Currently, the **Oracle Certified Professional Java Programmer (OCPJP)** exam is offered in three different versions.

- OCPJP 1.8
- OCPJP 1.7
- OCPJP 1.6
- OCPJP 1.5 (Scheduled to retire on March 1, 2016)

If you want me to give you a quick answer on which exam you should go for, I would suggest you to go for the latest version, which is OCPJP 1.8.

Granted, that would be a very generic answer, which might NOT be applicable for you. Listed below is some key points on each of these exam versions. If you can't decide which exam to go for, ask from your Examlab tutor for free!

SCJP 1.8:
- Latest!
- Covers a lot of things which are new to Java 8.
- Must pass the OCA exam first.

SCJP 1.7:
- Covers new-to-Java-7 stuff.
- Must pass the OCA exam first.

SCJP 1.6:
- Covers new-to-Java-6 stuff.
- NO prerequisite exams

SCJP 1.5:
- Covers new-to-Java-6 stuff.
- NO prerequisite exams
- Old! If you really want to go for this version, you have few days before it retires on March 01, 2016

Concise Exam Objectives

It should be obvious that each of these versions has different objectives as they focus on different versions of Java. Here is a very brief and concise description of objectives covered in each of these versions.

OCPJP 1.8

As mentioned earlier, you need to take two exams to complete this certification - OCA and OCP

OCA: (iz0-808)

- Basics like class structure, variables, operators, conditions, and loops.
- Arrays with different dimensions.
- Basic APIs like wrapper classes for primitives, String, StringBuilder, ArrayList, etc
- Almost everything about OOP in Java
- Exceptions
- Lambda predicate expressions

OCP: (iz0-809)

- Everything in the OCA exam
- Singleton and immutable classes.
- Initialization blocks
- Inner classes and enumerations (enums)
- Generics
- Threads
- List, Set, and Map implementers in the Java collection framework.
- Streams, files, I/O, and NIO.2
- Java stream API
- Lambda functional interface
- JDBC
- Localization

OCPJP 1.7

Similar to the OCPJP 1.8, this version splits into two exams that you must do to get this certification.

OCA: (iz0-803)

- Basics like class structure, variables, operators, conditions, and loops.
- Arrays with different dimensions.
- Garbage collection
- Basic APIs like wrapper classes for primitives, String, StringBuilder, ArrayList, etc
- Almost everything about OOP in Java
- Exceptions

OCP: (iz0-804)

- Everything in the OCA exam
- Basic patterns like singleton, DAO, and factory.
- Inner classes and enumerations (enums)
- Generics
- Threads
- Thread management with executors and java.util.concurrent collections
- List, Set, and Map implementers in the Java collection framework.
- Streams, files, I/O, and NIO.2
- JDBC
- Localization

OCPJP 1.6

One exam (iz0-851) covering these topics:

- Basics like class structure, variables, operators, conditions, and loops.
- Arrays with different dimensions.
- Garbage collection
- Basic APIs like wrapper classes for primitives, String, StringBuilder, ArrayList, etc
- Almost everything about OOP in Java
- Exceptions
- Inner classes
- Generics
- Threads
- JAR files and classpath configuration.

OCPJP 1.5

This is very much similar to the OCPJP 1.6 exam. Like OCPJP 1.6, OCPJP 1.5 has only one exam (iz0-853) and its objectives are very much similar to the objectives of OCPJP 1.6, except that OCPJP 1.5 doesn't cover some specific API classes, like Console and NavigableSet that OCPJP 1.6 covers.

For the consistency, here is the list of OCPJP 1.5

- Basics like class structure, variables, operators, conditions, and loops.
- Arrays with different dimensions.
- Garbage collection
- Basic APIs like wrapper classes for primitives, String, StringBuilder, ArrayList, etc
- Almost everything about OOP in Java
- Exceptions
- Inner classes
- Generics
- Threads
- JAR files and classpath configuration.

Above concise objectives were listed so briefly, only for the intention of helping you to select which exam to go for. For detailed objectives, please refer the Oracle website:
https://education.oracle.com/pls/web_prod-plq-dad/db_pages.getpage?page_id=653&get_params=p_id:155

If selecting an exam is still puzzling for you, you can get some expert advice for free! All you have to do is sign up for an Examlab account, and click the "Ask" button to ask a question from the tutor assigned to you!