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Middle School Weekly



Emphasizing both News and Academics

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April 21, 2008

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1) The man who began the Smithsonian's gem collection with the 45-carat Hope Diamond in 1958 just died. Name the French queen to whom this blue stone belonged before being stolen in 1792.

Answer: Marie Antoinette (it was later owned by English King George IV)

2) Identify the so-called "Queen of the Roman Roads" dating to 312 B.C. which archaeologists are fighting to preserve even though 90% of the park area is still private property.

Answer: Appian Way.

3) Name the country whose ancient Lascaux cave paintings north of the Pyrenees Mountains, closed to the public in 1963, are now a threatened World Heritage site because of fungus and bacteria.

Answer: France (150 paintings have faded away since 2001).

4) Name the country where travelers trying "to get away from it all" are now heading to its Blue Mountains in New South Wales, one of its 6 states.

Answer: Australia.

5) What exactly is the so-called "Journey of Harmony" that was recently beset with chaos instigated by human rights groups in Paris, prompting San Francisco to make last-minute changes in its route there?

Answer: Olympic torch relay (a 21-nation promotional tour to end in China).

6) What Japanese word names the craft of folding paper to create objects, such as the paper airplane Japanese scientists hope to launch from space to get info about re-entry?

Answer: Origami (prototype paper plane recently passed lab tests simulating conditions of re-entry).

7) Identify the country where 7 historical aboriginal paintings were recently stolen from a museum and 7 hours later found undamaged in parkland in Darwin, named for the scientist who did some of his research there.

Answer: Australia.

8) As part of 60th anniversary celebrations in May, which country will stage a sound and light show in Tiberias and 7 other sites and open a footpath around the Sea of Galilee?

Answer: Israel (founded in May, 1948; Independence Day is celebrated May 10).

9) Which Christian religious denomination did Norway just agree to drop as its official state religion? It's also dominant in Minnesota, where many Norwegian immigrants settled.

Answer: Lutheran (its monarch still must be Lutheran, named for Reformation leader Martin Luther).

10) Researchers recently tracked down a former Nazi fighter pilot who quickly said he'd always believed he had shot down the French-born pilot and author who disappeared on an Allied mission in 1944. Name this author, known for his book *The Little Prince*.

Answer: Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (silver bracelet found off Marseille in 1998 renewed search).

11) Name either of the adjacent Northern Plains states thought to hold the largest oil resources in the continental U.S., nicknamed Peace Garden State and Treasure State.

Answer: North Dakota and Montana (oil is dispersed through rock, making it harder to extract).

12) Identify both the color of the circle logo for Al Gore's Alliance for Climate Protection, and the 2-letter pronoun on it, which upside down shows in reverse a word for individual effort.

Answer: Green and we (upside down looks like "me" because of its stylized W).

13) Which Constitutional amendment is inscribed on a huge tablet at the front of Washington, D.C.'s just opened Newseum dedicated to journalism and freedom of the press?

Answer: First amendment (establishes freedom of press, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech).

14) Name the 2 kinds of lighting that may in the future be replaced by "solid state lighting" using L.E.D. (light-emitting diodes) or OLEDs (pronounced OH-leds, the *O* for "organic").

Answer: Incandescent and fluorescent (solid uses less power, 12 watts giving light of 75-watt bulb).

15) What name is given to an area of space with gravity so strong not even light can escape from it, such as the newly found 15-mile-wide one that is the smallest ever detected?

Answer: Black hole (the new one weighs almost 4 times as much as the sun).

16) Some restaurants are now offering special gluten-free meals for those suffering from celiac disease. In which food crop is gluten found, even though the major product made from it is called "the staff of life"?

Answer: Wheat (barley, rye; gluten is wheat protein that makes dough stretch; bread is "staff of life").

HISTORICAL EVENTS - April 21-27 (Questions 17-24)

17) In which city will the Space Needle, built for the 1962 World's Fair, mark its 41st anniversary on April 21?

Answer: Seattle (Washington).

18) Name the Mexican general who was defeated on April 21, 1836, in the battle of San Jacinto, the last battle in the war for Texan independence.

Answer: Santa Anna.

19) Name the brothers who allegedly founded Rome on April 21, 753 B.C.

Answer: Romulus and Remus (Remus was killed in the process, possibly by Romulus).

20) On April 22, 1864, which 4-letter phrase was for the first time stamped on all U.S. coins by congressional order?

Answer: In God We Trust.

21) Name the Spanish writer who died on April 23, 1616, the same day as did William Shakespeare. He created the Knight of La Mancha, or Don Quixote.

Answer: Miguel de Cervantes.

22) On April 25, 1898, who resigned as assistant secretary of the Navy to continue his recruitment of members for the group of volunteers known as the "Rough Riders"?

Answer: Theodore Roosevelt.

23) In which city did the Germans raise the Nazi swastika over the Acropolis when they took it over on April 27, 1941?

Answer: Athens (Greece).

