

Part II

Topical Review with Sample Questions and Answers and Explanations

Use these practice questions to arm yourself thoroughly for all kinds of test items you will encounter on the AP^{*} exam. Answers and explanations are provided for each question for your further review. Additional review items address additional important topics, for further study or in-class discussion. Answers to these items are not provided in this guide.

From Human Prehistory to the Early Civilizations

Archeological studies and other scientific methods have provided us with a view of human development that begins millions of years ago. Most of the 2 million-plus years of our existence as a species has been described as the Paleolithic, or Old Stone, Age. This lengthy phase, during which both *Homo erectus* and then *Homo sapiens sapiens* made their appearances, ran until about 14,000 years ago. Our immediate ancestors were *Homo sapiens sapiens*. All current races are descended from this subspecies.

Human Life Before Agriculture

- Humans learned simple tool use, tamed fire, and developed bigger brains and a more erect posture during the **Paleolithic (Old Stone) Age**, which lasted from about 2.5 million years to about 12,000 B.C.E.
- Over time, the **hunting and gathering** species *Homo sapiens sapiens*, which originated in Africa and from which all modern humans are descended, **came to dominate other human types**.
- Stone **tool use** gradually improved, and humans developed **speech, rituals, and culture** as they gradually spread across the globe.
- In the **Mesolithic (Middle Stone) Age**, from about 12,000–8,000 B.C.E., humans made more advanced tools, fought in more wars, and increased their population considerably.

The Neolithic Revolution

- In the **Neolithic (New Stone) Age**, between roughly 8,000 and 3,500 B.C.E., some human societies experienced one of the most dramatic developments in human history.
- These groups mastered **sedentary agriculture** (this is often called the “**Neolithic Revolution**”) and **domesticated animals**. These innovations produced the **food surpluses** and **rising populations** that made possible the founding of **cities** and the increasing **specialization of occupations** within human societies.
- At the same time, **pastoral nomadism** developed, but these nomads remained on the periphery of civilizations and sedentary agricultural zones.
- Soon after the introduction of agriculture, societies in the Middle East began **replacing stone tools with those made of metal**—first copper, then bronze. These new tools improved agriculture, aided in warfare, and benefited manufacturing artisans.

Civilization

- The **emergence of civilization** occurred in many agricultural societies. It often built on additional changes in technology including the introduction of metal tools.
- Most civilizations had common features including **cities, writing, formal institutions** (especially government and religion), **stratified classes**, and **trade**. **Çatal Hüyük** is an excellent example of an important town in an early Neolithic civilization.
- Early civilizations included those in **Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus River Valley, and northern China**.

The Heritage of the River Valley Civilizations

- River valley civilizations left a number of **durable innovations**, but **most declined after about 1,200 B.C.E.** This decline was often due to nomadic migrations across Eurasia by pastoral nomadic chariot peoples from the central Asian steppe.
- A number of small population centers emerged in the Middle East. These civilizations introduced further innovations including the religion of **Judaism**, the **alphabet, iron tools**, and extensive **trade connections** across the Mediterranean basin.

The First Civilizations

- The river valley civilizations created a basic set of **tools, intellectual concepts** such as writing and mathematics, and **political forms** that persisted across three continents.
- The rise of civilizations **reduced local autonomy**, as kings and priests tried to spread trade contacts and cultural forms and warred to gain new territory.
- Despite wars and trade, civilizations had **little contact with each other** and thus developed **separate cultural patterns**.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. The transformation that was most responsible for moving humans toward civilization was the
(A) use of fire.
(B) smelting of metals such as copper.
(C) growth of towns and cities.
(D) rise of agriculture.
(E) rise of specialized classes.
2. Metalworking was important to agricultural and herding societies for each of the following reasons EXCEPT:
(A) Farmers could use more efficient metal hoes to work the ground.
(B) Metal weapons were superior to those made of stone or wood.
(C) Toolmakers could focus on their craft full time and trade with farmers for food.
(D) Woodworkers and other manufacturing artisans could improve their craft.
(E) Large metal boats could be constructed, improving trade.
3. The start of sedentary agriculture
(A) occurred simultaneously in various places and spread around the world.
(B) began only in the savannas of West Africa.
(C) started in the Middle East first but developed independently in other areas.
(D) arose in the river valleys of the Huang-he and Yangtze.
(E) began after the abandonment of hunting and gathering.

