InstantCert
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Free Humanities CLEP Practice Test

10 questions from InstantCert's 516-card Humanities study guide

How to use this PDF

Each of these questions is a sentence with one blank and four choices. Pick the best fit, mark it, and keep going. The answer key with explanations starts after question 10, so do all 10 before you look. No timer. On the real exam you get about 39 seconds per question, so if you want a challenge, give yourself 6 and a half minutes for the set. One caveat before you start: the real exam shows you pictures of paintings, sculptures, and buildings far more often than this set does. Only two of these 10 questions come with an image. They also have nothing on film or dance.

What your score means

0 to 4 correct

The Humanities CLEP is a recognition exam: names, works, periods, and terms. A score in this range usually means a lot of them are not there yet. Ten questions is a sample, not a diagnosis. Take Round 2 on the page linked at the end before you decide how much work is ahead of you.

5 to 7 correct

Right in the middle. Close enough to the line to be worth studying for, and not close enough to walk in cold on an exam that about 1 in 3 test takers fail. Check whether your misses bunch up on the literature side or the arts side, then take Round 2 and see if the number holds.

8 to 10 correct

You know your Shakespeare, the major art movements, and Bach. Keep in mind that a good score here says nothing about the parts this set does not sample. Only two questions here show an image, and the real exam shows you paintings, sculptures, and buildings to identify far more often. There is also no question here on film or dance, and only one each on poetry, music, and architecture. Take Round 2, then spend a few hours looking at the actual works.

Questions

QUESTION 1 OF 10 | DRAMA

_____ is arrested and threatened with losing a pound of flesh when he reneges on a loan in "The Merchant of Venice".

A. Bassanio
B. Antonio
C. Solanio
D. Stephano

QUESTION 2 OF 10 | POETRY

An English _____ is composed of three quatrains and one couplet.

A. poem
B. epigraph
C. limerick
D. sonnet

QUESTION 3 OF 10 | FICTION

John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is a(n) _____ of religious salvation.

A. Allegory
B. Simile
C. Personification
D. Alliteration

QUESTION 4 OF 10 | ARCHITECTURE

Identify the Greek column below: _____



A. Ionian
B. Doric
C. Caryatid
D. Corinthian

QUESTION 5 OF 10 | NONFICTION AND PHILOSOPHY

"That government is best which governs least" is a quote from Henry David Thoreau's essay, _____.

A. Civil Disobedience
B. Common Sense
C. Rights of Man
D. Pragmatism

QUESTION 6 OF 10 | VISUAL ARTS

Baroque painter _____ made Seaport.



A. Joshua Renolds
B. Claude Lorrain
C. Thomas Gainsborough
D. John Constable

QUESTION 7 OF 10 | VISUAL ARTS

Developed in 1907 by Pablo Picasso and his contemporaries, _____ replaced the artistic tendencies of previous generations with fragmented three-dimensional images.

A. Realism
B. Surrealism
C. Cubism
D. Fauvism

QUESTION 8 OF 10 | VISUAL ARTS

Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael were both artists during the _____ period.

A. High Renaissance
B. Ancient Classical
C. Medieval
D. Neoclassicism

QUESTION 9 OF 10 | VISUAL ARTS

The Edo Period in Japan introduced a new form of wood-block art known as _____.

A. Azuchi
B. Ikebana-e
C. Shikki
D. Ukiyo-e

QUESTION 10 OF 10 | MUSIC

A famous technique of Bach, _____ is the integration of independent melodies into a homogenous sound.

A. Juxtaposition
B. Counterweight
C. Counterpoint
D. Obbligato

Answer Key

1. B Antonio

Bassanio, in an attempt to win the hand of Portia by selecting the right treasure chest, borrows money from the merchant Antonio, who in turn borrows the money from Shylock—with a pound of his flesh as a guarantee. When Antonio's wealth is reported lost at sea, Shylock has Antonio arrested and tries to claim his right to the pound of flesh—and Antonio's life. At the last minute, Antonio is saved by a lawyer (actually Portia in disguise), who points out that the contract is flawed since the deal is that Shylock gets a pound of flesh, but he can't take that without taking some of Antonio's blood.

2. D sonnet

An English sonnet (also known as a Shakespearean sonnet) begins with three quatrains (a quatrain is a stanza containing 4 lines) and concludes with a couplet (two rhyming lines). It follows the rhyme scheme abab cdcd efef gg. An English sonnet is 14 lines long (divided into 4 stanzas), and it has no required number of caesuras, or pauses within a line.

3. A Allegory

When a story as a whole represents something else entirely through extensive use of symbolism, it is known as an allegory. Generally, the characters in an allegory lack personally defining characteristics, and instead exist to embody an emotion or virtue.

4. B Doric

The simplest column form, Dorics have flat capitals and plain shafts.

5. A Civil Disobedience

Thoreau encourages people to follow their own conscience, not necessarily the one prescribed to them by the government, but if in doing so they go against the law, they must be prepared to handle the consequences. Thoreau spent time in jail for refusing to pay taxes to support the Mexican War.

6. B Claude Lorrain

Known for his brilliantly lit landscape pieces, Lorrain (1600-1682) also did Enchanted Castle and Rebecca's Wedding.

7. C Cubism

Originally done almost exclusively in blacks, whites, and grays, the abstract cubist forms were designed to appeal to the human intellect. By the 1920s, cubism took on more colors and represented less images of nature.

8. A High Renaissance

From 1490 to 1520, High Renaissance style was composed of order, grace, and harmony, with perfectly proportioned subjects. Michelangelo was also an artist from this time period.

9. D Ukiyo-e

Harunobu, Kiyonaga, Utamaro, Hokusai, and Hiroshige were all well-known ukiyo-e artists, a style initially appealing only to those of low social status with enough money to spend on art. Over time, these pictures of the "floating" world gained international renown during the Edo Period (1615-1867).

10. C Counterpoint

There are five types of counterpoint: note against note, two notes against one, four notes against one, syncopation, and florid counterpoint (the latter of which is a combination of the first four types).

Want 10 more? Take Round 2 online

Round 2 is 10 more questions from the same 516 cards, and 7 of the 10 are Fine Arts. It covers a trilogy of Greek tragedies, the art movement that came out of World War I, a period of Japanese painting, the composer who created the symphonic poem, and the film technique of montage. Take Round 1 on the page below, enter your email on the score screen, and the Round 2 link follows.

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The full Humanities study guide

516 Humanities flashcards, each one with an explanation of why the answer is right, plus the Specific Exam Feedback forum on DegreeForum.net, where members post what was on their exam. $20/month, cancel anytime. 30-day money-back guarantee. 93% of InstantCert students who reported a Humanities score passed (1,086 of 1,166), against a 68% national pass rate (College Board).

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