

Chapter 01 Geography and History

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The Indians of California
 - A. made virtually no attempt to explain the origins of California.
 - B. developed a wide variety of creation stories.
 - C. produced a state-wide consensus on the origins of California.
 - D. failed to recognize the unlikelihood of agreement on matters as important as the origins of their world.

2. Earth scientists today explain the origins of California
 - A. as a result of numerous massive earthquakes.
 - B. by theories of thermal volcanism.
 - C. by the theory of plate tectonics.
 - D. as occurring extremely early in the geologic history of the world.

3. The movement of tectonic plates dramatically changed about 30 million years ago when the Pacific Plate began
 - A. sliding past the North American Plate in a lateral motion.
 - B. subducting beneath the North American Plate.
 - C. moving upward to dislodge the overburden of rock and soil.
 - D. sinking deeper into the Earth's molten core.

4. Accounts of devastating California earthquakes appear in
 - A. the stories of California Indians.
 - B. the earliest records of European settlers.
 - C. the memories of many contemporary Californians.
 - D. all of the above.

5. The land surface of California is
- A. larger than that of Alaska.
 - B. larger than that of Texas.
 - C. approximately 100 million acres.
 - D. all of the above.
6. The largest lowland area that fronts the ocean is the
- A. Los Angeles basin.
 - B. San Francisco Bay area.
 - C. northern coastal zone near the Oregon border.
 - D. vast Santa Barbara Channel area.
7. Most of the surface of California is covered by
- A. deserts.
 - B. mountains.
 - C. lakes.
 - D. valleys.
8. The state tree of California is the
- A. bristlecone pine.
 - B. California live oak.
 - C. coast redwood.
 - D. eucalyptus.
9. The most productive agricultural region of California is the
- A. Great Central Valley.
 - B. Los Angeles basin.
 - C. San Francisco Bay region.
 - D. Owens Valley.

10. European and American settlement of California was significantly retarded by

- A. the region's geographical remoteness.
- B. the steep eastern face of the Sierra Nevada.
- C. the vast southern deserts.
- D. all of the above.

11. Before the American period, agriculture in California was

- A. widespread among the Indians of northern California.
- B. the dominant activity of the Great Central Valley.
- C. aided by extensive Indian irrigation projects.
- D. exceedingly difficult.

12. California's climate could best be described as

- A. diverse.
- B. uniform.
- C. "Mediterranean."
- D. historically insignificant.

13. The political boundaries of the state

- A. outline the only area of winter rain and summer drought in North America.
- B. do not include a unique climatic region.
- C. bear no important relation to physical geography.
- D. outline the only area where winter rain almost exactly equals that of summer.

14. The Mediterranean climate zone of California

- A. is much like that found in the Alps of Switzerland.
- B. covers the area east of the Sierra Nevada.
- C. has relatively warm, dry summers and mild winters.
- D. keeps the state relatively immune to pollution.

15. The coastal region from Los Angeles to San Diego has a climate that can best be described as
- A. Mediterranean.
 - B.** semiarid or steppe.
 - C. desert.
 - D. subalpine.

True / False Questions

16. Most earth scientists have accepted the theory of plate tectonics to explain the origins of California.

TRUE

17. In Assembling California (1993), John McPhee argues that California was geologically formed very early in the history of the world.

FALSE

18. The San Andreas Fault follows almost exactly the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

FALSE

19. California has experienced major earthquakes only in the past few centuries.

FALSE

20. In total land surface, California is the fifth largest of the states.

FALSE

21. The lowest point in the United States is found in California's Death Valley.

TRUE

22. The highest point in the United States outside of Alaska is found in California.

TRUE

23. Rainfall in California tends to occur throughout the year in most of the state.

FALSE

24. Winters in the Mediterranean climate zone are generally severe.

FALSE

25. The southeastern third of the state has a microthermal climate.

FALSE

26. While California occupies a large geographical area, its climatic conditions are remarkably uniform.

FALSE

27. California's economic development has been significantly influenced by its rich natural resources.

TRUE

Essay Questions

28. Explain the plate tectonics theory of the origins of California.

Answers will vary

29. Explain the myths and realities of California's climate.

Answers will vary

30. To what extent does the sobriquet "sunny California" describe the realities of California's climate?

Answers will vary

31. Explain the major varieties of California geography and climate.

Answers will vary

32. Assess the interaction of geography and culture in California history.

Answers will vary

33. Granting that both climate and geography have considerably influence on human culture, which one of these two conditions do you consider to be the more important in California's development? Why?

Answers will vary