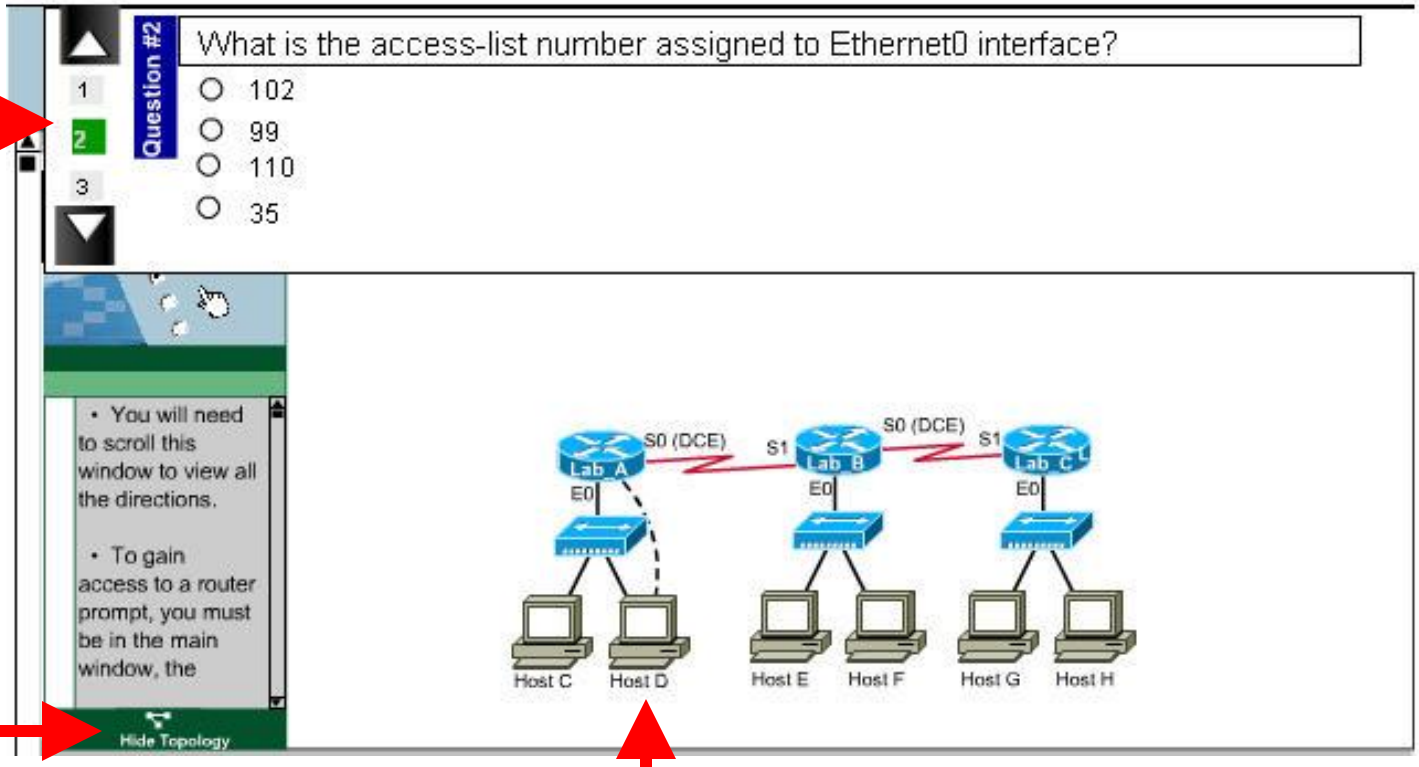
Simlet

- Like testlet, with multiple different Multiple Choice questions
- Like sim, uses simulator
- Objective is to answer Multiple Choice questions
- Typically, no configuration required

Simlet

Select Question Here

Toggle Between CLI View and Topology View Here



Dashed Line between Host D and router Lab A implies to Click Host D icon to reach Lab A's CLI

Exam Taking Tips

Tips:
Multiple Choice Questions

- Look for the "best" answer; some answers may be good, but not "best", so read all the answers
- Look for subtleties, for example:
  - "Packet" implies layer 3, typically IP packet, routing, etc
  - "RIP Version 2" implies classless routing protocol and implies both VLSM support and 2^s formula (instead of $2^s - 2$ formula) for the number of subnets
- If you need to guess:
  - Rule out as many answers as possible
  - Your first impression is usually the better answer to guess
  - There is no penalty for guessing

Tips: Testlets

- Answer all questions—exam software will remind you before letting you move on
- You can move between questions in a single testlet
  - If confused by testlet question 1, look at question 2
  - When reading question X, go ahead and click answer(s), even if you are unsure, so you'll remember your first impressions
- Same general suggestions as Multiple Choice questions

Tips: Sims

- Sim questions are always answered by configuring something!
- The Exam Engine grades the **running config**, not the startup config
- Before exam day …
  - Practice as much as you can (real gear, simulators, sample tests, read every configuration in books, repeat labs while in class, etc.)
  - Use multiple sources for practice/review of configurations
- Exam day …
  - Do what you can—**partial credit**!!!
  - Start with "show running-config"
  - There are no style points!

