

Chapter 1

Preliminary to Western Civilization

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Ötzi's survival suggests the existence in Europe of
- Europe as a political and cultural entity.
 - migrants moving into Europe from Asia.
 - organized life.
 - iron-age technology.

Answer: c

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2. Prehistory is normally thought of as that period before the invention of
- art.
 - war.
 - agriculture.
 - writing.

Answer: d

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3. The Neolithic period connotes the move to what kind of society?
- hunter-gatherer
 - agricultural
 - urban
 - migrant

Answer: b

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4. About what percentage of all human existence occurred during prehistoric times?
- 52.5 percent
 - 67.5 percent
 - 85.5 percent
 - 97.5 percent

Answer: d

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5. In the last 12,000 years the human population has exploded from 1 to 5 million humans in 10,000 BCE to how many people as of 2011?

- a. 7 billion
- b. 6 billion
- c. 5 billion
- d. 4 billion

Answer: a

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6. Where did our species, *homo sapiens sapiens*, reach its basic form?

- a. Asia
- b. Europe
- c. Australia
- d. Africa

Answer: d

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7. The common matrilineal ancestor of all living humans, the so-called Mitochondrial Eve, lived in Africa

- a. 17,000 years ago.
- b. 170,000 years ago.
- c. 7,000 years ago.
- d. 7 million years ago.

Answer: b

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8. European hunter-gatherers of the period from about 35,000 to 15,000 years ago began to produce

- a. written texts.
- b. metal weapons.
- c. stone temples.
- d. objects with symbolic meaning.

Answer: d

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9. The achievements of human beings over the last 20,000 years can best be attributed to

- a. bigger brains and better brain wiring.
- b. interbreeding between *homo sapiens sapiens* and *homo sapiens neanderthalensis*.
- c. shared and cumulative cultural advances.
- d. the domestication of animals and plants.

Answer: c

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10. The first domesticated animal was the

- a. dog.
- b. horse.
- c. chicken.
- d. pig.

Answer: a

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11. By what date had most of the animals upon which humans depend been domesticated?

- a. 250,000 BCE
- b. 25,000 BCE
- c. 2500 BCE
- d. 250 BCE

Answer: c

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12. Which of the following most likely preceded the development of agriculture?

- a. the ability to smelt metals
- b. settled life
- c. writing
- d. wheeled vehicles

Answer: b

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13. How did the diet of settled peoples most likely differ from that of their hunter-gatherer predecessors?

- a. more abundant and nutritious
- b. more dependent on meat and animal products
- c. less varied and perhaps less healthy
- d. more varied and most likely healthier

Answer: c

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14. Neolithic farmers in the Near East devoted themselves chiefly to the cultivation of what kind of crops?

- a. vegetables
- b. fruits
- c. grains
- d. sheep and goats

Answer: c

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15. How did the great carbohydrate shift in the human diet change human existence?
- a. It forced human beings to domesticate animals.
 - b. It encouraged human beings to create cave art.
 - c. It drove human beings to colonize the Fertile Crescent.
 - d. It allowed human beings to escape dependence on nomadic gathering and hunting.

Answer: d

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16. Çatal Hüyük was a
- a. site of impressive cave paintings in France.
 - b. community of nearly a thousand rectangular houses in Anatolia.
 - c. village in the Fertile Crescent where wheat was first domesticated.
 - d. location in the British Isles where peoples in Europe erected megaliths.

Answer: b

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17. Why was Europe well behind the Near East culturally and economically?
- a. Europeans expended most of their resources building henges.
 - b. People in the Near East were able to borrow agricultural techniques from Africa.
 - c. The warmer Fertile Crescent blossomed while Europe still felt the effects of the Ice Age.
 - d. Humans did not reach Europe until well after agriculture had developed in the Fertile Crescent.

Answer: c

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18. The Indo-European peoples were agents of
- a. cultural penetration and engagement.
 - b. the spread of techniques for growing grains.
 - c. the dissemination of African art forms.
 - d. the rise of urban civilizations.

Answer: a

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19. What invention allowed the Indo-Europeans to influence developing lands to the south, east, and west of their homeland?
- a. the plow
 - b. wheeled carts pulled by horses
 - c. the long bow
 - d. iron-smelting

Answer: b

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20. What is the chief characteristic of the “Mesopotamian model” of civilization?
- a. Empires never develop; instead, a region remains politically fragmented in small cities and towns.
 - b. Powerful rulers conquer vast territories and then create cities and towns.
 - c. Empires emerge from important cities and dominate and incorporate other cities and lands.
 - d. Outside peoples migrate into the region and bring with them new crops that lead to the growth of empires.

