

Foreign Language Milestones and Statistics

Linguistics · Practice Test · 18 Questions

1. In what year did the United Nations officially establish International Mother Language Day?

- A) 1995
- B) 1999
- C) 2001
- D) 2005

2. According to Ethnologue, approximately how many distinct living languages are spoken across the world today?

- A) Under 1,000
- B) About 3,500
- C) Over 7,000
- D) Nearly 15,000

3. Which language served as the primary lingua franca of the Achaemenid Empire beginning in the 6th century BCE?

- A) Aramaic
- B) Sumerian
- C) Latin
- D) Phoenician

4. How many official working languages does the United Nations currently recognize?

- A) 3
- B) 5
- C) 6
- D) 8

5. The Rosetta Stone, which was instrumental in deciphering hieroglyphs, was discovered by French soldiers in what year?

- A) 1789
- B) 1799
- C) 1812
- D) 1822

6. Who is the linguist credited with formulating the theory of Universal Grammar in the mid-20th century?

- A) Ferdinand de Saussure
- B) Noam Chomsky
- C) Roman Jakobson
- D) Edward Sapir

7. How many unique symbols or characters are contained in the standard Japanese Hiragana syllabary?

- A) 26
- B) 46
- C) 64
- D) 102

8. Which country has the highest number of living indigenous languages, totaling over 800?

- A) Brazil
- B) Indonesia
- C) Papua New Guinea
- D) India

9. The Esperanto language was created by L. L. Zamenhof and first published in a book in what year?

- A) 1887
- B) 1901
- C) 1915
- D) 1923

10. In the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), how many primary symbols are used to represent consonant sounds?

- A) 24
- B) 54
- C) 84
- D) 114

11. What is the estimated number of native speakers of Mandarin Chinese, the world's most spoken first language?

- A) 400 million
- B) 600 million
- C) 900 million
- D) 1.2 billion

12. The first dictionary of the English language, compiled by Samuel Johnson, was published in which century?

- A) 16th
- B) 17th
- C) 18th
- D) 19th

13. How many grammatical cases exist in the Finnish language?

- A) 5
- B) 15
- C) 25
- D) 35

14. The Cyrillic alphabet, used by several Slavic languages, was developed in the 9th century and is traditionally attributed to whom?

- A) Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius
- B) Charlemagne
- C) Vladimir the Great
- D) Peter the Great

15. Approximately what percentage of the world's languages are considered endangered, according to UNESCO?

- A) 10%
- B) 40%
- C) 65%
- D) 80%

16. Which ancient language, serving as the liturgical language of Hinduism, has a history dating back to the 2nd millennium BCE?

- A) Pali
- B) Sanskrit
- C) Tamil
- D) Avestan

17. The 'Voynich Manuscript', an undeciphered text, has been carbon-dated to approximately which time period?

- A) 800-900 CE
- B) 1404-1438 CE
- C) 1650-1700 CE
- D) 1820-1840 CE

18. How many official languages does the European Union recognize as of 2024?

- A) 12
- B) 24
- C) 28
- D) 32