

Advanced Placement (AP) World History Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Don't worry about getting everything right, your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations, and take breaks to retain information better.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning.

7. Use Other Tools

Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly — adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

- 1. What was a significant impact of James Cook's voyages?**
 - A. Decimation of indigenous populations**
 - B. Discovery of new trade routes**
 - C. Claiming territories for Britain**
 - D. Formation of the British Empire**
- 2. What aspect of society did the plantation economy significantly impact?**
 - A. Agricultural production**
 - B. Cultural diversity**
 - C. Religious practices**
 - D. Political structures**
- 3. Why were joint-stock companies significant during this period?**
 - A. They were the first companies in the United States**
 - B. They allowed individuals to invest and share profits in exploration**
 - C. They were formed for non-profit ventures**
 - D. They had no connection to international trade**
- 4. Capitalism is described as:**
 - A. An economic system based on the public ownership of resources**
 - B. A form of economic planning by the government**
 - C. An economic system based on private ownership of capital**
 - D. A system that discourages trade**
- 5. What was a result of the cross-regional ties created in the expanding Islamic world?**
 - A. The disappearance of the Silk Roads as trade shifted to the Mediterranean**
 - B. The exchange of agricultural products and practices from one region to another**
 - C. The emergence of new systems of slave labor based on plantation crops**
 - D. The emphasis on secularism, democracy, and reason in politics and education**

- 6. What significant impact did the Columbian Exchange have on the world?**
- A. It led to the isolation of the Americas**
 - B. It facilitated widespread exchange of different species, cultures, and diseases**
 - C. It focused exclusively on North American products**
 - D. It ended the trans-Atlantic slave trade**
- 7. What was the role of the East India Companies?**
- A. To trade only with South America**
 - B. To obtain government monopolies and trade in India and Asia**
 - C. To regulate local markets in Europe**
 - D. To focus on domestic trade within Europe**
- 8. Which of the following statements best describes John Locke's philosophy?**
- A. People are inherently selfish and need government control**
 - B. Governments are formed to protect natural rights**
 - C. Monarchy is the best form of government**
 - D. All knowledge comes from experience and sensory perception**
- 9. What is a similarity between the Mayans and the Greeks?**
- A. Used an alphabet in which symbols represented sounds**
 - B. Linked science and religion closely together**
 - C. Built tall structures to get closer to heaven**
 - D. Developed ball games as religious rituals**
- 10. What did the Protestant Reformation primarily criticize?**
- A. The need for clerical celibacy**
 - B. The wealth of the Catholic Church**
 - C. The use of art in churches**
 - D. The concept of divine right of kings**

Answers

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1. C
2. A
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What was a significant impact of James Cook's voyages?

- A. Decimation of indigenous populations
- B. Discovery of new trade routes
- C. Claiming territories for Britain**
- D. Formation of the British Empire

James Cook's voyages had a profound impact on the geopolitics of the time, particularly regarding the claiming of territories for Britain. His expeditions, notably to the Pacific, led to the European mapping of previously uncharted regions and the establishment of British claims over vast areas such as Australia and New Zealand. Cook's detailed surveys and interactions with Indigenous populations laid the groundwork for subsequent British colonization efforts. This assertion is supported by his landing at Botany Bay in 1770, which was later recognized as the site for the first British penal colony, heralding the expansion of Britain's influence in the region. Cook's voyages effectively transformed the known world and contributed to the broader phenomenon of imperialistic expansion during the Age of Enlightenment, leading to significant alterations in territorial boundaries and colonial presence around the globe. While the other options touch upon important themes related to Cook's legacy, the direct act of claiming territories is the most significant and consequential impact of his voyages, as it fundamentally shaped the map of Australia and the Pacific islands, setting the stage for future colonial pursuits by Great Britain and disrupting the lives of indigenous populations.

2. What aspect of society did the plantation economy significantly impact?

- A. Agricultural production**
- B. Cultural diversity
- C. Religious practices
- D. Political structures

The plantation economy significantly impacted agricultural production by driving the development of large-scale farming operations that relied heavily on cash crops such as sugar, cotton, tobacco, and rice. These plantations became the backbone of economic systems in regions like the American South and the Caribbean, playing a crucial role in shaping local and transatlantic trade dynamics. The reliance on intensive agriculture necessitated the establishment of a labor force, often resulting in the use of enslaved people, which in turn influenced social hierarchies and economic practices. This focus on monoculture and export-oriented production fundamentally changed farming techniques, land use, and the overall agricultural landscape, creating a system that prioritized profitability over subsistence and led to substantial changes in the economies of the regions involved. While the plantation economy did influence aspects like cultural diversity, religious practices, and political structures, its most direct and profound effect was on agricultural production, reshaping how and what was cultivated on a large scale.

