

English Literature Firsts and Innovations

English Literature · Practice Test · 15 Questions

1. Who is credited with inventing the first printing press in England, revolutionizing book production?

- A) Geoffrey Chaucer
- B) William Caxton
- C) William Shakespeare
- D) John Milton

2. Which work is often considered the first English novel, published in 1719?

- A) Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded
- B) Robinson Crusoe
- C) Gulliver's Travels
- D) Tom Jones

3. What significant literary form did Geoffrey Chaucer popularize in the English language with 'The Canterbury Tales'?

- A) Blank verse
- B) Sonnet
- C) Rhyming couplet
- D) Prose narrative

4. Who is widely recognized as the first English poet to gain significant public acclaim for his vernacular poetry?

- A) John Gower
- B) William Langland
- C) Geoffrey Chaucer
- D) Thomas Wyatt

5. Which playwright is credited with introducing approximately 1,700 new words and phrases into the English language?

- A) Christopher Marlowe
- B) Ben Jonson
- C) William Shakespeare
- D) Thomas Kyd

6. The first folio of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623, was a monumental effort to preserve which aspect of his work?

- A) His sonnets
- B) His comedies
- C) His complete dramatic works
- D) His poems

7. What invention by Johannes Gutenberg, adopted in England, fundamentally changed the dissemination of literature?

- A) The quill pen
- B) The printing press
- C) The typewriter
- D) The printing block

8. Who is considered the first major English poet to write primarily in the vernacular, paving the way for modern English literature?

- A) Sir Thomas Malory
- B) William Dunbar
- C) Geoffrey Chaucer
- D) John Lydgate

9. The development of which poetic form is significantly attributed to English poets like Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey?

- A) Haiku
- B) Limerick
- C) Sonnet
- D) Ballad

10. Who published the first comprehensive English dictionary, a massive undertaking of lexicography?

- A) Samuel Johnson
- B) Robert Cawdrey
- C) Nathan Bailey
- D) John Ash

11. Which early English author is credited with writing one of the first detective stories, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' (though originally in French, it heavily influenced English detective fiction)?

- A) Arthur Conan Doyle
- B) Edgar Allan Poe
- C) Agatha Christie
- D) Wilkie Collins

12. What was the first major English epic poem to be written in blank verse, a significant innovation in poetic form?

- A) The Faerie Queene
- B) Paradise Lost
- C) Beowulf
- D) The Canterbury Tales

13. Who is recognized as the first English female novelist to achieve widespread popularity and critical success?

- A) Jane Austen
- B) Mary Shelley
- C) Fanny Burney
- D) Aphra Behn

14. The invention of which literary device is often associated with the playwright William Shakespeare, allowing for complex character development?

- A) Dramatic irony
- B) Soliloquy
- C) Foreshadowing
- D) Allegory

15. Which author is often considered the father of English history writing for his comprehensive work, 'Ecclesiastical History of the English People'?

- A) Alfred the Great
- B) Bede
- C) William of Malmesbury
- D) John of Salisbury