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## Middle School Weekly



Emphasizing both News and Academics

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December 3, 2007

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1) Shortly after the huge California oil spill, a Russian cargo ship split apart off Ukraine in a storm, spilling 560,000 gallons of fuel into a strait leading into which sea bordering Russia and Turkey?

**Answer: Black Sea (11 ships sank in the storm).**

2) Which 2 European countries recently attended the Ibero-American summit in Chile, bringing together Latin American countries and those on Europe's Iberian peninsula?

**Answer: Spain and Portugal.**

3) Name the ailing Western Hemisphere leader who to continue his reign of 48 years must be reelected in called elections January 20.

**Answer: Fidel Castro.**

4) Which country just marked in Kiev the 75th anniversary of the 1932-33 famine engineered by Soviets to force its peasants to give up their fertile farm land and join collective farms?

**Answer: Ukraine (if food production targets not met, food was confiscated).**

5) In which U.S. town in which state was President Bush's Mideast peace summit between Israel and Palestinians held, using facilities of the U.S. Naval Academy located there?

**Answer: Annapolis, Maryland (town hosted Continental Congress and was an early U.S. capital).**

6) Which Arab country bordering Israel and Jordan in a last minute reversal agreed to send a deputy minister to Bush's Mideast peace conference in Annapolis, Maryland?

**Answer: Syria (it wants Israel to withdraw from Golan Heights, which it controlled until 1967 war).**

7) Name the Dutch artist whose painting of wheat fields near Auvers, France, where he spent his last 70 days, recently failed to sell at Sotheby's sale of Impressionist art.

**Answer: Vincent Van Gogh (Sotheby's stock fell 28% after the failed sale of *The Fields*).**

8) Name the Asian country where citizens have begun wearing pink to honor their King Bhumibol, the world's longest reigning monarch, who left the hospital wearing a pink shirt and pink blazer. An earlier king inspired the book *Anna and the King of Siam*.

**Answer: Thailand (79-year-old king will celebrate his 80th birthday on December 5).**

9) Name the Dr. Seuss book featured in the Broadway show that was the 1st of over 2 dozen closed down by striking stagehands, thus "stealing" from showgoers the opportunity to see this musical about a character who "steals" Christmas.

**Answer: *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (*The Musical*; it's now open by special agreement).**

10) Name the U.S. city whose St. Charles Avenue streetcar is back on track, after 2 years, 2 months, and 13 days, for travel between the Columns Hotel and the French Quarter.

**Answer: New Orleans (line was knocked out of service by Katrina).**

11) *Parade* magazine recently noted that only once has the U.S. elected a President shorter than the national average at his time. Identify this president, who is also the only one to be the grandson of another President.

**Answer: Benjamin Harrison (5 feet 6, inch shorter than 1888 average; male av. today is 5 feet 9).**

12) Name the V-shaped granite monument on the National Mall inscribed with 58,256 names that just marked its 25th anniversary of its dedication on November 13, 1982.

**Answer: Vietnam Memorial (names are those killed or missing in the Vietnam War).**

13) Name major league baseball's home run king who faces the possibility of prison after being indicted on charges of perjury and obstructing justice for lying about steroid use.

**Answer: Barry Bonds.**

14) What color is used to designate water like shower and laundry water some are saving to water outdoor plants during the Southeast's drought, though scientists warn that it, like "black water," or toilet and dishwasher water, can carry bacteria and contaminants?

**Answer: Gray water.**

15) What word introduced in 1921 in the play *R.U.R* is now used to name the experimental driverless "thinking" cars that with no remote just ran a 60-mile race in California?

**Answer: Robot (cars; Pentagon funded competition to make 1/3 of combat vehicles unmanned by 2015).**

16) Name the insects that may again be dying in Florida from a 2006 plague called CCD, or Colony Collapse Disorder, threatening crops because of their role in pollination.

**Answer: Honeybees (when plague occurs, worker bees do not return to hive, young bees in hive die).**

### HISTORICAL EVENTS - December 3-9 (Questions 17-24)

17) What is the occupation of members of the organization known as the Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange, founded in Washington, D.C., on December 4, 1867?

**Answer: Farming.**

18) Name the major Midwest city now located at the site of the trading post where Jesuit missionary Jacques Marquette established a mission house on December 4, 1674.

**Answer: Chicago.**

19) Name the period that ended on December 5, 1933, when the 21st Amendment was ratified, repealing the amendment forbidding people to make, sell, or transport liquor.

**Answer: Prohibition (the 21st Amendment repealed the 18th Amendment).**

20) Identify the patron saint of sailors, merchants, and especially little children, whose feast day is still celebrated by many European countries on December 6.

**Answer: Saint Nicholas.**

21) At which site on the island of Oahu did Japan suddenly attack U.S. forces on December 7, 1941, at 7:55 a.m.?

**Answer: Pearl Harbor.**

22) Name the member of the Beatles killed in New York City on December 8, 1980.

