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Middle School Weekly

Emphasizing both News and Academics

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1) Identify the religion that by the end of 2006 surpassed Roman Catholicism as the world's largest religion.

Answer: Islam (19.2% compared to 17.4% for Catholics).

2) A fossil up to 1.3 million years old just found in Spain suggests that people lived on Europe much earlier than once thought. Give the common name for this unearthed bone called a mandible.

Answer: Jawbone (specifically, lower jaw of a vertebrate).

3) As host of the recent NATO meeting, which country took steps to protect the visitors from the thousands of stray dogs that roam its streets and can be as lethal as its legendary Count Dracula?

Answer: Romania (meeting was in Bucharest, the capital).

4) Which nation is set to vote on an assembly to rewrite its Constitution, likely giving up its monarchy, having already issued new rupees on which the king's image is replaced by Mount Everest?

Answer: Nepal.

5) Name the ancient British monument an Australian man is hoping to replicate in Perth in time for the December 21 solstice since its 101 granite stones arranged in an inner and outer circle are believed to have been used for predicting astronomical events.

Answer: Stonehenge (visitors will be allowed to touch and play around Australian replica).

6) Identify the sport said to be the most popular in India and claimed by fans as the world's 2nd most popular that was recently introduced in New York schools, with about 600 students playing on 14 teams, using balls, bats, but no pitchers.

Answer: Cricket (most players have roots in nations once ruled by England, or in the British Empire).

7) What word beginning with C meaning "agreement" completes the following concerning NATO's rejection of Ukraine's and Georgia's bid for membership: "Because NATO operates on _____, the opposition of any country can block a decision"?

Answer: Consensus (France, Germany, others opposed, out of concern it would antagonize Russia).

8) On which sea are the 2 Balkan countries to which NATO did extend full invitations to join located, namely Albania and Croatia?

Answer: Adriatic Sea.

9) Identify the 2-syllable repeat used informally as a farewell that also designates the motor company in India to which Ford has agreed to sell its Jaguar and Land Rover divisions.

Answer: Ta-ta (Indian auto company is Tata, named for Jamsheji Tata, who founded it in 1945).

10) On privacy issues, one state is refusing to comply with the U.S. ID law in issuing drivers' licenses, meaning that as of May 11, its residents would have to use passports for air travel. Name this state known for its Acadia National Park near Bar Harbor.

Answer: Maine (MT, SC, and NH have not fully complied but have shown steps toward doing so).

11) Identify the state where about 9,000 people a day are flocking to see the active Mount Kilauea volcano despite ongoing explosions and toxic fumes.

Answer: Hawaii (in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park).

12) What word designates both a spurting of molten material from the earth's mantle, as from Hawaii's Kilauea volcano, and a brightly colored feather, as from a peacock?

Answer: Plume.

13) What alliterative 2-word term names the auto emissions-control device now targeted by thieves for its small amounts of precious metals in demand on the black market?

Answer: Catalytic converter.

14) Identify any one of the 3 silvery or steel-white rare metals Pt, Pd, and Rh found in trace amounts in the catalytic converter.

Answer: Platinum, palladium (named indirectly for Pallas, Greek god of wisdom), and rhodium.

15) What word not only means "to stretch to see better" but also designates a machine with a boom for moving heavy pieces, such as the one that recently collapsed at a Miami condominium site, killing 2 workers and injuring 5?

Answer: Crane (as in *craned his neck*).

16) Identify the European automated cargo ship that just docked at the International Space Station with supplies, after 26 days of circling in space in contrast to the 80 days it took to go around the world in a book by the science fiction author for whom it is named.

Answer: Jules Verne (the cargo ships are not reusable, will detach, make fiery re-entry over Pacific).

HISTORICAL EVENTS - April 14-20 (Questions 17-24)

17) How much time elapsed between the *Titanic's* collision with an iceberg at 11:40 p.m. on April 14, 1912, and its sinking at 2:20 a.m. on April 15?

Answer: 2 hours and 40 minutes.

18) In which district of the U.S. did Congress abolish slavery on April 16, 1862, months before Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation?

Answer: Washington, D.C. (or District of Columbia; Proclamation issued 9/22/62).

19) Name the capital of the country on the Jutland Peninsula in which Queen Margrethe's birthday, April 16, is a national holiday.

Answer: Copenhagen (Denmark).

20) Name the Cuban bay where a U.S.-backed invasion was crushed on April 17, 1961.

Answer: Bay of Pigs.

21) Name the North American country that became completely independent of Britain on April 17, 1982, when Queen Elizabeth II signed the Constitution Act.

Answer: Canada.

22) Name the U.S. city whose harbor was discovered by Giovanni da Verrazano, an Italian navigator in the service of Francis I, on April 17, 1524.

Answer: New York City (its Verrazano-Narrows Bridge is named for him).

23) In which year did Paul Revere make his famous ride as reflected in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's line "on the 18th of April in _____" in his poem "Paul Revere's Ride"?

Answer: 1775.

24) Complete the name of Andrew _____, the wealthy steel manufacturer who on April 20, 1903, gave \$1.5 million to build the Hague Peace Palace in The Netherlands.

Answer: (Andrew) Carnegie.

