



2024-2025 Regional Finals Study Guide – Alpha Question Set

Instructions: This study guide should be your first resource in preparing for the International History Bee and Bowl Regional Tournament that is run on the Alpha Set of questions for the 2024-2025 academic year. Most of the facts below are found at some point in the preliminary rounds of this Set. Thus, we have selected these facts for this study guide to help make your preparation easier and more efficient. This study guide is particularly meant to help new players and teams – not to determine the ultimate winner of the tournament. For that, you will need to do more preparation. In particular, we recommend reviewing the past questions that are posted on the website at www.ihbbeurope.com, www.iacompetitionsasia.com, or www.ihbbcanada.com as well as the other resources there, such as the Nationals Capitals Study Guide. Remember that the questions are all short paragraphs on a particular topic, so if a topic is referenced below, then it is a good idea to learn a bit more about it on your own than what is listed here (since additional facts about a topic will also be referenced in the question). On the other hand, it is generally not helpful to memorize the dates of events or of famous people’s birth and death years, as those are provided below for historical context, not because we will likely ask for those. It is also helpful to read, at a minimum, the introduction of a Wikipedia page on a topic to gain additional historical context about why it is significant. For the International History Bowl, we strongly recommend that your team divide up the topics here among the players who will be competing, so that at least one person on the team is responsible for knowing each of the various topics. On the other hand, remember that some of the topics below will be referenced in the questions in the International History Bee preliminary rounds, where students play individually, so it behooves students playing in the Bee to know all of the information contained below here. Good luck!

African History

1. [Gamal Abdel Nasser](#) (1918-1970) was a president of Egypt and pan-Arab nationalist who gained international support and condemnation for his 1956 nationalization of the Suez Canal, sparking the [Suez Crisis](#).
2. [The Kingdom of Kongo](#) was an African kingdom which converted to Catholicism under Portuguese influence.
3. The [Rwandan Genocide](#) in 1994 saw the killing of ethnic Tutsis by Hutu militias. [Paul Kagame](#), a Tutsi rebel commander, seized Kigali shortly afterward and has been president of Rwanda since 2000.
4. The [Kingdom of Aksum](#) was an ancient kingdom based in modern Ethiopia that dominated the trade routes between India and the Roman Empire.

Ancient History

1. [Pompey the Great](#) (106 - 48 BCE) was a protege to the Roman dictator Sulla and later lost the [Battle of Pharsalus](#) to [Julius Caesar](#).

2. [Cave paintings](#) show evidence of creativity among early Homo sapiens, including archaic humans. The oldest known cave art can be found in places like Maltravieso cave, Spain; Sulawesi; and the Lascaux cave network in France.
3. [The Battle of Actium](#) (31 BCE) marked the effective end of Mark Antony and Cleopatra's war against Octavian, who would go on to become the first Roman Emperor as [Augustus](#).
4. The [Hittite Empire](#) (c. 1650 - c. 1180 BCE) was an ancient Anatolian empire which was one of the dominant powers of the Bronze Age alongside the Mittani, the Assyrian Empire, and the New Kingdom of Egypt.
5. The [Clovis Culture](#) is an archaeological culture of North America dating to over 12,000 years ago. They are best recognized by their distinctive projectile points and arrowheads.

Asian History

1. [Uzbekistan](#) was formed after the fall of the Soviet Union and sits on the heartlands of such cultures as the [Scythians](#), [Khwarezmians](#), and the [Timurid Empire](#) based in Samarkand.
2. [Puyi](#) (1906-1967) was the final emperor of China and the [Qing dynasty](#). As Emperor of [Manchukuo](#) from 1934 to 1945, he served as a puppet to the Japanese Empire.
3. [Malaysia](#) is a southeast Asian country governed from Kuala Lumpur. It became independent in the years following the [Malayan Emergency](#) of the 1950s.
4. The [Tang dynasty](#) was a powerful Chinese imperial dynasty. Known for poets like Li Bai and Du Fu, the Tang also attempted to expand into the Middle East, only stopping after losing to the [Abbasids](#) at the [Battle of Talas](#).
5. [Babur](#) (1483-1530) was the founder of the Mughal dynasty. He created the new empire by winning the First Battle of Panipat against Ibrahim Lodi. His descendants included [Akbar the Great](#) and [Shah Jahan](#).
6. [Emperor Meiji](#) (1852-1912) reasserted imperial control of Japan from the Tokugawa Shogunate, beginning a period of rapid industrialization and military buildup that made Japan a world power by the turn of the 20th century.
7. [Indonesia](#) is a multi-ethnic island nation that was ruled by the authoritarian regime of Suharto from 1967 to 1998.
9. [Oda Nobunaga](#) (1534-1582) was the first unifier of Japan. His one-time prisoner, [Tokugawa Ieyasu](#), forged the Tokugawa Shogunate by winning the [Battle of Sekigahara](#).
10. [Saladin](#) (1137-1193) was a Kurdish commander, founder of the Egyptian Ayyubid dynasty, ruled Syria, and fought against figures such as Richard the Lionheart during the [Third Crusade](#).

