

# In The Beginning...

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A literary axiom is, "Get their attention early," and, as a result, there are many memorable opening lines in fiction. Some are classics, some are frequently quoted standards, others have clues to the identity of the work, and still others may be just your personal favorites.

Here is a quiz on opening lines. It may stimulate you to read a book you've missed, or reread an old favorite. In any case it may cause you to realize how the author got your attention.\*

1. "Call me Ishmael," is from:

- (a) *The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran
- (b) *The Children of Abraham* by Sholem Asch
- (c) *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville

2. "There were fourteen officers on the Reluctant and all of them were reserves," opens:

- (a) *The Cruel Sea* by Nicholas Monsarrat
- (b) *Mister Roberts* by Thomas Heggen
- (c) *The Caine Mutiny* by Herman Wouk

3. "Her voice was something to dream about, on any night when she was running through the hills," begins:

- (a) *The Song of Bernadette* by Franz Werfel
- (b) *The Voice of Bugle Ann* by MacKinlay Kantor
- (c) *Song of the Lark* by Willa Cather

4. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," is from:

- (a) *Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck
- (b) *Seventeen* by Booth Tarkington
- (c) *Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

5. "On Friday noon, July the twentieth, 1714, the finest bridge in all Peru broke and precipitated five travelers into the gulf below," starts:

- (a) *Bridge of San Luis Rey* by Thornton Wilder
- (b) *The Bridges at Toko-ri* by James Michener
- (c) *The Bridge over the River Kwai* by Pierre Boulle

6. "The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home," is the opening of:

- (a) *Tales of Uncle Remus* by Joel Chandler Harris
- (b) *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame
- (c) *Winnie the Pooh* by A. A. Milne

7. "Mr. Phileas Fogg lived, in 1872, at No. 7, Saville Row, Burlington Gardens, the house in which Sheridan died in 1814," begins:

- (a) *The Lodger* by Marie Lowndes
- (b) *A Study in Scarlet* by Arthur Conan Doyle
- (c) *Around the World in Eighty Days* by Jules Verne

8. "Samuel Spade's jaw was long and bony, his chin a jutting v under the flexible v of his mouth," is from:

- (a) *The Big Sleep* by Raymond Chandler
- (b) *Moving Target* by Ross MacDonal
- (c) *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett

9. "The conviction that he could fly didn't come over Sam Small gradually," begins:

- (a) *Night Flight* by Antoine St. Exupry
- (b) *The High and the Mighty* by Ernest Gann
- (c) *The Flying Yorkshireman* by Eric Knight

10. "He was born with a gift of laughter and a sense the world was mad," is the start of:

- (a) *Scaramouche* by Rafael Sabatini
- (b) *The House of Mirth* by Edith Winton
- (c) *The Human Comedy* by William Saroyan

11. "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again," leads off:

- (a) *Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier
- (b) *Burmese Days* by George Orwell
- (c) *Barrack Room Ballads* by Rudyard Kipling

12. "The cold passed reluctantly from the earth, and the retiring fogs revealed an army stretched out on the hills, resting," opens:

- (a) *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Remarque
- (b) *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane
- (c) *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoi

And finally, name the authors of the following three well-known works

13. *Pride and Prejudice*    14. *Atlas Shrugged*    15. *Paradise Lost*    1

### ANSWERS

1. (c) An Ishmael was a son of Abraham and an ancestor of the Prophet, but this one was a schoolmaster turned sailor who survived to tell the story of Captain Ahab's search for the Great White Whale.

2. (b) There were two ships, *Compass Rose* and *Saltash*, riding the Cruel Sea and at least one regular officer, Captain Queeg, aboard the *Caine*. It was Mister Roberts and his unhappy shipmates who sailed from Tedium to Apathy on the *Reluctant*.

3. (b) Bernadette's voices were divine and the Lark's song operatic. Bugle Ann was the baying hound whose voice was something to dream about.

4. (c) In *The Grapes of Wrath* it was all the worst of times and in *Seventeen* all the best. The French Revolutionary period of the *Tale of Two Cities* provided the violent contrast.
5. (a) *The Bridges at Toko-ri* were in Korea and the *Bridge over the River Kwai* was in Thailand. *The Bridge of San Luis Frey* was in Spanish-speaking Peru.
6. (b) Brer Rabbit starred in Uncle Remus and Pooh Bear in *Winnie the Pooh*. The Mole lived among the willows.
7. (c) The Lodger living in Marleybone Road was the gentleman of *A Study in Scarlet*, Holmes and Watson, took rooms at 221B Baker Street. It was Mr. Fogg who planned his circumnavigation while living in Burlington Gardens.
8. (c) Philip Marlowe was Chandler's hard-boiled detective and Lew Archer was MacDonald's creation. Sam Spade was after the Maltese Falcon.
9. (c) The flyers of *Night Flight* and *The High and the Mighty* used airplanes. Only Sam Small, the Flying Yorkshireman, flew without mechanical aid by simply spreading his arms and launching himself into the air.
10. (a) *The Human Comedy* was sentimental and *The House of Mirth* tragic. It was the swashbuckling Scaramouche who was graced to view the world with such philosophy.
11. (a) The Mandalay of Kipling and Orwell is spelled differently and lies upriver from Rangoon in Burma. Miss Du Maurier's *Manderley* was in the South of England.
12. (b) The army in *All Quiet on the Western Front* fought for the Kaiser and in *War and Peace* fought for the Czar. In *The Red Badge of Courage* the army was Mr. Lincoln's.
13. Jane Austin.                      14. Ayn Rand                      15. John Milton