

Chronicles of Sartorial History

Fashion History · Practice Test · 20 Questions

1. Which 17th-century French monarch is credited with establishing the 'haute couture' industry by mandating that court fashion must change seasonally to boost the French textile economy?

- A) Louis XIV
- B) Louis XIII
- C) Henri IV
- D) Louis XV

2. In the 1890s, the 'Gibson Girl' aesthetic was popularized by the illustrations of Charles Dana Gibson; what specific structural garment was essential to achieving this silhouette?

- A) Bustle
- B) Crinoline
- C) S-bend corset
- D) Hobble skirt

3. The 'Great Male Renunciation' in the late 18th and early 19th centuries refers to the shift in men's fashion from elaborate ornamentation to what primary style?

- A) The rise of the tunic
- B) The adoption of military uniforms
- C) The birth of the sober tailored suit
- D) The return to classical robes

4. Which textile material, originally known as 'artificial silk,' was first commercially produced in the 1890s and later branded as 'Rayon'?

- A) Cellulose acetate
- B) Viscose
- C) Polyester
- D) Nylon

5. In 1947, Christian Dior launched his debut collection, which was dubbed the 'New Look' by Carmel Snow. What was the defining characteristic of this silhouette?

- A) Extremely short hemlines
- B) Shoulder pads and boxy shapes
- C) Cinched waists and voluminous skirts
- D) Straight-cut 'garçonne' lines

6. What was the primary function of the 'patten' worn by women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance?

- A) To add height for status
- B) To keep the hem of the dress out of street mud
- C) To provide arch support
- D) To signify marital status

7. During the 1920s, the 'cloche' hat became a defining accessory; what was the literal translation of the French word 'cloche' from which it took its name?

- A) Bell
- B) Shield
- C) Crown
- D) Cover

8. What 19th-century invention by Elias Howe and Isaac Singer fundamentally transformed the fashion industry by moving garment construction from bespoke to mass production?

- A) The spinning jenny
- B) The power loom
- C) The lockstitch sewing machine
- D) The jacquard mechanism

9. The 'Zoot Suit' riots of 1943 were partially fueled by tensions regarding wartime fabric rationing; how did the zoot suit violate these regulations?

- A) It used excessive amounts of wool
- B) It utilized synthetic dyes
- C) It incorporated banned metals
- D) It featured forbidden leather trimmings

10. Which historical garment, popular in the 18th century, was characterized by wide side hoops that extended the width of the skirt while keeping the front and back flat?

- A) Farthingale
- B) Pannier
- C) Bustle
- D) Crinoline

11. What did the 'Sumptuary Laws' passed in various European countries during the Middle Ages and Renaissance explicitly regulate?

- A) The hours of textile production
- B) The types of fabric and color allowed based on social rank
- C) The minimum wage for weavers
- D) The export quotas for silk

12. In 1964, which designer introduced the 'Space Age' collection, featuring vinyl, metal, and geometric shapes like the astronaut helmet?

- A) André Courrèges
- B) Pierre Cardin
- C) Paco Rabanne
- D) Yves Saint Laurent

13. Which specific technique, developed by Mariano Fortuny in the early 20th century, involved fine pleating of silk that remains a mystery to modern manufacturers?

- A) The Delphos pleat
- B) The bias cut
- C) The tambour stitch
- D) The smocking method

14. What was the 'Directoire' style of the late 18th century influenced by?

- A) The French Revolution and Neoclassicism
- B) The Industrial Revolution
- C) The American Civil War
- D) The Ottoman Empire

15. The term 'bias cut,' which revolutionized dressmaking by allowing fabric to drape fluidly over the body, is most associated with which designer?

- A) Coco Chanel
- B) Madeleine Vionnet
- C) Elsa Schiaparelli
- D) Paul Poiret

16. What was the primary purpose of the 'codpiece' in 16th-century male attire?

- A) To store small personal items
- B) To emphasize virility and accommodate breeches
- C) To serve as a decorative button
- D) To protect the wearer from cold

17. The 'Hobble Skirt,' popular around 1910, was so narrow that it often required a 'fetter' to prevent what?

- A) The fabric from staining
- B) The wearer from falling
- C) The skirt from splitting at the seams
- D) The wearer from walking too fast

18. Which synthetic fiber, discovered by Wallace Carothers at DuPont in 1935, famously replaced silk stockings during the fabric shortages of World War II?

- A) Polyester
- B) Nylon
- C) Acrylic
- D) Spandex

19. Before the standardization of sizes, what was the primary indicator of a 'ready-to-wear' garment's fit prior to the 20th century?

- A) Adjustable lacing
- B) Standardized pattern blocks
- C) Loose-fitting silhouettes
- D) Professional tailoring at the point of sale

20. Which historical figure is widely credited with ending the practice of wearing corsets in the early 20th century by popularizing the loose, empire-waisted 'directoire' style?

- A) Paul Poiret
- B) Jeanne Lanvin
- C) Callot Soeurs
- D) Lucile