

# CLEP Western Civilization II 1648 to the Present

## AT A GLANCE

### Description of the Examination

The Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present examination covers material that is usually taught in the second semester of a two-semester course in Western Civilization. Questions cover European history from the mid-17th century through the post-Second World War period, including political, economic and cultural developments such as Scientific Thought, the Enlightenment, the French and Industrial Revolutions, and the First and Second World Wars.

Candidates may be asked to choose the correct definition of a historical term, select the historical figure whose viewpoint is described, identify the correct relationship between two historical factors or detect the inaccurate pairing of an individual with a historical event. Groups of questions may require candidates to interpret, evaluate or relate the contents of a passage, a map, a picture or a cartoon to the other information or to analyze and use the data contained in a graph or table.

The examination contains approximately 120 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored.

### Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the Western Civilization II examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities:

- Ability to understand important factual knowledge of developments in Western Civilization
- Ability to identify the causes and effects of major events in history

- Ability to analyze, interpret and evaluate textual and graphic historical materials
- Ability to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant
- Ability to reach conclusions on the basis of facts

The subject matter of the Western Civilization II examination is drawn from the following topics. The percentages next to the main topics indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions on that topic.

#### **7–9% ABSOLUTISM AND CONSTITUTIONALISM, 1648–1715**

The Dutch Republic

The English Revolution

France under Louis XIV

Formation of Austria and Prussia

The “westernization” of Russia

#### **4–6% COMPETITION FOR EMPIRE AND ECONOMIC EXPANSION**

Global economy of the eighteenth century

Europe after Utrecht, 1713–1740

Demographic change in the eighteenth century

#### **5–7% THE SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF THE WORLD**

Major figures of the scientific revolution

New knowledge of man and society

Political theory

### **7–9% PERIOD OF ENLIGHTENMENT**

Enlightenment thought

Enlightened despotism

Partition of Poland

### **10–13% REVOLUTION AND NAPOLEONIC EUROPE**

The Revolution in France

The Revolution and Europe

The French Empire

Congress of Vienna

### **7–9% THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**

Agricultural and industrial revolution

Causes of revolution

Economic and social impact on working and middle class

British reform movement

### **6–8% POLITICAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS, 1815–1848**

Conservatism

Liberalism

Nationalism

Socialism

The Revolutions of 1830 and 1848

### **8–10% POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY IN THE AGE OF NATIONALISM, 1850–1914**

The unification of Italy and Germany

Austria

Hungary

Russia

France

Socialism and labor unions

European diplomacy, 1871–1900

### **7–9% ECONOMY, CULTURE AND IMPERIALISM, 1850–1914**

Demography

World economy of the nineteenth century

Technological developments

Science, philosophy and the arts

Imperialism in Africa and Asia

### **10–12% WORLD WAR I AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**

The causes of the First World War

The economic and social impact of the war

The peace settlements

The Revolution of 1917 and its effects

### **7–9% EUROPE BETWEEN THE WARS**

The Great Depression

International politics, 1919–1939

Stalin's five-year plans and purges

Italy and Germany between the wars

Interwar cultural developments

### **8–10% THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND CONTEMPORARY EUROPE**

The causes and course of the Second World War

Postwar Europe

Science, philosophy, the arts and religion

Social and political developments

## Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level Western civilization courses cover the topics in the above outline, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the Western Civilization II exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found for sale online or in most college bookstores. You may also find it helpful to supplement your reading with books listed in the bibliographies found in most Western civilization textbooks. In addition, contemporary historical novels, plays and films provide rich sources of information. Actual works of art in museums can bring to life not only the reproductions found in books but history itself.

A recent survey conducted by CLEP® found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. You might find one or more of these online or at your local college bookstore. HINT: Look at the table of contents first to make sure it matches the Knowledge and Skills Required for this exam.

Chambers et al., <i>The Western Experience</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Coffin and Stacey, <i>Western Civilizations</i> , Brief Edition (W.W. Norton)
Greer and Lewis, <i>A Brief History of the Western World</i> (Wadsworth)
Goff, <i>A Survey of Western Civilization</i> , Vols. I and II (McGraw-Hill)
Hunt et al., <i>The Making of the West</i> (Bedford/St. Martin's)
Kidner et al., <i>Making Europe: People, Politics, Culture</i> (Wadsworth)
King, <i>Western Civilization: A Social and Cultural History</i> (Prentice-Hall)
Kishlansky et al., <i>Civilization in the West</i> (Pearson Longman)
McKay et al., <i>A History of Western Society</i> (Wadsworth)
Merriman, <i>A History of Modern Europe</i> (W.W. Norton)
Noble et al., <i>Western Civilization: Beyond Boundaries</i> (Wadsworth)
Sherman and Salisbury, <i>The West in the World</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Spielvogel, <i>Western Civilization</i> (Wadsworth)

