

Western Civilization
Essay Questions: Chapters 1-2

Directions:

1. Select 1 Essay question.
2. Essays must be at least 2 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 1" margins, 12-14 pt. font, and must contain at least 2 valid citations.
3. Citations may be from your text but are not limited to your text. Use of a citation outside of your text is a good thing.
4. Please recopy the question at the beginning of your essay and remember to include your name.

A. Discuss the shift from a hunting and gathering economy to the production of food by systematic agriculture. How and why did this transition occur? Why did it occur in some places before others? Why might some historians call this transition the "greatest event of pre-history"?

B. What does the Code of Hammurabi reveal about Mesopotamian society? How does it compare with the Hebrew Law code as found in the book of Leviticus? How does it compare with modern western legal codes?

C. The Nile has been described as the "coronary artery of ancient Egypt." Write an essay validating this statement. Reference the "Hymn to the Nile" found in your text as a part of your discussion.

D. Discuss in detail the religious, political and social significance of megalithic structures, particularly the Great Pyramids of Egypt and Ziggurats of Mesopotamia.

E. Trace the evolution of religious thought in the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Persia. Include mention of deities such as Osiris and Amon Re, reformers such as Akhenaten, and pioneers such as Zoroaster.

F. In the Hebrew religion, what was the nature of the covenant between Yahweh and the Hebrews? What was its moral significance? What roles did prophets and priests play in reinforcing religious belief and influencing the Hebrew state and Hebrew society?

G. Discuss the military systems of the Assyrian and Persian empires. Include references to size, organization, tactics, and over-all effectiveness. What were the reasons for each empire's military successes and failures?

H. Compare and contrast the role of women and families in Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Persian, and Hebrew societies.