

History of Drama and Performance

Performing Arts History · Practice Test · 20 Questions

1. Which ancient Greek playwright is credited with adding the second actor to tragedy, thereby allowing for dialogue between two characters?

- A) Aeschylus
- B) Sophocles
- C) Euripides
- D) Aristophanes

2. The Globe Theatre, famous for its association with William Shakespeare, was originally built in which London district?

- A) Westminster
- B) Southwark
- C) City of London
- D) Kensington

3. In the context of Japanese Noh theater, what is the raised wooden walkway used by actors to enter and exit the stage called?

- A) Hanamichi
- B) Hashigakari
- C) Kagura-den
- D) Butai

4. The Commedia dell'arte, which flourished in Europe from the 16th to the 18th century, is best known for its use of what?

- A) Elaborate stage machinery
- B) Strictly scripted text
- C) Improvised scenarios and stock characters
- D) Singing exclusively in Latin

5. What was the primary function of the 'chorus' in the classical Greek theater?

- A) To provide musical accompaniment only
- B) To represent the voice of the people or the community
- C) To act as the lead antagonist
- D) To sell tickets to the audience

6. The 'Lord Chamberlain's Men' was an acting company most famous for being the primary troupe for which playwright?

- A) Christopher Marlowe
- B) Ben Jonson
- C) William Shakespeare
- D) John Webster

7. In the 18th century, which French philosopher and writer popularized the concept of 'le paradoxe sur le comédien' (the paradox of the actor)?

- A) Denis Diderot
- B) Voltaire
- C) Jean-Jacques Rousseau
- D) Molière

8. What was the main architectural feature of the Roman theater that distinguished it from the Greek theater?

- A) The orchestra was square
- B) The stage building (scaenae frons) was part of a single enclosed structure
- C) The seats were made of wood
- D) The theater was always built on a flat plain

9. The Peking Opera, which combines music, vocal performance, mime, and dance, reached its mature form in the middle of which century?

- A) 17th century
- B) 18th century
- C) 19th century
- D) 20th century

10. Who wrote 'The Seagull', 'Uncle Vanya', and 'The Cherry Orchard', works that became foundational to modern realism in theater?

- A) Henrik Ibsen
- B) August Strindberg
- C) Anton Chekhov
- D) Maxim Gorky

11. What is the term for the Japanese theatrical tradition that began in the 17th century and is known for its highly stylized performances and elaborate makeup?

- A) Kyogen
- B) Kabuki
- C) Bunraku
- D) Noh

12. The Federal Theatre Project was a short-lived government-funded program in which country during the 1930s?

- A) United Kingdom
- B) Canada
- C) United States
- D) Australia

13. Which English playwright is known for the 'Comedy of Manners' style, including the play 'The Way of the World'?

- A) William Congreve
- B) Oscar Wilde
- C) Richard Brinsley Sheridan
- D) George Bernard Shaw

14. In Elizabethan theater, what were 'groundlings'?

- A) Actors who played the roles of servants
- B) Members of the audience who stood in the pit
- C) The stagehands who moved the scenery
- D) The musicians who sat in the gallery

15. What is the significance of the 'Théâtre Libre', founded by André Antoine in 1887?

- A) It was the first outdoor theater
- B) It introduced the 'fourth wall' concept to modern drama
- C) It banned the use of realistic lighting
- D) It focused exclusively on religious plays

16. Which playwright is considered the father of modern realism for works such as 'A Doll's House'?

- A) Henrik Ibsen
- B) Arthur Miller
- C) Tennessee Williams
- D) Anton Chekhov

17. The Sanskrit drama tradition of 'Koodiyattam' is recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity and originates from which country?

- A) India
- B) Thailand
- C) Cambodia
- D) Sri Lanka

18. The 'Deus ex machina' device in Greek theater originally referred to what?

- A) A complex plot twist
- B) A mechanical crane used to lower a god onto the stage
- C) The actor playing the lead character
- D) A type of stage mask

19. Which 20th-century movement, featuring plays like 'Waiting for Godot', challenged conventional notions of plot and character?

- A) Expressionism
- B) Theatre of the Absurd
- C) Epic Theatre
- D) Naturalism

20. Bertolt Brecht developed a style of theater designed to prevent the audience from becoming emotionally lost in the story, known as what?

- A) Method Acting
- B) Verfremdungseffekt (Alienation Effect)
- C) Total Theater
- D) Direct Address