

CLEP® Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present: At a Glance

Description of the Examination

The Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present examination covers material that is usually taught in the second semester of a two-semester course in Western Civilization. Questions cover European history from the mid-17th century through the post-World War II period, including political, economic and cultural developments such as Scientific Thought, the Enlightenment, the French and Industrial Revolutions, and World Wars I and II. Candidates may be asked to choose the correct definition of a historical term, select the historical figure whose political viewpoint is described, identify the correct relationship between two historical factors or detect the inaccurate pairing of an individual with a historical event. Groups of questions may require candidates to interpret, evaluate or relate the contents of a passage, a map, a picture or a cartoon to the other information or to analyze and use the data contained in a graph or table.

The examination contains approximately 120 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored.

Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the Western Civilization II examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities:

- Understanding important factual knowledge of developments in Western Civilization
- Identifying the causes and effects of major events in history
- Analyzing, interpreting and evaluating textual and graphic historical materials
- Distinguishing the relevant from the irrelevant
- Reaching conclusions on the basis of facts

The subject matter of the Western Civilization II examination is drawn from the following topics. The percentages next to the main topics indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions on that topic.

7–9% Absolutism and Constitutionalism, 1648–1715

The Dutch Republic

The English Revolution

France under Louis XIV

Formation of Austria and Prussia

The “westernization” of Russia

4–6% Competition for Empire and Economic Expansion

Global economy of the 18th century

Europe after Utrecht, 1713–1740

Demographic change in the 18th century

5–7% The Scientific View of the World

Major figures of the scientific revolution

New knowledge of man and society

Political theory

7–9% Period of Enlightenment

Enlightenment thought

Enlightened despotism

Partition of Poland

10–13% Revolution and Napoleonic Europe

The Revolution in France

The Revolution and Europe

The French Empire

Congress of Vienna

7–9% The Industrial Revolution

Agricultural and industrial revolution

Causes of revolution

Economic and social impact on the working class and the middle class

British reform movement

6–8% Political and Cultural Developments, 1815–1848

Conservatism, Liberalism, Nationalism, Socialism

The Revolutions of 1830 and 1848

8–10% Politics and Diplomacy in the Age of Nationalism, 1850–1914

The unification of Italy and Germany

Austria-Hungary, Russia, France

Socialism and labor unions

European diplomacy, 1871–1900

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7–9% Economy, Culture and Imperialism, 1850–1914

Demography

World economy of the 19th century

Technological developments

Science, philosophy and the arts

Imperialism in Africa and Asia

10–12% World War I and the Russian Revolution

The causes of World War I

The economic and social impact of the war

The peace settlements

The Revolution of 1917 and its effects

7–9% Europe Between the Wars

The Great Depression

International politics, 1919–1939

Stalin's five-year plans and purges

Italy and Germany between the wars

Interwar cultural developments

8–10% World War II and Contemporary Europe

The causes and course of World War II

Postwar Europe

Science, philosophy, the arts and religion

Social and political developments

Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level Western civilization courses cover the topics in the above outline, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the Western Civilization II exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found for sale online or in most college bookstores. You may also find it helpful to supplement your reading with books listed in the bibliographies found in most Western civilization textbooks. In addition, contemporary historical novels, plays and films provide rich sources of information. Actual works of art in museums can bring to life not only the reproductions found in books but history itself.

A recent survey conducted by CLEP® found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. You might find one or more of these online or at your local college bookstore. HINT: Look at the table of

contents first to make sure it matches the Knowledge and Skills Required for this exam.

Chambers et al., <i>The Western Experience</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Coffin and Stacey, <i>Western Civilizations</i> , Brief Edition (W.W. Norton)
Greer and Lewis, <i>A Brief History of the Western World</i> (Wadsworth)
Goff, <i>A Survey of Western Civilization</i> , Vols. I and II (McGraw-Hill)
Hunt et al., <i>The Making of the West</i> (Bedford/St. Martin's)
Kidner et al., <i>Making Europe: People, Politics, Culture</i> (Wadsworth)
King, <i>Western Civilization: A Social and Cultural History</i> (Prentice-Hall)
Kishlansky et al., <i>Civilization in the West</i> (Pearson Longman)
McKay et al., <i>A History of Western Society</i> (Wadsworth)
Merriman, <i>A History of Modern Europe</i> (W.W. Norton)
Noble et al., <i>Western Civilization: Beyond Boundaries</i> (Wadsworth)
Sherman and Salisbury, <i>The West in the World</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Spielvogel, <i>Western Civilization</i> (Wadsworth)

Additional details and differing interpretations can be gained by consulting readers and specialized historical studies. Pay attention to visual materials (pictures, maps and charts) as you study.

