

# Alaska Citizenship Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. How is the climate in most of Alaska best described?**
  - A. Temperate and humid**
  - B. Dry and arid**
  - C. Subarctic to Arctic**
  - D. Mild and sunny**
- 2. Which natural disaster poses a unique risk to coastal communities in Alaska?**
  - A. Flooding**
  - B. Earthquakes**
  - C. Tsunamis**
  - D. Wildfires**
- 3. How many major languages do indigenous peoples in Alaska speak?**
  - A. Over ten**
  - B. Over twenty**
  - C. Over thirty**
  - D. Over fifteen**
- 4. Which natural resource is Alaska famous for mining, especially in Fairbanks?**
  - A. Coal**
  - B. Silver**
  - C. Gold**
  - D. Oil**
- 5. What does the term “subsistence lifestyle” mean in the context of Alaska?**
  - A. Reliance on grocery stores for food**
  - B. Harvesting natural resources for food and shelter**
  - C. Urban living with minimal outdoor activities**
  - D. Exclusive dependence on tourism**

- 6. Which historic event is commemorated by the Alaska Day celebration?**
- A. Founding of the Alaska Territory**
  - B. Purchase of Alaska from the United States**
  - C. Transfer of Alaska from Russia to the United States**
  - D. Discovery of Gold in Alaska**
- 7. What is one power that belongs to the states under the Constitution?**
- A. Declare war**
  - B. Provide education**
  - C. Regulate interstate commerce**
  - D. Print money**
- 8. What is the significance of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971?**
- A. Established national parks**
  - B. Raised fishing quotas**
  - C. Settled land claims and established Native corporations**
  - D. Created wildlife refuges**
- 9. Who is the primary representative of Alaska in the U.S. Congress?**
- A. Senator from Alaska**
  - B. Governor of Alaska**
  - C. At-Large Congressional District Representative**
  - D. State Legislature Representative**
- 10. Name one state that borders Mexico.**
- A. Arizona**
  - B. Texas**
  - C. New York**
  - D. Alaska**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. How is the climate in most of Alaska best described?**

- A. Temperate and humid**
- B. Dry and arid**
- C. Subarctic to Arctic**
- D. Mild and sunny**

The climate in most of Alaska is best described as subarctic to arctic due to its geographical location and topography. This classification encompasses the majority of the state, where temperatures can be extremely cold and vary significantly between seasons. In the subarctic regions, winters are long, dark, and harsh, with heavy snowfall, while summers are short and can still be cool. In the arctic regions, conditions become even more severe. These areas experience polar climates characterized by very low temperatures year-round, with temperatures sometimes plummeting below freezing for much of the year. Like the subarctic regions, summer is brief, but it can also bring continuous daylight during certain months due to Alaska's high latitude, known as the midnight sun phenomenon. This climate classification impacts various aspects of life in Alaska, including the ecosystem, wildlife patterns, and the lifestyle of the residents. The vast range of temperatures and weather conditions also highlights the resilience required for both people and wildlife to thrive in such a challenging environment.

**2. Which natural disaster poses a unique risk to coastal communities in Alaska?**

- A. Flooding**
- B. Earthquakes**
- C. Tsunamis**
- D. Wildfires**

Coastal communities in Alaska face a unique risk from tsunamis due to the state's geographical location along the Pacific Ring of Fire, which is known for its high seismic activity. Tsunamis are large ocean waves typically caused by underwater earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or landslides. Given the frequent seismic events in the region, the potential for tsunamis is significant, particularly in coastal areas where the impact can be devastating. Tsunamis can travel quickly across the ocean, reaching shorelines with little warning, and when they hit, they can inundate coastal areas, causing extensive destruction to infrastructure and putting lives at risk. This makes them a distinct and immediate threat to communities situated along Alaska's expansive coastline. Flooding can indeed affect coastal communities, but it does not carry the same immediacy or potential for rapid destruction associated with tsunamis. Earthquakes, while a risk in Alaska, do not directly impact coastal communities without leading to secondary disasters like tsunamis. Wildfires, although a concern in some regions of Alaska, are not as salient a risk for coastal areas specifically. Therefore, tsunamis stand out as the natural disaster that poses a unique and severe threat to the coastal populations in Alaska.