Answer: c

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21. Sumer was at the mercy of its

- a. high mountains.
- b. deadly monsoons.
- c. swampy hinterland.
- d. great rivers.

Answer: d

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22. What were the first and second great inventions of southern Mesopotamia?

- a. cities and writing
- b. agriculture and the plow
- c. domesticated horses and wheeled carts
- d. monumental architecture and bronze

Answer: a

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23. By the second millennium BCE, Mesopotamian scribes introduced into their writing signs for sounds, which are called

- a. pictographs.
- b. ideographs.
- c. phonograms.
- d. logograms.

Answer: c

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24. An awareness of different kinds of _____ depends on the existence of writing.

- a. space
- b. time
- c. social status
- d. music

Answer: b

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25. In Mesopotamian society, writing was a tool that empowered

- a. warriors and farmers.
- b. artists and scientists.
- c. women and slaves.
- d. priests and rulers.

Answer: d

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26. By the third millennium BCE, society in the developing cities of southern Mesopotamia was

- a. rigidly hierarchical.
- b. loosely organized.
- c. strongly egalitarian.
- d. mostly at peace.

Answer: a

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27. Why was agricultural Mesopotamia a world at war?

- a. It was subject to frequent invasions from other powers such as Egypt.
- b. A stable balance of power among the Mesopotamian cities was impossible to preserve.
- c. Frequent famines led to large-scale peasant revolts.
- d. Climate change forced many Mesopotamians to migrate from north to south.

Answer: b

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28. The founder of the Akkadian empire in Mesopotamia was

- a. Naram-Sin.
- b. Gilgamesh.
- c. Sargon.
- d. Ur-Nammu.

Answer: c

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29. The most celebrated document to survive from the reign of Hammurabi is his famous

- a. history of Babylon.
- b. Ziggurat.
- c. epic tale of the conquest of Mesopotamia.
- d. law code.

Answer: d

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30. Why was Mesopotamia always susceptible to invasion?
- a. It was politically weak and fragmented.
 - b. It lacked natural barriers to keep outsiders out.
 - c. The Mesopotamians had not yet developed sophisticated bronze weapons.
 - d. Mesopotamian society was sharply divided between nobles and commoners.

Answer: b

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31. Like Mesopotamian society, Mesopotamian religion was
- a. hierarchical.
 - b. egalitarian.
 - c. patriarchal, with male gods only.
 - d. based on ancestor worship.

Answer: a

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32. *The Epic of Gilgamesh* is not only the world's first great literary work, but an example of the meshing of
- a. male and female principles in the divine.
 - b. Mesopotamian and Babylonian cultural traditions.
 - c. royal and religious persons.
 - d. agricultural and hunter-gatherer religious beliefs.

Answer: c

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33. What essential feature did Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilization share?
- a. the same pantheon of gods and goddesses
 - b. dependence upon a great river complex
 - c. cuneiform writing
 - d. the story of the flood

Answer: b

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34. Why was Egypt more politically stable, confident, and self-sufficient than Mesopotamia?
- a. Egypt's geography left it isolated and protected from frequent turmoil.
 - b. Egypt possessed an older and more sophisticated law code than that of Mesopotamia.
 - c. Egyptian society was much less hierarchical than that of Mesopotamia.
 - d. Egypt was poorer than Mesopotamia and thus was a less tempting target for invaders.

Answer: a

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35. The original Egyptian script is called

- a. cuneiform.
- b. demotic.
- c. hieroglyphics.
- d. hieratic.

Answer: c

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36. Egypt's dynastic history began with the merging of Upper and Lower Egypt about

- a. 3000 BCE.
- b. 2600 BCE.
- c. 2100 BCE.
- d. 1600 BCE.

Answer: a

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37. What is the first great piece of Egyptian art called?

- a. the Rosetta Stone
- b. the *Book of the Dead*
- c. the Palette of Narmer
- d. the Great Pyramid of Giza

Answer: c

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38. Why did the conventions of Egyptian art change little for thousands of years following the Early Dynastic period?