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4. Cuneiform and other types of writing are important in part because they
- (A) help organize elaborate political structures.
 - (B) lead directly to social stratification.
 - (C) can compel leaders to follow written guidelines of behavior.
 - (D) hinder economic development in certain circumstances.
 - (E) limit bureaucratic inefficiencies.
5. Which of the following is NOT a feature of Sumerian civilization?
- (A) a simplified alphabet of 22 letters
 - (B) ziggurats
 - (C) cuneiform
 - (D) city-States
 - (E) a numeric system based on 10, 60, and 360
6. Unlike Sumer and the Indus Valley or Harappan civilization, Egypt
- (A) did not have an effective method of irrigation.
 - (B) lacked a coherent system of writing.
 - (C) began using metal tools much later.
 - (D) retained a unified state throughout most of its history.
 - (E) worshipped many gods.
7. Unlike Sumer and Egypt, the Indus Valley or Harappan civilization
- (A) became a geographic center for a unified, continuous culture lasting millennia.
 - (B) is particularly difficult to study because its writing has not been deciphered.
- (C) was secure from nomadic incursions and invasions.
- (D) never developed a military social class.
- (E) developed a monotheistic religion.
8. Compared to river valley cultures in Egypt and Mesopotamia, Chinese civilization
- (A) probably developed after civilizations in the Nile Valley and Mesopotamia.
 - (B) predates the rise of civilization in both Egypt and Mesopotamia.
 - (C) developed simultaneously with Egypt and Mesopotamia.
 - (D) did not rely on heavy irrigation as year-round water was plentiful.
 - (E) has no verifiable historic origins and left no written records.
9. In early China, unity and cultural identity were provided by
- (A) divine monarchs.
 - (B) shared religious ceremonies.
 - (C) a uniform language.
 - (D) Buddhism.
 - (E) a common system of writing.
10. Stone tools, hunting and gathering, and an increasing number of *Homo sapiens sapiens* are features of the
- (A) Neolithic Age.
 - (B) Late Paleolithic Age.
 - (C) Bronze Age.
 - (D) Early Copper Age.
 - (E) River valley civilizations.

Free-Response Question

To what extent was the Neolithic revolution responsible for the development of early civilizations?

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

Multiple-Choice Questions

- **1. (D) is correct.** With agriculture, human beings were able to settle in one spot and focus on particular economic, political, and religious goals and activities.

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- **2. (E) is correct.** Metal boats were not constructed until much later in human history.
 - **3. (C) is correct.** Historians believe that agriculture appeared independently in the Middle East, in China, and in the Americas; the Middle East developed farming first.
 - **4. (A) is correct.** A society with written records can tax, keep records, send messages, and make laws much more effectively.
 - **5. (A) is correct.** The Phoenicians developed the simplified alphabet, not the Sumerians.
 - **6. (D) is correct.** The Egyptians had a complex irrigation system, an effective method of writing (hieroglyphics), used metal tools from an early stage, and remained territorially unified for most of their history. Like the Harappans and Sumerians, they worshipped many gods.
 - **7. (B) is correct.** Scholars have yet to translate the Harappan written language.
 - **8. (A) is correct.** The first civilizations developed in Mesopotamia around 3,500 B.C.E. and in Egypt around 3,100 B.C.E. Civilization developed in China 1,000–1,500 years later.
 - **9. (E) is correct.** Chinese ideographic symbols formed the basis of an elaborate, complex written language.
 - **10. (B) is correct.** Small groups of hunter-gatherers who did not have metal tools dominated the Paleolithic Age. As the era progressed, *Homo sapiens sapiens* drove out and/or killed competitor species like *Homo erectus*.

Free-Response Essay Sample Response

To what extent was the Neolithic revolution responsible for the development of early civilizations?

The development of sedentary agriculture during the Neolithic Age set the stage for civilizations. Farming revolutionized the Harappan, Chinese, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian peoples.

With relatively large groups of women and men farming in one place, cities could be built, labor could be specialized, humans could be organized into different social and economic strata, ideas and goods could be exchanged rapidly, and information could be recorded in widely accepted formats.