

World History I Reading Questions

Instructions:

The answers to the questions need to be **typed**.

The responses should be at least one paragraph-long (at least 3 or 4 sentences).

The paper must be written in **complete sentences**. Do not simply give a list of things.

Socrates

1. What were the specific charges against Socrates? Would they be sufficient to bring someone to trial today in the US or in other countries?
2. Who were his accusers? What element of society did they represent?
3. What was the political situation in Athens at the end of the fifth century B.C. at the time of Socrates' trial? Does it help explain why he was tried and convicted?
4. What was Socrates' charge against Meletus and his accusers?

5. What was Socrates' view of the general mass of the people? If he was an elitist, in what sense of the word?
6. In the Apology why does Socrates compare himself to a horse (gad) fly?
7. How did Socrates defend himself? Had you been on the jury would you have voted to convict him?
8. Why didn't he escape, seek a reduced charge or exile? What would you have done in his place?
9. What does Socrates mean when he says that the important thing is not to live, but to live well?
10. Was Socrates' attitude typical of Athenians of his day? What evidence can you use to support your opinion?
11. Why is his method of arguing called the Socratic Method? Is it still used today?
12. Has history vindicated Socrates? If so, how? Does the manner of his death have anything to do it?
13. How do Plato's ideas on the immortality of the soul in the Phaedo help us understand his explanation of Socrates' willingness to face his death?

14. What is Plato's role in the whole Socrates affair?

Book of Acts/Acts of the Apostle Questions

1. What special problems did the early Christian Church face?
2. Why was the question of circumcision so crucial to the future of the early church?
3. Compare the significance of Peter's mission with that of Paul for the later history of the church?
4. Given what you know about Athenian life, was Paul's reception in Athens typical of what you might expect there? How did it differ from his testament in Jerusalem?
5. In what ways was the Christian message compatible or incompatible with Classical philosophy? How might Plato or an educated Roman have reacted to the Christian message? What was at issue for the Athenians in Paul's message?
6. What was Luke's purpose in writing the book of Acts? Does he have a particular point of view? What are his underlying assumptions about causation in history?
7. What are some of the difficulties inherent in using scripture as a historical source?

Einhard, Charlemagne

1. What was the office of Mayor of the Palace, and how did Charlemagne's father use it to become king of the Franks? And by whose authority?
2. Charlemagne was constantly at war. What does that tell us about political stability in the early Middle Ages? What was Charlemagne's remarkable achievement?
3. Why does Einhard place special emphasis on education in his biography of Charlemagne, especially when Charlemagne was reportedly illiterate?
4. What ideal qualities of a medieval ruler did Charlemagne embody?
5. Einhard modeled his life of Charlemagne upon Suetonius' lives of the Roman Caesars. What evidence of influence can you detect?
6. How did Christianity help consolidate Charlemagne's power?
7. Do you believe Einhard's claim that Charlemagne didn't want to be crowned emperor?
8. Who was Einhard and what was his purpose in writing a life of Charlemagne?

Machiavelli, *The Prince*

1. Why did Machiavelli write *The Prince* and to whom was it dedicated? Who was Machiavelli's model Prince? Why? How have these circumstances affected the work?

2. In what ways does *The Prince* reflect the period of the Renaissance during which it was written? What typical Renaissance values does it embody?
3. By what means, according to Machiavelli, may a prince rise to power? By what means is he to maintain his position?
4. What qualities must the successful prince have? What does Machiavelli mean by the “lion and the fox” and “*Virtú* and Fortune”?
5. How does Machiavelli view morality and religion?
6. What is Machiavelli’s concept of the state?

Martin Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*

1. What in Luther’s Treatise on Christian Liberty distinguishes it as Lutheran and distinctly non-Catholic?
2. In what ways does Luther remain faithful to the teachings of the Catholic church?
3. What is Luther’s view of man? Compare it with Machiavelli.

4. What does Luther mean by the following terms: works; faith; by scripture alone; justification by faith; priesthood of all believers; Christian liberty?

5. How did Luther's Reformation pamphlets help spread his beliefs?

6. Compare the historical significance of Luther with that of St. Paul.