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## Middle School Weekly



Emphasizing both News and Academics

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October 29, 2007

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1) Which country is condemned for the mass killings, or genocide, of Armenians during WWI in a resolution recently passed by a committee of the U.S. House of Representatives?

**Answer: Turkey (vote was 27-21; it may not come before House).**

2) In which country was what is believed to be the world's oldest wall painting recently discovered near Aleppo, its 2nd largest city after Damascus, the capital?

**Answer: Syria.**

3) Which country bordering the Caspian Sea, Persian Gulf, and Gulf of Oman has more land than Alaska and a population 3 times as large as Iraq's, of which Arabs make up 3%, not 80% as in Iraq?

**Answer: Iran.**

4) To which 72-year-old monk and Nobel Peace prize winner did President Bush just present the Congressional Gold Medal even though China demanded the U.S. cancel the week's celebrations?

**Answer: Dalai Lama (China opposes his seeking of "autonomy" for Tibet).**

5) In which country did striking drivers recently halt the public transport system, including its high-speed TGV trains, creating a real test for newly divorced President Sarkozy?

**Answer: France.**

6) What high rank in the Roman Catholic Church did the Pope just give to 23 people, meaning that all of them under age 80 can vote in the election of the next pope?

**Answer: Cardinal (the College of Cardinals serves as advisor to the Pope and elects next one).**

7) Name the U.S.'s 2nd tallest building which was recently illuminated green to mark the Islamic holy days of Eid-al-Fitr, at the end of the month of renewal called Ramadan.

**Answer: Empire State Building (at 1250 ft.; green stands for happy occasion and nature in Islam).**

8) What word designates either the cargo basket on a hot-air balloon from which a woman fell in New Mexico, or a slender oared boat used on canals in Venice, Italy?

**Answer: Gondola (Albuquerque, NM, is known for its annual balloon festival).**

9) Which President depicted on Mount Rushmore was just honored by the National Garden Clubs' planting of a tree cloned from one at his Sagamore Hill home in New York?

**Answer: Theodore Roosevelt (cloned beech tree was planted at its Club's headquarters in Missouri).**

10) Use the surname initials *B*, *H*, and *A* to name 2 of the 3 Presidents besides Lincoln to use as a retreat the newly restored D.C. house now called President Lincoln's Cottage.

**Answer: James Buchanan, Rutherford B. Hayes, and Chester Arthur.**

11) What alliterative double name designates the generation whose youngest members will turn 62 in 2008, adding 3.2 million people to those eligible for Social Security benefits?

**Answer: Baby Boomers (post-war babies, those born from 1946 to 1964).**

12) What do the initials B.B.B. stand for in designating a 95-year-old non-profit now urging consumers to use it to check out a business rather than just to lodge a complaint later?

**Answer: Better Business Bureau.**

13) What does *stay* mean as used in the headline "Court Stays Execution in Nevada"?

**Answer: Postpone, delay, or stop (stay is transitive verb here, taking a direct object).**

14) Name the individual electronic device being used in some of New Jersey's poorest schools to help immigrants sharpen their English by singing along to popular songs.

**Answer: iPod (an acronym for individual portable digital player).**

15) What fuel is used in the new Mazda model powered by energy produced when this fuel combines with oxygen in the air to emit only clean water?

**Answer: Hydrogen.**

16) The NASA spacecraft bound for Pluto has reconfirmed Io, the moon of which planet, as the most active body in the solar system, noting 20 geological changes since 2001?

**Answer: Jupiter (in Greek myth, Io was a maiden loved by Zeus, called Jupiter in Roman myth).**

#### **HISTORICAL EVENTS - October 29-November 4 (Questions 17-24)**

17) Sir Walter Raleigh was executed on October 29, 1618, for trying to dethrone King James I. What word names the crime of being disloyal to one's country?

**Answer: Treason.**

18) Identify the Titan of Greek mythology whose name bodybuilder Angelo Sicilano adopted as a surname to link himself with the giant's power to hold the sky on his shoulders.

**Answer: Atlas (Sicilano, born October 30, 1893, adopted the name Charles Atlas).**

19) In which state was the second President of the U.S. born on October 30, 1735?

**Answer: Massachusetts (John Adams was born in what is now Quincy, MA).**

20) Which H.G. Wells novel did Orson Welles broadcast as a radio drama on October 30, 1938, terrifying listeners who thought its story of a Martian invasion was a news report?

**Answer: *War of the Worlds*.**

21) Which national memorial was completed in South Dakota on October 31, 1941, after the sculptor's son took over the work on its 60-foot-tall granite figures of 4 Presidents?

**Answer: Mount Rushmore.**

22) Name the reformer who posted 95 protests against the Roman Catholic Church on a church in Germany on October 31, 1517, beginning what is now called Protestantism.

**Answer: Martin Luther.**

23) Name the famous escape artist who died October 31, 1926. His initials are H.H.

**Answer: Harry Houdini (his real name was Ehrich Weisz).**

24) In which country were 66 Americans taken hostage on November 4, 1979, in Teheran?

**Answer: Iran (52 of these hostages were not released until January 20, 1981).**

25) The square root of 100 plus the square root of 100 is equal to the square root of which integer?