**Answer: John Lennon (killed by Mark David Chapman).**

23) In which year did the U.S.S.R. cease to exist on December 8 when Russia, Ukraine, and Byelorussia formed the Commonwealth of Independent States, 50 years after the attack on Pearl Harbor?

**Answer: 1991 (the Japanese attack was 12/7/1941).**

24) Which 2 countries signed a treaty on December 8, 1987, to eliminate 2 entire classes of nuclear missiles, those in the 500- to 5,000-kilometer range?

**Answer: U.S. and Soviet Union.**

25) How much does a 10-mile cab ride cost if the rate is \$8.00 for the first two miles and \$1.50 for each subsequent mile?

**Answer: \$20.00.**

26) The base three number 111 is how much greater than the base two number 111 if the result is expressed as a base ten number?

**Answer: 6.**

27) Given that the test scores of a class of 24 students are arranged in order of size, what name is given to the top 6 scores?

**Answer: Upper Quartile.**

28) How many diagonals can be drawn from any one vertex of an octagon?

**Answer: 5.**

29) What science explores the relationship between elements of an environment, such as the dependency of bats, moths, and beetles on the Sherwood Forest trees now dying off?

**Answer: Ecology.**

30) Identify the edible fungus with the scientific name *omphalotus olearius* having varieties known as morels, shitake, and truffles.

**Answer: Mushroom.**

31) Identify the Swedish naturalist with initials C.L. whom the New York Botanical Garden recently honored on the 300th anniversary of his birth with a display of his personal 1st edition of his book introducing a classification system for all living things.

**Answer: Carl Linnaeus.**

32) What word is used to designate both a 2-part name, as in Linnaeus's naming system, and a mathematical expression consisting of 2 terms connected by a plus or minus sign?

**Answer: Binomial.**

33) What word beginning with *C* is used to describe the Monday after Thanksgiving when Internet retailers offer specials to kick off the holiday online shopping season?

**Answer: Cyber (Monday; so dubbed 2 years ago, prompting 3/4 retailers to offer specials this year).**

34) Spell and give the meaning of the word having the sound of a single letter in the caption "Shoppers' pre-dawn queue" used for a post-Thanksgiving "Black Friday" photograph.

**Answer: Q-U-E-U-E meaning "a line" or "to line up" (here, a line of shoppers after bargains).**

35) What 6-letter word designates a short narrative song of love such as those that appear along with religious songs on the Indonesian president's newly released album?

**Answer: Ballad.**

36) What is the common name for cayenne, long used as a folk remedy for headaches and now proven by research to do so?

**Answer: Red pepper (as in hot sauce, but research says relieves only when applied topically).**

37) What does *quiver* mean as used in the recent headline "With a Full Quiver, Eager to Join the Band of Merry Men" for reporting a writer's attempt to master archery?

**Answer: Container for arrows ("Band of Merry Men" refers to Robin Hood's followers).**

38) Name the almost 900-year-old hardwood trees now dying out in England's Sherwood Forest, where Robin Hood allegedly hid from the Sheriff of Nottingham. The same variety is named in the song "Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old \_\_\_\_\_ Tree."

**Answer: Oak trees (only about 450 of them are still living in the 450 existing acres of the forest).**

39) The recently staged New York play entitled *1001* focuses on Scheherazade who tells 1001 tales to save her life in which famous collection also featuring Sinbad the Sailor?

**Answer: Arabian Nights (or Arabian Nights' Entertainments, also called A Thousand and One Nights).**

40) Name the legendary lumberjack Paul Bunyan's sidekick depicted in the 35-foot-tall blue statue in California that recently lost its head because of water seepage from inside.

**Answer: Babe (the Blue Ox).**

#### DOUBLE LETTERS: M-Z

**Emmy** . . . . . (M) Statuette awarded by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for achievement in television

**Mammoth Cave** (M) Kentucky cave that is part of the world's longest cave system

**Kangaroo** . . . . . (O) Marsupial that is Australia's national animal

**Boomerang** . . . . . (O) Curved device that when thrown will return to the thrower

**Waterloo** . . . . . (O) Belgian site where Napoleon was defeated in 1815

**Sapphire** . . . . . (P) April's bright blue birthstone

**Chopper** . . . . . (P) Nickname for a helicopter

**Flapper** . . . . . (P) Informal term for a young woman who bobbed her hair and in other ways defied custom in the 1920s

**Cirrus** . . . . . (R) Very high wispy white cloud

**Marrow** . . . . . (R) Soft tissue in the central cavity of bones

**Quarry** . . . . . (R) Place where building stone or marble is excavated

**Point Barrow** .. (R) U.S.'s northernmost point, located in Alaska

**Narcissus** . . . . . (S) Mythological youth changed into a flower after he fell in love with his own image

**Palette** . . . . . (T) Thin board on which an artist mixes colors

**Powwow** . . . . . (W) Native American conference or meeting

**Gizzard** . . . . . (Z) A bird's 2nd stomach, where food is churned into small pieces

**Jazz** . . . . . (Z) Music noted for its improvisation

**Mezzanine** . . . . . (Z) Lowest balcony in a theater, or the first few rows of a balcony