

Taha Husayn was one of the most influential 20th-century Egyptian writers and intellectuals, he was born on Nov. 4, 1889, in Maghagha, a mill town in Minya Province, Egypt. He became blind at the age of three from a combination of eye disease and folk medicine. After completing studies at the village mosque school, Taha was sent to Cairo (1902) to attend al-Azhar, the mosque university. Because of his outspoken opposition to the school's teaching system at al-Azhar, Husayn was failed in his final examinations. He enrolled in the new, worldly Egyptian University, where he studied with some of the leading scholars of the time, Egyptian and European, in the field of Arabic and Islamic studies. In this heady new atmosphere, Husayn received the first doctorate awarded by the university (1914) for his thesis on Abu-l-Ala al-Maarri. *Al-Ayyam* and the *Pre-Islamic Poetry* criticism book were from his most famous work.

His nickname was "The Dean of Arabic Literature". He was nominated for a Nobel prize in literature fourteen times. Taha Husayn died in 1973. he was considered one of Egypt's leading men of letters. He devoted his life to intellectual freedom for the writer, critic, and scholar and to the introduction of Western learning into his country.



**Reading comprehension:**

**Task 1: I read the text and fill in the following table (2pts)**

Name	Date and place of birth	Occupation	Location of birth palce	Famous work
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

**Task 2: I read the text again and answer the following questions (3pts)**

- 1- When did Taha Husayn became blind? and why?  
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- 2- Why did he fail in his final examination?  
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- 3- How many times was he nominated for the noble prize?  
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**Task 3: I find in the text synonyms and opposites for the following words (2pts)**

- A) Finishing =..... Well-known =.....
- B) Old =/=..... Eastern =/=.....

