VIRAL PUB TRIVIA MASTER NIGHT

10 rounds · 520 questions · 1 legendary host

NEXT ROUND

POP CULTURE & 90S/2000S NOSTALGIA

Which 1999 sci-fi movie popularised the cinematic bullet-time visual effect?

The Matrix

Directed by the Wachowskis, it used a green-screen ring of 120 cameras firing in micro-second succession.

What was the name of Ross Geller's pet white-headed capuchin monkey on 'Friends'?

Marcel

Marcel famously swallowed a Scrabble tile and loved the song 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight'.

Which toy introduced in 1996 triggered nationwide holiday riots across US department stores?

Tickle Me Elmo

Originally retailing for $28.99, secondary black-market resales reached over $1,500 that winter.

Which games console, launched in 1994, became the first in history to sell over 100 million units?

The Sony PlayStation

The original PlayStation passed 100 million sales in 2003 — a first for any games console.

In 'The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air', in which city was Will born and raised, according to the theme song?

West Philadelphia

The famous theme opens: 'In West Philadelphia, born and raised…'

Which 1997 film about an ocean liner became the highest-grossing movie of all time on its release?

Titanic

James Cameron's Titanic held the all-time box-office record until his own Avatar passed it in 2009.

What does 'www' stand for in a web address?

World Wide Web

The Web was invented by Tim Berners-Lee at CERN between 1989 and 1991.

Which boy band released the hit 'I Want It That Way' in 1999?

The Backstreet Boys

The song appears on 'Millennium', one of the best-selling albums of all time.

In the Pokémon anime, what was Ash Ketchum's very first Pokémon?

Pikachu

Ash overslept on his first day; Pikachu was the only starter Pokémon left.

Which handheld virtual-pet craze hatched from Japan in 1996?

Tamagotchi

Bandai's egg-shaped keychain pet sold tens of millions of units worldwide.

The coffee house Central Perk is the hangout in which sitcom?

Friends

Set in Manhattan, the series ran for ten seasons from 1994 to 2004.

Which 2001 film opened the screen trilogy of 'The Lord of the Rings'?

The Fellowship of the Ring

All three films were shot back-to-back in New Zealand under director Peter Jackson.

Which 1990 film stars Macaulay Culkin as a boy left behind at Christmas who defends his house with booby traps?

Home Alone

It became one of the highest-grossing comedies of all time and made Culkin a superstar at age ten.

What does the 'S' stand for in the console abbreviation 'SNES'?

Super (Super Nintendo Entertainment System)

The SNES launched in Japan in 1990 as the Super Famicom.

Which British girl group urged the world to 'spice up your life' in the 1990s?

The Spice Girls

Their 1996 debut single 'Wannabe' topped charts in 37 countries.

In 'The Lion King' (1994), what is the name of Simba's father?

Mufasa

Mufasa was voiced by James Earl Jones — who returned for the 2019 remake.

Which 1990 song by Los del Rio became a worldwide wedding-party dance craze?

Macarena

The song spent 14 weeks at number one in the US in 1996.

Which actor played the Terminator in 'Terminator 2: Judgment Day' (1991)?

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Schwarzenegger reportedly earned about $15 million for roughly 700 words of dialogue.

The Walkman and Discman portable music players were made by which company?

Sony

The original Walkman launched in Japan in 1979 and changed how the world listened to music.

Which cartoon family lives in the fictional town of Springfield?

The Simpsons

The show never officially confirms which US state its Springfield is in.

What was the name of Nintendo's handheld console released in 1989?

Game Boy

Its killer app was Tetris, bundled with the console in most markets.

Which 1996 film ends with Will Smith punching an alien and saying 'Welcome to Earth'?

Independence Day

It was the highest-grossing film of 1996 worldwide.

In 'Toy Story' (1995), what is the name of the cowboy doll voiced by Tom Hanks?

Woody

Woody's full name is Woody Pride, though it is never said in the first films.

Which early-90s TV series followed Agent Dale Cooper investigating the murder of Laura Palmer?

Twin Peaks

David Lynch's eerie series ran 1990-91 and returned for a revival in 2017.

What did the letters 'MTV' originally stand for when the channel launched in 1981?

Music Television

The first video aired was 'Video Killed the Radio Star' by The Buggles.

Which Canadian singer released the 1995 album 'Jagged Little Pill'?

Alanis Morissette

The album sold over 33 million copies, one of the best sellers ever by a female artist.

Beanie Babies, the 1990s plush craze, were filled with what instead of stuffing?

Plastic pellets (beans)

Creator Ty Warner deliberately under-stuffed them so they felt floppy and lifelike.

Which 1992 Disney film features a genie voiced by Robin Williams?

Aladdin

Williams improvised so much dialogue that hours of unused material were recorded.

The catchphrase 'Did I do that?' belongs to which nerdy 1990s sitcom character?

Steve Urkel (Family Matters)

Urkel was meant to appear in a single episode — he became the show's breakout star.

Which search giant was founded in 1998 by Larry Page and Sergey Brin?

Google

The name is a playful spelling of 'googol', the number 1 followed by 100 zeros.

Which 1999 horror hit was marketed as real found footage of three missing student filmmakers?

The Blair Witch Project

Made for roughly $60,000, it went on to gross nearly $250 million worldwide.

In 'Jurassic Park' (1993), the fictional Isla Nublar lies off the coast of which country?

Costa Rica

The island's name is Spanish for 'clouded island', for the mist around its peaks.

Which boy band featured Justin Timberlake before his solo career?

NSYNC

The band's name came from the last letters of the five members' first names.

Which furry robotic toy, launched in 1998, appeared to learn language as it 'grew up'?

Furby

Furby spoke its own language, 'Furbish', and slowly mixed in English words.

The line 'Show me the money!' comes from which 1996 Tom Cruise film?

Jerry Maguire

The line was shouted by Cuba Gooding Jr.'s character, footballer Rod Tidwell.

Which actress played the title role in TV's 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer' from 1997?

Sarah Michelle Gellar

Gellar did most of Buffy's taekwondo-based fight training herself.

Which 1989 Disney film, starring a mermaid named Ariel, revived the studio's animation fortunes?

The Little Mermaid

It kicked off the decade-long 'Disney Renaissance' of animated hits.

Which grunge band released 'Nevermind' in 1991, fronted by Kurt Cobain?

Nirvana

'Nevermind' knocked Michael Jackson off the top of the US album chart in January 1992.

Which video game plumber made his arcade debut in 1981's 'Donkey Kong'?

Mario

He was originally called 'Jumpman' and worked as a carpenter, not a plumber.

The 1994 film 'Pulp Fiction' was directed by whom?

Quentin Tarantino

Tarantino wrote the diner scenes while working in a video rental store years earlier.

Which Saturday-morning cartoon featured four turtles named after Renaissance artists?

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

Leonardo, Michelangelo, Donatello and Raphael began in a gritty 1984 indie comic.

Which internet provider famously flooded mailboxes with free trial CDs throughout the 1990s?

AOL (America Online)

AOL later claimed about half of all CDs produced worldwide in the mid-90s carried its logo.

Which handheld console did Nintendo release in 2001 as the Game Boy line's successor?

Game Boy Advance

The Advance was backwards-compatible with the entire Game Boy library.

Who sang the 1995 hit 'Gangsta's Paradise', featured in the film 'Dangerous Minds'?

Coolio

The song samples Stevie Wonder's 1976 track 'Pastime Paradise'.

The catchphrase 'As if!' belongs to Cher in which 1995 teen film?

Clueless

The film is a loose modern retelling of Jane Austen's novel 'Emma'.

In 'Mrs. Doubtfire' (1993), Robin Williams disguises himself as what so he can see his children?

A Scottish nanny and housekeeper

Williams's full prosthetic makeup took about four hours to apply each day.

Which MTV countdown show, hosted by Carson Daly from Times Square from 1998, defined after-school TV?

TRL (Total Request Live)

At its peak, fans crowded Times Square hoping to glimpse pop stars through the studio windows.