European History

1. [King John of England](#) was the brother of Richard the Lionheart and youngest son of [Henry II](#). During his reign, the [Angevin Empire](#) collapsed in northern France and he was forced to sign the [Magna Carta](#) by disloyal barons following his loss at [Bouvines](#).
2. The [Dreyfus Affair](#) began when Jewish artillery officer Alfred Dreyfus was wrongfully convicted of treason and forced to serve life in prison on Devil's Island. Writer [Émile Zola](#)'s open letter *J'Accuse...* put pressure on the government to resolve the affair.

3. The [Prague Spring](#) of 1968 was a brief period of liberalization in Communist Czechoslovakia led by Alexander Dubček. It was suppressed by a Soviet invasion of over half a million soldiers and tanks.
4. The [Domesday Book](#) was a census undertaken by [William the Conqueror](#) of England.
5. The [KGB](#), or Committee for State Security, was the primary security agency of the Soviet Union from 1954 to 1991, succeeding such organizations as the Cheka, OGPU, and NKVD.
6. [Volkswagen](#) is a German automobile manufacturer based in Wolfsburg, Lower Saxony. It was established in 1937 by the German Labour Front and produced the iconic Beetle car.
7. The [Wars of the Roses](#) were a series of dynastic conflicts between the Lancaster and York families of England, eventually resolved in favor of the Lancastrian [Tudor dynasty](#), who ruled England from 1485 to 1603.
8. The [Winter War](#) of 1939 to 1940 involved a rugged Finnish defense against invading Soviet soldiers in the wake of the [Fall of Poland](#).
9. The [Battle of Trafalgar](#) (1805) saw Horatio Nelson defeat a combined French and Spanish fleet loyal to Napoleon.
10. [Rudolf Hess](#) (1894-1987) was a Nazi German politician and Deputy Fuhrer of the Third Reich who fled Germany in 1941 in a bizarre and failed attempt to foster peace with Britain.
11. The [Tennis Court Oath](#) was taken in 1789 and saw the Third Estate vow to not separate “until the Constitution of the kingdom [of France] is established.” It is a major preceding event to the [French Revolution](#).
12. [Estonia](#) is a modern-day Baltic nation governed from Tallinn. Following the Northern Crusade, it was dominated by the [Teutonic Order](#) of knights.
13. [Ivan the Terrible](#) was the first tsar to unite Russia into a single realm. He established the Zemsky Sobor parliament, created the Streltsy standing army, and organized the Oprichniki secret police.
14. Marie de Medici was the second wife of [Henry IV of France](#) and a member of the powerful Florentine [House of Medici](#). Her son was [Louis XIII](#) and grandson was the “Sun King,” [Louis XIV](#).
15. [George III](#) was the ruler of England during the American Revolution. He likely suffered from porphyria, leading to madness and a ten-year [Regency period](#) before his death.
16. The [Warsaw Pact](#) was the military alliance between the countries within the Soviet sphere of influence.
17. [Charles Dickens](#) was an English novelist of the Victorian era who portrayed social issues in novels such as *The Pickwick Papers* and *David Copperfield*.

Latin American and Caribbean History

1. [Suriname](#) is a former Dutch colony in South America, governed from Paramaribo.
2. [Pedro II](#) (1825-1891) was the final emperor of Brazil. His daughter, Isabel, enacted the Golden Law to end slavery in Brazil in 1888.
3. [Hugo Chavez](#) (1954-2013) was a socialist president of Venezuela. A prominent critic of U.S. foreign policy, his tenure in office coincided with major inflation and the rise of poverty in Venezuela.
4. [Benito Juarez](#) (1806-1872) was the first indigenous president of Mexico. A leader of the Liberal Party, he led Mexico during the Reform War and the Second French Intervention, which is honored in the holiday Cinco de Mayo.
5. [Rafael Trujillo](#) (1891-1961), nicknamed “El Jefe,” was the longtime dictator of the Dominican Republic.

7. [Quetzalcoatl](#) is an Aztec deity often called the “feathered serpent.” He is apocryphally associated with Hernan Cortez.

U.S. History

1. [D-Day](#) was a major invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944 during World War Two. It involved soldiers from the U.S., Britain, and Canada landing along heavily defended beaches.

2. [Chief Joseph](#) (1840-1904) was a leader of the Wallowa band of the Nez Perce people. He notably surrendered to U.S. General Nelson Miles by stating, “From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.”

3. [Detroit](#) is an American city in Michigan heavily associated with the automotive industry due to its metro area hosting the headquarters of companies like Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors.