



Ancient History Examination IAC European Championships 2026

Instructions – Mark your answers on the scantron provided. Correct answers are worth 2 points. Incorrect answers are worth –1 point. Questions left blank are worth 0 points. Write the answer to your tiebreaker question in the box at the top of your scantron.

1. Which ancient Chinese text, compiled by disciples of Confucius around 500 BCE, records his teachings on virtue and society?

- A. I Ching
- B. Analects
- C. Art of War
- D. Tao Te Ching

2. A new 'wet' farming technique to grow what crop was introduced during the Yayoi period in Japan?

- A. wheat
- B. oranges
- C. rice
- D. lettuce

3. Which Tang dynasty poet wrote thousands of vivid poems about friendship, nature, and the moon?

- A. Li Bai
- B. Lady Murasaki
- C. Tokugawa
- D. Hideyoshi

4. What ancient Egyptian god, depicted with the head of a jackal, guided souls to the underworld and oversaw the embalming process?

- A. Anubis
- B. Set
- C. Thoth
- D. Osiris

5. Honen, a 12th-century CE Japanese monk, founded the 'Pure Land' sect of what major world religion?

- A. Islam
- B. Buddhism
- C. Christianity
- D. Hinduism

6. Which Egyptian pharaoh, reigning from 1479 to 1425 BCE, expanded ancient Egypt to its greatest territorial extent?

- A. Tutankhamun
- B. Thutmose III
- C. Akhenaten
- D. Seti I

7. Which Roman general and dictator was famously assassinated on the Ides of March in 44 BCE?

- A. Augustus
- B. Pompey
- C. Julius Caesar
- D. Mark Antony

8. What ancient Greek poet is credited with writing the Iliad and the Odyssey?

- A. Hesiod
- B. Homer
- C. Pindar
- D. Sappho

9. Built around 2500 BCE, which prehistoric monument on England's Salisbury Plain is linked to religious ceremonies and astronomy?

- A. Stonehenge
- B. Skara Brae
- C. Avebury
- D. Carnac

10. Laozi is believed to be the founder of which ancient Chinese philosophy that teaches harmony with the natural way of the universe?

- A. Baha'i
- B. Zoroastrianism
- C. Taoism
- D. Legalism

11. The ancient navigation method called 'wayfinding' was used by which of these groups to settle places like Fiji and Hawai'i?

- A. Ainu
- B. Champa
- C. Polynesians
- D. Mongols

12. What Celtic people, famously defeated in namesake wars by the Romans, dominated much of continental Europe until the first century BCE?

- A. Saxons
- B. Gauls
- C. Vikings
- D. Huns

13. Which ancient Greek philosopher and student of Socrates wrote 'The Republic' and other famous dialogues?

- A. Plato
- B. Diogenes
- C. Zeno
- D. Epicurus

14. Which ancient Greek sanctuary in the Peloponnese hosted namesake 'games' every four years in honor of Zeus starting in the 8th century BCE?

- A. Spartan agoge
- B. Corinthian agora
- C. Acropolis of Athens
- D. Olympia

15. Which of these ancient South Asian kingdoms, located in present-day Tamil Nadu, was known for its maritime trade and naval power?

- A. the Mughal Empire
- B. the Chola Empire
- C. the Achaemenid Empire
- D. the Nabatean Kingdom

16. What 490 BCE battle saw Athenian soldiers defeat a much larger Persian army, with a famous runner carrying news to Athens?

- A. Battle of Thermopylae
- B. Battle of Salamis
- C. Battle of Plataea
- D. Battle of Marathon

17. One of the world's first great libraries was built in Nineveh in the 7th century BCE by which ancient Mesopotamian civilization?

- A. Babylonians
- B. Persians
- C. Assyrians
- D. Sumerians

18. Which ancient Greek sanctuary, home to an oracle who advised kings and generals, was dedicated to the god Apollo?

- A. Eleusis
- B. Athens
- C. Epidauros
- D. Delphi

19. Which ancient Chinese invention, developed during the Han dynasty, used a magnetized needle to help sailors and travelers find their direction?

