

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lexical Labyrinth: 12th Grade Idioms and Expressions Quiz

Can you untangle the sociopolitical roots of archaic metaphors? Deconstruct the etymology and nuanced usage of idioms within high-stakes academic and literary contexts.

1. In a legal or diplomatic setting, the term 'to throw the baby out with the bathwater' is used to warn against which specific logical fallacy or strategic error?

- A. Rejecting a beneficial whole because of a single, minor defect.
- B. Prioritizing short-term gains over long-term institutional stability.
- C. Eliminating essential elements while attempting to purge unwanted scrap.
- D. Assuming a causal link between two unrelated chronological events.

2. When a pundit claims an administration is 'tilting at windmills,' they are making an intertextual reference to Cervantes to suggest the administration is _____.

- A. engaging in a noble but destined-to-fail crusade.
- B. attacking imaginary enemies or perceived threats that don't exist.
- C. utilizing outdated technology to solve modern infrastructure issues.
- D. deliberately obfuscating the truth to mislead the electorate.

3. The expression 'the exception that proves the rule' suggests that a rule is only valid if there is a known instance that contradicts it.

- A. True
- B. False

4. Which idiom best describes a 'Pyrrhic victory' in the context of a corporate hostile takeover?

- A. A win achieved through unethical or 'under-the-table' negotiations.
- B. A triumph that inflicts such devastating costs on the victor that it is tantamount to defeat.
- C. A success gained solely through the exploitation of legal loopholes.
- D. A swift acquisition that leaves the competitors stunned and unable to respond.

5. To describe a situation as 'crossing the Rubicon' implies that an individual has _____.

- A. reached the midpoint of a very long and arduous journey.
- B. successfully mediated a conflict between two bitter rivals.
- C. committed to a course of action from which there is no return.
- D. violated a sacred or moral trust for personal enrichment.

6. If a literary critic describes a character's dialogue as 'Gordian,' they are most likely implying the speech is:

- A. Lyrical and flowing, similar to a river.
- B. Extremely intricate, tangled, and difficult to resolve.
- C. Blunt, honest, and refreshingly direct.

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D. Highly derivative of classical Greek tragedies.

7. In professional discourse, to 'beg the question' is synonymous with 'raising the question' or prompting a new inquiry.

- A. True
- B. False

8. Which scenario best exemplifies the idiom 'hoist with one's own petard'?

- A. A hacker whose own computer is frozen by the virus they created.
- B. A climber who reaches the summit but run outs of oxygen.
- C. A politician who loses an election despite record-breaking fundraising.
- D. An athlete who retires at the peak of their professional career.

9. An 'Old Guard' member of an organization typically represents _____.

- A. the newest recruits who are most vigilant about safety.
- B. a faction that advocates for radical, progressive reform.
- C. the traditionalist, long-standing members resistant to change.
- D. the security detail responsible for protecting high-level executives.

10. In the context of fiscal policy, a 'sacred cow' refers to:

- A. An investment that yields high returns with zero risk.
- B. A program or institution considered immune from criticism or budget cuts.
- C. A deceptive financial practice intended to hide debt.
- D. A sudden, unexpected influx of capital into the treasury.