**3. How many major languages do indigenous peoples in Alaska speak?**

- A. Over ten
- B. Over twenty**
- C. Over thirty
- D. Over fifteen

The choice indicating that indigenous peoples in Alaska speak over twenty major languages is accurate because Alaska is home to a diverse range of indigenous communities, each with its own distinct languages. In total, there are more than twenty recognized indigenous languages in the state, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the various groups, such as the Inupiat, Yupik, Aleut, and Athabaskan peoples. This linguistic diversity highlights not only the complexity of indigenous identities but also the importance of these languages in preserving cultures and traditions. While some languages may be more widely spoken, others are limited to smaller populations or are currently endangered, underscoring the need for language preservation efforts. The presence of over twenty languages demonstrates the significant linguistic legacy of Alaska's indigenous peoples.

**4. Which natural resource is Alaska famous for mining, especially in Fairbanks?**

- A. Coal
- B. Silver
- C. Gold**
- D. Oil

Alaska is particularly famous for gold mining, especially in the Fairbanks area. The history of gold discovery in Alaska dates back to the late 19th century, with Fairbanks emerging as a significant location during the Gold Rush era. Gold was discovered in the area in 1902, which led to a rush of prospectors and the establishment of mining operations. Fairbanks became known as a hub for gold mining activities, with many mines operating throughout the region. The prominence of gold in Alaska's economy has not only shaped Fairbanks but also the state's identity as a whole. Gold mining has influenced the development of infrastructure, businesses, and the overall community in this region. As a result, it has become synonymous with Alaska's rich natural resource heritage, making it the correct answer to the question. While coal, silver, and oil are also significant resources in Alaska, they do not have the same historical and cultural association with the Fairbanks area as gold does.

**5. What does the term “subsistence lifestyle” mean in the context of Alaska?**

- A. Reliance on grocery stores for food**
- B. Harvesting natural resources for food and shelter**
- C. Urban living with minimal outdoor activities**
- D. Exclusive dependence on tourism**

The term “subsistence lifestyle” in the context of Alaska refers to the practice of harvesting natural resources for food and shelter, which is immensely significant in the state's culture and daily living. This lifestyle is deeply rooted in the traditions of Indigenous peoples and many rural communities, where individuals rely on fishing, hunting, and gathering to meet their basic needs. Subsistence activities promote self-sufficiency and a connection to the land, as people sustainably utilize the natural resources available around them. In Alaska, many communities take part in this way of life due to the harsh climate, which can make reliance on commercial food systems challenging and expensive. The practice of subsistence living not only fulfills physical needs but also plays a crucial role in cultural identity and community bonding, as these activities often involve family and community collaboration. The other options reflect different aspects of modern living that do not align with the traditional concept of a subsistence lifestyle, which is fundamentally about engaging directly with the environment to gather resources for daily living.

**6. Which historic event is commemorated by the Alaska Day celebration?**

- A. Founding of the Alaska Territory**
- B. Purchase of Alaska from the United States**
- C. Transfer of Alaska from Russia to the United States**
- D. Discovery of Gold in Alaska**

The Alaska Day celebration commemorates the transfer of Alaska from Russia to the United States, which occurred on October 18, 1867. This event is significant as it marked the formal transition of Alaska into U.S. governance, which began the process of integrating the territory into American society and economy. The event is celebrated to recognize the importance of this historical acquisition, which not only expanded the geographical boundaries of the United States but also opened up new opportunities for exploration, settlement, and resource development in the region. The transfer itself was carried out in a formal ceremony often referred to as "The Transfer Ceremony," where U.S. officials raised the American flag in Alaska for the first time. This marked a pivotal moment in the history of both Alaska and the United States. The celebration emphasizes the rich history that Alaska has as part of the United States since that transfer. Other options relate to significant historical moments but do not represent the specific event that Alaska Day honors. The founding of the Alaska Territory and the discovery of gold in Alaska are important in their own rights, but they are not directly tied to the celebration of Alaska Day. Similarly, the purchase of Alaska refers to the agreement made by the U.S. to acquire the territory, but the actual transfer event

