

Name: _____ Date: _____

Nail These High School Figurative Language Essentials Quiz

Moving beyond literal definitions, students identify subtle idiomatic nuances and recall the origins of complex phrases in this foundational assessment.

1. If a political candidate is described as 'jumping the shark,' what does this idiom imply about their campaign?

- A. They have reached a point where they are using desperate gimmicks because they've run out of ideas.
- B. They are showing incredible bravery in the face of a dangerous situation.
- C. They have successfully overcome a major obstacle in the polls.
- D. They are acting too quickly without thinking about the consequences.

2. The expression 'to pull someone's leg' is used when you are trying to provide them with helpful, honest advice.

- A. True
- B. False

3. When an author describes a character as having a 'chip on their shoulder,' they are suggesting the character:

- A. Is physically injured and needs medical attention.
- B. Is holding a grudge or has an angry attitude due to a past slight.
- C. Is very wealthy and shows it off to others.
- D. Is incredibly strong and capable of heavy lifting.

4. Which of the following phrases best describes a 'Pyrrhic victory'?

- A. A win that was achieved through cheating and dishonesty.
- B. A victory that is celebrated by everyone involved.
- C. A win that comes at such a great cost it is hardly worth it.
- D. A sudden victory that no one expected to happen.

5. If a manager tells an employee to 'climb the _____' to get a promotion, they are referring to moving up the hierarchy of a company.

- A. Social tree
- B. Corporate ladder
- C. Mountain top
- D. Office wall

6. The idiom 'to steal someone's thunder' means to take credit for someone else's ideas or to lessen their excitement by doing something first.

- A. True

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B. False

7. What does it mean to 'throw down the gauntlet' in a formal or literary setting?

- A. To admit defeat and surrender to an opponent.
- B. To give a gift to an enemy to settle a dispute.
- C. To issue a challenge or an invitation to a struggle.
- D. To clean up a mess that someone else created.

8. An 'Achilles' heel' refers to a person's _____ despite overall strength.

- A. Greatest talent
- B. Physical speed
- C. Vulnerable weakness
- D. Favorite hobby

9. When someone says 'the elephant in the room,' they are referring to a small, insignificant detail that everyone is over-analyzing.

- A. True
- B. False

10. Which idiom would you use to describe a situation that has become chaotic and out of control?

- A. Everything is coming up roses.
- B. Barking up the wrong tree.
- C. The wheels have fallen off.
- D. Back to the drawing board.