

Scientific Perspectives on Folklore and Legends

Scientific Folklore Analysis · Practice Test · 18 Questions

1. The legend of the 'Cyclops' is widely believed by paleontologists to be an interpretation of the fossilized skulls of which prehistoric animal?

- A) Mammuthus primigenius
- B) Deinotherium giganteum
- C) Palaeoloxodon falconeri
- D) Coelodonta antiquitatis

2. Which geological phenomenon is currently the leading scientific explanation for the 'Oracle of Delphi's' prophetic trances?

- A) Ethylene gas emissions
- B) Geothermal steam vents
- C) Volcanic sulfur deposits
- D) Radon gas accumulation

3. The legend of the 'Kraken' is scientifically attributed to sightings of which real-world creature?

- A) Giant Oarfish
- B) Giant Squid
- C) Sperm Whale
- D) Colossal Squid

4. The folklore surrounding 'werewolves' in 18th-century Europe has been linked by medical historians to which genetic disorder?

- A) Porphyria
- B) Hypertrichosis
- C) Rabies
- D) Lycanthropy clinical syndrome

5. Scientific analysis of the 'Green Children of Woolpit' suggests the children may have suffered from which condition caused by nutritional deficiency?

- A) Chlorosis
- B) Rickets
- C) Kwashiorkor
- D) Pellagra

6. The 'Vampire' legends of Eastern Europe are often clinically explained by the exhumation of bodies in states of post-mortem decomposition involving which process?

- A) Autolysis
- B) Saponification
- C) Rigor mortis
- D) Desiccation

7. The mythical 'Will-o'-the-wisp' is a natural phenomenon caused by the spontaneous combustion of which gas produced by decomposing organic matter?

- A) Methane
- B) Phosphine
- C) Hydrogen sulfide
- D) Ethane

8. The 'Thunderbird' of North American indigenous legend is interpreted by many scholars as an oral tradition recording the impact of which geological event?

- A) The 1700 Cascadia earthquake
- B) The Mount St. Helens eruption
- C) The Great Missoula Floods
- D) The Yellowstone caldera eruption

9. The 'Great Flood' myths found in various cultures have been linked to the rapid flooding of which body of water around 5600 BCE?

- A) Mediterranean Sea
- B) Black Sea
- C) Caspian Sea
- D) Red Sea

10. The legend of 'Sirens' luring sailors to their deaths is commonly attributed by biologists to the mistaken identification of which marine mammal?

- A) Sea Lion
- B) Dugong
- C) Walrus
- D) Harbor Seal

11. Which condition, historically mistaken for being 'touched by faeries' or 'changelings,' is now understood to be an autism spectrum disorder?

- A) Williams syndrome
- B) Pervasive Developmental Disorder
- C) Fragile X syndrome
- D) Asperger's syndrome

12. The 'Dragon' legends of China and Europe are theorized to have originated from the discovery of fossils belonging to which group of animals?

- A) Dinosauria
- B) Pterosauria
- C) Therapsida
- D) Crocodylomorpha

13. The 'Berserkers' of Norse legend are frequently analyzed by modern toxicologists as having been under the influence of which psychoactive substance?

- A) Cannabis sativa
- B) Amanita muscaria
- C) Datura stramonium
- D) Papaver somniferum

14. The folklore regarding 'Mummies' in Victorian England led to the consumption of ground-up remains; what was the primary chemical component sought in the mistaken belief of healing?

- A) Bitumen
- B) Calcium
- C) Gold traces
- D) Ochre

15. The 'Island of Antillia' (part of the Seven Cities of Gold legend) is now understood to be a mythological representation of which real-world geographical feature?

- A) The Azores
- B) The Sargasso Sea
- C) The Grand Banks
- D) The Canary Islands

16. The legend of 'Basilisk' stone-turning gaze is scientifically correlated with the historical identification of which creature?

- A) Spitting Cobra
- B) Nile Crocodile
- C) Egyptian Mongoose
- D) Horned Viper

17. The 'Pied Piper of Hamelin' legend is historically linked to an outbreak of which disease, which caused high mortality in medieval European cities?

- A) Bubonic Plague
- B) Ergotism
- C) Typhus
- D) Smallpox

18. The 'Jackalope' of American folklore is based on rabbits infected with which real-world condition?

- A) Shope papilloma virus
- B) Myxomatosis
- C) Rabbit hemorrhagic disease
- D) Tularemia