



CLEP[®]

CLEP[®] Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648

AT A GLANCE

Description of the Exam

The Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648 exam covers material that is usually taught in the first semester of a two-semester course in Western Civilization. Questions deal with the civilizations of Ancient Greece, Rome, and the Near East; the Middle Ages; the Renaissance and the Reformation; and early modern Europe. Test takers 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 test takers to interpret, evaluate, or relate the contents of a passage, a map, or a picture to other information, or to analyze and utilize the data contained in a graph or table.

The exam contains approximately 120 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that won't be scored. This exam uses the chronological designations B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (common era). These labels correspond to B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (anno Domini), which are used in some textbooks.

Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the Western Civilization I exam require test takers to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities:

- Understanding important factual knowledge of developments in Western Civilization
- Ability to identify the causes and effects of major historical events
- Ability to analyze, interpret, and evaluate textual and graphic historical materials
- Ability to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant
- Ability to reach conclusions on the basis of facts

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

8%–10% ANCIENT NEAR EAST

- Political evolution
- Religion, culture, and technical developments in and near the Fertile Crescent

15%–17% ANCIENT GREECE AND HELLENISTIC CIVILIZATION

- Political evolution to Periclean Athens
- Periclean Athens through the Peloponnesian Wars
- Culture, religion, and thought of Ancient Greece
- The Hellenistic political structure
- The culture, religion, and thought of Hellenistic Greece

15%–17% ANCIENT ROME

- Political evolution of the Republic and of the Empire (economic and geographical context)
- Roman thought and culture
- Early Christianity
- The Germanic invasions
- The late empire

23%–27% MEDIEVAL HISTORY

- Byzantium and Islam
- Early medieval politics and culture through Charlemagne
- Feudal and manorial institutions
- The medieval church
- Medieval thought and culture
- Rise of the towns and changing economic forms
- Feudal monarchies
- The late medieval church

13%–17% RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

- The Renaissance in Italy
- The Renaissance outside Italy
- The New Monarchies
- Protestantism and Catholicism reformed and reorganized

10%–15% EARLY MODERN EUROPE, 1560–1648

- The opening of the Atlantic
- The Commercial Revolution
- Dynastic and religious conflicts
- Thought and culture

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 I exam, it's advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found in most college bookstores. When selecting a textbook, check the table of contents against the knowledge and skills required for this test.

You may also find it helpful to supplement your reading with books listed in the bibliographies found in most history 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 also 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.

Chambers et al., <i>The Western Experience</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Coffin and Stacey, <i>Western Civilizations</i> , Brief Edition (W. W. Norton)
Goff, <i>A Survey of Western Civilization</i> , Vols. I and II (McGraw-Hill)
Greer and Lewis, <i>A Brief History of the Western World</i> (Wadsworth)
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 can't vouch for accuracy

Fordham's Internet History Sourcebooks Project
fordham.edu/halsall/

Free online CLEP Western Civilization I course offered by Modern States Education Alliance modernstates.org/course/western-civilization-i-ancient-near-east-to-1648

University of California, Berkeley: Webcast lectures for History 5 and Philosophy 6 webcast.berkeley.edu/#c,d,History,-XXv-cvA_iBuv4J6iCVOqBLTP2KcY2JF

Visit clep.collegeboard.org/earn-college-credit/practice for additional resources and suggestions for exam preparation. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions don't appear on an actual CLEP exam. They're intended to give potential test takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the exam and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and information about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

1. Which of the following were Phoenician cities or colonies?
 - A. Alexandria and Cairo
 - B. Tyre and Carthage
 - C. Corinth and Chersonesos
 - D. Messina and Rhegium
 - E. Syracuse and Naples