The 1996 film 'Space Jam' paired Michael Jordan with which cartoon characters?

The Looney Tunes

Bugs Bunny and company recruited Jordan to save them from the Monstars.

Which 2000 reality TV show stranded contestants on an island to 'outwit, outplay, outlast'?

Survivor

The US version was based on a Swedish format called 'Expedition Robinson'.

The letters 'DVD' are most commonly expanded to what?

Digital Versatile Disc

It was also originally read as 'Digital Video Disc' — the Versatile name won out officially.

Which doll, launched in 1959, got her first Dreamhouse in 1962 and a blockbuster film in 2023?

Barbie

Barbie's full name is Barbara Millicent Roberts, from the Mattel founders' daughter.

NEXT ROUND

BIZARRE HISTORY & TRUE CRIME FACTS

In 1971, which notorious hijacker parachuted out of a Boeing 727 with $200,000 and was never found?

D.B. Cooper

The FAA subsequently mandated the installation of the aerodynamic 'Cooper Vane' on all 727s.

What famous poison leaves a distinct bitter almond scent in autopsy investigations?

Cyanide

Only roughly 40-50% of the population genetically possesses the ability to smell the almond odor.

In the 'Dancing Plague' of 1518 in Strasbourg, hundreds of people were struck by an urge to do what, for days on end?

Dance

Victims danced for weeks without resting; some reportedly died from exhaustion and heart attacks.

Which US president survived a 1912 assassination attempt partly because a folded speech and a steel glasses case in his breast pocket slowed the bullet?

Theodore Roosevelt

Shot in Milwaukee, Roosevelt insisted on delivering his campaign speech before going to hospital.

The 'Great Emu War' of 1932 — a military operation against some 20,000 birds — took place in which country?

Australia

Soldiers were deployed in Western Australia; the emus evaded them so well the operation was abandoned.

The wreck of which famous liner was finally located in 1985, 73 years after she sank?

RMS Titanic

Robert Ballard's team found her about 370 miles off Newfoundland, nearly 3,800 metres down.

In 1962, Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers escaped from which island prison — and were never found?

Alcatraz

They fled on a raft made from raincoats. Whether they survived the bay remains unknown.

The Great Pyramid of Giza — the only Ancient Wonder still standing — was built by which civilisation?

Ancient Egypt

It was already ancient when the other six wonders were built, and it outlasted them all.

In 19th-century Britain, wealthy hosts held 'unwrapping parties' to unwrap what imported curiosity?

Egyptian mummies

Mummies were shipped to Europe and unwrapped as society entertainment — and even ground into paint pigment.

Outlaw Jesse James was shot dead in 1882 by which former associate, hoping to collect the reward?

Robert Ford

Ford shot James in his own home in St. Joseph, Missouri — and was later branded a coward for it.

The 1908 Tunguska event flattened around 2,000 square kilometres of forest in which country?

Russia

The Siberian blast is believed to have been an asteroid or comet exploding in mid-air — no crater was found.

Which legendary con artist 'sold' the Eiffel Tower to scrap dealers — twice — in the 1920s?

Victor Lustig

Posing as a government official, Lustig convinced dealers the tower was being sold for scrap metal.

Which Roman emperor is said to have planned to make his favourite horse, Incitatus, a senator?

Caligula

Historians suspect the story was exaggerated by hostile writers — but the horse did get a marble stall.

In 1726, English hoaxer Mary Toft fooled doctors into believing she had given birth to what animals?

Rabbits

Toft confessed after a porter was caught smuggling a rabbit into her room.

The crew of which ship vanished in 1872, leaving the vessel drifting in the Atlantic with its cargo intact?

The Mary Celeste

The ship was found near the Azores with a lifeboat missing — and no one was ever found.

During the 1904 St. Louis Olympic marathon, runner Thomas Hicks was dosed mid-race with brandy, egg white and what dangerous poison?

Strychnine

Strychnine was then believed to be a stimulant in tiny doses. Hicks won — and nearly died.

Which French monarch, builder of Versailles, was known as the Sun King?

Louis XIV

His 72-year reign is the longest of any verified monarch in European history.

The 'mystery cloud' that dimmed the sun and caused crop failures around 536 AD is now blamed on what?

A massive volcanic eruption

Ice-core evidence points to a huge eruption whose ash veil cooled the Northern Hemisphere for years.

Which unidentified murderer terrorised London's Whitechapel district in 1888?

Jack the Ripper

Five victims are generally attributed to the Ripper — the case remains officially unsolved.

In 1928, which Scotsman discovered penicillin by accident from a mould growing in his lab?

Alexander Fleming

The mould was Penicillium — its juice killed the bacteria on Fleming's culture plates.

The Voynich manuscript, a centuries-old book nobody can read, is written in what?

An unknown, undeciphered script

Carbon dating puts the vellum in the early 1400s; every codebreaker since has failed.

Which US state was an independent republic with its own president, Sam Houston, before joining the Union in 1845?

Texas

The Republic of Texas existed from 1836 to 1845, with its own currency and navy.

In 1977, Ohio State's Big Ear telescope received a famous 72-second radio burst known by what name?

The Wow! signal

Astronomer Jerry Ehman circled the printout and wrote 'Wow!' beside it — the source is still unknown.

Which queen of ancient Egypt was the last active ruler of the Ptolemaic Kingdom?

Cleopatra VII

Cleopatra spoke nine languages and was the only Ptolemaic ruler who learned Egyptian.

The 1883 eruption of which Indonesian volcano produced the loudest sound in recorded history?

Krakatoa

The blast was heard nearly 4,800 km away, and its ash lowered global temperatures for years.

The Salem witch trials of 1692-93 took place in what is now which US state?

Massachusetts

Twenty people were executed; Massachusetts formally apologised for the trials in 1957.

Which British king abdicated in 1936 in order to marry Wallis Simpson?

Edward VIII

He reigned just 326 days — one of the shortest reigns in British history.

The 'Piltdown Man', exposed as a fraud in 1953, was a faked specimen of what?

A fossil human ancestor (a human skull combined with an orangutan's jaw)

The hoax fooled much of the scientific establishment for over forty years.

In 1961, which Soviet cosmonaut became the first human in space?

Yuri Gagarin

His single orbit of Earth aboard Vostok 1 lasted 108 minutes.

Which civilisation built the mountain citadel of Machu Picchu?

The Inca

The site was never found by the Spanish and stayed unknown to the outside world until 1911.

The Great Fire of London in 1666 started in a bakery on which street?

Pudding Lane

The fire raged for four days and destroyed more than 13,000 houses.

Which 19th-century US president is the only one to have served two non-consecutive terms?

Grover Cleveland

Cleveland was both the 22nd and the 24th president.

In 1919, a flood of what food substance killed 21 people in Boston?

Molasses (the Great Molasses Disaster)

A storage tank burst and sent a wave of molasses up to 7.6 metres high through the streets.

The lost Roanoke Colony was planted on an island off the coast of which modern US state?

North Carolina

The only clue left behind was the word 'CROATOAN' carved into a post.

Which pharaoh's tomb did Howard Carter discover nearly intact in 1922?

Tutankhamun

The boy king's tomb held over 5,000 artefacts, including his famous gold mask.

Julius Caesar was assassinated on the Ides of which month in 44 BC?

March

The Ides of March — the 15th — became a byword for betrayal and doom.

At the bizarre 'Cadaver Synod' of 897 AD, the corpse of which church leader was put on trial?

Pope Formosus

His body was exhumed, dressed in papal robes and propped on a throne to answer charges.

Which British ocean liner, sunk by a U-boat in 1915, helped push the US toward entering World War I?

RMS Lusitania

Nearly 1,200 people died, including 128 Americans, when she sank in just 18 minutes.

In 1519, which Spanish conquistador marched into the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan?

Hernan Cortes

Within two years the Aztec Empire had fallen to Cortes and his Indigenous allies.

What was the name of the ship that carried the Pilgrims to Massachusetts in 1620?