- A. Astrolabe
- B. Sextant
- C. Compass
- D. Rudder

20. Which Aztec capital city was one of the world's largest cities by 1519 when it was first encountered by Europeans?

- A. Tenochtitlan
- B. Cuzco
- C. Tikal
- D. Chichen Itza

21. What was the primary purpose of the Roman Colosseum, completed around 80 CE?

- A. Holding government meetings
- B. A temple for Jupiter worship
- C. Storing military weapons
- D. Public entertainment with gladiator fights

22. Which 14th century BCE Egyptian pharaoh replaced Egypt's many gods with worship of a single sun disk called Aten?

- A. Akhenaten
- B. Nefertiti
- C. Hatshepsut
- D. Ptolemy

23. Which of the following Roman emperors divided the empire into eastern and western halves in the late 3rd century CE?

- A. Nero
- B. Trajan
- C. Diocletian
- D. Hadrian

24. Chandragupta, Bindusara, and Ashoka were all rulers of what empire on the Indian subcontinent?

- A. Abbasid
- B. Phoenician
- C. Minoan
- D. Mauryan

25. What Mesoamerican civilization sculpted colossal stone heads from basalt?

- A. Inuit
- B. Olmec
- C. Minoan
- D. Nubian

26. Which ancient Peruvian markings form giant animal shapes visible only from the air?

- A. Nazca Lines
- B. Inca road markers
- C. Aztec murals
- D. Rapa Nui carvings

27. Which large Pacific island group was settled by ancestors of the Māori around 1280 CE?

- A. Australia
- B. Samoa
- C. Tonga
- D. New Zealand

28. Which of the following is credited with founding Islam on the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century CE?

- A. Ali ibn Abi Talib
- B. Abu Bakr
- C. Umar ibn al-Khattab
- D. Muhammad

29. Greek authors like Sophocles and Aristophanes were famous for their works in which of these?

- A. theater and plays
- B. novels
- C. military theory
- D. political philosophy

30. Which ancient city, located in modern-day Jordan, was known for its rock-cut architecture including the Treasury and the Monastery?

- A. Cairo
- B. Persepolis
- C. Petra
- D. Jerusalem

31. According to myth, which ancient Greek hero completed twelve labors including slaying the Nemean Lion?

- A. Heracles
- B. Achilles
- C. Odysseus
- D. Perseus

32. Which ancient Egyptian writing system used pictorial symbols carved into stone for religious and royal inscriptions?

- A. Aramaic
- B. Demotic script
- C. Hieroglyphics
- D. Linear B

33. Which ancient civilization developed cuneiform writing and built the city of Babylon?

- A. Sumerians
- B. Romans
- C. Persians
- D. Greeks

34. The Baekje kingdom introduced what religion to Korea in the 4th century CE?

- A. Hinduism
- B. Buddhism
- C. Judaism
- D. Christianity

35. The Kojiki, compiled in 712 CE, is the oldest chronicle of mythology and early imperial history for what modern nation?

- A. Vietnam
- B. Australia
- C. Japan
- D. Indonesia

36. The Battle of Red Cliffs in the early 3rd century CE took place on what major Chinese river?

- A. Mekong
- B. Irrawaddy
- C. Indus
- D. Yangtze

37. Which Carthaginian general famously crossed the Alps with war elephants in 218 BCE to invade Italy and threaten Rome?

- A. Pyrrhus
- B. Hannibal
- C. Vercingetorix
- D. Scipio Africanus

38. Which legendary twin brothers are said to have founded the city of Rome around 753 BCE?

- A. Tiberius and Gaius
- B. Brutus and Cassius
- C. Romulus and Remus
- D. Castor and Pollux

39. Chichen Itza and Tikal are major ancient sites for what people who inhabited the Yucatan Peninsula?

- A. Olmec
- B. Aztec
- C. Toltec
- D. Maya

40. According to legend, Piliakaia was the founder of the Pili line and Ali'i Nui or 'Chief of the Island' of which of the following, also known as the 'Big Island'?

- A. Hawai'i
- B. Samoa
- C. Fiji
- D. New Zealand

41. Which Babylonian king created one of the world's earliest written law codes in the 18th century BCE?

- A. Sargon of Akkad
- B. Cyrus the Great
- C. Nebuchadnezzar
- D. Hammurabi

42. Which ancient Egyptian god, depicted with the head of a falcon, was the protector of the pharaoh and the god of the sky?

- A. Set
- B. Ra
- C. Osiris
- D. Horus

43. Which ancient African kingdom along the Nile, flourishing around 700 BCE, conquered Egypt and ruled as the 25th dynasty?

- A. Kush
- B. Axum
- C. Carthage
- D. Zimbabwe

44. Which class of Japanese warriors followed a code of honor called Bushido and served powerful lords called daimyo?

- A. Ronin
- B. Buddhist monks
- C. Ninja
- D. Samurai

45. Which 480 BCE naval battle saw Athenian ships lure the Persian fleet into a narrow strait and destroy it?

- A. Battle of Aegospotami
- B. Battle of Salamis
- C. Battle of Plataea
- D. Battle of Marathon

46. Which Athenian general and historian wrote 'History of the Peloponnesian War' based on his firsthand experience of the conflict?

