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CLEP Western Civilization I Exam



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Question: 1

Which of the following is NOT a common characteristic of all early civilizations?

- A. Agricultural surplus.
- B. Clear division of labor.
- C. A pictographic writing system.
- D. Population centers such as towns and cities.
- E. Some form of government.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Though Egypt had a well-known pictographic writing system called hieroglyphs, other cultures used different forms of writing. For example, cuneiform is a language that does not use pictographs. The remaining choices played an essential role in all early civilizations.

Question: 2

Which of the following rivers did NOT play an important role in the development of the earliest civilizations?

- A. The Tiber River.
- B. The Yangtze River.
- C. The Euphrates River.
- D. The Nile River.
- E. The Indus River.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Roman civilization developed on the Tiber River, but it is not considered one of the earliest civilizations. Major civilizations developed along the other rivers listed: Chinese civilization developed in the Yangtze and Huang River valleys; Mesopotamian civilization emerged between the Tigris and Euphrates; and Egyptian culture developed in the Nile River valley.

Question: 3

"The river was easy to navigate because of a peculiar trait: Its strong winds blew in the opposite direction of its water's flow. The winds blew down from the north, but the river flowed up from the

south. This unusual feature made it easy to transport goods back and forth from the Mediterranean Sea, which lay to the north.

Which river is most likely being described in the above passage?

- A. The Tiber River.
- B. The Tigris River.
- C. The Nile Rivers.
- D. The Yangtze River.
- E. The Indus River.

Answer: C

Explanation:

This passage contains two clues to the answer: one the river flows north and two the river lies to the south of the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile is the only river listed that flows south-to-north and lies to the south of the Mediterranean, making C the best choice. These geographical clues can be used to exclude the other choices: the Tiber is incorrect because it lies to the north of the Mediterranean Sea. The other choices are incorrect because these rivers lie east or southeast of the sea.

Question: 4

Which of the following rulers was female?

- A. Sargon.
- B. Hammurabi.
- C. Hatshepsut.
- D. Nebuchadnezzar.
- E. Amenhotep IV.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Hatshepsut was an Egyptian Pharaoh whose name means "foremost of noble ladies." Sargon, Hammurabi, Nebuchadnezzar, and Amenhotep IV were men.

Question: 5

"Because of the central role religion played in Sumerian culture, priests held much of the real power, despite the existence of a king. Beneath them a class of warrior nobles, responsible for protecting the city, held the next level of power. Less powerful than the nobles but still influential were the lower priests, scholars, and merchants who took responsibility for many of the daily operations of the government."

Which characteristic of most early civilizations does this passage reflect?

- A. Agricultural surplus.
- B. Population centers

- C. Religious practice.
- D. Development of technology
- E. Government.

Answer: E

Explanation:

This passage details the political hierarchy of the Sumerian government. Little mention is made of agricultural surplus, population centers, or technology. C is incorrect because the passage primarily focuses on the structure of Sumerian government.

Question: 6

In what modern day country is the remains of Mesopotamian civilization found?

- A. Afghanistan.
- B. Iraq.
- C. Turkey.
- D. Egypt.
- E. Lebanon.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Mesopotamian civilization developed in the Tigris and Euphrates River Valley, an area now controlled by Iraq. None of the other answers accurately reflects the geography of the region.

Question: 7

"The king allowed the conquered the right to maintain their own religious practices, local laws, and customs. This practice, however, shares no similarities with our present-day principals of tolerance. In effect, allowing conquered people to maintain their own religions and customs forged a bond of loyalty between the conqueror and the conquered. Though the conquered preserved many rights and customs, local governors called Satraps, along with a network of spies, maintained order and reported back to the King."

Which empire does the above passage describe?

- A. Persians.
- B. Akkadians.
- C. Babylonians.
- D. Egyptians.
- E. Sumerians.

Answer: A

Explanation:

The word "Satrap" is associated with Persian governors, not Akkadians, Babylonians, or Egyptians.

Question: 8

A monotheistic religious practice was central to which of the following cultures?

- A. Egyptians.
- B. Hebrews.
- C. Sumerians.
- D. Babylonians.
- E. Hittites.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Of the cultures listed, only the Hebrews worshipped one God. Egyptians, Sumerians, Babylonians, and Hittites all practiced polytheistic religions that worshipped a host of deities.

Question: 9

Which of the following is a character from the Epic of Gilgamesh?

- A. Ahura Mazda.
- B. Enkidu.
- C. Yahweh.
- D. Thoth.
- E. Zoroaster.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Enkidu, is a character in the Epic of Gilgamesh. Ahura Mazda is a deity in the Zoroastrian religion. Yahweh is the God of the Hebrew people. Thoth is one of the many Egyptian deities. Zoroaster is the prophet of the Zoroastrian religion.

Question: 10

According to tradition, who founded the Israelite people?

- A. Zoroaster.
- B. Abraham.
- C. Aeneas.
- D. Daniel.
- E. Jesus.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Abraham is considered the founder of the Israelite tradition. Zoroaster is not directly associated with the Israelite tradition. Aeneas is a character from Greek legends, sometimes associated with the founding of Rome. Though Daniel and Jesus shaped the history of the Israelite people and religion, neither is considered the founder.

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