The Mayflower

The ship carried 102 passengers and about 30 crew across the Atlantic in 66 days.

The Berlin Airlift of 1948-49 supplied which half of the divided city?

West Berlin

Allied planes landed up to every 30 seconds at the peak, delivering food and coal.

Which Viking explorer is credited with reaching North America around the year 1000?

Leif Erikson

His settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland was confirmed by archaeologists in the 1960s.

Outlaws Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow were killed by police in which year?

1934

Their ambush in Louisiana ended a two-year crime spree across the American Midwest and South.

The Rosetta Stone, the key to deciphering hieroglyphs, was found in which country?

Egypt

French soldiers rebuilding a fort near Rosetta uncovered it in 1799.

Which Chinese dynasty built most of the Great Wall that still stands today?

The Ming dynasty

The Ming rebuilt the wall in stone and brick during the 1300s-1600s.

In 1867, the United States purchased Alaska from which country?

Russia

Critics mocked the $7.2 million deal as 'Seward's Folly' — until gold and oil were found.

The first successful powered aeroplane flight in 1903 was made by which brothers?

The Wright brothers

Orville won the coin toss and flew first: 12 seconds and 36.5 metres at Kitty Hawk.

Which Chicago gangster was finally jailed in 1931 — not for murder, but for tax evasion?

Al Capone

The FBI's accountants built the case that sent 'Scarface' to Alcatraz.

The ancient Olympic Games were held in honour of which Greek god?

Zeus

A colossal gold-and-ivory statue of Zeus at Olympia was one of the Seven Wonders.

In 1974, farmers digging a well near Xi'an, China, accidentally uncovered what famous army?

The Terracotta Army

Thousands of life-size clay soldiers guard the tomb of China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang.

In 1811-12, the most powerful earthquakes in recorded US history struck near New Madrid in which state?

Missouri

The quakes were so strong they reportedly made the Mississippi River appear to run backwards.

NEXT ROUND

MOVIES, TV SHOWS & STREAMING HITS

Which actor played both Jack Dawson in 'Titanic' and Howard Hughes in 'The Aviator'?

Leonardo DiCaprio

DiCaprio finally won his first Oscar for 'The Revenant' in 2016.

Wakanda, the fictional high-tech African nation, is the homeland of which Marvel hero?

Black Panther

Wakanda's wealth comes from vibranium, a fictional metal from a meteorite.

The Iron Throne is fought over by the houses of which TV series?

Game of Thrones

The throne is said to be forged from a thousand swords of surrendered enemies.

Who directed 'Jaws', 'E.T.' and 'Schindler's List'?

Steven Spielberg

Spielberg co-founded DreamWorks and is the highest-grossing director of all time.

In the 1939 film 'The Wizard of Oz', Dorothy's magical slippers are what colour? (They were silver in the book!)

Ruby red

The filmmakers changed them to ruby to show off the new Technicolor process.

Which Netflix series opens its deadly contest with a game of 'Red Light, Green Light'?

Squid Game

The South Korean series became Netflix's most-watched launch of its time in 2021.

In what year was the very first 'Star Wars' film released in cinemas?

1977

It was re-titled 'Episode IV — A New Hope' only in later re-releases.

Which actress played Hermione Granger in the 'Harry Potter' films?

Emma Watson

Watson was cast at age nine, in her first professional acting role.

In 'Breaking Bad', by what name is Walter White known in the criminal underworld?

Heisenberg

He named himself after physicist Werner Heisenberg — of uncertainty-principle fame.

Olaf the snowman sings 'In Summer' in which animated film?

Frozen

The song is a joke: Olaf dreams of the one season that would melt him.

Which film is the highest-grossing of all time worldwide, not adjusted for inflation?

Avatar (2009)

Re-releases have pushed James Cameron's Avatar to roughly $2.9 billion worldwide.

The sitcom 'Parks and Recreation' is set in the fictional town of Pawnee — in which US state?

Indiana

Pawnee's fierce rival town in the show is the much wealthier Eagleton.

Which actor played Forrest Gump in the 1994 film?

Tom Hanks

Hanks won back-to-back Best Actor Oscars in 1994 and 1995 — for 'Philadelphia' and 'Forrest Gump'.

The US version of 'The Office' is set in which fictional paper company?

Dunder Mifflin

The show is set in Scranton, Pennsylvania — which embraced its fictional fame with real fan conventions.

Which 1972 film about the Corleone family is routinely ranked among the greatest movies ever made?

The Godfather

Marlon Brando stuffed his cheeks with cotton wool for the audition to get Don Corleone's bulldog jowls.

In 'The Shawshank Redemption', what was Andy Dufresne's profession before prison?

Banker

Andy uses his banking skills to launder the warden's money — and to plot his escape.

Which Netflix series features the alternate dimension called the Upside Down and a girl named Eleven?

Stranger Things

The show premiered in 2016 and turned Dungeons & Dragons into a mainstream craze again.

Who played the Joker in 'The Dark Knight' (2008) and won a posthumous Oscar for it?

Heath Ledger

Ledger kept a character diary and locked himself away for weeks to build the Joker's voice.

As a full series, 'The Simpsons' first aired in which year?

1989

The family began as short cartoons on 'The Tracey Ullman Show' two years earlier.

Which film won the very first Academy Award for Best Picture in 1929?

Wings

The silent WWI epic is the only fully silent film ever to win the top Oscar.

In 'Friends', what is Joey Tribbiani's famous pick-up line?

'How you doin'?'

Matt LeBlanc improvised the line's swagger — it became Joey's signature across ten seasons.

Who directed 'Psycho', 'Vertigo' and 'Rear Window'?

Alfred Hitchcock

Hitchcock was nominated for Best Director five times but never won a competitive Oscar.

The adventurer Indiana Jones is famously afraid of which animals?

Snakes

'Snakes. Why did it have to be snakes?' — the phobia was written into the character from the first film.

Which 2019 South Korean film became the first non-English-language winner of the Best Picture Oscar?

Parasite

Bong Joon Ho's thriller also won Best Director, Original Screenplay and International Feature.

Which creature bites off Frodo's finger at Mount Doom in 'The Return of the King'?

Gollum

Gollum then falls into the fire with the Ring — destroying it by accident, not heroism.

The sitcom 'Seinfeld' is famously described as a show about what?

Nothing

The pitch George makes inside the show — a show about nothing — mirrored the real series.

Which actress played Katniss Everdeen in 'The Hunger Games' films?

Jennifer Lawrence

Lawrence did her own archery training and performed most of Katniss's stunts.

In 'Back to the Future', what speed must the DeLorean reach to travel through time?

88 miles per hour

The speed was chosen simply because it looked good on the digital speedometer prop.

Which HBO series about a New Jersey mob boss is often credited with starting TV's golden age?

The Sopranos

James Gandolfini's Tony Soprano redefined what a TV protagonist could be — a villain you root for.

The line 'May the Force be with you' comes from which film franchise?

Star Wars

The phrase was first delivered by General Dodonna before the Death Star assault.

Which film series follows spy Ethan Hunt and his Impossible Missions Force team?

Mission: Impossible

Tom Cruise famously performs many of the franchise's most dangerous stunts himself.

In 'Harry Potter', what is the name of the school of witchcraft and wizardry?

Hogwarts

Its full name: Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, hidden somewhere in Scotland.

Which 1999 film's twist ending reveals that Bruce Willis's character has been dead all along?

The Sixth Sense

M. Night Shyamalan hid the clues in plain sight — Willis's character is never seen touching anything.

Which actor played the liquid-metal T-1000 in 'Terminator 2: Judgment Day'?

Robert Patrick

Patrick trained to run at full sprint without breathing through his mouth, to look less human.

The Netflix series 'Wednesday' centres on a member of which fictional family?

The Addams Family

Jenna Ortega learned cello and fencing for the role — and choreographed the famous dance herself.

Which war film opens with the Normandy landings and a mission to find one paratrooper?

