

Math 3010 Reading Quiz
Due April 20, Before Class
Dr. Smith

The quiz questions are based on *Logicomix, An Epic Search for Truth*. You are allowed to reread portions of the book. You may not discuss the quiz with anyone. One to just a few sentences is all that is required for the answer to questions 1-11.

1. Where does the book begin? What Country and City?

Athens, Greece.

2. When we meet Russell early in the book, he was arriving to give a lecture but was met by a crowd of people. When (year – (the same year as a specific major historic event is okay)) and where (country) did this happen? What did they want Russell to do?

September 1939 around the time of the beginning of World War II in Europe. The crowd was protesting the war and wanted Russell to join their protest since he was a pacifist during World War I.

3. What happened to Russell's parents?

When he was very young, his mother died of diphtheria (as did his sister); his father died of grief shortly afterwards, he "lost the will to live."

4. How did Russell keep his grandmother from reading his diary?

He wrote his diary in Greek, a language his mother did not know, and called it "Greek Exercises."

5. Where was Cantor when Russell met him (in what environment) and what was Cantor working on at the time?

He was in a mental asylum; he was "proving" that Jesus was the son of Joseph of Arimathea. Although this is accurate, the scene itself in the book is fictitious; as is indicated in the end notes, there is no evidence that Russell ever met Cantor.

- 6 & 7. There were scenes in the book of two important mathematics meetings. Where did they take place (what city)? And what important events in the history of mathematics were presented by the book at these scenes of the meeting?

6. Paris. The Mathematics Congress where Hilbert posed his turn of the century problems, which included one about proving the completeness and consistency of axiom systems.

7. Vienna. Where Gödel presented his proof that the completeness of an axiom system that included arithmetic could not be proven.

8. Is the book self-referential? How do you know this?

Yes. The book refers to itself in the "Modern Day" scenes in Athens where the authors and artists discuss writing the book. The book in fact states this explicitly in a note of page 166, but it was not necessary to have found that note for full credit for this question.

9. Who was Russell's Ph.D. student mentioned in the book and what happened to him during the war?

Ludwig Wittgenstein. He joined the German army and volunteered for dangerous duty, and yet he survived the first world war.

10. What happened to Whitehead's son during the war?

He enlisted as an English pilot and was killed; according to the graphics in the book, his plane was shot down.

11. Bertrand Russell lived through two world wars. What does the book tell us about his attitude towards these two conflicts?

He was a pacifist and conscientious objector during the first world war. (And in fact was jailed for a while because of his position.) He was generally dismayed by the illogic of wars - but seemed to understand that that fighting was necessary in opposition to the deadly totalitarianism of Hitler and dictators of Hitler's ilk.