24) Name the Portuguese navigator killed by natives in the Philippines on April 27, 1521, 18 months after he set sail from Spain with 5 ships on the first round-the-world voyage.

Answer: Ferdinand Magellan.

25) For the fraction $\frac{3}{4}$, adding 2 to the numerator gives a result that is how much greater than adding 2 to the denominator?

Answer: $\frac{3}{4}$.

26) What is the prime factorization of 132?

Answer: $2^2 \cdot 3 \cdot 11$.

27) By what binomial is $(x - 6)$ multiplied by to get the trinomial $(2x^2 - 15x + 18)$?

Answer: $2x - 3$.

28) Which type of quadrilateral could have consecutive sides measuring 4 inches, 4 inches, 7 inches, and 7 inches?

Answer: Kite.

29) What name is given to a young tree, such as any of the 2,000 reported in a recent count of the trees in New York City's Central Park developed in 1873?

Answer: Sapling (park has 24,132 mature trees).

30) What part of the body is affected by *tinnitus*, common in soldiers back from combat, and similar in meaning to *tintinnabulation* in Poe's lines: "Keeping time, time, time, ...To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells/From the bells, bells, bells, bells"?

Answer: Ears (*tinnitus* is "ringing in the ears," caused by loud noises, infections, or trauma).

31) Define the term *nanometer* in terms of a meter and with 10 digits in the denominator.

Answer: One billionth of a meter (light's photons this size may be used to make computers faster).

32) Name the 2 digits that make up the strings of data information stored in a computer.

Answer: 0 (zero) and 1.

33) What word, by sound suggesting a nuisance bird in cities, names a form of language that uses words from 2 languages, such as Chinese immigrants might use in an English-speaking society as they cope with the new tongue?

Answer: Pidgin (as in *pidgin English*).

34) What word, linked with a Louisiana shrimp dish, designates what some define as a "pidgin language that became someone's native language," as in the form of French that developed in the Louisiana area?

Answer: Creole.

35) Junot Diaz's novel *The Best Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, which just won the Pulitzer Prize, follows a New Jersey immigrant family from his native land. Name this Carib-bean country, home to more U.S. major league baseball players than any other.

Answer: Dominican Republic (at start of 2008, 76 of the major's 750 players were natives of it).

36) Which team defeated which team 75-68 in overtime to win the 2008 NCAA Division I basketball championship just played in San Antonio between the Jayhawks and Tigers?

Answer: Kansas (Jayhawks) defeated Memphis (Tigers).

37) Name the 1950s rock singer recently for the first time surpassed by Mariah Carey and Madonna in Billboard's records for rock's most No. 1 songs and most Top 10 hits.

Answer: Elvis Presley (Carey with 18 and Madonna with 37).

38) Which 2 circuses combined to form the one that just presented its 138th edition in Madison Square Garden as the "Greatest Show on Earth," one having initials B & B?

Answer: Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus (merged in 1919).

39) Name the so-called "River of Grass" the Interior Department is trying to restore with a huge man-made sea near Florida's Lake Okeechobee to hold water and send it inland.

Answer: Everglades (it's half as large as it once was and has lost 90% of its wading birds).

40) Identify the alliterative 2-word name used for both the London bell that just marked the 150th anniversary of its casting and for the clock tower that houses it.

Answer: Big Ben (same foundry made Liberty Bell & Bell of Hope, London gave NYC, year after 9/11).

SOUND IT AGAIN: TWO-WORD ALLITERATIONS

Abigail Adams . . First to be wife of one U.S. President and mother of another

Addis Ababa . . . Ethiopia's capital, located in the center of the country

Ascorbic acid . . . Water-soluble vitamin also called Vitamin C

Buffalo Bill Nickname of William F. Cody, who took his Wild West Show to Chicago for the Columbian Exposition in 1893

Bunsen burner . . Small laboratory burner that produces a hot, blue flame and is named after a German chemist

Benazir Bhutto . Pakistan's 1st female P.M., assassinated on return from exile in 2007

Botany Bay South Pacific bay near Sydney, Australia, named for study of plant life

Big Bend National park in Texas named for its site on a curve of the Rio Grande

Black belt Area or belt of rich, fertile soil, especially in Alabama and Mississippi

Cape Canaveral . Florida site from which NASA launches its space exploration programs

Crescent City . . . New Orleans's nickname because of its site on a curve in the Mississippi

Friendly fire Military term for discharge of weapons that in error hit one's own forces

Hula-Hoop Trademark for a circular toy twirled around the body by moving the hips

Kris Kringle Name for Santa Claus derived from the German for "Christ child"

Mount McKinley Highest peak in North America

Mass media Full range of public communication, including radio, TV, & newspapers

Solar system That portion of our galaxy subject to the sun's gravity

Tiny Tim Bob Cratchit's crippled son in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*

Talk turkey Idiom for "to speak frankly and bluntly"

Tell-tale Hyphenated adjective preceding *Heart* in the title of an Edgar Allan Poe story in which a murdered man is buried beneath floor boards

***Barbara Bush is the 2nd to be wife of one President, mother of another**