Saving Private Ryan

Veterans praised its opening 24 minutes as the most realistic battle footage ever filmed.

In 'The Lion King', what does the phrase 'Hakuna Matata' mean?

No worries

The Swahili phrase became one of Disney's most famous songs, written by Elton John and Tim Rice.

Which actress starred as Elle Woods in 'Legally Blonde'?

Reese Witherspoon

Witherspoon kept Elle's entire wardrobe after filming — all 77 costume changes.

In 'Doctor Who', the Doctor's time machine is called the what?

The TARDIS

TARDIS stands for Time And Relative Dimension In Space — and it is famously bigger on the inside.

Which 2008 Marvel film launched the Marvel Cinematic Universe?

Iron Man

Robert Downey Jr. improvised the final line — 'I am Iron Man' — changing Marvel's plans on the spot.

In 'E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial', what does E.T. famously want to do?

Phone home

The line 'E.T. phone home' ranks among the most quoted in cinema history.

Which film features Tyler Durden and an unnamed narrator who start an underground club?

Fight Club

The first rule of Fight Club is famous — the film flopped in cinemas, then became a cult phenomenon on DVD.

Which director made 'The Grand Budapest Hotel' and 'Moonrise Kingdom'?

Wes Anderson

Anderson's perfectly symmetrical shots are so distinctive the style has its own name among film students.

In 'The Wizard of Oz', what is Dorothy's little dog called?

Toto

Toto was played by a Cairn terrier named Terry, who appeared in 16 films.

Which TV series follows the Shelby crime family in post-WWI Birmingham?

Peaky Blinders

Cillian Murphy's Tommy Shelby made flat caps fashionable again a century later.

Which 2024 Pixar sequel became the highest-grossing animated film of all time?

Inside Out 2

It passed the 2019 'Lion King' remake with roughly $1.7 billion at the worldwide box office.

In 'Jaws', what is the name of the grizzled shark hunter played by Robert Shaw?

Quint

Shaw ad-libbed much of Quint's legendary USS Indianapolis monologue.

Which sitcom centres on physicists Sheldon, Leonard and their neighbour Penny?

The Big Bang Theory

The show ran 12 seasons and made 'Bazinga!' a global catchphrase.

The 1976 boxing film 'Rocky' is set in which US city?

Philadelphia

Sylvester Stallone wrote the script in three days and refused to sell it unless he could star.

Which actor played Captain Jack Sparrow in the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' films?

Johnny Depp

Depp based Sparrow's swaying walk on Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards.

In 'The Hunger Games', Katniss Everdeen volunteers from which district?

District 12

District 12 is Panem's impoverished coal-mining district, in the former Appalachians.

NEXT ROUND

MIND-BLOWING SCIENCE & SPACE ODDITIES

How long does a photon take to travel from the center core of the Sun to its outer surface?

Approx. 100,000 to 170,000 Years

Dense plasma collisions force the light particle into a violent 'random walk' before it finally escapes.

Which creature has three hearts, blue hemocyanin blood, and doughnut-shaped brains?

The Octopus

Two hearts pump blood to the gills, while the third central heart stops beating when swimming.

Olympus Mons, the largest volcano in the solar system, towers over which planet?

Mars

Olympus Mons is about 22 km high — roughly two and a half times the height of Mount Everest.

Which planet is tilted so far that it effectively rotates on its side, at about 98 degrees?

Uranus

Astronomers believe an ancient collision with an Earth-sized body knocked Uranus sideways.

What is the chemical symbol for gold?

Au

The symbol comes from 'aurum', the Latin word for gold.

Which cells in your blood are responsible for carrying oxygen around the body?

Red blood cells

They get their colour from haemoglobin, the iron-containing protein that binds oxygen.

Who published the laws of motion and universal gravitation in the 1687 work 'Principia Mathematica'?

Isaac Newton

The Principia is considered one of the most important scientific books ever written.

Approximately how fast does light travel through a vacuum, in kilometres per second?

About 300,000 km/s

The exact figure is 299,792 km/s — nothing with mass can reach it.

Which organ of the human body produces the hormone insulin?

The pancreas

Insulin is made by the beta cells in the pancreatic islets of Langerhans.

What was the name of the first artificial satellite, launched into orbit in 1957?

Sputnik 1

The Soviet satellite's simple 'beep-beep' signal could be picked up by radios around the world.

About 78% of Earth's atmosphere consists of which gas?

Nitrogen

Oxygen makes up most of the rest, at about 21%.

Roughly how long does sunlight take to reach the Earth?

About 8 minutes

Eight minutes and twenty seconds on average — so we always see the Sun as it was, not as it is.

Which planet's day is longer than its year, taking 243 Earth days to spin once?

Venus

Venus rotates backwards and so slowly that one spin outlasts its 225-day trip around the Sun.

What is the chemical symbol for iron?

Fe

Fe comes from 'ferrum', the Latin word for iron.

What is H2O more commonly known as?

Water

Two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom — the most familiar molecule on Earth.

Which gas do plants absorb from the air to power photosynthesis?

Carbon dioxide

Plants trade it for oxygen — the gas exchange that keeps the air breathable.

What is the largest planet in our solar system?

Jupiter

More than 1,300 Earths could fit inside Jupiter.

How many bones are there in the adult human body?

206

Babies are born with around 300 bones; many fuse together as we grow.

Who proposed evolution by natural selection in 'On the Origin of Species' (1859)?

Charles Darwin

Darwin delayed publishing for years, gathering evidence after his voyage on HMS Beagle.

What force keeps the planets in orbit around the Sun?

Gravity

The same force that drops your pen bends the path of entire planets.

Which metal is the most abundant in the Earth's crust?

Aluminium

Aluminium makes up about 8% of the crust — yet was once costlier than gold.

Which blood cells are the soldiers of the immune system, fighting infection?

White blood cells

They make up only about 1% of your blood, but a high count signals your body is fighting something.

The asteroid belt lies between the orbits of which two planets?

Mars and Jupiter

Despite the movies, the belt is mostly empty space — its total mass is less than the Moon's.

What is the name of the galaxy that contains our solar system?

The Milky Way

It holds at least 100 billion stars — and probably more than 200 billion.

Which element has the chemical symbol 'O'?

Oxygen

Oxygen is the third most abundant element in the universe, after hydrogen and helium.

Roughly how long does the International Space Station take to complete one orbit of Earth?

About 90 minutes

Its crew sees about 16 sunrises and sunsets every single day.

What is the tallest land animal in the world?

The giraffe

A giraffe's heart weighs around 11 kilograms to pump blood up that long neck.

Which organ of the human body is the largest?

The skin

An adult's skin weighs roughly 3.6 kilograms and covers about 2 square metres.

What do you call an animal that eats only plants?

A herbivore

Cows, horses and giant pandas are all herbivores — though pandas belong to the bear family.

Which planet is famous for its rings of ice and rock?

Saturn

The rings are billions of ice chunks — some as small as grains of sugar, some as big as houses.

What was the name of the first space station, launched into orbit in 1971?

Salyut 1

The Soviet station hosted one crew for 23 days before its tragic return flight.

Which subatomic particle carries a negative electric charge?

The electron

Electrons weigh about 1/1836th of a proton — they are almost pure nothing, yet run all of chemistry.

What is the chemical formula for common table salt?

NaCl (sodium chloride)

One sodium atom and one chlorine atom — two dangerous elements that make a kitchen essential.

Which bird is the fastest animal on Earth in a hunting dive?

The peregrine falcon

In a stoop it has been clocked at over 380 km/h — faster than a Formula 1 car.

How many legs does a spider have?

Eight

All spiders are arachnids — if it has six legs, it is an insect, not a spider.

What is the main gas that makes up the Sun?

Hydrogen

The Sun converts about 600 million tonnes of hydrogen into helium every second.

Which human sense is most strongly wired to memory, which is why smells trigger nostalgia?

Smell (olfaction)

Smell signals travel almost directly to the brain's memory and emotion centres.

Approximately how fast does sound travel through air at sea level?

