

Existentialism: Key Firsts and Discoveries

Existentialism · Answer Key · 18 Questions

1. Which philosopher is widely credited with being the first to systematically develop existentialist ideas, even before the term became common?

- A) Jean-Paul Sartre
- B) Albert Camus
- C) Søren Kierkegaard**
- D) Friedrich Nietzsche

2. The concept of 'existence precedes essence' is a cornerstone of existentialism. Which major existentialist thinker most famously articulated this principle?

- A) Simone de Beauvoir
- B) Martin Heidegger
- C) Jean-Paul Sartre**
- D) Karl Jaspers

3. What significant philosophical work, published in 1943, is considered a foundational text for existentialism and explores themes of being and time?

- A) Thus Spoke Zarathustra
- B) Being and Nothingness
- C) The Myth of Sisyphus
- D) Being and Time**

4. Which existentialist philosopher, known for her work on feminist existentialism, first published her seminal work 'The Second Sex' in 1949?

- A) Iris Murdoch
- B) Hannah Arendt
- C) Simone de Beauvoir**
- D) Ayn Rand

5. The notion of 'bad faith' (mauvaise foi) is a key concept in existentialist ethics. Which philosopher extensively explored this idea in relation to freedom and responsibility?

- A) Gabriel Marcel
- B) Martin Heidegger
- C) Søren Kierkegaard
- D) Jean-Paul Sartre**

6. What literary genre did Albert Camus often employ to explore existential themes, notably in works like 'The Stranger'?

- A) Science Fiction
- B) Historical Fiction
- C) Philosophical Novel**
- D) Mystery

7. Which philosopher, often associated with existentialism, famously declared 'God is dead' in his work 'The Gay Science'?

- A) Arthur Schopenhauer
- B) Friedrich Nietzsche**
- C) Immanuel Kant
- D) Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

8. The concept of the 'absurd' is central to the philosophy of Albert Camus. Which work is considered his primary philosophical exposition on this idea?

- A) The Rebel
- B) The Plague
- C) The Fall
- D) The Myth of Sisyphus**

9. Who is recognized as the first to introduce the term 'existentialism' into philosophical discourse, although he later distanced himself from the label?

- A) Jean-Paul Sartre
- B) Søren Kierkegaard
- C) Martin Heidegger
- D) Gabriel Marcel**

10. Which existentialist thinker emphasized the importance of 'authenticity' and the individual's confrontation with their own mortality?

- A) Jean-Paul Sartre
- B) Albert Camus
- C) Martin Heidegger**
- D) Simone de Beauvoir

11. The existentialist concept of 'anguish' or 'anxiety' is often linked to the realization of human freedom. Which thinker is particularly noted for exploring this psychological state?

- A) Friedrich Nietzsche
- B) Søren Kierkegaard**
- C) Albert Camus
- D) Jean-Paul Sartre

12. What was the first major work by Jean-Paul Sartre that brought existentialist ideas to a wider public audience after World War II?

- A) Nausea
- B) The Flies
- C) Existentialism is a Humanism**
- D) No Exit

13. Which philosopher's early work, particularly 'The Phenomenology of Perception', laid groundwork for later existentialist explorations of embodiment and lived experience?

- A) Edmund Husserl
- B) Maurice Merleau-Ponty**
- C) Max Scheler
- D) Nicolai Hartmann

14. The idea of 'for-itself' (pour-soi) and 'in-itself' (en-soi) are key distinctions made by which existentialist philosopher?

- A) Martin Heidegger
- B) Jean-Paul Sartre**
- C) Simone de Beauvoir
- D) Albert Camus

15. What significant event in the mid-20th century is often seen as providing fertile ground and a catalyst for the rise of existentialist thought in popular consciousness?

- A) The Russian Revolution
- B) The Cold War
- C) World War II**
- D) The French Revolution

16. Which philosopher, deeply influenced by Kierkegaard, is considered a pioneer of Christian existentialism, focusing on faith and the leap of faith?

- A) Paul Tillich
- B) Karl Jaspers
- C) Gabriel Marcel**
- D) Reinhold Niebuhr

17. The concept of 'thrownness' (Geworfenheit) - the idea that individuals are cast into existence without their consent - is a core concept introduced by which existentialist thinker?

- A) Jean-Paul Sartre
- B) Albert Camus
- C) Martin Heidegger**
- D) Søren Kierkegaard

18. Which play by Jean-Paul Sartre, first performed in 1944, is a famous existentialist dramatic work exploring themes of hell and judgment?

- A) The Flies
- B) No Exit**
- C) Dirty Hands
- D) The Respectful Prostitute