

Introduction to Existentialism

Philosophy · Answer Key · 20 Questions

1. Which French philosopher is widely considered the central figure of 20th-century existentialism?

A) Jean-Paul Sartre

- B) Immanuel Kant
- C) René Descartes
- D) John Locke

2. What is the core existentialist slogan popularized by Jean-Paul Sartre?

A) I think, therefore I am

B) Existence precedes essence

- C) Life is a dream
- D) Knowledge is power

3. Which 19th-century philosopher is famous for the statement 'God is dead'?

A) Friedrich Nietzsche

- B) Søren Kierkegaard
- C) Albert Camus
- D) Martin Heidegger

4. Who is often referred to as the 'father of existentialism' for his focus on individual subjectivity?

A) Søren Kierkegaard

- B) Karl Marx
- C) Sigmund Freud
- D) Arthur Schopenhauer

5. Albert Camus is famous for his essay comparing the struggle of existence to which mythological character?

A) Sisyphus

- B) Hercules
- C) Odysseus
- D) Prometheus

6. Existentialism emphasizes that individuals have the freedom to define their own what?

A) Purpose

- B) Genetics
- C) Ancestry
- D) Geography

7. Which term do existentialists use to describe the feeling of deep anxiety or dread regarding human freedom?

- A) Angst**
- B) Euphoria
- C) Apathy
- D) Nostalgia

8. Simone de Beauvoir, a prominent existentialist, is best known for writing which influential feminist text?

- A) The Second Sex**
- B) The Republic
- C) A Vindication of the Rights of Woman
- D) The Feminine Mystique

9. In existentialism, what does the concept of 'authenticity' primarily refer to?

- A) Living in accordance with one's own values**
- B) Copying the behaviors of others
- C) Following religious laws strictly
- D) Obeying the government

10. Which of these themes is most central to existentialist literature?

- A) Individual choice and responsibility**
- B) The predictability of history
- C) The perfection of human logic
- D) The biological evolution of man

11. Martin Heidegger, an existentialist thinker, is famous for his major work titled what?

- A) Being and Time**
- B) The Social Contract
- C) Leviathan
- D) Critique of Pure Reason

12. What do existentialists typically believe about inherent, pre-defined human 'meaning'?

- A) It does not exist**
- B) It is written in the stars
- C) It is determined by social status
- D) It is provided by biology

13. Which existentialist thinker famously stated that 'Man is condemned to be free'?

- A) Jean-Paul Sartre**
- B) Friedrich Nietzsche
- C) Albert Camus
- D) Simone de Beauvoir

14. Existentialism became particularly popular in which intellectual hub following World War II?

- A) Paris**
- B) London
- C) New York
- D) Berlin

15. What is the relationship between existentialism and personal responsibility?

- A) Individuals are fully responsible for their choices**
- B) Choices are entirely dictated by fate
- C) Society is responsible for individual actions
- D) God is responsible for all human choices

16. Which of these emotions is frequently analyzed in existentialist philosophy as a response to the 'absurd' nature of life?

- A) Absurdity**
- B) Happiness
- C) Contentment
- D) Pride

17. The term 'Absurdism' is most closely associated with the works of which philosopher?

- A) Albert Camus**
- B) Jean-Paul Sartre
- C) Friedrich Nietzsche
- D) Martin Heidegger

18. Existentialists often focus on the 'human condition', which refers to what?

- A) The universal experiences of being human**
- B) The medical study of human anatomy
- C) The history of human evolution
- D) The rules of international law

19. According to existentialism, when someone denies their own freedom, they are often said to be acting in:

- A) Bad faith**
- B) Good faith
- C) Total honesty
- D) Social harmony

20. What role does 'choice' play in the existentialist view of human identity?

- A) Identity is built through choices**
- B) Identity is fixed at birth
- C) Identity is purely a matter of luck
- D) Identity is defined by one's parents