

ARE MATHEMATICS AND POETRY SIMILAR?

by JoAnne S. Growney

This "quiz" will enable you to test their similarity. If you don't use the author's name as a clue, you may find it difficult to decide whether "poetry" or "mathematics" (or "poet" or "mathematician" or a variation of one of these terms) has been left out of each quotation. Guess which is intended in each case.

- (1) _____ is the art of uniting pleasure with truth. –Samuel Johnson
- (2) To think the thinkable – that is the _____'s aim. –Cassius J. Keyser
- (3) All _____ [is] putting the infinite within the finite. –Robert Browning
- (4) The moving power of _____ invention is not reasoning but imagination. –A. DeMorgan
- (5) When you read and understand _____, comprehending its reach and formal meanings, then you master chaos a little. –Stephen Spender
- (6) _____ practice absolute freedom. –Henry Adams
- (7) I think that one possible definition of our modern culture is that it is one in which nine-tenths of our intellectuals can't read any _____. –Randall Jarrell
- (8) Do not imagine that _____ is hard and crabbed, and repulsive to common sense. It is merely the etherealization of common sense. –Lord Kelvin
- (9) The merit of _____, in its wildest forms, still consists in its truth; truth conveyed to the understanding, not directly by words, but circuitously by means of imaginative associations, which serve as conductors.–T. B. Macaulay
- (10) It is a safe rule to apply that, when a _____ or philosophical author writes with a misty profundity, he is talking nonsense. –A. N. Whitehead
- (11) _____ is a habit. –C. Day-Lewis
- (12) . . . in _____ you don't understand things, you just get used to them. –John von Neumann
- (13) _____ are all who love—who feel great truths
And tell them. –P. J. Bailey
- (14) The _____ is perfect only in so far as he is a perfect human being, in so far as he perceives the beauty of truth; only then will his work be thorough, transparent, comprehensive, pure, clear, attractive, and even elegant.–Goethe
- (15) . . . [In these days] the function of _____ as a game . . . [looms] larger than its function as a search for truth –C. Day-Lewis
- (16) A thorough advocate in a just cause, a penetrating _____ facing the starry heavens, both alike bear the semblance of divinity. –Goethe
- (17) _____ is getting something right in language. –Howard Nemerov

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The words missing are: (1) Poetry, (2) mathematician, (3) poetry, (4) mathematical, (5) a poem, (6) Mathematicians, (7) poetry, (8) mathematics, (9) poetry, (10) mathematician, (11) Poetry, (12) mathematics, (13) Poets, (14) mathematician, (15) poetry, (16) mathematician, (17) Poetry.