About 343 metres per second

That is roughly 1,235 km/h — fast, but light beats it by a factor of nearly a million.

Which scientist's equation E = mc2 links energy and mass?

Albert Einstein

The equation appeared in 1905, Einstein's 'miracle year' of four revolutionary papers.

What do bees collect from flowers to make honey?

Nectar

A single jar of honey requires nectar from roughly two million flower visits.

Which is the only mammal capable of true powered flight?

The bat

There are over 1,400 bat species — about one in five of all mammal species.

What is the name of the process by which plants make food from sunlight?

Photosynthesis

Nearly all life on Earth runs on energy captured by this one chemical trick.

How many chambers does the human heart have?

Four

Two atria on top, two ventricles below — a double pump in a single organ.

Which dwarf planet was classed as the ninth planet until 2006?

Pluto

Pluto is smaller than Earth's Moon and takes 248 years to orbit the Sun once.

What is the hardest naturally occurring substance on Earth?

Diamond

Diamonds are pure carbon squeezed under enormous pressure deep underground.

Which mammal can live for over 200 years, making it the longest-lived of all?

The bowhead whale

Some bowheads alive today may carry 19th-century harpoon points in their blubber.

What is the pH of a neutral solution?

7

The scale runs 0 to 14: below 7 is acid, above 7 is alkaline.

Which blood type is known as the universal donor type?

O negative

O-negative blood can be given to almost anyone in an emergency — its donors are always in demand.

The Great Red Spot is a centuries-old storm on which planet?

Jupiter

The storm is wider than Earth and has been raging for at least 190 years of observation.

How many eyes does a honeybee have?

Five

Two large compound eyes plus three tiny simple eyes, called ocelli, on top of its head.

What is the dense centre of an atom called?

The nucleus

The nucleus holds over 99.97% of the atom's mass in a speck a hundred-thousandth of its width.

NEXT ROUND

GEOGRAPHY & WORLD CAPITALS

What is the only letter in the English alphabet that does NOT appear in any US state name?

The Letter 'Q'

Every other letter from A to Z appears at least once across all 50 states.

GEOGRAPHY & WORLD CAPITALS · QUESTION 2 · 150 PTS

What is the capital city of Australia?

Canberra

Canberra was purpose-built as a compromise between rivals Sydney and Melbourne.

According to the United Nations, which country became the most populous on Earth in 2023?

India

India overtook China in 2023, with a population passing 1.43 billion people.

The Danube flows through which capital city, famed as the home of the waltz?

Vienna

Vienna is one of four capitals on the Danube — the others are Bratislava, Budapest and Belgrade.

Which is the largest hot desert in the world?

The Sahara

At about 9.2 million square kilometres, the Sahara is almost the size of the entire United States.

Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak, stands in which country?

Tanzania

Its highest point, Uhuru Peak, rises 5,895 metres above sea level.

Which country is also an entire continent by itself?

Australia

Australia is the world's smallest continent and its sixth-largest country.

What is the capital city of Canada?

Ottawa

Queen Victoria chose Ottawa in 1857, partly because it sat safely between Toronto and Montreal.

The Strait of Gibraltar separates southern Spain from which North African country?

Morocco

At its narrowest point the strait is only about 14 kilometres wide.

The Grand Canyon is carved into which US state?

Arizona

The canyon is about 446 kilometres long and up to 1,857 metres deep.

Reykjavik, the world's northernmost capital, belongs to which island nation?

Iceland

Reykjavik runs almost entirely on geothermal and hydroelectric renewable energy.

Which river is traditionally considered the longest in the world, at about 6,650 km?

The Nile

The Amazon carries far more water, but the Nile is usually measured as the longest.

What is the capital of Japan?

Tokyo

Tokyo is the largest metropolitan economy in the world, home to over 37 million people in its metro area.

Which is the smallest country in the world?

Vatican City

At under half a square kilometre, it is smaller than many shopping malls — yet issues its own stamps and passports.

The Eiffel Tower stands in which city?

Paris

It was meant to be temporary, built for the 1889 World's Fair, and was nearly scrapped in 1909.

Which river flows through the centre of London?

The River Thames

The Thames is 346 km long and was once so polluted it was declared biologically dead in 1957.

Mount Everest lies on the border of Nepal and which other country?

China (Tibet)

Everest grows about 4 millimetres taller every year as tectonic plates keep colliding.

What is the capital of Brazil?

Brasilia

Brasilia was built from scratch in just 41 months and inaugurated in 1960.

Which country has the largest land area in the world?

Russia

Russia covers about one-eighth of the world's inhabited land and spans 11 time zones.

The Panama Canal connects which two oceans?

The Atlantic and the Pacific

Ships save a journey of some 13,000 km around South America by using the canal.

Which African country was formerly known as Abyssinia?

Ethiopia

Ethiopia is the only African country never formally colonised, and uses its own calendar with 13 months.

What is the longest river in South America?

The Amazon

The Amazon discharges more water than the next seven largest rivers combined.

Which US state is nicknamed the Sunshine State?

Florida

Florida was given the nickname officially in 1970 — and earns it with some 230 sunny days a year.

The Great Barrier Reef lies off the coast of which Australian state?

Queensland

The reef is the largest living structure on Earth — big enough to be seen from space.

What is the capital of Egypt?

Cairo

Cairo is the largest city of the Arab world and sits a short drive from the pyramids of Giza.

Kangaroos are native to which country?

Australia

There are roughly twice as many kangaroos in Australia as there are people.

Which is the largest ocean on Earth?

The Pacific Ocean

The Pacific covers more area than all of Earth's land combined.

The city of Istanbul straddles which two continents?

Europe and Asia

The Bosphorus Strait splits the city in two — you can breakfast in Asia and lunch in Europe.

What is the capital of Spain?

Madrid

Madrid is Europe's highest capital city, sitting about 650 metres above sea level.

Which is the coldest continent on Earth?

Antarctica

It holds about 70% of the planet's fresh water, locked up as ice.

Which capital city is home to the ancient Colosseum?

Rome

The Colosseum could hold around 50,000 spectators — and was sometimes flooded to stage sea battles.

Which country has more natural lakes than any other on Earth?

Canada

Estimates suggest Canada holds over 60% of the world's lakes.

What is the largest island in the world?

Greenland

Australia is bigger, but it counts as a continent — Greenland takes the island title.

Which US state is nicknamed the Lone Star State?

Texas

The lone star recalls Texas's decade as an independent republic, 1836 to 1845.

Angel Falls, the world's tallest waterfall, is located in which country?

Venezuela

The falls drop 979 metres — so high that much of the water evaporates before reaching the bottom.

What is the capital of Argentina?

Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires has more bookshops per person than any other city in the world.

Which European country is famously shaped like a boot?

Italy

The 'boot' kicks the triangular 'ball' of Sicily across the Mediterranean.

Mount Fuji is the highest mountain of which country?

Japan

Fuji last erupted in 1707 and is still classified as an active volcano.

The Strait of Malacca separates Malaysia from which large Indonesian island?

Sumatra

It is one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, carrying about a quarter of global traded goods.

What is the smallest US state by land area?

Rhode Island

You could fit Rhode Island inside Alaska more than 400 times over.

The Victoria Falls lie on which African river?

The Zambezi

The falls form the largest sheet of falling water in the world, over 1.7 km wide.

Cape Town is a major city of which country?

South Africa

South Africa has three capitals: Cape Town (legislative), Pretoria (executive) and Bloemfontein (judicial).

Which country has the longest coastline in the world?

Canada

Counting its Arctic islands, Canada's coastline runs over 200,000 kilometres.

What is the capital of New Zealand?

Wellington

Wellington is the world's southernmost capital city — and one of the windiest.

Which sea separates Europe from Africa?

The Mediterranean Sea

Its name comes from Latin for 'sea in the middle of the land'.

The Atacama, one of the driest deserts on Earth, lies mainly in which country?

Chile

Some parts of the Atacama went roughly 400 years without recorded rain.