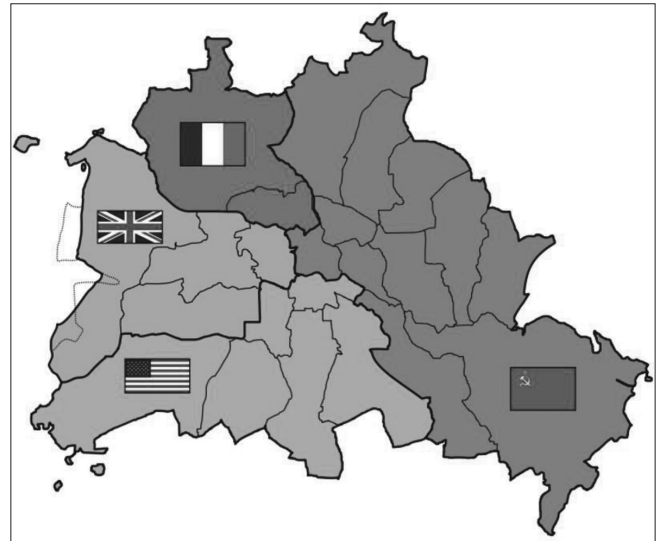
Additional details and differing interpretations can be gained by consulting readers and specialized historical studies. Pay attention to visual materials (pictures, maps and charts) as you study.

Visit [clep.collegeboard.org/prepare-for-an-exam/study-resources-by-exam/western-civilization-2](https://clep.collegeboard.org/prepare-for-an-exam/study-resources-by-exam/western-civilization-2) for additional Western civilization resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *CLEP Western Civilization II Examination Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

## Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more study resources and info about the test, visit the CLEP Western Civilization II exam page: [clep.collegeboard.org/clep-exams/western-civilization-2](http://clep.collegeboard.org/clep-exams/western-civilization-2).

- Which of the following best describes the Ottoman Empire at its height?
  - It controlled territory on three continents, including Africa, Asia, and Europe.
  - It incorporated the core of the old Habsburg Empire.
  - It controlled several colonies in the East Indies.
  - It stretched as far as the Indus River valley.
  - It was the largest Shi'ite state in the Muslim world.
- Which of the following best describes Peter the Great's Table of Ranks?
  - The elaborate system of court protocol required of nobles
  - A reform to introduce a service nobility based on merit
  - The restructuring of the Russian government along Swedish lines
  - The introduction of peasant conscripts into the Russian military
  - A universal system of taxation
- Which of the following is most representative of the position Mary Wollstonecraft took in her writings?
  - The liberating promise of the French Revolution must be extended to women.
  - The revolutionary chaos in France threatened the British way of life.
  - Inherited privilege must be defended against revolutionary ideas.
  - Women should devote themselves to education, not politics.
  - Women should confine themselves to supporting a husband and raising children.
- The work of Isaac Newton is best viewed as the culmination of the work of which of the following scientists?
  - Vesalius and Paracelsus
  - Kepler and Galileo
  - Bacon and Boyle
  - Descartes and Leibniz
  - Cardano and Pascal
- Which of the following was a significant factor in the growth and rise to power of the Nazi Party in Germany?
  - Muslim immigration into Germany after the First World War
  - Concern about the growth of the British and French economies
  - The expansion of industrialization throughout Germany
  - Disenchantment with liberalism as weak and ineffective
  - The party's support of labor and trade unions



- The map shown above portrays which of the following?
  - Europe during the Second World War
  - Berlin during the Cold War
  - Occupied Germany in 1918
  - The Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe
  - German reunification in 1990

“Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas: How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it with an almost endless variety? When has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE. In that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself.”

7. The quotation above represents the viewpoint of which of the following?
- A. René Descartes
  - B. Voltaire
  - C. Edmund Burke
  - D. Isaac Newton
  - E. John Locke
8. Which of the following statements best reflects the significance of the quotation?
- A. It represents the traditional Judeo-Christian answer to the question of how humans know.
  - B. It teaches that human beings are born with knowledge inherently imprinted in the mind.
  - C. It furthers the idea that knowledge is gained through practical contact with and observation of events.
  - D. It suggests that the human mind is fixed and limited and cannot be shaped by education.
  - E. It represents extreme philosophical skepticism and casts doubt on humanity’s ability to acquire any knowledge.

## Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant 3 credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP Western Civilization II exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the Western Civilization II examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

### Answers to Sample Questions:

1-A; 2-B; 3-A; 4-B; 5-D; 6-B; 7-E; 8-C.