2. Which of the following best describes a significant difference between Classical Greece and Achaemenid Persia?
- A. Persian society was Islamic, whereas Greek society was polytheistic.
 - B. Persian society was entirely nomadic, whereas Greek society relied on agriculture.
 - C. Persia was governed by an absolute monarchy, whereas the Greek city-states allowed popular political participation.
 - D. Slavery was pervasive in Persian society, whereas slavery was outlawed in most Greek city-states.
 - E. Persian culture developed with little influence from outside its borders, whereas Greek culture was heavily influenced by the Romans.
3. Which of the following best describes a political continuity between Rome during the monarchy and Rome during the Republican period?
- A. The Senate continued to be an important government body.
 - B. Plebeians continued to hold all of the offices of tribune.
 - C. Two consuls continued to hold the power of *imperium*.
 - D. Praetors continued to serve as governors in conquered provinces.
 - E. The Twelve Tables continued to serve as the most important legal codex.
4. Which of the following best explains a change in Greek religious practice during the Hellenistic period?
- A. As Greeks became more familiar with Persian culture, many became Zoroastrians.
 - B. Greeks increasingly incorporated foreign cults such as those of Isis and Serapis into their traditional belief system.
 - C. Buddhist and Hindu practices spread rapidly across the Mediterranean because of the missionary activities of Greek settlers from India.
 - D. Greeks increasingly adopted monotheistic religious beliefs, such as those of the ancient Israelites.
 - E. As Roman and Carthaginian power grew, Greeks incorporated Roman and Phoenician religious beliefs while abandoning the traditional Greek pantheon.
5. Which of the following best describes the Roman Principate?
- A. It was a period of dictatorship established by Julius Caesar following his defeat of Pompey.
 - B. It was a political arrangement through which Marc Antony and Cleopatra planned to rule Egypt.
 - C. It was a system of government established by Sulla in Italy following the Social War that granted Rome's Italian allies limited autonomy.
 - D. It was a period of imperial government begun under Augustus that retained many Republican features and institutions of government.
 - E. It was a buffer state created by Marcus Aurelius to protect the empire from Germanic invasions.

Questions 6–8 refer to the passage below.

“This is a charter of favor and protection that I, Jaume, by the grace of God king of Aragón, make to six Muslim communities in the region of Valencia following their surrender to my forces.

The Muslims may keep their homes and possessions in all their districts with all of their income and profits and all their farms and plantings.

Christians are not to be sent to settle in Muslim districts without the Muslims’ permission, and Muslims may travel throughout their districts without Christian interference.

Christians may not forbid preaching in the mosques or the conduct of prayer on Fridays. Indeed, Muslims may practice their own religion and teach students the Qur’an and the Hadith.

Muslims may bring their legal cases to their *qadi* [judge], who will judge according to Islamic law.”

Surrender agreement negotiated between Jaume I of Aragón and various Muslim communities, Spain, 1242 C.E.

6. Which of the following developments in the early thirteenth century most directly contributed to the creation of the surrender agreement?
- A. The Christian defeat of the Ottomans at the Battle of Lepanto
 - B. The Christian defeat of the Almohads at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa
 - C. The defeat of Umayyad armies by the Frankish lord Charles Martel
 - D. The Crusader conquest of Jerusalem from the Fatimids
 - E. The Mongols’ destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate
7. The passage most directly illustrates which of the following features of Christian conquest in the Iberian Peninsula between the late eleventh and early fourteenth centuries?
- A. Christian conquest was typically consolidated by the large-scale settlement of Christians who received generous financial and legal incentives.
 - B. Christian conquest was often facilitated by conflicts between Berber and Arab Muslims.
 - C. Christian conquest was often accompanied by the regulation of relations between religious communities.
 - D. Christian conquest sometimes led to the arrival of Christian missionaries into non-Christian communities.
 - E. Christian conquest frequently led to Christian confiscation of the most fertile farm and pasture lands of the Muslim communities.
8. Which of the following features of Spain under Islamic rule most directly influenced the provisions relating to religious practice and law in the fourth and fifth paragraphs?
- A. The rules imposed upon religious minorities under the *dhimma* system
 - B. The Arabization of the Christian and Jewish populations under Muslim rule
 - C. The strict regulation of religious interactions in the marketplace
 - D. The close cooperation of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars
 - E. The high number of Christian and Jewish officials in the Umayyad bureaucracy
9. The Council of Trent (1545–1563) enacted all of the following in response to the Protestant Reformation EXCEPT
- A. granting greater powers to the Inquisition
 - B. reaffirming the legitimacy of indulgences
 - C. rejecting the notion that salvation depended on faith alone
 - D. encouraging missionary activity outside of Europe
 - E. requiring the Latin Bible to be translated into vernacular languages
10. Which of the following regions experienced most of the military conflict that took place during the Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648) ?
- A. Great Britain
 - B. Italy
 - C. France
 - D. Germany and Bohemia
 - E. Spain and Portugal

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 I exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the Western Civilization I exam, 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-B; 2-C; 3-A; 4-B; 5-D; 6-B; 7-C; 8-A; 9-E; 10-D.