Which island nation off Africa's southeast coast is famous for its lemurs?

Madagascar

About 90% of Madagascar's wildlife exists nowhere else on Earth.

What is the capital of South Korea?

Seoul

Nearly half of South Korea's population lives in the Seoul metropolitan area.

Which mountain range separates France from Spain?

The Pyrenees

The tiny country of Andorra sits entirely within the Pyrenees.

Lake Baikal, the deepest lake in the world, is in which country?

Russia

Baikal holds about a fifth of the world's fresh surface water — more than all the US Great Lakes combined.

Which country's flag features a red maple leaf?

Canada

The flag was adopted in 1965 after a famous nationwide design debate.

NEXT ROUND

MUSIC & AUDIO RIFFS

Which band released the album 'Abbey Road' in 1969?

The Beatles

The cover photo of the zebra crossing was taken in about ten minutes outside EMI Studios.

How many keys are there on a standard modern piano?

88

52 white keys and 36 black keys — a range of just over seven octaves.

Which deaf-in-old-age composer wrote the famous 'Moonlight Sonata'?

Ludwig van Beethoven

Beethoven never called it that — the nickname came from a critic writing after his death.

A 'luthier' is a craftsman who builds and repairs which instruments?

Stringed instruments (violins, guitars and their family)

The word comes from 'luth', French for lute.

Which singer is universally known as the 'Queen of Pop'?

Madonna

Madonna is the best-selling female recording artist of all time.

In 4/4 time, a whole note (semibreve) is held for how many beats?

Four beats

A whole note fills the entire bar in 4/4 — hence the name.

Chart-topping quartet ABBA came from which country?

Sweden

ABBA won Eurovision in 1974 with 'Waterloo', launching their global career.

What was Elvis Presley's famous Memphis mansion called?

Graceland

Graceland is one of the most visited houses in America, second only to the White House.

Rapper Eminem performs his angrier alter ego under what name?

Slim Shady

'The Slim Shady LP' of 1999 made Eminem a superstar — and thoroughly infamous.

How many strings does a standard acoustic or electric guitar have?

Six

The standard tuning, low to high, is E–A–D–G–B–E.

The tune of 'Happy Birthday' was first published in 1893 under what title?

'Good Morning to All'

Sisters Patty and Mildred Hill wrote it as a classroom greeting song.

Before a concert, which orchestral instrument traditionally plays the note A for everyone to tune to?

The oboe

The oboe's piercing tone cuts through the whole orchestra, making it easy to hear.

How many symphonies did Beethoven compose?

Nine

His Ninth, premiered when he was almost completely deaf, gave us the 'Ode to Joy'.

Which instrument has 47 strings and seven pedals in its full concert form?

The harp

Each pedal has three positions, letting one harp play in any key.

Who is universally known as the 'King of Rock and Roll'?

Elvis Presley

Presley had 18 US number-one singles and starred in 31 films.

Which singer released the album 'Thriller' in 1982?

Michael Jackson

'Thriller' remains the best-selling album of all time, with over 70 million copies sold.

What is the lowest-pitched instrument in a standard string quartet?

The cello

A string quartet is two violins, a viola and one cello.

The song 'Bohemian Rhapsody' is by which band?

Queen

Record executives said the nearly six-minute song would never get radio play. It topped the charts twice.

Which Italian composer wrote the violin concertos known as 'The Four Seasons'?

Antonio Vivaldi

Vivaldi wrote the concertos around 1720 and published them with matching sonnets about each season.

In 4/4 time, a half note (minim) lasts for how many beats?

Two beats

Exactly half of a whole note — the name gives it away.

The tango originated in the working-class districts of which capital city?

Buenos Aires (Argentina)

UNESCO lists the tango as part of the world's Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Which band recorded the 1973 album 'The Dark Side of the Moon'?

Pink Floyd

The album spent a record 900-plus weeks on the Billboard 200 chart.

What is a group of exactly eight musicians called?

An octet

Four is a quartet, five a quintet — Latin counting runs through chamber music.

Which pop superstar is known to her fans as 'Queen Bey'?

Beyonce

Beyonce is the most awarded artist in Grammy history, with over 30 wins.

The finale of Rossini's 'William Tell Overture' became famous as the theme of which TV hero?

The Lone Ranger

The galloping finale has signalled heroic horseback rides in cartoons ever since.

How many strings does a standard violin have?

Four

They are tuned in fifths: G, D, A and E.

Which German composer wrote the epic opera cycle 'The Ring of the Nibelung'?

Richard Wagner

The full Ring cycle runs about 15 hours across four operas.

What does 'a cappella' mean in music?

Singing without instrumental accompaniment

The Italian phrase means 'in the manner of the chapel'.

Which jazz trumpeter and singer was nicknamed 'Satchmo'?

Louis Armstrong

The nickname came from 'Satchel Mouth', shortened over his early career.

The Beatles were formed in which English city?

Liverpool

Before settling on The Beatles, the band played as The Quarrymen and The Silver Beetles.

Which instrument is traditionally nicknamed the 'king of instruments'?

The organ (pipe organ)

Mozart himself used the title — the largest pipe organs have over 30,000 pipes.

Who composed the ballet 'The Nutcracker'?

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky disliked the score at first; it is now the most performed ballet in the world.

What word describes the words of a song, as opposed to its melody?

Lyrics

The word comes from the lyre, the instrument that accompanied sung poetry in ancient Greece.

Which singer's fanbase call themselves 'Swifties'?

Taylor Swift

Swift's Eras Tour became the highest-grossing concert tour of all time.

Which brass instrument changes pitch with a slide instead of valves?

The trombone

'Trombone' is Italian for 'large trumpet' — its slide gives it seven basic positions.

The opera 'Carmen' was written by which French composer?

Georges Bizet

Bizet died three months after the premiere, never knowing 'Carmen' would conquer the world.

Hip hop was born in the 1970s in which New York City borough?

The Bronx

DJ Kool Herc's 1973 back-to-school party in the Bronx is widely counted as hip hop's birthplace.

What do we call a slow, sentimental song, often about love?

A ballad

Ballads began as narrative folk songs sung for centuries before they were ever written down.

Which Mozart opera features the Queen of the Night and her famously high aria?

The Magic Flute

The Queen's aria reaches one of the highest notes in all opera — a top F.

How many musicians perform in a string quartet?

Four

Two violinists, one violist and one cellist — Haydn effectively invented the format.

Which American band sang the 1977 classic 'Hotel California'?

Eagles

'Hotel California' won the Grammy for Record of the Year in 1978.

The tempo marking 'allegro' instructs musicians to play how?

Fast and brightly

Allegro is Italian for 'cheerful' — the opposite end of the scale from the slow 'adagio'.

Which Caribbean country gave the world reggae and Bob Marley?

Jamaica

Reggae was added to UNESCO's cultural heritage list in 2018.

A 'duet' is a piece performed by how many musicians?

Two

Duet for two performers; a piece for two pianists at one piano is a special favourite of the form.

Which Polish-French composer is celebrated as the 'poet of the piano'?

Frederic Chopin

Chopin wrote almost exclusively for the piano — and transformed what the instrument could express.

Which large tuned drums, also called kettledrums, anchor the orchestra's percussion section?

Timpani

A timpanist tunes each drum with a pedal, mid-performance, by ear.

The 1985 charity supergroup USA for Africa recorded which single?

We Are the World

Written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, it raised over $60 million for famine relief.

Roughly how many symphonies did Mozart compose?

Over 40 (41 are numbered)

Mozart wrote his first symphony at eight years old and his last, the 'Jupiter', at 32.

The saxophone was invented in the 1840s by Adolphe Sax, a maker from which country?

Belgium

Sax patented the saxophone in Paris in 1846, aiming to bridge brass and woodwind.

What genre of music is most associated with Nashville and Johnny Cash?

Country music

Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, founded in 1925, is the longest-running radio show in US history.

Which note value, also called a crotchet in British terms, gets one beat in 4/4?

