

Class 10 | English Olympiad

Instructions: Each question has one correct answer. Choose the best option (A/B/C/D). Answer key is provided at the end. This paper is for practice only — not an official exam paper. Recommended time: **45 minutes**.

Q1. 'Apophaticism' (negative theology) defines the divine by ___ .

A. listing all divine attributes

B. saying what God is not

C. comparing God to nature

D. historical accounts

Q2. 'Differance' (Derrida) differs from 'difference' by suggesting meaning is ___ .

A. fixed and stable

B. found in the speaker's intention

C. always deferred and created by difference between signs

D. determined by cultural consensus

Q3. 'Weltanschauung' is German for ___ .

A. world peace

B. a worldview or comprehensive philosophy of life

C. world war

D. world literature

Q4. 'Cognitive estrangement' (Suvin) in science fiction is the mechanism of ___ .

A. creating familiar settings

B. using science to explain magic

C. using a 'novum' (new thing) to defamiliarise reality and prompt critical thinking

D. exploring historical events through future settings

Q5. 'Palimpsest' as a postcolonial metaphor suggests colonial texts ___ .

A. completely erased indigenous narratives

B. exist alongside but over indigenous narratives, which remain visible beneath

C. were written by indigenous people

D. will eventually be forgotten

Q6. 'Stochastic' language is ___ .

A. systematic and predictable

B. relating to probability; randomly determined

C. stored in memory

D. relating to ancient Greek

Q7. 'Chora' (Kristeva) refers to ___ .

A. a Greek chorus

B. a pre-linguistic, pre-symbolic realm of the drives

C. a type of choral music

D. the physical geography of a text

Q8. 'Polyphony' in Bakhtin's sense means a novel where ___ .

A. multiple languages are used

B. the author's voice dominates

C. multiple fully valid voices exist without the author's overriding them

D. multiple plots occur simultaneously

Q9. 'Abject' (Kristeva) refers to that which ___ .

A. is objectively real

B. we reject but which remains disturbingly close — on the border of self and other

C. is abstract

D. is abstract and theoretical

Q10. 'Thick description' (Geertz) in ethnography means ___ .

A. writing very long descriptions

B. describing an act along with its full social meaning and context

C. describing multiple cultures at once

D. using technical vocabulary

Q11. 'Hegemony' (Gramsci) refers to ___ .

A. military domination

B. cultural and ideological dominance that is consented to by the dominated group

C. economic control

D. political dictatorship

Q12. 'Alterity' in philosophy means ___ .

A. an alternative argument

B. a higher state of awareness

C. the state of being other or different; otherness

D. an alternative interpretation

Q13. 'Heuristics' in linguistics refers to ___ .

A. historical linguistics

B. rules of thumb or practical strategies for language acquisition

C. the study of sounds

D. an ancient language system

Q14. 'Deconstruction' (Derrida) ultimately argues that texts ___ .

A. have clear, fixed meanings

B. mean what the author intended

C. undermine their own assumptions and contain contradictions

D. are best understood through historical context

Q15. 'Écriture féminine' (Cixous) advocates for ___ .

A. a return to traditional forms

B. a writing that disrupts phallogocentric structures and expresses feminine difference

C. a new grammar for women

D. poetry written only by women

Q16. 'Phonocentrism' (Derrida) is the privileging of ___ .

A. written over spoken language

B. spoken over written language

C. logic over emotion

D. poetry over prose

Q17. 'Overdetermination' (Althusser) in cultural theory means ___ .

A. determining everything with certainty

B. multiple causes converging to produce an effect

C. over-explaining a concept

D. economic determinism

Q18. 'Interpellation' (Althusser) describes how ideology ___ .

A. interrupts normal activity

B. constitutes subjects by 'hailing' them (e.g. 'Hey, you!')

C. interprets historical events

D. interpolates data

Q19. A 'portmanteau word' combines ___ .

A. two different languages

B. words from two different grammatical categories

C. the sounds and meanings of two words

D. a prefix and a suffix

Q20. 'Simulacra' (Baudrillard) refers to ___ .

A. real experiences

B. historical records

C. copies of things that never had an original — pure image with no referent

D. digital simulations

Q21. 'Intertextuality' (Kristeva) proposes that every text is ___ .

