

# Wonders of Words: A Linguistics Challenge

Linguistics · Practice Test · 18 Questions

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**1. What part of your mouth do you use to make the 'p' sound in 'pat'?**

- A) Your tongue behind your teeth
- B) Your lips together
- C) Your throat
- D) Your soft palate

**2. Which of these is a type of language where words change their ending to show their job in a sentence (like 'dog' changing to 'dogs')?**

- A) Isolating language
- B) Agglutinative language
- C) Inflectional language
- D) Polysynthetic language

**3. What is the scientific study of the meaning of words called?**

- A) Phonetics
- B) Syntax
- C) Morphology
- D) Semantics

**4. Which of these is NOT a way that languages can be grouped together by linguists?**

- A) By the sounds they use
- B) By their age or how old they are
- C) By how they are written
- D) By similar grammar and vocabulary

**5. What is the smallest unit of sound in a language that can change the meaning of a word, like the 'p' and 'b' in 'pat' and 'bat'?**

- A) Morpheme
- B) Phoneme
- C) Grapheme
- D) Syllable

**6. In linguistics, what is 'syntax' mainly concerned with?**

- A) The meaning of individual words
- B) How words are combined to form sentences
- C) The history of words
- D) The study of different speech sounds

**7. Which is an example of a language family, meaning a group of languages that have descended from a common ancestor?**

- A) Mandarin
- B) Spanish
- C) English
- D) Swahili

**8. What is the term for a word that sounds the same as another word but has a different meaning, like 'to', 'too', and 'two'?**

- A) Homograph
- B) Homonym
- C) Synonym
- D) Antonym

**9. The study of how words are formed and how they are built from smaller parts is called:**

- A) Phonology
- B) Pragmatics
- C) Morphology
- D) Etymology

**10. What is the scientific study of the patterns of sounds in a language called?**

- A) Acoustic phonetics
- B) Phonology
- C) Articulatory phonetics
- D) Auditory phonetics

**11. When an older word or phrase is used to describe something new or modern, what is this process called?**

- A) Neologism
- B) Borrowing
- C) Archaism
- D) Semantic shift

**12. What is the term for a language that is being learned and used by a group of people who didn't have a common language before, often developing in trade situations?**

- A) Pidgin
- B) Creole
- C) Lingua franca
- D) Dialect

**13. Which type of word describes a word that sounds like the noise it represents, like 'buzz' or 'meow'?**

- A) Metaphor
- B) Onomatopoeia
- C) Alliteration
- D) Simile

**14. What is the study of the history and origin of words called?**

- A) Morphology
- B) Semantics
- C) Etymology
- D) Phonetics

**15. What is the scientific study of how we produce speech sounds called?**

- A) Auditory phonetics
- B) Acoustic phonetics
- C) Articulatory phonetics
- D) Phonology

**16. Which of these is a type of language where words are typically short and don't change their endings much to show their grammatical function?**

- A) Inflectional language
- B) Agglutinative language
- C) Isolating language
- D) Polysynthetic language

**17. What is the term for a language that has become a standardized, official language used for communication between groups of people who speak different native languages?**

- A) Pidgin
- B) Creole
- C) Lingua franca
- D) Dialect

**18. When a word's meaning changes over time, for example, 'nice' originally meaning 'ignorant' but now meaning 'pleasant', what is this linguistic change called?**

- A) Neologism
- B) Semantic shift
- C) Borrowing
- D) Archaism