The quarter note

Four quarter notes fill a 4/4 bar — hence the name.

NEXT ROUND

SPORTS & EPIC CHAMPIONS

How often are the Summer Olympic Games held?

Every four years

The modern Games began in Athens in 1896; the four-year cycle is called an Olympiad.

Which national team has won the FIFA World Cup the most times?

Brazil

Brazil has five titles — 1958, 1962, 1970, 1994 and 2002 — and has played in every World Cup.

In tennis scoring, what is a score of zero points called?

Love

The term may come from the French 'l'oeuf' — the egg — describing the shape of a zero.

How many players from one basketball team are on the court at the same time?

Five

Five on court, with squads typically carrying up to twelve players on game day.

Which heavyweight champion, born Cassius Clay, called himself simply 'The Greatest'?

Muhammad Ali

Ali won the world heavyweight title three times across three different decades.

In golf, a score of one stroke under par on a hole is called what?

A birdie

Two under par is an eagle; one over par is a bogey.

Which swimmer is the most decorated Olympian in history, with 28 medals?

Michael Phelps

Phelps won 23 golds — more than most countries have managed in total.

The Super Bowl decides the champion of which American sports league?

The NFL (National Football League)

Super Bowl Sunday is one of the most-watched television events on Earth.

Excluding stoppage and extra time, a standard association football match lasts how long?

90 minutes

Two halves of 45 minutes, with a 15-minute half-time break.

The sport of badminton is played over a net with what feathered projectile?

A shuttlecock

A shuttlecock's feathers come traditionally from the left wing of a goose.

Usain Bolt's 100 metres world record, set in Berlin in 2009, stands at what time?

9.58 seconds

Bolt's record has survived more than a decade and a half of challengers.

Which bat-and-ball sport is played on a diamond with four bases?

Baseball

The four bases — home, first, second and third — form the diamond.

How many rings appear on the Olympic flag?

Five

The five rings represent the inhabited continents, and their colours appear in every national flag.

In which sport would a player perform a slam dunk?

Basketball

The dunk was banned in US college basketball from 1967 to 1976 — partly thanks to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's dominance.

Which country is credited with inventing golf, centred on St Andrews?

Scotland

Golf was so popular that Scotland's parliament banned it in 1457 for distracting men from archery practice.

To the nearest whole number, how many kilometres long is a marathon?

42 kilometres (42.195 km)

The odd distance was standardised at the 1908 London Olympics so the race could finish at the royal box.

Which tennis tournament is played on grass at the All England Club?

Wimbledon

Wimbledon began in 1877 and still insists on a strict all-white dress code for players.

In American football, how many points is a touchdown worth?

Six points

Add the extra-point kick and a scoring drive usually yields seven.

Which heavyweight boxer was nicknamed 'Iron Mike'?

Mike Tyson

Tyson became the youngest heavyweight champion in history at just 20 years old.

Which nation won the very first FIFA World Cup in 1930?

Uruguay

Uruguay hosted and won the tournament, beating Argentina 4-2 in the final.

How many holes are played in a standard round of golf?

18

The 18-hole standard also comes from St Andrews, whose course settled at 18 holes in 1764.

Which sport uses the terms 'strike' and 'spare'?

Tenpin bowling

A perfect game of 12 straight strikes scores exactly 300.

In ice hockey, what is the small rubber disc called?

A puck

Game pucks are frozen before matches to stop them bouncing on the ice.

Which gymnast, with multiple skills named after her, is widely considered the greatest of all time?

Simone Biles

Biles has more World Championship medals than any gymnast in history, male or female.

The Tour de France traditionally finishes in which city?

Paris (on the Champs-Elysees)

The final stage has ended on the Champs-Elysees every year since 1975.

How many players does a rugby union team field at once?

15

Fifteen a side, from the loosehead prop (number 1) to the fullback (number 15).

Karate developed on the island of Okinawa, part of which country?

Japan

'Karate' means 'empty hand' — a fighting art built for the unarmed.

In darts, what is the highest possible score with three darts?

180

Three triple-twenties — the commentator's famous cry of 'One hundred and eighty!'

In an Olympic individual medley, which stroke is swum first?

Butterfly

The medley order is butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

The Ashes is a historic cricket series between England and which country?

Australia

The rivalry began in 1882, named for a mock obituary of English cricket printed in a newspaper.

In baseball, a batter who strikes out has accumulated how many strikes?

Three strikes

'Three strikes and you're out' passed from baseball into everyday language — and US law.

Which two drivers share the record of seven Formula 1 world championships?

Michael Schumacher and Lewis Hamilton

Schumacher set the mark in 2004; Hamilton equalled it in 2020.

Japan's national sport features wrestlers, called rikishi, grappling in a clay ring called a dohyo. What is it?

Sumo wrestling

Sumo's rituals — salt throwing, leg stomps — descend from ancient Shinto ceremonies.

How many players of one volleyball team are on the court at a time?

Six

Teams rotate clockwise every time they win back the serve.

Which chess piece is the only one that can jump over other pieces?

The knight

The knight's L-shaped leap makes it the trickiest piece for beginners to track.

The Stanley Cup is the championship trophy of which sport?

Ice hockey (the NHL)

Donated in 1893, the Stanley Cup is the oldest trophy still contested in North American pro sport.

How many events make up a decathlon?

Ten

Four runs, three jumps and three throws across two days decide the 'world's greatest athlete'.

The Olympic motto 'Citius, Altius, Fortius' translates into English as what?

Faster, Higher, Stronger

In 2021 the IOC added a fourth word: 'Communiter' — Together.

In snooker, how many points is the black ball worth?

Seven

The black is the most valuable ball; a maximum break totals 147 points.

What is the only sport to have been played on the Moon?

Golf

Apollo 14 astronaut Alan Shepard smuggled a club head aboard and hit two shots in 1971.

In which sport do athletes perform the 'Fosbury Flop'?

High jump (athletics)

Dick Fosbury's backwards technique, mocked in 1968, won Olympic gold and replaced every older style.

The America's Cup, first contested in 1851, is a trophy in which sport?

Sailing (yachting)

It is the oldest international trophy in world sport — older than the modern Olympics.

Taekwondo originates from which country?

Korea

Its name breaks down as 'the way of foot and fist'; it became an Olympic sport in 2000.

What colour jersey does the overall leader wear in the Tour de France?

Yellow (the maillot jaune)

The yellow jersey was introduced in 1919 so crowds could spot the leader easily.

How many players does a cricket team have on the field?

Eleven

All eleven field, but only two bat at a time — cricket's enduring oddity.

Curling matches are played on what surface?

Ice

Curlers sweep the ice to melt a microscopic layer, steering the 20-kilogram stone.

In boxing, what does the abbreviation 'KO' stand for?

Knockout

A technical knockout, TKO, is when the referee or corner stops the fight instead.

Which Grand Slam tennis tournament is played on clay courts at Roland Garros?

The French Open

Rafael Nadal won the title a staggering 14 times, earning the nickname 'King of Clay'.

A basketball hoop's rim has what diameter, in inches?

18 inches

Exactly twice the diameter of the ball — which is why perfect shots can still rattle out.

Which country has won the most Olympic medals of all time?

The United States

The US total across Summer and Winter Games stands well beyond 2,900 medals.

Of fencing's three weapons — foil, sabre and epee — which is the heaviest?

The epee

The epee is also the only weapon with no right-of-way rules: first light wins the point.

NEXT ROUND

FOOD, DRINK & CULINARY SECRETS

Which European nation officially consumes the most beer per capita in the entire world?

Czech Republic (Czechia)

Consuming over 180 liters per person annually, holding the global #1 spot for over 30 years.

The world's most expensive spice, saffron, is harvested from which flower?

The crocus

Saffron threads are the dried stigmas of Crocus sativus — it takes about 150 flowers for one gram.

What is the principal ingredient of a proper guacamole?

Avocado

Traditional Mexican guacamole adds lime, salt, onion, chilli and coriander to mashed avocado.

