

Advanced Etymological Studies

Etymology · Practice Test · 20 Questions

1. The English word 'thug' derives from which historical group of organized criminals in India?

- A) Thuggee cult
- B) Maratha Raiders
- C) Pindari banditti
- D) Sikh insurgents

2. The term 'salary' is etymologically derived from the Latin 'salarium', which refers to an allowance for what commodity?

- A) Grain
- B) Salt
- C) Olive oil
- D) Wine

3. Which language serves as the primary etymological root for the word 'algebra'?

- A) Persian
- B) Arabic
- C) Greek
- D) Sanskrit

4. The word 'sycophant' originates from a Greek compound meaning what literally?

- A) Fig-shower
- B) Wine-drinker
- C) Bread-beggar
- D) Temple-slave

5. 'Ostracism' originates from the Greek word 'ostrakon', which referred specifically to what object?

- A) A bronze sword
- B) A pottery shard
- C) A marble column
- D) A wooden chest

6. The term 'avocado' is derived from the Nahuatl word 'ahuacatl', which also translates to what anatomical term?

- A) Heart
- B) Kidney
- C) Testicle
- D) Stomach

7. Which English word, meaning a person who hates mankind, is derived from the Greek 'misos' and 'anthropos'?

- A) Misanthrope
- B) Misogynist
- C) Misanthropist
- D) Misologist

8. The word 'candidate' comes from the Latin 'candidatus', meaning 'clothed in white', worn by men seeking office in which period?

- A) Imperial Rome
- B) Republican Rome
- C) Hellenistic Greece
- D) Byzantine Empire

9. The word 'dandelion' is a corruption of the French 'dent de lion', which translates to what?

- A) Gold leaf
- B) Lion's tooth
- C) Sun bloom
- D) Field king

10. Which etymological root defines the word 'quarantine', referencing the Venetian practice of isolating ships for how many days?

- A) 7
- B) 14
- C) 30
- D) 40

11. The term 'clue' originally referred to a 'clew', which is defined as what?

- A) A secret sign
- B) A ball of thread or yarn
- C) A trail of breadcrumbs
- D) A navigational star

12. The word 'muscle' is derived from the Latin 'musculus', meaning what?

- A) Little mouse
- B) Strong band
- C) Inner power
- D) Flexible cord

13. 'Narcissism' is derived from the Greek myth of Narcissus, who was cursed to fall in love with what?

- A) A nymph
- B) His own reflection
- C) A mountain echo
- D) A golden statue

14. The word 'robot' was first introduced in the play 'R.U.R.' by Karel Capek, derived from the Czech word 'robota', meaning what?

- A) Machine
- B) Metal
- C) Forced labor
- D) Automaton

15. The term 'groggy' originates from Admiral Edward Vernon, nicknamed 'Old Grog', who insisted on diluting the sailors' ration of what?

- A) Water
- B) Ale
- C) Rum
- D) Wine

16. 'Pecuniary', relating to money, is derived from the Latin 'pecus', meaning what?

- A) Gold
- B) Cattle
- C) Trade
- D) Weight

17. The word 'lunatic' is etymologically rooted in the belief that mental instability was influenced by what?

- A) The moon
- B) Bad humors
- C) Solar flares
- D) Malicious spirits

18. The word 'nice' has undergone semantic narrowing; in Middle English, it originally meant what?

- A) Pleasant
- B) Foolish
- C) Kind
- D) Refined

19. 'Zenith' entered the English language via Old Spanish, originating from the Arabic phrase 'samt ar-ra's', meaning what?

- A) Path of the sun
- B) Way over the head
- C) Highest point
- D) Center of heaven

20. The word 'tawdry' is an etymological corruption of 'St. Audrey's' lace, referring to cheap finery sold at which location?

- A) Ely
- B) London
- C) York
- D) Canterbury