- A. Xenophon
- B. Plutarch
- C. Herodotus
- D. Thucydides

47. The famous ancient library of Alexandria, known as a center of scholarship and knowledge, was located in which modern-day country?

- A. Turkey
- B. Greece
- C. Egypt
- D. Russia

48. Which Roman leader defeated Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE and became the first emperor?

- A. Caligula
- B. Octavian
- C. Hadrian
- D. Tiberius

49. The city-states of Kilwa, Malindi, and Zanzibar were collectively named for what Bantu language?

- A. Xhosa
- B. Akkadian
- C. Swahili
- D. French

50. Which ancient Egyptian process preserved bodies for the afterlife by removing organs and wrapping the corpse in linen?

- A. Mummification
- B. Cementation
- C. Cremation
- D. Ossification

51. Which of these was the main site of the Bronze Age Minoan civilization?

- A. Crete
- B. Sicily
- C. Corsica
- D. Rome

52. Which ancient Greek philosopher tutored Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE and studied under Plato at the Academy?

- A. Ptolemy
- B. Anaxagoras
- C. Aristotle
- D. Epicurus

53. Which of these was NOT one of the kingdoms of the Chinese Three Kingdoms period?

- A. Cao Wei
- B. Shu Han
- C. Eastern Wu
- D. Meiji

54. Socrates was sentenced to death for which of these crimes in 399 BCE?

- A. corrupting the youth and impiety
- B. murder
- C. theft
- D. treason

55. Which ancient Roman building, completed around 125 CE, features a massive concrete dome with a circular opening called the oculus?

- A. Pantheon
- B. Colosseum
- C. Forum of Trajan
- D. Circus Maximus

56. The Gate of All Nations, the Apadana Palace, and the Throne Hall are all landmarks in what former ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Persian Empire?

- A. Baghdad
- B. Tehran
- C. Persepolis
- D. Tabriz

57. Sargon the Great was the founder of what empire in the 24th century BCE?

- A. Persian
- B. Akkadian
- C. Judean
- D. Corinthian

58. Which 3rd century BCE Greek mathematician discovered the principle of buoyancy and invented a famous water-raising screw?

- A. Pythagoras
- B. Thales
- C. Archimedes
- D. Euclid

59. Which ancient Indian social system, established during the Vedic period, divided people into hereditary groups based on occupation and birth?

- A. Caste system
- B. Dharma
- C. Ahimsa
- D. Karma

60. Which Persian king, reigning from 559 to 530 BCE, founded the Achaemenid Empire?

- A. Xerxes
- B. Cyrus the Great
- C. Darius I
- D. Cambyses

61. What was the primary function of the Roman Senate during the Roman Republic?

- A. Commanding armies in battle
- B. Advising magistrates and managing finances
- C. Serving as high priests of Rome
- D. Electing the emperor every year

62. Which Germanic tribe sacked Rome in 410 CE under their leader Alaric?

- A. Vandals
- B. Visigoths
- C. Huns
- D. Franks

63. The Great Mosque of Djenne was famously built of what material?

- A. earthen bricks
- B. wood
- C. concrete
- D. glass

64. In which of these places did writing develop the earliest?

- A. Egypt and the Middle East
- B. China
- C. Mesoamerica
- D. the Indus River Valley

65. Based on archaeological evidence, to which of these places did humans migrate MOST recently?

- A. Europe
- B. Japan
- C. Siberia
- D. the Americas

66. The end of the Genpei War brought about the Kamakura period in which Japanese military dictators adopted which of the following titles?

- A. shogun
- B. emperor
- C. khan
- D. sultan

67. What was the primary purpose of the large earthen mounds built by the Mississippian culture around 1000 CE?

- A. Defensive walls against invasion
- B. Grain storage for winter
- C. Astronomical observatories
- D. Ceremonial and political centers

68. Which Egyptian monument, built around 2560 BCE, is the only ancient Wonder of the World still standing?

- A. Great Sphinx
- B. Obelisk of Luxor
- C. Great Pyramid of Giza
- D. Step Pyramid of Djoser

69. The Via Appia is the most famous Roman example of which of these building projects?

- A. Palace
- B. Road
- C. Aqueduct
- D. Wall

70. Which 15th century BCE Egyptian queen ruled as pharaoh and was famous for building projects like the Red Chapel and the Speos Artemidos?

- A. Hatshepsut
- B. Neferure
- C. Nefertari
- D. Arsinoe

Tiebreaker

This question will only be scored if there is a tie for placement on the exam. **This is a required question, but there is no penalty for a wrong answer to this question.**

Write your answer legibly in the space provided on your scantron.

How tall is the dome of the Hagia Sofia at its highest point? Give your answer in either meters or feet.