

AP World History - Islam Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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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. 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.

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. 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!

Questions

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- 1. Which term describes the urbanized commercial centers mixing African and Arab cultures along the East African coast, including Mogadishu and Kilwa?**
 - A. Swahili City-States**
 - B. East African Trading Ports**
 - C. Indian Ocean Port Networks**
 - D. Red Sea Port Complexes**

- 2. The military government centered at Kamakura is often referred to as a**
 - A. Kyoto court**
 - B. Kamakura shogunate**
 - C. Edo regime**
 - D. Nara bureau**

- 3. Which trade system connected ports around the Indian Ocean and linked Africa, the Middle East, and Asia?**
 - A. Indian Ocean Maritime Trade**
 - B. Silk Road**
 - C. Trans Saharan Trade**
 - D. Baltic Exchange Network**

- 4. Champa Rice, a tribute gift from Vietnam to China, led to which demographic change in China?**
 - A. Population decline**
 - B. Urban overcrowding**
 - C. Agricultural stagnation**
 - D. Population increase**

- 5. Which African polity is associated with the most prominent early stone enclosures and towers in southeastern Africa?**
 - A. Axum**
 - B. Kush**
 - C. Great Zimbabwe**
 - D. Ghana**

- 6. Which dynasty followed the Sui and established tributary states in Vietnam and Korea, influencing Japan, and promoting Buddhist and Confucian traditions?**
- A. Tang Dynasty**
 - B. Han Dynasty**
 - C. Song Dynasty**
 - D. Ming Dynasty**
- 7. Which city served as the birthplace of Muhammad and was a major commercial hub before Islam?**
- A. Mecca**
 - B. Jerusalem**
 - C. Medina**
 - D. Damascus**
- 8. Which term describes the class that held land from lords and owed military service?**
- A. Lords**
 - B. Serfs**
 - C. Vassals**
 - D. Knights**
- 9. Which group includes the Umayyads?**
- A. Shi'a**
 - B. Mawali**
 - C. Sunnis**
 - D. Dhimmis**
- 10. Which caliphate overlapped with the Mongol Ilkhanate in the Middle East?**
- A. Abbasid Caliphate**
 - B. Umayyad Caliphate**
 - C. Fatimid Caliphate**
 - D. Rashidun Caliphate**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which term describes the urbanized commercial centers mixing African and Arab cultures along the East African coast, including Mogadishu and Kilwa?

- A. Swahili City-States
- B. East African Trading Ports**
- C. Indian Ocean Port Networks
- D. Red Sea Port Complexes

This item tests recognizing that the bustling urban centers along the East African coast grew into independent communities where African and Arab influences fused through long-distance Indian Ocean trade. Mogadishu and Kilwa Kisiwani are classic examples of these places, which were more than simple ports—they were city-states with their own rulers, economies, and distinct cultural life. The term that fits this idea best is Swahili city-states. They describe how these coastal towns developed as autonomous polities connected by commerce and shared culture, including the Swahili language (a Bantu base enriched with Arabic loanwords) and Islam. Their trade networks linked Africa with Arabia, Persia, and India, bringing in goods like textiles and ceramics while exporting gold, ivory, and various African commodities. This blend of urban sophistication, political autonomy, and cultural exchange is what the label Swahili city-states captures. Other options are less precise: labeling them simply as East African trading ports emphasizes locations rather than their political and cultural identity; calling them Indian Ocean port networks centers on trade routes rather than the distinctive urban, polity-based culture; and Red Sea port complexes points to a different geographic area.

2. The military government centered at Kamakura is often referred to as a

- A. Kyoto court
- B. Kamakura shogunate**
- C. Edo regime
- D. Nara bureau

In medieval Japan, real political power often ran through a military government known as the shogunate, or bakufu. The first and best-known example formed in Kamakura after the Genpei War, when Minamoto no Yoritomo established a ruler's office there to command the samurai, oversee land and taxes, and run the state's military and civil functions. The emperor in Kyoto remained the ceremonial figurehead, while the samurai-led administration in Kamakura handled governance. That arrangement is why this regime is called the Kamakura shogunate. The Kyoto court represents the imperial side, the Edo regime refers to a much later Tokugawa government in Edo (Tokyo), and Nara bureau isn't a correct term for this period or structure.

3. Which trade system connected ports around the Indian Ocean and linked Africa, the Middle East, and Asia?

- A. Indian Ocean Maritime Trade**
- B. Silk Road**
- C. Trans Saharan Trade**
- D. Baltic Exchange Network**

Indian Ocean Maritime Trade refers to a vast sea-based network that connected ports across the Indian Ocean, linking Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Sailors rode the reliable seasonal monsoon winds to travel between East Africa's coast—cities like Kilwa and Mogadishu—the Arabian Peninsula, Indian ports such as Calicut and Cochin, and ports in Southeast Asia and China. This system moved goods like gold, ivory, spices, textiles, and ceramics, and it facilitated cultural and religious exchange, helping Islam spread throughout the region. The marine trade network thrived on lively port economies and cross-cultural interactions among diverse merchants, pirates, and rulers. The Silk Road is primarily overland across Eurasia; the Trans Saharan Trade crosses the Sahara linking West Africa to North Africa; the Baltic Exchange Network does not pertain to this historical context. The described system is Indian Ocean Maritime Trade.

