

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer Key: Passport to Prose: The World Literature Odyssey for University Freshmen

Beyond the Western canon—identify 10 fundamental cultural shifts and literary voices that redefined storytelling across the global landscape.

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**1. Which ancient Mesopotamian narrative is widely considered the earliest surviving notable work of world literature?**

**Answer:** B) The Epic of Gilgamesh

The Epic of Gilgamesh, dating back to Ur III (c. 2100 BCE), is one of the earliest known pieces of literature, predating Homeric epics by centuries.

**2. The 'Rubaiyat' is a famous collection of quatrains attributed to the Persian polymath Omar Khayyam.**

**Answer:** A) True

Omar Khayyam was a Persian mathematician and astronomer whose poetry, the Rubaiyat, became famous globally through 19th-century translations.

**3. Which Norwegian playwright is often titled the 'father of realism' for works like 'A Doll's House'?**

**Answer:** B) Henrik Ibsen

Henrik Ibsen revolutionized world drama by moving away from Victorian morality toward the realistic depiction of social and domestic issues.

**4. The concept of 'Negritude,' a literary and ideological philosophy developed by francophone African intellectuals, was co-founded by which author?**

**Answer:** A) Leopold Sédar Senghor

Senghor, along with Aimé Césaire, developed Negritude to celebrate African identity and culture in response to French colonial racism.

**5. The 'Popol Vuh' is the foundational sacred narrative of the K'iche' Maya people.**

**Answer:** A) True

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The Popol Vuh is a critical corpus of Mythohistorical narratives from Post Classic Guatemala, essential to Indigenous American literature.

**6. Which Chilean poet, known for 'Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair', won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971?**

**Answer:** C) Pablo Neruda

Pablo Neruda is one of the most influential Latin American poets of the 20th century, celebrated for both his romantic and political verse.

**7. The 'Mahabharata,' one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India, contains which famous philosophical dialogue?**

**Answer:** B) The Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita is a 700-verse scripture that is part of the Hindu epic Mahabharata, structured as a dialogue between Prince Arjuna and Krishna.

**8. Russian author Leo Tolstoy is best known for his short, minimalist poems depicting rural life.**

**Answer:** B) False

Tolstoy is famous for lengthy, epic realist novels such as 'War and Peace' and 'Anna Karenina', not minimalist poetry.

**9. Which 14th-century collection by Giovanni Boccaccio features 100 tales told by a group of youths sheltering from the Black Death?**

**Answer:** B) The Decameron

The Decameron is a foundational work of Italian prose that influenced later story-cycle structures, including Chaucer's work.

**10. Which South African author became the first black African to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1986?**

**Answer:** C) Wole Soyinka

While Gordimer and Coetzee are South African Nobel laureates, Wole Soyinka (of Nigeria) was the first black African writer to receive the prize.