**Answer: 400.**

26) What is the height of a trapezoid if its area is 112 square inches and its parallel sides measure 17 inches and 11 inches, respectively?

**Answer: 8 inches.**

27) What type of arc of a circle has end points that are also end points of a diameter?

**Answer: Semicircle.**

28) The sum of  $1/2$  and  $1/3$  is how much more than the product of  $1/2$  and  $1/3$ ?

**Answer:  $2/3$ .**

29) Identify either the species of the animal called an orca or the species of the one called a mako, one of which recently caught in the Gulf of Mexico weighed in at 844 pounds.

**Answer: Dolphin (accept *whale*, since orca is also called a killer whale) or shark.**

30) Identify the 2 parts of the scientific name of a plant or animal in the system established by Carl Linnaeus, as in *canis lupus* for the wolf and *canis familiaris* for the dog.

**Answer: Genus and species (Swedish scientist Linnaeus established system in 1753).**

31) What term designates a plant-eating animal such as the 105-foot-long dinosaur whose remains were recently found in Argentina?

**Answer: Herbivore (huge Argentina dinosaur is believed to be a new species).**

32) U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy recently had surgery to clear a blockage in a carotid, a major artery located in which part of the body?

**Answer: Neck (carotid carries blood to the head).**

33) What word designates the written music for an orchestral composition such as an opera, and, as a verb, means "to mark with lines," as is done on a ham?

**Answer: Score.**

34) What word designates the text, or script, for an opera such as the one written by the British playwright Christopher Hampton for Philip Glass's opera *Appomattox*?

**Answer: Libretto** (text for *Appomattox* was written by Tony Award winner Christopher Hampton).

35) What name is given to the kind of newspaper account not yet written about missing pilot Steve Fossett in that editors fear releasing one for someone not officially declared dead?

**Answer: Obituary** (when *New York Journal* released his mistakenly, Mark Twain cabled from London, "Reports of my death are greatly exaggerated").

36) What name from Greek myth does columnist David Brooks give to what he sees as a new life phase consisting of a decade of wandering between adolescence and adulthood?

**Answer: Odyssey** (he also sees a new stage of active retirement between adulthood and old age).

37) What does MSG stand for as used to name the New York Knicks' parent, or owner, and the New York arena where Jennifer Lopez just performed on her 1st concert tour?

**Answer: Madison Square Garden** (husband Marc Anthony did a salsa set opener).

38) Identify the still popular 1959 Broadway musical linked with 91-year-old Werner von Trapp who recently died in Vermont, having gained fame as a member of the family choir that performed in the U.S. after fleeing Nazi-occupied Austria.

**Answer: Sound of Music** (based on 1949 book by his stepmother, Maria von Trapp).

39) Name either the "legal thriller" author of the new football novel *Playing for Pizza* or the author of the *Vampire Chronicles*, both of whom have endorsed Hillary Clinton.

**Answer: John Grisham or Anne Rice.**

40) Name the late cartoonist whose family objects to David Michaelis's new biography, saying it shows him as a depressed man, like his character not getting to kick the football.

**Answer: Charles Schulz** (new PBS documentary also shows dark side of Schulz's life).

### SPOOKY STUFF: WITCHES, CATS, AND GOBLINS

**Wicked Witch of the West** Witch whom Dorothy "melts" with a bucket of water in L. Frank Baum's *Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

**Wicked** . . . . . Broadway musical that opened in 2003 telling the story of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* from the point of view of the witches

**Gretel** . . . . . Girl who tricks a witch and pushes her into the oven to save herself and her brother from being eaten

**Witch doctor** . . . . . Sorcerer or healer in native societies, especially in Africa

**Witch hunt** . . . . . Investigation set up to uncover subversive action but in actuality amounting to harassment of those with different views

**Salem** . . . . . Massachusetts town that executed 19 people as witches in 1692

**Minerva McHonagall** Character with magical powers who changes herself into a tabby cat in the first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

**Circe** . . . . . Witch in Greek myth who had the power to change men into swine

**Black cat** . . . . . Animal considered bad luck if it crosses your path and in the Middle Ages said to be a witch's familiar, or spirit, that obeys a witch

**Edgar Allan Poe** . . . . . 19th-century author known for his horror story "The Black Cat"

**Gargoyle** . . . . . Roof spout of Gothic architecture shaped like a grotesque figure

**Gnome\*** . . . . . Term for a legendary gnarled old man living underground that is a homophone for the city where the Iditarod sled dog race ends

**Troll** . . . . . Grotesque humanlike figure who threatens to eat the Billy Goats Gruff when they try to cross the bridge underneath which he lives

**Leprechauns** . . . . . Wrinkled little men of Irish folklore full of impish or evil tricks

**Rumpelstiltskin** . . . . . Wicked dwarf who agrees to spin gold from straw for the prince's wife in exchange for her first child in a Grimm fairy tale

**Rapunzel** . . . . . Child who is raised in a tower by an evil witch and lives there alone until a prince climbs up her long hair to be with her

\*Iditarod is run between Anchorage and Nome