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Middle School Weekly



Emphasizing both News and Academics

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January 14, 2008

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1) Identify as popularly named the British Criminal Investigation Department dating to 1829 being called in to investigate the death of Pakistan opposition leader Benazir Bhutto in a bombing.

Answer: Scotland Yard (officially, name for London's police headquarters).

2) Name the Mediterranean island off the coast of Turkey that along with Malta on New Year's Day adopted the euro as its currency. Its name, beginning with *C*, is similar to that of an evergreen tree.

Answer: Cyprus (15 countries now use the euro as their currency).

3) Name the African country on the Indian Ocean where violence erupted to protest what some said was a rigged election after President Mwai Kibaki was sworn in for a 2nd term in Nairobi.

Answer: Kenya (over 500 have died in widespread riots).

4) What 4-letter word names the steep-walled *Great _____ Valley* that runs through Kenya and is explained by scientists as having been created when the plates of Earth's outer crust spread apart?

Answer: Rift.

5) At age 81 and 244 days, Queen Elizabeth just became Britain's oldest-ever monarch, surpassing the mark set by which woman, Elizabeth's great-great-grandmother?

Answer: Queen Victoria (on 9/9/2015, Elizabeth would be longest-reigning, topping Victoria's 64 yrs.).

6) At which famed white marble monument-to-love in which country must U.S. tourists now pay admission in rupees instead of dollars because of the dollar's loss of value?

Answer: Taj Mahal in India (former \$15 ticket now takes \$20 exchanged into rupees).

7) Name the country where before Christmas millions of Muslims marked the goal of the annual hajj by praying for God's forgiveness on Mount Arafat.

Answer: Saudi Arabia (Muslims believe Adam and Eve were reunited on Arafat after leaving Eden).

8) Identify the Republican President of the 1950s for whom the historic building with the V.P.'s office that caught fire just before Christmas is named.

Answer: Dwight D. Eisenhower (building is located near the White House).

9) Because Congress's recently passed \$555 billion spending bill combines war funding and Cabinet budgets, it is called what kind of *bus* beginning with the prefix for "all"?

Answer: Omnibus (spending bill; it funds 14 Cabinet agencies).

10) Congress also approved the 1st increase in fuel economy in 32 years, requiring automakers to increase fuel efficiency by 40% to an average of how many mpg, the equivalent of traveling 525 miles on 15 gallons of gas?

Answer: 35 miles per gallon (25 mpg is now required; increase is 1st in 32 years).

11) What name is given to a party meeting such as those in Iowa at which citizens in a precinct express a choice of candidates and pick delegates to their county conventions?

Answer: Caucus (at county level, delegates are picked for state convention, and there, for national one).

12) Name either the former governor of Arkansas who won Iowa's Republican caucus with 34% or the U.S. senator who won its Democratic caucus with 38%.

Answer: Mike Huckabee or Barak Obama.

13) What does a demographer study, as exemplified by a demographer's recent report that New Orleans has almost reached a milestone of 300,000?

Answer: Population (with 300,000 population, New Orleans reached 2/3 of its earlier population).

14) Name the 3 *I*'s that are the U.S.'s biggest corn producing states, despite North Dakota's record harvest of about 279 million bushels, topping for the first time its wheat crop.

Answer: Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois (corn is the most valuable cash crop in U.S.).

15) What word beginning with a prefix for "across" names the light switch-like devices on silicon chips that just turned 60 and are called the "nerve cells" of the information age?

Answer: Transistors (3 men who invented transistor in 1947-48 won Nobel for it in 1956).

16) Identify the game alluded to in the term _____-effect used to explain the spending now being required to restore beaches that have eroded as a result of money spent earlier to dredge out the channels for ships, which in turn caused the erosion.

Answer: Dominoes (domino-effect).

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

17) Who began producing the first muskets with standardized, interchangeable parts after he received a U.S. government contract for 10,000 guns on January 14, 1798?

Answer: Eli Whitney.

18) Name the musician, physician, and winner of the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize who was born in Upper Alsace on January 14, 1875, and died at age 90 in Lambarene, Gabon.

Answer: Albert Schweitzer.

19) In which city was civil rights leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Martin Luther King Jr. born on January 15, 1929? He was buried there in 1968.

Answer: Atlanta (King's birthday has been observed as a federal holiday on the 3rd Monday in January since 1986).

20) Which American cartoonist popularized the donkey as the symbol of the Democratic Party on January 15, 1870?

Answer: Thomas Nast.

21) Name the newly created European republic where concert pianist Ignace Jan Paderewski became the first premier on January 15, 1919. Its capital begins with the letter W.

Answer: Poland (Warsaw is its capital).

22) Which U.S. general assumed supreme command of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe on January 16, 1944? He later became President.

Answer: Dwight Eisenhower.

23) From which country did the U.S. buy the Virgin Islands on January 17, 1917, for \$25,000,000? It consists of the Jutland Peninsula and about 500 islands.

Answer: Denmark.

24) Which sport did Dr. James Naismith introduce to the world with the first official game on January 20, 1892, in the city of Springfield, Massachusetts?

Answer: Basketball.

25) What is the length of the side of a square whose area is 25% of a square foot?