Tips: Simlets

- Simlet questions—no need to change the config!
- You may not have visibility to the running config!
- Before exam day …
  - Stop and do "show" commands after each step—this emulates the status in Simlet questions
  - Use resources that emphasize and explain show command output
  - Use multiple sources for guidance in your hands-on practice
- Exam day …
  - Guess if you don't know! (no penalty)
  - If unsure, click your best guess now, to remember your first impressions
  - Read all questions, then use sim (personal preference)

Router Simulation
Legends vs. Truth

1. **Legend**: You lose points if you use help "?"
   - **Truth**: No penalty!
2. **Legend**: You have to save your configs even if the simulation does not specifically request saving
   - **Truth**: Grading based on running-config
3. **Legend**: You lose points if you enter too many commands
   - **Truth**: No penalty!

Router Simulation
Legends vs. Truth (Cont.)

4. **Legend**: If you miss one little thing, you get 0 points on that Sim question
   - **Truth**: Partial credit is given, so do as much as you can
5. **Legend**: You will fail the exam if you miss even one simulation question
   - **Truth**: You can miss all available points on a sim question and still pass the exam
6. **Legend**: You should spend most of your time working on the simulations
   - **Truth**: Sims do have greater weighting than one MC question, but do not spend most of your time—maybe 5 to 8 minutes

Other Legends and Truths

1. **Legend**: The test is adaptive, e.g., if you miss a RIP question, you'll get more RIP questions
   - **Truth**: The tests are not adaptive
2. **Legend**: My exam covered something not listed in the exam topics
   - **Truth 1**: Exam Topics are "guidelines"; the exams may go beyond the exam topics, so you could see such a question
   - **Truth 2**: More likely: the question was a sample item for possible future tests, and did not affect your score

Cisco Avoids These Questions ...

- Those that require the memorization of command syntax or interface/menus
- "Trick questions"
- Version-dependent questions, e.g., configure Cisco IOS vs. Cisco Cat IOS
- Subnetting questions that are ambiguous regarding whether to use the 2^s or $2^s - 2$ formula for the number of subnets

Time Budget

Time and Question Counts on the Exams

- The three exams state the following:
  - ICND1: 90 minutes 50–60 questions
  - ICND2: 75 minutes 45–55 questions
  - CCNA: 90 minutes 50–60 questions
- You learn your exam's question count as you begin the exam
- Look at the clock as you begin Sim and Simlet questions

Time Budget: Short Version

- You need a way to answer the question:
  - Am I using too much time per question so far?
- Time consumers—Sim, Simlet, and Testlet questions—make the obvious math (actual-time/answered-questions vs. time-per-question) much less useful
- Just a suggestion:
  - For each simlet/testlet/sim, add 5 to current question count
  - Multiple by 1.2
  - That's the number of minutes, or less, you should have taken so far
  - It's an estimate—don't be slaved to it

Time Budget Example

- CCNA Exam
- After question 10, you want to check time
- You've had one Sim question, no Simlets/Testlets
- Multiply 15 * 1.2 = 18 minutes
- If actual time <= 18 minutes, you're doing fine on time

Register and Check Out

The Cisco Learning Network
A Wealth of Resources:

- Self Register
- Documents
- Videos
- Discussions
- VIP Blogs
- Self Assessment

https://learningnetwork.cisco.com/community/learning_center?view=overview

You Tube Video—'How to Pass the CCNA'

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UwvOsfJMY8&feature=player_embedded#at=72

Summary

Prepare

Use the Many Resources

Practice on Routers and Switches, PT, Simulators

Time Budget on Questions—Answer All of Them

Don’t Be Intimidated by the Simulations

Give Yourself a Time Budget When You Hit a Simulation

Shows and Question Marks work

Answer as Much as You Can

CERTIFICATION DAY TIPS

- Be calm
- Don't give up
- Don't panic
- Schedule at your best timing
- Don't attempt exam without preparation
- Watch your time
- Focus
- All the best!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