25) What is the arithmetic mean of the next 3 terms of the arithmetic sequence 1, 8, 15, 22, ...?

Answer: 36.

26) A rectangle 7 inches wide by 13 inches long has an area that is what percent of the area of a square having sides of 10 inches?

Answer: 91(%).

27) According to sides and angles, which type of triangle has angles in a 2 to 4 to 9 ratio?

Answer: Scalene obtuse triangle.

28) What is the value of $(8/9)^2 - 8/9$?

Answer: $-8/81$.

29) What exactly is a *necropsy* as used in reference to the Coney Island, New York, aquarium's at least 43-year-old sand tiger shark that recently died?

Answer: Autopsy, or exam to find cause of death (*necro-* is Greek prefix for corpse or death).

30) What is measured by a hygrometer, one simple kind of which uses human hair as its basis, since the hair rapidly expands or shrinks in response to that factor?

Answer: Atmospheric humidity, or moisture content of air.

31) Name the device for measuring atmospheric pressure to detect likely weather changes.

Answer: Barometer.

32) Identify the specialty of the medical branch called bariatrics, named from the same Greek root as the *barometer*, the device measuring atmospheric pressure, or weight.

Answer: Obesity, or being overweight (its causes, prevention, and treatment).

33) What word beginning with *E* designates the action Wisconsin voters just prohibited the governor from doing when they passed a referendum preventing him from deleting words, sentences, or paragraphs to create new meanings in legislation he signs?

Answer: Editing (2005 omission of 700 words diverted \$427 million from transportation to education).

34) Identify the Shelley character named in the term _____ *veto* coined in Wisconsin to designate "monstrous" changes made in legislation by a governor's editing out of words.
Answer: Frankenstein (Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein made monster, now in error called that name)

35) Identify Leonard Bernstein's failed 1976 Broadway musical just revived in concert form in New York in honor of his 90th birthday. It's named with the White House address.
Answer: 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (original closed after 7 showings; Bernstein died in 1990).

36) As part of his prize, the young German violinist who won Indianapolis's International Violin Competition recently performed in what is called "the grandest of America's concert halls." Identify this NYC hall named for a philanthropist linked with libraries.
Answer: Carnegie Hall (old joke: "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" "Practice, practice, practice").

37) The one-time poor boy from New Orleans who founded a spicy fried chicken fast-food chain recently died. Identify this chain seemingly named for a spinach-eating cartoon character but actually named for a detective in the film *The French Connection*.
Answer: Popeyes (founder Al Copeland said he was too poor to afford an apostrophe; really named for film detective Popeye Doyle).

38) Frenchman Jean Nouvel just won architecture's top honor, the Pritzker Prize. Which U.S. city is home to his Guthrie Theater overlooking the Mississippi opposite St. Paul?
Answer: Minneapolis (Guthrie is a boxy blue metallic structure reflecting industrial style of area).

39) Name the major league team that recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of its move to Los Angeles, having played in Brooklyn since the team's founding in 1883.
Answer: Dodgers (called Trolley Dodgers in 1890s for trolleys one had to dodge on way to ballpark).

40) Identify the Rangers and the Knicks home arena that recently announced it will renovate, not move, halting plans for transforming Pennsylvania Station underneath it. Its initials also designate a crystalline compound used as a flavor enhancer in foods.
Answer: Madison Square Gardens (MSG, or monosodium glutamate, is food additive).

WEATHER WATCH

Alberta Clipper . Province named in the term _____ *clipper* for a fast, snow-producing storm moving SE from Calgary area into U.S. northern & central plains
Pineapple Express Fruit named in the term _____ *express* for a storm that moves from Hawaii into the U.S. Northwest bringing lots of rain
Jet stream High, fast-moving airstream from the west that pilots take advantage of to shorten the time for flying from west to east
Santa Ana Hot, dry wind that often fans forest fires in southern California, named for a California river and valley
Trade winds . . . Belts of prevailing tropical winds that blow from the northeast in the Northern Hemisphere and from the southeast in the Southern Hemisphere
France Country where a violent, cold, dry northerly wind called the mistral sweeps down the Rhône River valley into Provence
Monsoon Wind system that reverses seasonally bringing long periods of rain in India and other Asian countries, named from the Arabic for "season"
Sirocco Hot, dry wind from the Sahara that picks up moisture over the Mediterranean and sweeps across North Africa and Southern Europe
Warning W-word used to announce a tornado has been seen in the area or on radar
Wedge W-word for an elongated layer of cool air that slides in at the surface, shaped like a cut of cheese or piece of pie
Cirrus Of the 3 basic kinds of clouds, the thin, wispy ones that are the highest
Cumulus Of the 3 kinds of clouds, the low ones with flat bases and puffy tops
Whiteout 0-visibility when clouds and surface snow blend, erasing the horizon
Black ice Thin coating of ice that can't be seen on a highway's dark surface
Dust devil Alliterative term for a spiral of dust whipped up by a swirling of wind
Greenhouse effect . 2-word term designating the heating of earth's surface as a result of the entrapment of radiation by increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
Isotherm I-word for a weather map line linking sites with the same temperature
Isobar I-word for weather map line linking sites with same atmospheric pressure