4. Champa Rice, a tribute gift from Vietnam to China, led to which demographic change in China?

- A. Population decline**
- B. Urban overcrowding**
- C. Agricultural stagnation**
- D. Population increase**

The key idea is how a breakthrough in agriculture can drive people's size and distribution. Champa rice was a high-yield, fast-maturing variety that China adopted after receiving it from Vietnam. Because it could produce more grain—and in many places could be harvested more than once a year with good irrigation—overall food production rose significantly. More reliable and abundant food means the land could support a larger population, reducing famine risk and enabling population growth over time. That's why the demographic change associated with Champa rice is a population increase. Exhaustive food shortages or stagnation wouldn't fit with a boost in yields, and while more people can lead to urban growth later, the immediate and direct consequence described here is a growing population.

5. Which African polity is associated with the most prominent early stone enclosures and towers in southeastern Africa?

A. Axum

B. Kush

C. Great Zimbabwe

D. Ghana

The question highlights a distinctive form of architecture that signals centralized power and urban planning in southeastern Africa. Great Zimbabwe is famous for constructing massive stone enclosures and towers without mortar, built from granite blocks that fit together tightly. The Great Enclosure, with its towering walls and conical towers at the corners, stands out as one of the most impressive early stone fortifications in sub-Saharan Africa. This settlement, flourishing roughly between the 11th and 15th centuries, shows how a centralized polity could mobilize labor and resources to create a monumental architectural complex that served political, ceremonial, and economic purposes. Axum sits in the Horn of Africa and is known for monumental stelae and palaces rather than stone enclosures in the southeastern region. Kush refers to a Nubian polity in northeast Africa famous for pyramids, not southeastern Africa's stone enclosures. Ghana, on the other hand, is a West African kingdom known for its early wealth and trade networks, not for the large stone enclosures or towers characteristic of Great Zimbabwe.

6. Which dynasty followed the Sui and established tributary states in Vietnam and Korea, influencing Japan, and promoting Buddhist and Confucian traditions?

A. Tang Dynasty

B. Han Dynasty

C. Song Dynasty

D. Ming Dynasty

The key idea here is how a dynasty after the Sui shaped regional relations through a tribute system and cultural influence. The Tang dynasty followed the Sui and built an expansive network of tributary states in East Asia. Vietnam and Korea interacted with Tang China as recognized tributaries, gaining access to trade, protection, and Chinese cultural practices. At the same time, Tang authority helped spread Buddhist traditions across the region, while Confucian ideas and bureaucratic norms influenced governance and education, shaping political culture in neighboring lands and even influencing Japan through cultural and religious exchange. The other dynasties listed do not fit all these elements: the Han predates the Sui, the Song rises after Tang but doesn't match the described regional influence in the same way, and the Ming comes much later. Thus, the Tang dynasty is the one that fits all aspects of the question.

7. Which city served as the birthplace of Muhammad and was a major commercial hub before Islam?

- A. Mecca**
- B. Jerusalem**
- C. Medina**
- D. Damascus**

Mecca, located in western Arabia, is Muhammad's birthplace. Before Islam, it stood at a key crossroads of long-distance caravan routes, linking Yemen and the southern trade networks with Syria and the Levant. This position drew merchants, goods, and wealth through the city, making Mecca a bustling commercial hub. The Quraysh clan managed much of this trade, and the Kaaba within Mecca attracted pilgrims from across the region, boosting markets and exchanges even before Islam. That combination of being Muhammad's birthplace and a thriving pre-Islamic commercial center makes Mecca the best answer. Jerusalem is a sacred site in Islam but not Muhammad's birthplace; Medina is where the Muslim community formed after the hijra; Damascus was a major trade center later but not Muhammad's birthplace.

8. Which term describes the class that held land from lords and owed military service?

- A. Lords**
- B. Serfs**
- C. Vassals**
- D. Knights**

Understanding feudal relationships: in medieval Europe, lords granted land to vassals in exchange for loyalty and military service. The class that holds land from the lord and owes that service is the vassals; they often include knights who serve as the lord's mounted soldiers, but the label vassal covers the broader relationship of landholding and obligation. Serfs are peasants bound to the land who provide labor rather than military service, and knights are a specific type of vassal who fought. So the term that fits best for the class holding land and owing military service is vassals.

9. Which group includes the Umayyads?

- A. Shi'a**
- B. Mawali**
- C. Sunnis**
- D. Dhimmis**

Sunnis recognize the caliphate as legitimate political and religious leadership chosen or accepted by the Muslim community, and the Umayyad dynasty fits that pattern as a line of rulers widely regarded as rightful caliphs within mainstream Islam. After the era of the Prophet's companions, Sunnis accepted the Umayyad succession and its dynastic rule, even though it shifted away from a simple community-elected leadership to hereditary rule. Shia Muslims, by contrast, emphasize that leadership should remain within Ali's family, which is why they do not include the Umayyads as rightful rulers. Mawali describes non-Arab Muslim converts, and dhimmis are non-Muslims living under Muslim rule with protected status; neither term designates a bloc that includes the Umayyads as rulers.

10. Which caliphate overlapped with the Mongol Ilkhanate in the Middle East?

- A. Abbasid Caliphate**
- B. Umayyad Caliphate**
- C. Fatimid Caliphate**
- D. Rashidun Caliphate**

In this era, the caliphate continued to function as a religious and symbolic authority even under new rulers. The Mongol Ilkhanate swept into the Middle East and conquered Baghdad in 1258, but the Abbasid line persisted as a recognized caliphate in title and spiritual leadership, with its influence carried on from Cairo under the Mamluks. This creates an overlap in the region between Mongol rule and Abbasid caliphal legitimacy. The Rashidun and Umayyad caliphates existed earlier in history and were not ruling in the Middle East during the Ilkhanate period, and the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt had already ended by Saladin's time in the late 12th century. Thus, the Abbasid Caliphate is the one that overlaps with the Mongol Ilkhanate.

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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://apworldhistoryislam.examzify.com>

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

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