Answer: 6 Inches or 1/2 Foot.

26) If a day of the week is chosen completely at random, what is the probability it begins with a letter in the first half of the alphabet?

Answer: 2/7.

27) Positive integers that are perfect squares can NOT end in which two even integers?

Answer: 2 and 8.

28) Consecutive positive multiples of 30 and 45 have a difference of what positive number?

Answer: 90.

29) Name the natural substance Egyptians began applying to wounds over 4,000 years ago that is making a comeback as an FDA-approved dressing for wounds, especially when produced from nectar from manuka bushes in Australia and New Zealand.

Answer: Honey (called Medihoney commercially).

30) What word beginning with *T* names the kind of bandage now being built into military uniforms on a trial basis so that they will be readily available for use in encircling wounded limbs to temporarily stop bleeding prior to treatment?

Answer: Tourniquet (uniform with 2 in each sleeve and pants leg is now being tested).

31) Spell the 4-letter word that designates an expanse of floating ice and is a homophone for a word designating a continuous stream, as of lava from a volcano.

Answer: F-L-O-E (walruses use floes as diving platforms since they, unlike seals, can't swim indefinitely).

32) Identify the 5-letter word that defines *pheromone* and is a homophone for the past tense of a 4-letter verb meaning "to dispatch."

Answer: Scent (cotton-eating weevils have been wiped out via use of pheromones to lure them to traps).

33) What 4-letter word designates both a basin of water from which babies are baptized in some Christian denominations and a typeface, or type of print, in computer programs?

Answer: Font (one print analyst defines a font as "the clothes words wear").

34) What word beginning with *E* designates a short piece placed at the end of a book or movie to provide information about what happened after the action of the book ends?

Answer: Epilogue (as in text on-screen at the end of a movie, as in *The Great Debaters*).

35) What name did an Italian court recently prohibit a couple from giving their son, saying he would be ridiculed for having the name of the "savage" in *Robinson Crusoe*?

Answer: Friday (or Venerdì, the Italian for "Friday").

36) What word beginning with *A* names the kind of center just opened in the black community of Flat Rock, GA, as a repository for 2 centuries of church and family records?

Answer: Archives (records are linked to nearby slave graveyard with about 250 graves).

37) Name the Scott Adams comic strip that a worker in Iowa was just fired for posting on an office bulletin board because, in its usual way, it made fun of managers.

Answer: Dilbert (a judge just sided with the fired man).

38) Identify 2 of the 4 Presidents who will appear on the presidential dollar coins to be released in 2008, specifically, the 5th President, nicknamed the "Last of the Cocked Hats," and his successors, "Old Man Eloquent," "Old Hickory," and "Old Kinderhook"

Answer: James Monroe, John Q. Adams, Andrew Jackson, and Martin Van Buren.

39) Give the English name for *El Día de los Reyes*, designating the Hispanic January 6 holiday U.S. retailers are promoting as a way to extend the buying season past Christmas.

Answer: Three Kings Day (also called Epiphany, marking the day the 3 wise men visited baby Jesus).

40) What do the *T* and *S* stand for in TSA, which recently ranked 2nd along with IRS in an Associated Press poll of least-liked federal agencies, topped only by FEMA?

Answer: Transportation Security (Administration; Internal Revenue Service and Federal Emergency Management Agency).

REMEMBERING 2007

Taser* Stun-gun used as a police weapon referred to in the phrase parody "Don't _____ Me," on *Time's* Top Ten T-Shirt-Worthy slogans for 2007

Georgia Drought-ridden southeast state whose Governor Sonny Perdue held a prayer service at the Capitol for what he said was to "pray up a storm"

Trans-fats Common fast food ingredient linked to heart disease banned in New York City, Philadelphia, and other major cities

Forever stamp . 2007 U.S. postage stamp that will continue to cover a 1st class letter regardless of future price increases

Boris Yeltsin . . Former Russian president who died at 76, having helped end the U.S.S.R.

Bangladesh . . . South Asian country whose name means "Bengal nation" where a November cyclone killed over 1,000

California State where wildfires in October and November burned over 500,000 acres and destroyed 2000 homes, forcing evacuation of nearly 1 million people

Greece Country where wildfires burned up to 500,000 acres, ruining olive groves

Barry Bonds . . . Player who hit 756 home runs, breaking Hank Aaron's record, and was indicted on charges of perjury for lying under oath about his steroid use

David Beckham British soccer star who moved to L.A. with wife Posh to join LA Galaxy

Floyd Landis . . 2006 Tour de France winner stripped of his title for doping

Boston (Red Sox) City whose Major League team won its 2nd World Series in 4 years and whose \$14.8 billion inner city Big Dig highway project officially ended

Michael Vick . . Atlanta Falcon sentenced to 23 months in prison for running a dogfighting operation in Virginia

Virginia Tech . . College paid tribute by poet Nikki Giovanni's line, "We are the Hokies. We will prevail" after a campus shooter killed 32 and himself

Evel Knievel . . Daredevil motorcyclist known for his jumps over canyons and rows of buses who died at age 69

Minnesota "North Star State" where an interstate bridge collapsed, killing 13

* T-shirt slogan was "Don't Tase Me"

