2025 WorldQuest / Academic WorldQuest
STUDY GUIDE

The WACC does not endorse any of the links or information provided on any of the websites recommended below.

The study guide serves as "informational material" to help you begin your prep strategy.

You are **not required** to use any of the sources/links provided below in order to prepare to play.

Your WQ or AWQ team is encouraged to do additional research/studying/reading separate from this study guide.

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The sources and sample questions provided are only meant to be a basic guide to help you begin preparing for WorldQuest or Academic WorldQuest.

Who Can Play?

WorldQuest: Each team consists of UP TO 8 players.

Consisting of eight (8) players. Each team is formed by businesses, government institutions, schools/colleges, non-profits, or other self-determined groups. Individuals without a group will be assigned to a team by the Council.

Academic WorldQuest: Each high school in Mecklenburg, Iredell, Cabarrus, Gaston, Lincoln, and Union County can send two (2) teams of four (4) students each to represent their school in the Academic WorldQuest competition.

How are WorldQuest and Academic WorldQuest Played?

- Each category will have ten questions. The majority of questions will be multiple-choice.
- Each question is typically allotted 20-30 seconds, though there may be 5-7 questions (total) that require extra time (45 seconds to 2 minutes).
- Each team collaborates to answer each question before submitting their answer sheet at the end of each round.

What Do You Win?
- AWQ and WQ teams will be judged separately.
- Medals and trophies are awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winning teams for both WQ and AWQ.

How Should My Team Prepare?
The best way to prepare is to review international news coverage and our category descriptions on our website at www.worldaffairscharlotte.org

Academic WorldQuest 2025 Categories:

1. World Flags
2. The Geography of India: Land, Water, and Borders
3. History: The Fall of the Berlin Wall and European Integration
4. Current Events
5. The Global Digital Battlefield: Cybersecurity, Disinformation, and Tech Diplomacy
6. Where in the World? Landmarks Around the Globe
7. Anything and Everything Trivia (No Prep or Studying Required)

CATEGORY 1: Flags of the World

Questions in this category will include identifying an image of a flag or identifying a flag based on a description. Flags can be from any country, including islands and territories.

No multiple-choice options. Questions will be in fill-in-the-blank format.

Study Link

- Flags of the World – CIA Fact Book
- Flags of the World - Quiz

Sample Questions

1. Identify this flag: _____ **(write the answer on your answer sheet)**

   ANSWER: Canada

2. This flag has two equal horizontal bands of azure (light blue) and golden yellow. These colors represent grain fields under a blue sky. Identify the country: _____ **(write the answer on your answer sheet)**

   ANSWER: Ukraine

CATEGORY 2: The Geography of India: Land, Water, and Borders

The geography of India category will cover a series of questions about maps, area topology, climate and atmosphere, and ecology.

Most questions will be multiple-choice, but for variety, there could be fill-in-the-blank and/or matching questions.

Helpful Links

- India – Wikipedia
- India – Britannica
- Geography of India (Embassy of India, Washington D.C.) *(navigate to "About India" → "Geography")*
- India – CIA World Factbook
- India – National Geographic Kids

Interactive Maps & Geography Resources

- India – Google Maps
- National Geographic Map of India
- CIA World Factbook: India Maps
- India Map – Geology.com
- UN Cartographic Section – India Map

Sample Questions

What is the capital city of Rajasthan, also known as the "Pink City"?

A. Udaipur
B. Jaipur
C. Jodhpur
D. Bikaner

Answer: B. Jaipur

Which Indian state is the largest by area?

A. Uttar Pradesh
B. Rajasthan
C. Madhya Pradesh
D. Maharashtra

Answer: B. Rajasthan

CATEGORY 3: History: The Fall of the Berlin Wall and European Integration

This category explores one of the most pivotal moments in modern history — the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and its lasting impact on Europe. Questions will cover the events leading to the Wall's collapse, key political figures, and the symbolic importance of reunification. The category also examines how this moment accelerated European integration, including the expansion of the European Union and the strengthening of international cooperation across the continent.

Most questions will be in multiple-choice format, but there could be fill-in-the-blank and/or matching questions for variety.

Helpful Links:

Here's a set of **helpful links** for the trivia category *History: The Fall of the Berlin Wall and European Integration*:

Helpful Links

- [Fall of the Berlin Wall – Wikipedia](#)
- [History.com – Fall of the Berlin Wall](#)
- [BBC – How the Fall of the Berlin Wall Changed the World](#)
- [European Union – History of the EU](#)
- [Cold War Museum – Fall of the Berlin Wall](#)
- [DW – 30 Years Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall](#)

Recent Articles on Post-1989 European Integration

1. "35 Years Later: How the Fall of the Berlin Wall Reshaped Europe"
   Syracuse University News (Nov 7, 2024)
   This article examines the transformative impact of the Berlin Wall's fall on German reunification and the broader European integration process.
   Read the article