3. Why were joint-stock companies significant during this period?

- A. They were the first companies in the United States
- B. They allowed individuals to invest and share profits in exploration**
- C. They were formed for non-profit ventures
- D. They had no connection to international trade

Joint-stock companies played a crucial role during this period by allowing individuals to pool their resources to invest in large ventures, particularly in exploration and colonization. This innovative financial structure enabled multiple investors to share both the risks and rewards associated with these often costly and uncertain enterprises. By distributing ownership among several shareholders, joint-stock companies made it possible for investors to support expeditions and commercial activities that would have been too financially burdensome for any single individual. Profits from successful ventures could then be shared among the investors, thereby encouraging more people to participate in exploration, trade, and settlement. This system not only propelled economic development but also significantly contributed to the expansion of European influence around the globe, particularly in the Americas, Asia, and Africa during the Age of Exploration. In contrast, the other options do not accurately represent the role of joint-stock companies. They were not exclusive to the United States, as they originated in Europe; they were primarily for profit rather than non-profit ventures; and they were intrinsically tied to international trade, as many of these companies were formed to exploit overseas resources and establish trade routes.

4. Capitalism is described as:

- A. An economic system based on the public ownership of resources
- B. A form of economic planning by the government
- C. An economic system based on private ownership of capital**
- D. A system that discourages trade

Capitalism is characterized as an economic system in which private individuals or businesses own capital goods, meaning the means of production and distribution are operated for profit. In this system, the allocation of resources and production is guided by competition in a free market, allowing for innovation and consumer choice. This structure contrasts with systems that advocate for public ownership, where resources are owned collectively and managed by the government. In capitalism, the driving force is the pursuit of profit, which incentivizes entrepreneurs to develop new products and services while responding to consumer demand. The interaction between supply and demand shapes prices, leading to efficient resource allocation without the central planning typical in other economic systems. This fundamental principle of private ownership of capital further emphasizes individual investment and risk-taking as pivotal aspects of economic growth and prosperity, distinguishing it from other approaches that might centralize control or limit enterprise.

5. What was a result of the cross-regional ties created in the expanding Islamic world?

- A. The disappearance of the Silk Roads as trade shifted to the Mediterranean**
- B. The exchange of agricultural products and practices from one region to another**
- C. The emergence of new systems of slave labor based on plantation crops**
- D. The emphasis on secularism, democracy, and reason in politics and education**

The exchange of agricultural products and practices across regions was a significant result of the cross-regional ties created in the expanding Islamic world. The Islamic Empire, which stretched from Spain to India, facilitated not just trade but the movement of ideas and innovations. This cultural and commercial interconnectedness allowed for the sharing of agricultural techniques, such as irrigation practices, crop rotation, and the introduction of new crops like sugarcane, citrus fruits, and cotton, greatly influencing agricultural productivity and diets in various regions. The flourishing of trade routes, alongside the cultivation of these new agricultural practices, contributed to urbanization and the growth of cities across the empire. This also led to the rise of a vibrant marketplace where different cultures interacted, enhancing the exchange of not just goods but also knowledge, including agricultural methods. The other options do not capture the primary effect of these cross-regional ties. For instance, while the Mediterranean did indeed play a significant role in trade, the Silk Roads continued to be vital throughout the Islamic period, contrary to the suggestion that they disappeared. The emergence of new systems of slave labor based on plantation crops was more characteristic of post-medieval developments rather than a direct result of the Islamic expansion itself. Finally, the Islamic world during this period was not primarily defined

6. What significant impact did the Columbian Exchange have on the world?

- A. It led to the isolation of the Americas**
- B. It facilitated widespread exchange of different species, cultures, and diseases**
- C. It focused exclusively on North American products**
- D. It ended the trans-Atlantic slave trade**

The Columbian Exchange had a profound impact on the world, as it facilitated the widespread exchange of different species, cultures, and diseases between the Americas and the rest of the world. This interchange, which began after Columbus's voyages in the late 15th century, transformed agriculture, cuisine, and settlements across continents. In terms of species, it introduced a variety of crops such as potatoes, maize, and tomatoes from the Americas to Europe, Asia, and Africa, which had far-reaching effects on global diets and agricultural practices. Conversely, domesticated animals like horses, pigs, and cattle were brought to the Americas, reshaping Indigenous ways of life. Culturally, the exchange promoted significant interactions between different societies, leading to the blending of traditions, languages, and technologies. However, this exchange was also marked by devastating consequences as diseases such as smallpox were introduced to Indigenous populations in the Americas, leading to widespread mortality and disruptions in their societies. The other options do not accurately reflect the overall importance of the Columbian Exchange. It did not lead to the isolation of the Americas; rather, it connected them more closely with the rest of the world. The exchange was not limited to North American products but included goods and interactions across multiple continents

