

Talbot House: a place of words and letters

Language, literature and wit

20 multiple-choice questions (only one answer is correct - except for 11 and 19, of which all five must be correct for a score *)

on the ground floor (lounge, hall and canteen)

1 The founder of Talbot House was Philip Clayton, nicknamed "Tubby" Clayton. When someone is given that name, it means that he is....

- A: tall
- B: rotund
- C: big
- D: huge
- E: thin

-> hint: look up the word 'tub' and make the comparison

2 His function in the army was that of a 'chaplain'. How are such priests addressed?

- A: father
- B: padre
- C: sir
- D: excellency
- E: monsignor

-> hint: must be a religious title

3 The floormat in the hall reads "Don't dally with the doormat". This sort of stylistic phrasing is called:

- A: alliteration
- B: assonance
- C: consonance
- D: end rhyme
- E: binomial

-> hint: look at the initial consonants

4 "If you are in the habit of spitting at home..." (the sign near the radiator) is a phrase with a specific purpose. And so was "The Wastepaper baskets are purely ornamental". Which - do you think?

- A: an order
- B: euphemism
- C: a warning
- D: an invitation
- E: permission

-> hint: remember that the man who wrote this had a sense of humour

5 The sign in the Old Canteen “No swearing aloud hear...” contains how many deliberate spelling mistakes?

- A: none
- B: one
- C: two
- D: three
- E: four

-> hint: remember that these ‘mistakes’ were made with a specific ambiguity in mind

6 That sort of phrase (i.e. number 5) is called...

- A: a pun
- B: a joke
- C: a persiflage
- D: a proverb
- E: an idiom

-> hint: the writer is playing with words

7 Compare the word ‘aloud’ with ‘allowed’. These are...

- A: homonyms
- B: homographs
- C: homophones
- D: synonyms
- E: antonyms

-> hint: they sound the same but are spelled differently and have a different meaning

8 More jokes have been created over the years in this house of pun.

Consider the following one-liner: “If you want breakfast in bed,

Which of these lines makes up the second part, do you think?

- A: help yourself
- B: cook it here
- C: take it upstairs
- D: order it the night before
- E: sleep in the kitchen

-> hint: remember that puns are meant to create comedy

on the first floor

9 Inside Tubby's room is a sign that reads "Genius is constitutionally untidy".

Look closely at the spelling of the word. The joke here is that

- A: the writer was a lousy speller
- B: the mistake was made unintentionally
- C: the man who wrote it must be a genius
- D: the man who wrote it didn't check it
- E: it's correct

-> hint: a genius is habitually sloppy

10 Read the old sign "All rank abandon ye who enter here" on the door of Tubby's room.

What kind of metaphor is this NOT!

- A: simile
- B: persiflage
- C: paraphrase
- D: pun
- E: wordplay

-> hint: by consequence, it is also four of these!

11 This line was originally phrased as "Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate", which means "all hope abandon ye who enter here". Go on Wikipedia and name...

- A: the author:
- B: the title of the book:
- C: the century when it was written:
- D: the place where the sign could be seen:
- E: an antonym for this place:

-> hint: this is set in the Middle Ages and deals with life after death

12 Consider the words 'dormitory' and 'library' in the sign over the old library door.

Which statement is correct?

- A: they have the same number of pronounced syllables and share the same stress
- B: they don't have the same number of pronounced syllables and share the same stress
- C: they have the same number of pronounced syllables but don't have the same stress
- D: they don't have the same number of pronounced syllables and don't have the same stress
- E: none of the above

-> hint: don't be misled by the number of written syllables; some vowels may be silent

13 Tubby often joked that Talbot House had “an off-licence... for books and magazines”. This was another joke as an ‘off-licence’ is a shop that sells....

A: books

B: food

C: alcohol

D: vegetables

E: fruit

-> hint: he liked to use anticlimax in his jokes

14 A small sign nearby reads “Go easy with the stationery” (= paper). Find a word that sounds exactly the same, meaning ‘not moving, immobile, motionless...’.

What is the correct spelling of that other word?

A: stationary

B: stationery

C: stationnary

D: stationalary

E: stationnary

-> hint: think of the spelling of this word in Dutch

15 Look at the spelling of the name ‘The General’s Room’. This would mean that...

A: this was not a bedroom but a general-purpose room

B: this was a name to sound like the bedroom was meant for a general

C: this was a name to sound like the bedroom was meant for more than one general

D: this was the officers’ general bedroom

E: there was enough room in here for more than one general

-> hint: the name contains an important genitive!

on the second floor

16 Look at the sign on the wall by the staircase. Two words in it (known as ‘minimal pairs’) must be substituted to understand the true meaning of the message. When spelled and pronounced differently, they reveal a military term meaning ‘in one row’

A: simple file

B: simple vile

C: single vile

D: single file

E: shingle pile

-> hint: think of the narrow staircase

on the third floor (the Chapel)

17 When Tubby said that "*the foundations*" were "*in the loft*", he meant that the most important bit (the chapel) was in the loft. Of this, he joked that "*the house is built...*"

A: *inside out*

B: *outside in*

C: *back to front*

D: *upside down*

E: *backwards*

-> hint: think logically

18 Soldiers used to joke about Tubby's services in the Chapel: "*His sermons were jokes and his jokes were sermons*". This figure of speech is called...

