

Cliché, Paradox, Oxymoron, Ambiguity, & Equivocation

High School English Language Arts Worksheet

Part I: Match the Term

Match each term with its correct definition. Write the letter on the line.

<u>Terms</u>	<u>Definition</u>
A. Cliché	_____ 1. A statement that seems contradictory but may reveal a deeper truth.
B. Paradox	_____ 2. A familiar expression that has been used so often that it has lost much of its originality.
C. Oxymoron	_____ 3. The use of a word or phrase that has more than one possible meaning, making the intended meaning unclear.
D. Ambiguity	_____ 4. A figure of speech that combines two contradictory or opposite words.
E. Equivocation	_____ 5. A misleading statement that uses a word or phrase in two different senses in order to make an argument appear logical.

Part II: Identify the Term

Read each example. Identify whether it is a cliché, paradox, oxymoron, ambiguity, or equivocation.

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| 6. "It is what it is."
Answer: _____ | 14. "The students discussed the old teacher."
Answer: _____ |
| 7. "The only constant is change."
Answer: _____ | 15. "Freedom means being able to do whatever you want.
Therefore, freedom means that rules are never necessary."
Answer: _____ |
| 8. "The comedian was seriously funny."
Answer: _____ | 16. "Everything happens for a reason."
Answer: _____ |
| 9. "I saw her duck."
Answer: _____ | 17. "Less is more."
Answer: _____ |
| 10. "A good decision is one that benefits everyone. Giving me
the job benefits me, so it is a good decision."
Answer: _____ | 18. "The witness said that the man's glasses were clear."
Answer: _____ |
| 11. "You can't judge a book by its cover."
Answer: _____ | 19. "The athlete's performance was an original copy of the
champion's routine."
Answer: _____ |
| 12. "The more you learn, the more you realize how little you
know."
Answer: _____ | 20. "A bank is a safe place to keep money. The river bank is a
bank. Therefore, the river bank is a safe place to keep
money."
Answer: _____ |
| 13. "The room was filled with deafening silence."
Answer: _____ | |

Part III: Multiple Choice

21. Which sentence contains a cliché?
- A. The moon reflected across the lake.
 - B. Every cloud has a silver lining.
 - C. The silence in the room was overwhelming.
 - D. The students debated the issue.
22. Which sentence is an oxymoron?
- A. The weather was unpredictable.
 - B. She was extremely happy.
 - C. The hallway was filled with organized chaos.
 - D. He ran quickly to class.
23. Which statement is a paradox?
- A. "The test was difficult."
 - B. "The more we know, the more we realize we don't know."
 - C. "The classroom was noisy."
 - D. "She arrived early."
24. Which sentence contains ambiguity?
- A. The teacher assigned homework.
 - B. Maria went to the library after school.
 - C. I watched the student with the telescope.
 - D. The bell rang at three o'clock.
25. Which example demonstrates equivocation?
- A. "The baby was crying loudly."
 - B. "Nothing is better than a healthy meal. A slice of cake is better than nothing. Therefore, cake is better than a healthy meal."
 - C. "The sky was dark before the storm."
 - D. "The class began at eight."
26. Which statement best describes a cliché?
- A. A statement with two possible meanings
 - B. A contradictory statement that contains a deeper truth
 - C. An overused expression or idea
 - D. Two contradictory words placed together
27. Which phrase is an oxymoron?
- A. "bright light"
 - B. "cold water"
 - C. "jumbo shrimp"
 - D. "fast runner"
28. Which statement is most likely to be considered a paradox?
- A. "The answer was correct."
 - B. "The beginning of the end had arrived."
 - C. "The students completed their work."
 - D. "The book was on the desk."
29. Which sentence is ambiguous?
- A. "The dog chased the cat."
 - B. "I saw the man with the binoculars."
 - C. "The teacher collected the papers."
 - D. "The students entered the room."
30. What makes equivocation different from ordinary ambiguity?
- A. Equivocation deliberately shifts the meaning of a word or phrase during an argument.
 - B. Equivocation always uses contradictory words.
 - C. Equivocation is always an overused expression.
 - D. Equivocation is always humorous.
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