2. "Europe's 35-Year Journey Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall"
   Bruegel (Nov 6, 2024)
   An analysis of Europe's political and economic evolution over the past 35 years, highlighting the challenges and successes in integrating Eastern European countries.
   Read the article

3. "EU Enlargement in Wartime Europe: Three Dimensions and Challenges"
   Taylor & Francis Online (2023)
   This scholarly article discusses the complexities of EU enlargement amidst ongoing geopolitical tensions,

focusing on the interplay between state-building, governance, and EU integration.
Read the article

4. "Geopolitical Change and EU Enlargement: Learning from the Past"
   American University (Dec 11, 2023)
   A policy brief reflecting on past EU enlargement experiences to inform future strategies, emphasizing the need for tailored approaches to different candidate countries.
   Read the article

5. "A Different Way of Thinking about EU Enlargement and Reform"
   IP Quarterly (Sep 28, 2023)
   This article critiques current EU enlargement strategies and proposes new principles for a future-oriented expansion and institutional reform.
   Read the article

Sample Questions:

1. In what year did the Berlin Wall fall?

   A. 1987
   B. 1989
   C. 1991
   D. 1993

Answer: B) 1989

Who was the East German leader at the time the Berlin Wall fell in 1989?

   A. Erich Honecker
   B. Walter Ulbricht
   C. Egon Krenz
   D. Helmut Kohl

Answer: C) Egon Krenz

CATEGORY 4: Current Events

Dive into the Headlines! This category encompasses significant global events spanning from late 2024 to early October 2025, including world politics, elections, economic crises, natural disasters, major catastrophes, military action in Ukraine and Iran, national security, and other related developments. Stay informed about current affairs by staying tuned to reputable news sources for the latest updates and insights on these impactful issues.

Most questions will be in multiple-choice format, but there could be fill-in-the-blank and/or matching questions for variety.

- Current Events – Wikipedia (*scroll down – events by month at the bottom) LINK
- The Economist - The World This Week LINK
- NPR Weekly News Quiz: LINK
- New York Times - Quiz (Paywall): LINK
- Foreign Policy Association - Quiz (Paywall): LINK
- PEW Research - International Affairs: LINK
- CNN World: LINK
- Brookings Institution - International: LINK

Which country officially became the 12th member of a trans-Pacific trade pact in 2025, joining nations such as Japan, Australia, and Canada, as part of its effort to strengthen global trade ties after leaving the European Union?

    A. United States
    B. United Kingdom
    C. New Zealand
    D. South Korea

Answer: B) United Kingdom

In September 2025, which country signed a formal mutual defense pact with Saudi Arabia, agreeing that any aggression against one would be considered an aggression against both, thereby strengthening their decades-long security partnership?

    A. Iran
    B. Pakistan
    C. Egypt
    D. United Arab Emirates

Answer: B) Pakistan

This subject encompasses a wide range of ongoing global discussions. The most effective way to stay informed is to regularly read news from reputable media sources and consult foreign policy think tanks such as the Brookings Institute and the Council of Foreign Relations.

CATEGORY 5: The Global Digital Battlefield: Cybersecurity, Disinformation, and Tech Diplomacy

In today's interconnected world, international conflicts are no longer fought solely on land, sea, or air — they've expanded into the digital realm. This category explores how nations navigate the challenges of cybersecurity, defend against disinformation campaigns, and wield technology as a tool of diplomacy and power. From state-sponsored cyberattacks and election interference to global debates over AI governance and data security, test your knowledge of the digital frontlines shaping international affairs in the 21st century.

All questions will be multiple-choice. There will be 10 questions in this category.

Helpful Links:

- ***How cyberspace affects international relations* (2024) — Foulon**
   Explores how cyberspace acts as a "structural modifier" in international relations, altering power dynamics, norms, and diplomacy. (Taylor & Francis Online)
- ***Countering Disinformation Effectively: An Evidence-Based Policy Guide* (2024) — Carnegie Endowment**
   Offers policy approaches to counter disinformation, distinguishing between misinformation and disinformation and summarizing empirical evidence. (Carnegie Endowment)
- ***Social networks, disinformation and diplomacy: a dynamic simulation approach* (2023)**
   Presents a model simulating how state actors may use disinformation in social networks as a diplomatic tool. (Nature)
- ***Cyber risk logics and their implications for cybersecurity* (2024) — Backman**
   Compares two logics of cyber risk ("as threats" and "as uncertainty") and explores their consequences for national security strategies. (Oxford Academic)
- ***Regulating Disinformation and Big Tech in the EU: A Research Note* (2024) — García et al.**
   Analyzes various EU strategies for regulating disinformation and the challenges in balancing regulation with free expression. (Wiley Online Library)