A: *oxymoron*

B: *chiasm*

C: *a proverb*

D: *a motto*

E: *a slogan*

-> hint: there is a cross-reference here

in the garden

19 Read the poem on the terrace wall (kitchen side). Answer the following questions:

A: *what is the first line:*

B: *name the poet:*

C: *and his nationality:*

D: *what is the English title of his famous war novel from 2008:*

E: *name one place in Poperinge where more of his war poems can be found:*

-> hint: one is in the town centre, another in the largest military cemetery in the vicinity

20 Tubby Clayton joked about the garden that it was "*the biggest in the house*"
Which word did you use, do you think?

A: *place*

B: *room*

C: *patch*

D: *space*

E: *spot*

-> hint: he liked contradiction

* answer key available from your teacher or at the ticket office. Thank you for participating.

answer key

on the ground floor (lounge, hall and canteen)

1 The founder of Talbot House was Philip Clayton, nicknamed "Tubby" Clayton.

When someone is given that name, it means that he is....

B: rotund -> clarification: a tub is a (wooden) barrel

2 His function in the army was that of a 'chaplain'. How are such priests addressed?

B: padre -> clarification: compare the Dutch word 'pater' meaning 'father' or even 'shepherd'

3 The floormat in the hall reads "Don't dally with the doormat". This sort of stylistic phrasing is called: *A: alliteration*

-> clarification: when a consonant at the beginning of a word is repeated, we speak of 'alliteration'

4 If you are in the habit of spitting at home..." (the sign near the radiator) is a phrase with a specific purpose. And so was "The Wastepaper baskets are purely ornamental".

Which - do you think? *B: euphemism*

-> clarification: euphemism is verbal irony (the message would have had the opposite effect)

5 The sign in the Old Canteen "No swearing aloud hear..." contains how many deliberate spelling mistakes? *D: three* -> clarification: swearing, allowed, here

6 That sort of phrase (i.e. number 5) is called...

A: a pun -> clarification: pun is a form of witty wordplay (the word 'joke' is too general)

7 Compare the word 'aloud' with 'allowed'. These are...

C: homophones -> clarification: they sound the same but are spelled differently and have a different meaning

8 More jokes have been created over the years in this house of pun. Consider the following one-liner: "If you want breakfast in bed, Which of these lines makes up the second part, do you think? *E: sleep in the kitchen* -> clarification: this is the only comical answer

on the first floor

9 Inside Tubby's room is a sign that reads "Genius is constitutionally untidy".

Look closely at the spelling of the word. The joke here is that

C: the man who wrote it must be a genius -> clarification: if a genius is untidy, then so is his spelling

10 Read the old sign "All rank abandon ye who enter here" on the door of Tubby's room.

What kind of metaphor is this NOT!

A: simile -> clarification: a simile is a form of comparison

11 This line was originally phrased as "Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate", which means "all hope abandon ye who enter here". Go on Wikipedia and name...

A: the author: Dante B: the title of the book: Divina Commedia C: the century when it was written: 14th

D: the place where the sign could be seen: hell E: an antonym for this place: heaven

12 Consider the words 'dormitory' and 'library' in the sign over the old library door.

Which statement is correct? *A: the same number of pronounced syllables (3) and the same stress*

-> clarification: these words are pronounced ['dɔ:mɪtri] and ['laɪbrəri]

13 Tubby often joked that Talbot House had “an off-licence... for books and magazines”.

This was another joke as an ‘off-licence’ is a shop that sells....

C: alcohol -> clarification: he liked to use anticlimax as Talbot House did not serve alcoholic drinks

14 A small sign nearby reads “Go easy with the stationery” (= paper). Find a word that sounds exactly the same, meaning ‘not moving, immobile, motionless...’.

What is the correct spelling of that other word?

A: stationary -> clarification: with an ‘a’ like in Dutch

15 Look at the spelling of the name ‘The General’s Room’. This would mean that...

B: this was a name to sound like the bedroom was meant for a general

-> clarification: this is a case of singular genitive (otherwise it would be Generals’ Room)

on the second floor

16 Look at the sign on the wall by the staircase. Two words in it (known as ‘minimal pairs’) must be substituted to understand the true meaning of the message. When spelled and pronounced differently, they reveal a military term meaning ‘in one row’

D: single file -> clarification: soldiers were supposed to use the stairs in a ‘single file’ (= a single row) pronounced [ˈsɪŋɡəl] [ˈfaɪl] rather than [ˈsɪɡnəl] [ˈfaɪəl]. A ‘signal’ means ‘a sign’ and a ‘phial’ is a small bottle.

on the third floor (the Chapel)

17 When Tubby said that “the foundations” were “in the loft”, he meant that the most important bit (the chapel) was in the loft. Of this, he joked that “the house is built...

D: upside down -> clarification: foundations are always at the bottom of a building

18 Soldiers used to joke about Tubby’s services in the Chapel: “His sermons were jokes and his jokes were sermons”. This figure of speech is called...

B: chiasm -> clarification: it’s cross-reference containing paradox

in the garden

19 Read the poem on the terrace wall (kitchen side). Answer the following questions:

A: what is the first line: Remember, remember...

B: name the poet: Erwin Mortier C: and his nationality: Belgian (Flemish)

D: what is the English title of his famous war novel from 2008: While the Gods were sleeping.

E: name one place in Poperinge where more of his war poems can be found:

In the courtyard of the Town Hal (by the Death Cells) and in the Lyssenthoek Visitors’ Centre.

**20 Tubby Clayton joked about the garden that it was “the biggest in the house”
Which word did you use, do you think?**

B: room -> clarification: he liked contradiction as gardens unlike houses normally don’t have ‘rooms’

my score
number correct x 5 = %