

Name: _____ Date: _____

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.

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

- A. The Odyssey
- B. The Epic of Gilgamesh
- C. The Book of the Dead
- D. The Ramayana

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

- A. True
- B. False

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

- A. August Strindberg
- B. Henrik Ibsen
- C. Knut Hamsun
- D. Anton Chekhov

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

- A. Leopold Sédar Senghor
- B. Wole Soyinka
- C. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o
- D. Ben Okri

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

- A. True
- B. False

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

- A. Gabriela Mistral
- B. Jorge Luis Borges
- C. Pablo Neruda
- D. Isabel Allende

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

- A. The Upanishads
- B. The Bhagavad Gita
- C. The Dhammapada
- D. The Tao Te Ching

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

- A. True
- B. False

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

- A. The Canterbury Tales
- B. The Decameron
- C. The Prince
- D. Don Quixote

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

- A. Nadine Gordimer
- B. J.M. Coetzee
- C. Wole Soyinka
- D. Alan Paton