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CLEP American Literature Exam

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Question: 1

Which of the following is NOT a poem by Anne Bradstreet?

- A. "Before the Birth of One of Her Children"
- B. "Contemplations"
- C. "Upon the Burning of our House, July 10, 1666"
- D. "A Funeral Poem on the Death of C.E"
- E. "A Dialogue Between Old England and New"

Answer: D

Explanation:

A Funeral Poem on the Death of C.E. - was written by ph'Ilis Wheatley.

Question: 2

The biblical phrase "city upon a hill" is also found in which of the following works?

- A. Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
- B. William Bradford's "History of Plymouth Plantation"
- C. John Winthrop's "A Model of Christian Charity"
- D. Samuel Sewall's "The Diary of Samuel Sewall"
- E. Cotton Mather's "Magnolia Christi Americana"

Answer: C

Explanation:

Borrowed from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in the book of Matthew, John Winthrop introduced the phrase "city upon a hill" into early American literature to describe the community formed by the Puritan colonists, which was to be watched by the world.

Question: 3

Which of the following authors was dubbed "The Poet of the American Revolution"?

- A. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- B. Anne Bradstreet
- C. William Cullen Bryant
- D. Philip Freneau
- E. Ebenezer Cooke

Answer: D

Explanation:

Philip Freneau was sometimes called the "Poet of the American Revolution," having written a number of anti-British Pieces before, during, and after the Revolutionary war.

Question: 4

Which of the following is NOT an example of a prominent form of Colonial American literature?

- A. Pamphlets extolling the benefits Of the colonies
- B. Journals discussing religious foundations and disputes
- C. Writings describing interactions and conflicts with the Indians
- D. Patriotic poems and songs
- E. Novels depicting regional dialect

Answer: E

Explanation:

Novels depicting regional dialect were prominent in the period of Realism.

Question: 5

The following passage is the first excerpt from which of the following works?

"About three o'clock afternoon, I begun my Journey from Boston to New-Haven; being about two Hundred Mile. My kinsman, Capt. Robert Luist, waited on me as far as Dedham, where I was to meet y Western post."

- A. "The Journal of Madam Knight" by Sarah Kemble Knight
- B. "The Narrative of the Captivity" by Mary Rowlandson
- C. "Upon the Burning of our House" by Anne Bradstreet
- D. "The Gleaner" by Judith Sargent Murray
- E. "A Farewell to America to Mrs. S.W." by Phillis Wheatley

Answer: A

Explanation:

A diary of a journey, "The Journal of Madam Knight" by Sarah Kemble Knight recounts the author's experiences during a trying journey. This passage details when her journey began and how far she would travel.

Question: 6

Which of the following best describes James Fenimore Cooper's fictitious character Natty Bumppo?

- A. An outlaw who took part in the kidnapping of two pioneer sisters
- B. A desperate, southern character longing to escape from his circumstances
- C. A near-fearless warrior who grew up with Native Americans
- D. A New England minister who took a stand against slavery
- E. A captain in pursuit of an impossible catch

Answer: C

Explanation:

Natty Bumppo, a fictitious rugged pioneer, was first introduced by Cooper in "Pioneers": the character appears in all five of Cooper's works collectively titled "The Leatherstocking Tales:

Question: 7

"A Pretty Story" by Francis Hopkinson can best be described as which of the following?

- A. The making of the American flag
- B. Askeptical examination of the relationship between Great Britain and the colonies
- C. A compilation of songs composed by Hopkinson
- D. Reflections on Hopkinson's life in Philadelphia
- E. An allegorical work likening the royal government to a tree

Answer: B

Explanation:

A writer of satire as well as music and poetry, Francis Hopkinson, in "A Pretty Story: examines the contentious relationship between Great Britain and the colonies. It is often called the most important of his political writings.

Question: 8

The following passage ends the famous speech delivered by which of the following?

"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

- A. Thomas Jefferson
- B. Patrick Henry
- C. Washington Irving
- D. Joseph Galloway
- E. John Winthrop

Answer: B

Explanation:

Delivered March 23, 1775, this famous speech by Patrick Henry presented resolutions to raise a militia and to put Virginia in a posture of defense. "Give me liberty or give me death" were Henry's unforgettable closing words.

Question: 9

The following passage from Anne Bradstreet's "To My Dear and Loving Husband" represents which of the following two literary devices?

"I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee give recompense."

- A. Paradox and Simile
- B. Imagery and Irony
- C. Iambic Pentameter and Foreshadowing
- D. Hyperbole and Metaphor
- E. Personification and Parallelism

Answer: D

Explanation:

Bradstreet uses hyperbole in her description of love being "more than whole mines of gold or all the riches that the East doth hold," In the line "My love is such that rivers cannot quench," the poet uses metaphor to compare her love to a thirst that nothing can quench.

Question: 10

The following passage from Michael Wigglesworth's "The Day of Doom" best describes which of the following?

"Still was the night, Serene and Bright,
when all Men sleeping lay;
Calm was the season, and carnal reason
thought so •twould last for ay.
Soul, take thine ease, let sorrow cease,
much good thou hast in store:
This was their Song, their Cups among,
the Evening before."

- A. The security of the world before Christ's coming to judgment
- B. A description of man just before he awakens
- C. Christ's sheep separated from the goats
- D. A full moon on a summer evening

E. The majesty of Chriss appearance on judgment day

Answer: A

Explanation:

Michael Wigglesworth's "The Day of Doom" is a poetical description of the Great and Last Judgment. The first excerpt describes the atmosphere of calm the evening before the storm of Judgment Day.

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