

Exploring Word Origins

Etymology · Answer Key · 20 Questions

1. The English word 'alphabet' is derived from the first two letters of which ancient language?

- A) Latin
- B) Greek**
- C) Hebrew
- D) Egyptian

2. The word 'astronaut' comes from the Greek words 'astron' meaning star and 'nautes' meaning what?

- A) Pilot
- B) Sailor**
- C) Explorer
- D) Traveler

3. Which language provided the root for the word 'school', originating from 'schole' meaning leisure or spare time?

- A) French
- B) Latin
- C) Greek**
- D) German

4. The word 'bicycle' contains the prefix 'bi-', which comes from Latin and means what?

- A) Two**
- B) Circle
- C) Wheel
- D) Speed

5. The word 'camera' originally comes from a Latin term that refers to what?

- A) A light box
- B) A vaulted chamber**
- C) A glass lens
- D) A memory keeper

6. Many English words for animals, such as 'beef' and 'pork', were adopted into English from which language following the Norman Conquest?

A) Old Norse

B) Old French

C) Latin

D) Italian

7. The word 'biology' is formed from two Greek words: 'bios', meaning life, and 'logia', meaning what?

A) Study of

B) Growth of

C) Nature of

D) Science of

8. The English word 'pedestrian' comes from the Latin word 'pedis', which refers to what body part?

A) Head

B) Hand

C) Foot

D) Leg

9. The word 'telephone' is derived from the Greek 'tele', meaning far off, and 'phone', meaning what?

A) Sound

B) Wire

C) Message

D) Speak

10. The word 'galaxy' is derived from the Greek word 'galaxias', which literally translates to what?

A) Star system

B) Milky circle

C) Light path

D) Heavenly body

11. The word 'geometry' originates from Greek roots meaning what?

A) Shape drawing

B) Earth measurement

C) Space study

D) Angle calculation

12. In the word 'autograph', the prefix 'auto-' comes from Greek and means what?

- A) Hand
- B) Self**
- C) Written
- D) Personal

13. The word 'umbrella' comes from the Latin 'umbra', which means what?

- A) Rain
- B) Shadow**
- C) Covering
- D) Sun

14. The word 'dentist' shares a Latin root with 'dental', which originates from 'dens', meaning what?

- A) Pain
- B) Doctor
- C) Tooth**
- D) Jaw

15. The word 'pyjamas' is borrowed into English from which language?

- A) Hindi
- B) Persian**
- C) Arabic
- D) Turkish

16. The word 'manuscript' is derived from Latin words meaning what?

- A) Paper bound
- B) Hand written**
- C) Old record
- D) Ink drawing

17. The prefix 'micro-' found in words like 'microphone' and 'microscope' comes from Greek and means what?

- A) Small**
- B) Clear
- C) Distant
- D) Precise

18. The word 'dinosaur' is a combination of two Greek words meaning what?

- A) Big lizard
- B) Terrible lizard**
- C) Ancient beast
- D) Earth walker

19. The word 'planet' comes from the Greek word 'planetes', which means what?

- A) Wanderer**
- B) Bright light
- C) Round object
- D) Great circle

20. The word 'captain' originates from the Latin word 'caput', which means what?

- A) Head**
- B) Leader
- C) Ship
- D) Strength