

Historical Foundations of Semiotics

Semiotics · Practice Test · 15 Questions

1. Which 19th-century philosopher and polymath is credited with introducing the triadic model of the sign, consisting of the representamen, object, and interpretant?

- A) Ferdinand de Saussure
- B) Charles Sanders Peirce
- C) Roland Barthes
- D) Umberto Eco

2. In 1916, students of which Swiss linguist posthumously published his lecture notes as the 'Course in General Linguistics', laying the foundation for structuralist semiotics?

- A) Louis Hjelmslev
- B) Roman Jakobson
- C) Ferdinand de Saussure
- D) Claude Lévi-Strauss

3. The term 'semiology' was formally distinguished from 'semiotics' by the IASS (International Association for Semiotic Studies) in 1969; which thinker famously titled his 1957 essay collection 'Mythologies', applying sign theory to popular culture?

- A) Roland Barthes
- B) Algirdas Julien Greimas
- C) Julia Kristeva
- D) Tzvetan Todorov

4. Which medieval philosopher is widely cited by modern semioticians like John Deely for his extensive work on the 'tractatus de signis' within the Scholastic tradition?

- A) Thomas Aquinas
- B) John Painsot
- C) William of Ockham
- D) Roger Bacon

5. The 'Prague Linguistic Circle', which heavily influenced structuralist semiotics, was co-founded in 1926 by which Russian-born linguist?

- A) Viktor Shklovsky
- B) Mikhail Bakhtin
- C) Roman Jakobson
- D) Nikolai Trubetzkoy

6. Which influential 1976 work by Umberto Eco attempted to provide a 'Theory of Semiotics' by integrating previous traditions into a unified field of study?

- A) A Theory of Semiotics
- B) The Open Work
- C) The Name of the Rose
- D) Kant and the Platypus

7. In the 1960s, which French structuralist applied semiotic analysis to the study of 'myth' in indigenous cultures in works such as 'The Savage Mind'?

- A) Michel Foucault
- B) Claude Lévi-Strauss
- C) Jacques Lacan
- D) Jean Baudrillard

8. Which Danish linguist founded the Copenhagen School and developed 'glossematics', an algebraic form of semiotics, in his work 'Prolegomena to a Theory of Language'?

- A) Viggo Brøndal
- B) Louis Hjelmslev
- C) Hans Jørgen Uldall
- D) Otto Jespersen

9. The concept of the 'semiosphere' was introduced in 1984 by which member of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School?

- A) Juri Lotman
- B) Boris Uspensky
- C) Vyacheslav Ivanov
- D) Vladimir Propp

10. In his 1928 work 'Morphology of the Folktale', which Russian formalist identified 31 recurring narrative functions, a milestone in narratology?

- A) Vladimir Propp
- B) Mikhail Bakhtin
- C) Roman Jakobson
- D) Yury Tynyanov

11. Which American semiotician founded the 'Semiotica' journal in 1969, acting as its editor-in-chief for over 30 years and instrumentalizing the field's institutionalization?

- A) Thomas A. Sebeok
- B) John Deely
- C) David Savan
- D) Arthur Burks

12. The 'Paris School' of semiotics, known for the semiotic square, was led by which Lithuanian-born theorist?

- A) Algirdas Julien Greimas
- B) Jacques Derrida
- C) Gérard Genette
- D) Jean-Marie Floch

13. Which 19th-century philosopher coined the term 'semiotic' (as a noun) to describe the doctrine of signs in his 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding'?

- A) John Locke
- B) Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz
- C) Charles Sanders Peirce
- D) Immanuel Kant

14. Which key semiotic concept, referring to the 'infinite' process of sign interpretation, was formalised by Peirce in his late writings?

- A) Semiosis
- B) Unlimited semiosis
- C) Representational chain
- D) Signified recursion

15. In 1981, which French sociologist published 'Simulacra and Simulation', theorizing how signs replace reality in contemporary society?

- A) Jean Baudrillard
- B) Pierre Bourdieu
- C) Guy Debord
- D) Paul Virilio