7. What was the role of the East India Companies?

- A. To trade only with South America
- B. To obtain government monopolies and trade in India and Asia**
- C. To regulate local markets in Europe
- D. To focus on domestic trade within Europe

The East India Companies were primarily established to obtain government-sanctioned monopolies to conduct trade in India and other parts of Asia. This was crucial during the age of European imperial expansion in the 17th and 18th centuries, as these companies were granted exclusive rights by their respective governments, allowing them to control trade routes and markets in valuable commodities such as spices, textiles, and tea. The British East India Company, for instance, played a significant role in British colonial expansion, influencing local economies and politics in India. This control facilitated not only trade but also the establishment of administrative and military structures to protect and expand their interests in the region. The other options do not accurately reflect the primary function of the East India Companies. For example, trading only with South America would limit their scope and contradict their extensive operations in Asia. Regulating local markets in Europe and focusing solely on domestic trade within Europe also misrepresents the global trading ambitions of these companies, which were particularly aimed at the lucrative markets in Asia, making the correct response clearly B.

8. Which of the following statements best describes John Locke's philosophy?

- A. People are inherently selfish and need government control
- B. Governments are formed to protect natural rights**
- C. Monarchy is the best form of government
- D. All knowledge comes from experience and sensory perception

John Locke's philosophy is fundamentally grounded in the idea that governments are formed to protect natural rights, which include life, liberty, and property. His writings emphasized the social contract, arguing that individuals consent to form governments to secure these rights. This perspective is a foundation for modern democratic thought, where the legitimacy of government is derived from the consent of the governed. Locke believed that if a government fails to protect those rights, citizens have the right to overthrow it. This makes the assertion that governments exist primarily to safeguard natural rights a central tenet of his political philosophy. In contrast, the other options reflect different philosophical views. The notion of people being inherently selfish aligns more closely with Thomas Hobbes' perspective. The statement about monarchy being the best form of government does not align with Locke's arguments advocating for representative government. Lastly, while Locke did believe that knowledge comes from experience and sensory perception, this idea, grounded in empiricism, is more related to his epistemological views rather than his political philosophy. Hence, the emphasis on the protection of natural rights distinctly captures the essence of Locke's thought.

9. What is a similarity between the Mayans and the Greeks?

- A. Used an alphabet in which symbols represented sounds
- B. Linked science and religion closely together**
- C. Built tall structures to get closer to heaven
- D. Developed ball games as religious rituals

Both the Mayans and the Greeks shared a significant connection between science and religion, demonstrating how their respective cultures intertwined these two aspects of life. The Mayans practiced astronomy to create their calendars, which were essential in agricultural cycles and religious festivals; this scientific knowledge was deeply integrated into their spiritual beliefs. Similarly, the Greeks pursued scientific inquiry in fields like astronomy and mathematics, often believing that understanding the natural world brought them closer to the divine or aided in comprehending the cosmos, which was influenced by their mythology and religious practices. The other options illustrate unique characteristics of either culture but do not reflect a similarity. The Mayans had a complex system of hieroglyphics rather than an alphabet like the Greeks. While both cultures built impressive structures, such as temples and pyramids, their motivations for these structures differed; for the Mayans, it was often related to their cosmology and the agricultural calendar, while for the Greeks, monumental architecture was closely tied to their city-states and civic pride. Lastly, although both the Mayans and the Greeks had ball games with ritual significance, the contexts and forms of these games were distinct and didn't imply a direct similarity between the cultures.

10. What did the Protestant Reformation primarily criticize?

- A. The need for clerical celibacy
- B. The wealth of the Catholic Church**
- C. The use of art in churches
- D. The concept of divine right of kings

The Protestant Reformation primarily criticized the wealth of the Catholic Church. Reformers, such as Martin Luther, raised concerns about the immense financial resources and opulence of the Church, which they believed detracted from the true teachings of Christianity and the spiritual integrity of the religious institution. The selling of indulgences, which were payments made to the Church in exchange for the forgiveness of sins, served as a particularly prominent symbol of this critique. Many supporters of the Reformation felt that the Church had become more focused on accumulating wealth and less on serving its spiritual mission. This criticism was integral to the movement, as it not only aimed to reform church practices but also sought to highlight the need for a more sincere, faith-based approach to Christianity that moved away from the financial corruption and excesses that characterized the Church at that time. The emphasis on the Church's wealth directly connected to broader concerns about papal authority and the accessibility of salvation, which were central to Reformation thought.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://ap-worldhistory.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!