These resources, compiled by the CLEP test development committee and staff members, may help you study for your exam. However, none of these sources are designed specifically to provide preparation for a CLEP exam. The College Board has no control over their content and cannot vouch for accuracy:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/>
(Fordham's Internet History Sourcebooks Project)

Visit www.collegeboard.com/clepprep for additional Western civilization resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *CLEP Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and info about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

1. Louis XVI's response to the American Revolution was to

- (A) oppose the revolution because of the threat to monarchy that it represented
- (B) attempt to broker a peaceful settlement between Britain and the United States
- (C) do all he could to remain neutral in the conflict
- (D) support the American cause, first covertly and then with troops, in order to weaken Britain
- (E) use the Revolution as a pretext for arresting those in France who opposed his rule

2. The Partitions of Poland in the late 18th century divided up Polish lands among

- (A) Russia, Prussia and Austria
- (B) Germany and the Soviet Union
- (C) France, England and the Habsburg Empire
- (D) all the victors of the Napoleonic Wars
- (E) the members of the Quadruple Alliance

3. An armistice was signed by Russia and the Central Powers ending Russian involvement in World War I after which of the following occurred?

- (A) The Bolsheviks seized power from Russia's provisional government in the October Revolution.
- (B) The Central Powers cut Russia off from its allies, making continued military alliance impossible.
- (C) Tsar Nicholas decided to focus more on domestic issues and land reform.
- (D) Russian elections brought an antiwar party to power in the face of widespread opposition to the fighting.
- (E) Germany and Russia signed a secret pact that guaranteed each country expanded territory.

4. "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

The quote above is most consistent with which of the following systems of thought?

- (A) Social Darwinism
- (B) Communism
- (C) Classical liberalism
- (D) Fascism
- (E) Logical positivism

5. Which of the following is considered one reason why the industrial revolution had its beginnings in England?

- (A) A large number of children were available to do much of the needed industrial work.
- (B) Britain preferred to be economically self-sufficient and limit imports and exports, so industrialization was necessary.
- (C) An extensive colonial system gave Britain access to raw materials and markets for finished products.
- (D) Military innovations benefited British merchants, who adapted new inventions for commercial use.
- (E) Unlike in other European countries, British workers were quick to embrace the time- and labor-saving advances of industrialization.

6. Which of the following European nations was NOT involved in the "Scramble for Africa"?

- (A) France
- (B) Germany
- (C) Belgium
- (D) The Netherlands
- (E) Spain

7. Which of the following was a result of the 1938 Munich Agreement?

- (A) Hitler concluded that the other European powers would not oppose German expansion.
- (B) Germany was divided into sections dominated by the Soviet Union and the United States.
- (C) Germany and Italy formed a military alliance with Japan.

- (D) The United Nations was created to replace the failed League of Nations.
 - (E) Chamberlain's successful negotiations with Hitler led to Chamberlain's election as British prime minister.
8. Rene Descartes' work is considered influential on science because of its
- (A) attempt to synthesize Aristotelian thought with traditional Christian symbolism
 - (B) insistence on empiricism and direct sensory experience and observation
 - (C) rediscovery of the work of the ancient Greek and Egyptian astronomers and mathematicians
 - (D) rejection of the heliocentric view of the universe championed by Galileo
 - (E) mechanistic worldview emphasizing the separation of the physical realm from human perception

Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant 3 credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP Western Civilization II exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the Western Civilization II examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

Answers to Sample Questions: 1-D; 2-A; 3-A; 4-B; 5-C; 6-D; 7-A; 8-E.