**POLYSEMOUS WORD TEST**

**Directions for individual administration:** Please read aloud the entire test (*i.e.*, the instructions, examples, test questions, and answer options). Read at a comfortable pace, keeping an eye on the student to make sure that he or she is not falling behind or working ahead.

**Instructions**

The meaning of a word often changes slightly depending on the way it is used in a sentence. In the following activity, you will be asked to read a sentence that contains a **bold** word. Choose the word or phrase that best explains the meaning of the bold word as it is being used in that sentence. The sentences and answer choices will be read out loud, and you will read them quietly to yourself and circle the best answer. For example:

Example A.

I scratched my **head** in confusion.

Does *head* mean:

(*Note: You do not need to read the letters of the options. Just briefly pause between them.)*

a. cabbage

b. sneaker

c. part of the body

d. leader of a group

e. to go somewhere

In this case, the best answer is *(c) part of the body*. But look at the next example:

Example B.

The general is the **head** of the army.

In this case, does *head* mean:

a. cabbage

b. sneaker

c. part of the body

d. leader of a group

e. to go somewhere

The word in bold is still *head*, but the sentence has changed. This time, the best answer is *(d) leader of a group*.

Remember. Choose the word or phrase that best explains the meaning of the bold word as it is being used in that sentence. (*Ask student if he or she has any questions*.) Please turn to the activity.

(*When reading the non-practice items, you can proceed from reading the sentence straight into reading the options, without segue. As in the practice, you can briefly pause between the options instead of reading the options’ letters.*)

1. The brutal storm destroyed the old wooden **structure**.

a. part

b. length

c. introduction

d. building

e. organization

2. The **weight** of his evidence changed my decision.

a. heaviness

b. metal

c. power

d. fragrance

e. absence

3. That **chapter** of the crime novel was frightening.

a. time

b. section

c. branch

d. cover

e. description

4. Her **flexible** nature made her easy to like.

a. easily movable

b. thin

c. easygoing

d. funny

e. smart

5. He **strikes** the baseball high into the treetops.

a. physically hits

b. walks out

c. taps

d. comes across to

e. goes away from

6. This poem's final image **carries** lots of anger.

a. drops off

b. avoids

c. holds and moves

d. expresses

e. orders and accepts

7. The puppy **followed** the children through the forest.

a. watched

b. led

c. walked behind

d. understood

e. disagreed with

8. Her comment **points** to mistakes in his reasoning.

a. uses a finger to direct attention

b. scores

c. indicates

d. uses a hand to say stop

e. brings corrections

9. The **light** sweater kept me warm and comfortable.

a. gentle

b. heavy

c. surprising

d. bright

e. thin

10. The book's exciting plot took another sharp **turn**.

a. long break

b. curve

c. steep drop

d. surprising event

e. chance

11. My younger sister **runs** faster than our brother.

a. drives

b. ends

c. owns

d. sprints

e. continues

12. My report **expands** on what we discussed earlier.

a. develops

b. looks

c. raises questions

d. spreads

e. rises

13. I used a yellow marker to **highlight** sentences.

a. verbally call attention to

b. verbally question

c. show the game’s best plays

d. physically mark in color

e. physically erase

14. She **found** her favorite coffee at the market.

a. come upon by chance

b. claimed

c. put down

d. searched for

e. discovered through study

15. He **opened** his report with a funny story.

a. installed

b. unfolded

c. unlocked

d. began

e. compared

16. The woman changed her **position** on the sofa.

a. job

b. way of speaking

c. memory

d. way of sitting

e. point of view

17. The character's **cold** words show she is unhappy.

a. useless

b. mumbled

c. unpracticed

d. freezing

e. unfriendly

18. The oranges increased the **weight** of his backpack.

a. heaviness

b. fragrance

c. metal

d. absence

e. power

19. He revised the **structure** of the whole argument.

a. organization

b. introduction

c. building

d. length

e. part

20. The dancers stretched to keep their bodies **flexible**.

a. easygoing

b. thin

c. easily movable

d. smart

e. funny

21. That **chapter** of our mother's life was frightening.

a. description

b. cover

c. time

d. branch

e. section

22. The little boy **carries** lots of groceries home.

a. drops off

b. expresses

c. orders and accepts

d. holds and moves

e. avoids

23. Your idea **strikes** me as an intelligent one.

a. taps

b. goes away from

c. walks out

d. comes across to

e. physically hits

24. The woman **points** at her old apartment building.

a. uses a hand to say stop

b. scores

c. uses a finger to direct attention

d. brings corrections

e. indicates

25. I **followed** the author's argument through the book.

a. led

b. disagreed with

c. understood

d. watched

e. walked behind

26. The dangerous mountain road took a sudden **turn**.

a. surprising event

b. long break

c. chance

d. curve

e. steep drop

27. The president’s speech had some **light** humor in it.

a. gentle

b. heavy

c. surprising

d. thin

e. bright

28. The city **expands** beyond its ancient rock walls.

a. rises

b. looks

c. raises questions

d. develops

e. spreads

29. One day of the summer **runs** into the next.

a. drives

b. owns

c. ends

d. continues

e. sprints

30. He shouted the words to **highlight** their importance.

a. physically mark in color

b. verbally question

c. verbally call attention to

d. show the game’s best plays

e. physically erase

31. He **opened** the wooden door for his grandmother.

a. compared

b. unfolded

c. began

d. installed

e. unlocked

32. She **found** a connection between walking and health.

a. discovered through study

b. searched for

c. put down

d. claimed

e. come upon by chance

33. My fingers become **cold** without my blue mittens.

a. useless

b. freezing

c. mumbled

d. unpracticed

e. unfriendly

34. The woman changed her **position** in the debate.

a. way of sitting

b. point of view

c. job

d. memory

e. way of speaking