

*The Alchemist* Comprehension Exam

Please choose the correct response to the questions below. [1 point each]

1. The Alchemist is told from what point of view?:
  - a. First person
  - b. Second person
  - c. Third person Omniscient
  - d. First person Omniscient
  
2. What does Santiago notice in the sacristy of the abandoned church that he takes shelter in on the way to the merchant?:
  - a. A burning bush
  - b. Lost sheep
  - c. A sycamore tree
  - d. a wooden cross
  
3. What did Santiago's parents originally hope he would be when he grew up?:
  - a. A Sheppard
  - b. a priest
  - c. A merchant
  - d. a lawyer
  
4. Santiago's struggle within himself is called:
  - a. internal conflict
  - b. external conflict
  - c. internal struggle
  - d. external struggle
  
5. Which character is the protagonist of the story?:
  - a. Fatima
  - b. The Englishman
  - c. The caravan driver
  - d. Santiago
  
6. In the recurring dream Santiago has at the abandoned Church, who encourages him to seek treasure at the pyramids?:
  - a. A merchant
  - b. A child
  - c. His mother
  - d. A sheep
  
7. What comforts Santiago when he is visiting the gypsy dream interpreter?:
  - a. An image of Jesus
  - b. A large cross
  - c. Urim and Thummim
  - d. A group of teenagers waiting
  
8. What does Melchizedek ask Santiago for in return for directing him toward his personal legend?:
  - a. one-sixth of his flock
  - b. one-tenth of his treasure
  - c. one-tenth of his flock
  - d. the rest of his gold
  
9. What does Santiago suggest to the crystal merchant as a strategy to make more money?:
  - a. to sell tea in the crystal glasses
  - b. to discount the crystal
  - c. to set up a shop at the bottom of the hill where people usually stop
  - d. export the crystal to Spain
  
10. According to the Englishmen, what is the name of the discovery that is the result of refining metal until all that is left is the Soul of the World?
  - a. The Universal Legend
  - b. The Master Work
  - c. The Philosopher's Stone
  - d. The Hand of God

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11. What is the product of alchemy that can turn lead into gold?:
- a. The Philosopher's Stone
  - b. Urim and Thummim
  - c. The Master Work
  - d. The Elixer of Gold
12. If Santiago has already come across the obstacles of thinking everything is impossible, and love, what are the two remaining obstacles?:
- a. fear of defeat & fear of realizing dream
  - b. fear of defeat & fear of realizing love
  - c. fear of realizing dream & passion
  - d. fear of losing treasure & fear of love
13. The story of Narcissus is told to warn the reader of :
- a. love
  - b. purity
  - c. vanity
  - d. loneliness
14. What is the portentous omen that Santiago sees in the Al-Fayoum oasis?:
- a. A dying scarab
  - b. A serpent
  - c. A fast-moving black cloud
  - d. Two hawks fighting
15. Which part of nature didn't Santiago speak to when he was trying to turn himself into the wind?:
- a. The Sun
  - b. The Wind
  - c. The Desert
  - d. The Trees
16. Why does Santiago choose to dig in the dune by the pyramids?:
- a. His heart tells him to
  - b. He has a vision in a dream
  - c. He sees a scarab there
  - d. There is an X on the ground
17. Which of the following could *not* be a theme of the novel?:
- a. the unity of nature
  - b. the danger of fear
  - c. letting go when it's time
  - d. the centrality of personal legends
18. What are Santiago's sheep a symbol for?:
- a. the existence of those who are blind to their personal legends
  - b. those who do not trust their legends
  - c. the existence of those who rely on someone else for guidance
  - d. those who do not appreciate their personal legends
19. Where does Santiago finally find his treasure?:
- a. under a rock by the church
  - b. back at the same sycamore tree
  - c. next to the pyramids
  - d. with Fatima in her oasis
20. What is the treasure that Santiago finds?:
- a. A philosopher's stone
  - b. a chest of gold and jewels
  - c. a secret book about triumphs
  - d. a lifetime supply of knowledge
21. The following are examples of how Santiago's legend parallels alchemy *except*:
- a. Santiago purifies himself of material concerns to focus on the legend
  - b. Santiago gives up wealth to find a greater wealth
  - c. Santiago's personal legend is his Soul of the World
  - d. Santiago gives into personal desires

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22. How does the prologue relate to the novel:

- a. Sometimes you have to be self-centered to reach your goal
- c. Santiago was so vain that he died trying to achieve his legend

- b. Santiago's father wept when he left because he wanted to live like him
- d. Narcissus was looking for his personal legend too

23. "To realize one's destiny is a person's only \_\_\_\_\_" the old man said" (pg. 22)

- a. personal legend
- c. true goal

- b. obligation
- d. reality

24. The climax of the novel is when:

- a. Santiago gives up his material goods
- c. Santiago finds the treasure under the tree

- b. Santiago struggles to turn himself into the wind
- d. Santiago heads back to Spain

25. The three possible motifs for the novel are:

- a. Dreams, love, loss
- c. Dreams, maktub, omens

- b. Omens, sheep, the Desert
- d. Maktub, omens, love





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Answer Key:

1 point each

1. c

2. c

3. b

4. a

5. d

6. b

7. a

8. c

9. a

10. b

11. a

12. a

13. c

14. d

15. d

16. a

21. d

17. c

22. a

18. a

23. b

19. b

24. b

20. b

25. c

Short answer:

21. The king helping him out; the caravan driver helping; the Englishman; the natural world helping

22. It's the most dangerous obstacle because it has a kind of saintly aura about it. You feel guilt when looking at those around you who have not obtained their personal legend and wonder why you should obtain yours. But you have worked hard and suffered to obtain yours; so do so.