- a. Egyptians focused their energies on building pyramids rather than on developing new artistic styles.
- b. The conquest of Egypt by the Hyksos interrupted Egyptian artistic development.
- c. Egyptian pharaohs passed laws prohibiting alterations to the artistic conventions.
- d. Egyptians and their rulers wanted to portray stability and continuity in their art.

Answer: d

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39. What was the major impact of Hyksos conquest and rule on Egyptian history?

- a. It prompted the rulers of Egypt's New Kingdom to create an Egyptian empire of tributary states.
- b. It led to the creation of a new chief god of Egypt, called Amon-Ra.
- c. It encouraged Egyptian nobles and even common people to begin to mummify their dead.
- d. It resulted in the creation in the 1250s of a new line of military kings to restore order.

Answer: a

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40. In general, Egyptians were

- a. monotheists.
- b. henotheists.
- c. polytheists.
- d. atheists.

Answer: c

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41. State power in Egypt flowed to officials, including viziers, from the

- a. law code of Hammurabi.
- b. tablet of Narmer.
- c. Ma'at.
- d. king, and through him from the gods.

Answer: d

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42. Why were Egyptian queens more powerful than the royal women of Mesopotamia?

- a. They were the embodiment of powerful goddesses.
- b. They shared in royal and divine blood.
- c. They were usually literate and could be scribes.
- d. They, rather than men, controlled the temples.

Answer: b

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43. The wealth of the Mycenaeans came primarily from

- a. farming and herding.
- b. the manufacture of luxury goods.
- c. the invention of the chariot.
- d. trade and war.

Answer: d

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44. The impact of the Sea Raiders on early Mediterranean civilizations was to

- a. limit its immediate growth and economic prospects.
- b. destroy Mycenaean civilization.
- c. drive the Hittites to attack Egypt.
- d. end the Minoan stranglehold on Mediterranean trade.

Answer: a

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45. The creators of the first great religion of a book were the

- a. Sumerians.
- b. Egyptians.
- c. Hebrews.
- d. Hittites.

Answer: c

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46. Why was God's renewal of the covenant with the Hebrews a defining moment in Jewish religious history?

- a. Only at that moment did the Hebrews become truly monotheistic.
- b. With it the Hebrews had their own legally based and religiously sanctioned legal and moral code.
- c. It prompted Moses to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt to Canaan.
- d. It obliged the Hebrews to write down their history in the Torah.

Answer: b

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47. Most of the Bible's texts were written down in Israel late in the

- a. first millennium BCE.
- b. second millennium BCE.
- c. first millennium CE.
- d. second millennium CE.

Answer: a

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48. The Assyrian and Babylonian attacks marked the beginning of the Diaspora, or

- a. destruction of the temple at Jerusalem.
- b. emigration of Hebrews from Israel to other lands.
- c. division of the Hebrew kingdom into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah.
- d. Hebrew adoption of the Phoenician alphabet to write down the books that would comprise the Hebrew Bible.

Answer: b

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49. Why did the Hebrew civilization endure and remain largely immune to assimilation, unlike the other civilizations of the early ancient world?

- a. They possessed a unique alphabet and written scriptures.
- b. Their kingdoms were too small to tempt invasion from larger neighbors such as the Assyrians.
- c. They developed a singular religious identity and core beliefs.
- d. They were able to convert their enemies to their own monotheistic beliefs.

Answer: c

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50. What made the Near East a hotbed of historical development?

- a. The invention of iron and the war chariot.
- b. Its rich agricultural surplus.
- c. The writing systems its peoples created.
- d. The contact and competition among peoples.

Answer: d

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ESSAY QUESTIONS

51. What are the main characteristics of civilization and what are the elements that make it possible? Why might we view the rise of civilization in the early ancient world as a series of experiments rather than as a universal good?

52. Where and how was the first writing invented? Why was the development of writing a significant step in the establishment of civilization?

53. Compare and contrast Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilization. What characteristics did the two civilizations share? How and why did they differ?

54. Discuss the relationship between Minoan and Mycenaean civilization. How do we know that there were contacts between these peoples? How and why did these civilizations differ?

55. Explain the causes and effects of the troubles that descended on the eastern Mediterranean around 1200 BCE.

56. Discuss the relationship between geography and the development of civilization in the eastern Mediterranean, using at least two civilizations as examples. How did geography and environment play a critical role in shaping the development of the region as a whole?

57. What made Hebrew civilization unique among the peoples of the ancient Near East? How did their culture differ from that of the other peoples of the region? How was Hebrew history intertwined with that of their neighbors?