

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lexical Chess: Advanced Wordplay for 11th Grade Rhetoricians

Students analyze semantic nuances between disparate synonyms and resolve homophonic ambiguities within complex literary and legal contexts.

1. In a legal context, while 'nullify' and 'abrogate' relate to cancellation, which nuance distinguishes 'abrogate' in high-level discourse?

- A. It implies a temporary suspension rather than a permanent end.
- B. It specifically refers to the formal repeal of a law or right by an authoritative body.
- C. It suggests the accidental loss of a contract's validity.
- D. It is exclusively used for the physiological breakdown of matter.

2. The philosopher's _____ toward the corruption was not 'indifference' but a calculated 'dispassion,' intended to foster objective analysis.

- A. apathy
- B. antipathy
- C. detachment
- D. zeal

3. The words 'discreet' (meaning cautious or unobtrusive) and 'discrete' (meaning individually separate and distinct) are homophones often confused in technical writing.

- A. True
- B. False

4. Which set of antonyms best illustrates the transition from a 'mercurial' temperament to one that is reliable and unchanging?

- A. mercurial / volatile
- B. mercurial / steadfast
- C. mercurial / whimsical
- D. mercurial / eloquent

5. The diplomat noted that the _____ of the bells from the cathedral provided a somber _____ for the funeral procession.

- A. kneel / chord
- B. knell / cord
- C. neal / chord
- D. knell / chord

6. In literary criticism, the term 'laconic' is a synonym for 'verbose' when describing a character's dialogue style.

- A. True

Name: _____ Date: _____

B. False

7. Choose the most precise synonym for 'mitigate' when used in the context of environmental damage control.

- A. exacerbate
- B. alleviate
- C. aggravate
- D. intensify

8. Despite the evidence, the suspect continued to ____ any involvement, hoping the jury would ____ his claims as the truth.

- A. recede / accept
- B. abjure / except
- C. deny / accept
- D. concede / except

9. The words 'aesthetic' and 'ascetic' are homophones that can be used interchangeably in essays about art history.

- A. True
- B. False

10. Identify the relationship: 'Ephemeral' is to 'Permanent' as 'Capricious' is to _____.

- A. Fickle
- B. Arbitrary
- C. Stable
- D. Erratic