

Name: _____ Date: _____

When Words Wear Masks: An 11th Grade Idiom Investigation

Pragmatic analysis, rhetorical intent, and cultural context—this 10-question assessment sharpens analytical skills through the lens of sophisticated linguistic expressions.

1. In a legal context, if an attorney is said to 'throw the book' at a defendant, what is the most likely outcome for the accused?

- A. A dismissal of all charges due to lack of evidence.
- B. The maximum possible legal penalty or sentence.
- C. A physical altercation involving library resources.
- D. A plea bargain involving community service.

2. The expression 'stealing someone's thunder' refers to the act of physically intimidating a competitor during a performance.

- A. True
- B. False

3. An aspiring politician who tries to win over both conservative and liberal voters simultaneously might be accused of 'trying to _____ the fence.'

- A. paint
- B. mend
- C. straddle
- D. jump

4. Which of the following idioms best describes a situation that is the 'final straw' in a series of unfortunate events?

- A. The elephant in the room
- B. The icing on the cake
- C. The camel's back breaking
- D. The tip of the iceberg

5. During a high-stakes negotiation, if one party suggests a '____-vixen' strategy (though more commonly a 'red herring'), they are attempting to introduce a distraction. The correct term for a misleading clue is a 'red ____.'

- A. Herring
- B. Falcon
- C. Snapper
- D. Ribbon

6. To 'gird one's loins' means to prepare oneself for a difficult task or a period of hardship.

- A. True

Name: _____ Date: _____

B. False

7. In the context of financial journalism, if a company is described as a 'white elephant' to its parent corporation, the company is:

- A. Highly profitable and rare
- B. A burdensome possession that costs more than it is worth
- C. A new, aggressive startup in the tech sector
- D. Extremely popular during the holiday season

8. If a CEO decides to '_____ the rug out from under' their employees, they have suddenly withdrawn support or changed plans unexpectedly.

- A. sweep
- B. pull
- C. shake
- D. roll

9. What is the rhetorical effect of using the expression 'jumping the shark' when critiquing a long-running television series?

- A. To suggest the show has reached its peak of popularity.
- B. To praise the writers for a daring creative choice.
- C. To indicate the show has declined in quality and is using gimmicks to stay relevant.
- D. To categorize the show within the action/adventure genre.

10. If an investigative journalist is 'barking up the wrong tree,' they have successfully identified a secondary suspect in a case.

- A. True
- B. False