A. entirely original

B. a mosaic of quotations from and references to other texts

C. the product of a single author's mind

D. a reflection of historical events

Q22. 'Metafiction' is fiction that ___ .

A. contains a moral lesson

B. is set in the past

C. is self-aware and draws attention to its own fictional status

D. spans multiple genres

Q23. 'Phenomenology' (Husserl) focuses on ___ .

A. language as a system

B. the structures of experience and consciousness as they appear to the subject

C. the physical world

D. historical development of thought

Q24. 'Paratext' includes all EXCEPT ___ .

A. the title

B. the author's preface

C. the main body of the text

D. cover design

Q25. 'Peritextual' elements (Genette) are those ___ .

A. that surround the main text within the same volume (cover, title, preface)

B. that are external to the book (reviews, interviews)

C. that are central to the narrative

D. that relate to the publisher

Q26. 'Psychoanalytic criticism' interprets texts by ___ .

A. examining historical context

B. applying economic theories

C. exploring unconscious desires and repression in texts and authors

D. using statistical analysis

Q27. 'Logomachy' means ___ .

A. the study of logic

B. an argument about words

C. a type of code language

D. a battle of wits

Q28. 'Apothegm' : 'short wise saying' :: 'gnome' (literary term) : ___ .

A. a small mythical creature

B. a pithy, sententious statement of general truth

C. an anonymous proverb

D. a garden ornament

Q29. 'Bathetic' : 'sudden descent from sublime to ridiculous' :: 'hypsos' : ___ .

A. the sublime in rhetoric and literature

B. a Greek god

C. a type of elevated style

D. a form of paradox

Q30. 'Diegesis' versus 'mimesis': diegesis is ___ .

A. the act of showing

B. the act of telling

C. a type of metaphor

D. a narrative summary

Q31. 'Nonce word' refers to a word ___ .

A. used very frequently

B. coined for a specific occasion and not widely adopted

C. borrowed from another language

D. used only in formal contexts

Q32. 'Phoneme' is the smallest unit of ___ in a language.

A. meaning

B. sound that distinguishes words

C. grammar

D. syntax

Q33. 'The intentional fallacy' (Wimsatt & Beardsley) argues that ___ .

A. authors always intend what they write

B. author's intention should be the primary guide to interpretation

C. the author's intention is irrelevant to the meaning of a text

D. intentional symbolism is superior

Q34. 'The affective fallacy' holds that ___ .

A. emotions have no place in criticism

B. judging a text by its emotional effect on the reader is a critical error

C. affective language is always incorrect

D. the best writing avoids emotion

Q35. 'Trope' originally meant a ___ .

A. type of music

B. tropical plant

C. figure of speech involving a turn or change of meaning

D. type of archetype

Q36. 'Death of the Author' (Barthes) argues for ___ .

A. giving more power to the author in interpretation

B. the liberation of the reader; meaning is created by the reader, not fixed by the author

C. ignoring the text entirely

D. relying on historical context

Q37. 'Habitus' (Bourdieu) refers to ___ .

A. a type of habitat

B. deeply ingrained habits, skills, and dispositions through which we experience the world

C. a social habit

D. a political institution

Q38. 'Hermeneutics of suspicion' (Ricoeur) refers to ___ .

A. trusting all texts at face value

B. reading texts with suspicion to uncover hidden ideologies or meanings

C. a type of legal interpretation

D. doubting the author's sincerity

Q39. 'Catachresis' in its most radical sense involves ___ .

A. using a well-established metaphor

B. creatively misusing language to expose its limits and create new meaning

C. using language correctly

D. a comparison between two natural objects

Q40. 'Palimpsest', 'simulacrum', and 'hyperreality' are all terms associated with which theoretical movement?

A. Marxism

B. Psychoanalysis

C. Postmodernism / poststructuralism

D. Formalism

Answer Key

Q1: B Q2: C Q3: B Q4: C Q5: B Q6: B Q7: B Q8: C Q9: B Q10: B
Q11: B Q12: C Q13: B Q14: C Q15: B Q16: B Q17: B Q18: B Q19: C
Q20: C Q21: B Q22: C Q23: B Q24: C Q25: A Q26: C Q27: B Q28: B
Q29: A Q30: B Q31: B Q32: B Q33: C Q34: B Q35: C Q36: B Q37: B
Q38: B Q39: B Q40: C