- ***Artificial Intelligence in Cybersecurity: Building Resilient Cyber Diplomacy Frameworks* (2024, preprint)**
  Looks at how AI and automation can support diplomacy in cyberspace, including in threat awareness and decision support. ([arXiv](#))
- ***A Comparative Study of National Cyber Security Strategies of Ten Nations* (2023)**
  Compares cyber strategies across different countries and highlights patterns, gaps, and international cooperation needs. ([arXiv](#))
- ***Automatic Detection of Influential Actors in Disinformation Networks***
  Presents ML and network analytics methods to detect influential actors behind disinformation campaigns. ([arXiv](#))
  Advancing a New Research Agenda on Digital Disruption, Disinformation & Governance (2023)
  Explores how states and nonstate actors leverage digital disruption and what research paths are needed for governance responses. ([Brill](#))

Institutional & Ongoing Research & Analysis Resources

- **Foreign Affairs – Cybersecurity Section**
  A curated collection of essays and analyses on cybersecurity and its international implications. ([Foreign Affairs](#))
- **Chatham House — Cyber Security**
  Focuses on global cyber policy, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and cybersecurity governance. ([Chatham House](#))
- **CSIS — Cybersecurity**
  In-depth research and commentary on cyber warfare, encryption, national capabilities, and digital threats. ([CSIS](#))
- **Carnegie Endowment — Cyber & Digital Policy**
  Research on tech and international affairs, norms building, information operations, and governance in cyberspace. ([Carnegie Endowment](#))
- **Digital Diplomacy in 2025: Geopolitics, new topics & tools** — Diplomacy.edu
  Reviews how diplomacy is adapting in the digital era, including disinformation, digital statecraft, and new tools. ([Diplomacy.edu](#))

Recent News & Real-World Cases (2025) Worth Noting

- **Drones, systems hack test Europe's aviation security defences** — coordinated attacks highlighting vulnerability of aviation systems. ([Reuters](#))
- **Airport chaos highlights rise in high-profile ransomware attacks** — showing how cyberattacks are disrupting critical infrastructure. ([Reuters](#))
- **Moldova's election faces AI-driven disinformation from Russia** — a current example of digital influence in geopolitics. ([AP News](#))
- **Countries shore up their digital defenses as global tensions raise the threat of cyberwarfare** — broader global posture shift in response to threats. ([AP News](#))
- **ICC says new cybersecurity incident has been contained** — illustrates how even international legal institutions are targets. ([Reuters](#))
- **France accuses a Russia-linked hacking group of targeting the Paris Olympics and French agencies** — blending espionage, state hacking, and soft power. ([AP News](#))

<u>**Sample Questions:**</u>

According to the Carnegie Endowment, what is one of the biggest challenges in countering disinformation while maintaining democratic principles?

- A. High costs of AI tools
- B. Balancing regulation with free expression
- C. Lack of government interest
- D. Weak international alliances

Answer: B) Balancing regulation with free expression

According to cyber experts, what type of attack caused major disruptions at global airports in September 2025?

    A. Phishing scams
    B. Denial-of-service attacks
    C. Ransomware
    D. Insider sabotage

Answer: C) Ransomware

CATEGORY 6: Where in the World? Landmarks Around the Globe

Where in the World? Landmarks Around the Globe
From ancient wonders to modern marvels, iconic landmarks tell the stories of cultures, history, and innovation across every continent. In this category, you'll test your knowledge of famous sites, whether it's identifying the country where a landmark stands, recalling the history behind its creation, or recognizing its unique features. Questions will be presented in both *fill-in-the-blank* and *multiple-choice* formats, so get ready to travel the world without leaving your seat!

Sample Questions:

Fill-in-the-Blank

The ancient city of Petra, carved into rose-red cliffs, is located in the country of _____. **(Answer: Jordan)**

The world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, can be found in _____. **(Answer: Dubai)**

Multiple Choice

Which landmark is famously known as the "Lost City of the Incas"?

    A. Angkor Wat
    B. Machu Picchu
    C. Chichen Itza
    D. Tikal

Answer: B.) Machu Picchu

The Sydney Opera House is located on the shores of which harbor?

    A. Darling Harbor
    B. Sydney Harbor
    C. Victoria Harbor
    D. Hobart Harbor

Answer: B. Sydney Harbor

CATEGORY 7: Anything and Everything Trivia

Get ready for a whirlwind of questions! From science and history to pop culture, sports, and random fun facts, you'll need to be well-rounded to conquer this round. Expect the unexpected, whether it's questions about outer space, quirky inventions, famous landmarks, or everyday trivia. It's a little bit of everything, so bring your broadest knowledge to the table!

What is the official language of Brazil?

    A. Spanish
    B. Portuguese
    C. French
    D. English

Answer: B. Portuguese

Which country has a landmark called "The Little Mermaid," inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale?

    A. Sweden
    B. Norway
    C. Denmark
    D. Finland

Answer: C. Denmark

Most questions will be multiple-choice, but for variety, there could be fill-in-the-blank and/or matching questions.