**7. What is one power that belongs to the states under the Constitution?**

- A. Declare war**
- B. Provide education**
- C. Regulate interstate commerce**
- D. Print money**

Providing education is a power that belongs to the states under the Constitution because education is not explicitly mentioned as a power of the federal government. The Tenth Amendment reserves powers not delegated to the federal government by the Constitution to the states or the people. As a result, states have the authority to establish and regulate their educational systems, which includes setting educational standards, funding schools, and determining curricula. This allows for diversity in education that can be tailored to the specific needs of different communities and populations across the country. In contrast to this, declaring war, regulating interstate commerce, and printing money are powers that are reserved for the federal government. The Constitution grants Congress the authority to declare war and regulate interstate commerce as part of its powers to manage national matters and promote economic stability. Additionally, only the federal government has the power to print and issue currency, which is essential for maintaining a consistent monetary system across the nation.

**8. What is the significance of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971?**

- A. Established national parks**
- B. Raised fishing quotas**
- C. Settled land claims and established Native corporations**
- D. Created wildlife refuges**

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 is significant because it was a landmark piece of legislation that aimed to resolve long-standing land claims by Alaska Natives. This act settled various land disputes that had existed since the United States acquired Alaska from Russia in 1867. Under this act, Alaska Natives were granted ownership of approximately 44 million acres of land and received financial compensation totaling nearly \$1 billion. Additionally, the act established Native corporations, which were designed to promote economic development and provide benefits to Alaska Natives. These corporations have played a crucial role in advancing the rights and resources of Native communities, allowing them to manage their lands and interests. The establishment of Native corporations also created a framework for self-determination and empowerment within Native communities, enabling them to make decisions regarding their lands and resources in a way that aligns with their cultural values and priorities. Thus, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 is pivotal in recognizing and addressing the needs and rights of Alaska Natives, fostering a sense of sovereignty and stewardship over their ancestral lands.

**9. Who is the primary representative of Alaska in the U.S. Congress?**

**A. Senator from Alaska**

**B. Governor of Alaska**

**C. At-Large Congressional District Representative**

**D. State Legislature Representative**

The primary representative of Alaska in the U.S. Congress is the At-Large Congressional District Representative. This is because Alaska is unique in that it only has one congressional district due to its relatively small population compared to the more populous states. As a result, the At-Large Representative serves as the sole voice for all Alaskans in the House of Representatives, managing legislative priorities for the entire state rather than just a specific district. While Alaska does have U.S. Senators who represent the state in the Senate, the question specifically asks for representation in the context of the House of Representatives, making the At-Large Representative the primary and singular official who carries the state's interests in that chamber. The Governor of Alaska, while an important state leader, is responsible for state governance rather than federal representation. The State Legislature Representative pertains to the state's local governance, separate and distinct from federal congressional representation. Thus, the role of the At-Large Congressional District Representative holds a unique and primary position in conveying Alaska's needs and interests at the national level.

**10. Name one state that borders Mexico.**

**A. Arizona**

**B. Texas**

**C. New York**

**D. Alaska**

Texas is a state that borders Mexico, making it a correct choice for this question. It shares a long international border with Mexico that stretches approximately 1,254 miles, which is the longest of any U.S. state. This border includes several significant cities, such as El Paso on the Texas side and Ciudad Juárez on the Mexican side, highlighting the economic and cultural exchanges that occur between the two countries. Arizona is also a state that borders Mexico, contributing to the understanding that there is more than one correct answer regarding states that share a border with Mexico. New York and Alaska, however, do not share a border with Mexico; New York is located in the northeastern U.S. and Alaska is situated at the northwestern corner of North America, separated from the U.S.-Mexico border by several states. Thus, while Texas is indeed a border state, it's important to recognize that Arizona also fits this criteria.