Which country drinks the most coffee per person in the world?

Finland

The average Finn drinks around four cups of coffee a day.

Tofu is made by curdling the milk of which bean?

The soybean

Tofu originated in China over 2,000 years ago and spread across Asia with Buddhism.

Green tea and black tea come from the same plant — what process makes black tea different?

Oxidation of the leaves

Both come from Camellia sinensis; black tea leaves are fully oxidised, green tea leaves are not.

According to the proverb, eating one of which fruit 'a day' keeps the doctor away?

An apple

The saying began in 19th-century Wales: 'Eat an apple on going to bed…'

The ancestor of the croissant, the kipferl, comes from which country — France's famous pastry is an import!

Austria

Viennese bakers made the kipferl for centuries before it was refined in Paris as the croissant.

True wasabi is a relative of which sharp-tasting Western condiment root?

Horseradish

Both are in the brassica family — most 'wasabi' outside Japan is actually dyed horseradish.

What is the maximum number of Michelin stars a single restaurant can hold?

Three

Michelin's own words: three stars mean 'exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey'.

A classic Ferrero Rocher chocolate wraps its wafer around which nut?

A hazelnut

Each Rocher contains a whole roasted hazelnut inside its chocolate shell.

Which Italian city is credited as the birthplace of modern pizza?

Naples

Neapolitan pizza is protected by UNESCO-listed traditional methods and an official association.

What is the main ingredient in hummus?

Chickpeas

Chickpeas, tahini, lemon and garlic — the Levant has argued over the perfect ratio for centuries.

Which famously pungent fruit is called the 'king of fruits' in Southeast Asia and banned in many hotels?

Durian

Its smell has been described as almonds, onions and gym socks — airlines ban it from cabins.

Sushi originates from which country?

Japan

Sushi began as a preservation method: fish fermented in rice, which was originally thrown away.

Eclairs and profiteroles are both made from which type of pastry?

Choux pastry

Choux relies on steam, not yeast, to puff its hollow shells.

Which country typically produces the most wine in the world by volume, trading the lead with France?

Italy

Italy and France swap first place depending on the harvest; Spain is usually third.

After water, what is the most widely consumed drink in the world?

Tea

All true teas — black, green, oolong, white — come from one plant: Camellia sinensis.

A 'sommelier' is a trained expert in what?

Wine

The word once meant the officer in charge of provisions and pack animals at a French court.

Which nut is the base of marzipan?

Almonds

Ground almonds and sugar — Lubeck and Toledo both claim to have perfected it.

What gives black pudding its dark colour and much of its protein?

Blood (traditionally pig's blood)

Versions of blood sausage exist on every continent, from Spanish morcilla to Korean sundae.

Which spice was once so valuable it was nicknamed 'black gold' and accepted as payment for rent?

Black pepper

Pepper was literally worth its weight in gold in medieval Europe — ransom demands were paid in it.

The Caesar salad was invented in the 1920s in which country?

Mexico (in Tijuana, by Caesar Cardini)

Italian immigrant Cardini improvised it on a busy 4th of July — it contains no anchovies in the original.

What is the star ingredient of a traditional Swiss fondue?

Melted cheese

Gruyere and Emmental, melted with white wine and eaten with bread on long forks.

The jam layer of a traditional Bakewell tart is made from which berry?

Raspberry

The tart comes from Bakewell in Derbyshire — legend says it began as a cook's happy mistake.

What does the Italian cooking term 'al dente' literally instruct?

'To the tooth' — pasta firm to the bite

Properly al dente pasta keeps a tiny white core of uncooked starch at its centre.

The Mojito cocktail originates from which Caribbean country?

Cuba

Havana's mint-and-rum highball was a favourite of Ernest Hemingway — or so the bars of Havana insist.

Kimchi, the spicy fermented vegetable dish, comes from which country?

Korea

Traditional kimchi is buried in clay pots to ferment through the winter; there are over 200 varieties.

Sake, the Japanese rice wine, is brewed from which grain?

Rice

Sake rice is polished down — the finest grades mill away 50% or more of each grain.

As of recent records, which chilli pepper is officially the hottest in the world?

Pepper X

Pepper X, certified in 2023, averages about 2.69 million Scoville units — hotter than police pepper spray.

A 'baker's dozen' is how many items?

13

Medieval bakers added a thirteenth loaf to avoid punishment for selling short weight.

Cavendish and Lady Finger are varieties of which fruit?

Banana

The Cavendish accounts for about half of all bananas grown on Earth.

Miso soup is built on miso, a paste fermented from which bean?

Soybeans

Miso ferments for months to years; the oldest styles are aged like fine cheese.

Which country drinks the most tea per person in the world?

Turkey

The average Turk drinks over 1,300 cups a year, served in tulip-shaped glasses.

Paella originates from which Spanish city and region?

Valencia

True Valenciana paella uses rabbit, chicken and green beans — never chorizo, Valencians insist.

Sauerkraut is made by fermenting which vegetable?

Cabbage

Finely shredded cabbage plus salt: lactic fermentation does the rest over several weeks.

Tequila is distilled from which desert plant?

The blue agave

By law, tequila must be made in designated Mexican regions, chiefly Jalisco.

A 'barista' crafts drinks in what kind of establishment?

A coffee shop (espresso bar)

'Barista' is Italian for bartender — in Italy, they serve both coffee and alcohol.

Which soft white cheese is traditional on a pizza Margherita?

Mozzarella

The Margherita's red, white and green mirror the Italian flag — tomato, mozzarella, basil.

What is the French term for a small appetiser, literally meaning 'outside the work'?

Hors d'oeuvre

It was served to workers and guests outside the main body of the meal — hence the name.

Prunes are the dried form of which fruit?

Plums

In 2000, US prunes were officially rebranded as 'dried plums' to shake off their stuffy image.

Kopi luwak, among the world's priciest coffees, is made from beans eaten and passed by which animal?

The Asian palm civet

The beans ferment inside the civet, which producers claim mellows their bitterness.

Which herb is the essential green base of a classic pesto?

Basil

Pesto alla Genovese is protected by tradition: basil, pine nuts, Parmesan, garlic and olive oil.

Which country is the world's largest producer of bananas?

India

India grows over 30 million tonnes a year — though most are eaten at home, not exported.

Which spirit takes its signature flavour from juniper berries?

Gin

Juniper is the one botanical every gin must contain by law in most countries.

Tempura, the light batter-frying technique, was introduced to Japan by traders from which country?

Portugal

Portuguese missionaries brought the technique in the 16th century — even the name echoes Latin 'tempora'.

What is the name of the Italian rice dish stirred slowly with stock until creamy?

Risotto

Carnaroli rice, 'the king of rices', is prized for risotto because it holds its bite.

Which vitamin are citrus fruits most famous for providing?

Vitamin C

British sailors were nicknamed 'limeys' for the citrus issued to prevent scurvy.

A traditional 'full English' breakfast features which cured pork, cut from the loin and back?

Back bacon

Unlike streaky American bacon, back bacon includes a meaty loin eye.

Sourdough bread gets its tang from fermentation by which organisms?

Lactic acid bacteria and wild yeast

A sourdough 'starter' is a living culture — some bakeries keep starters over a century old.

Which red grape is Bordeaux's most famous, blended classically with Merlot?

Cabernet Sauvignon

Cabernet Sauvignon is itself a natural cross of Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc.

NEXT ROUND

LITERATURE & MYTHOLOGICAL BEASTS

Who wrote the 1813 novel 'Pride and Prejudice'?

Jane Austen

Austen published anonymously in her lifetime — the title page simply said 'By a Lady'.

In Greek myth, which Titan stole fire from the gods and gave it to humanity?

Prometheus

His punishment: to be chained to a rock while an eagle ate his ever-regenerating liver.

The witches' chant 'Double, double, toil and trouble' opens Act IV of which Shakespeare play?

Macbeth

Shakespeare's shortest tragedy is also surrounded by a real theatre superstition — 'the Scottish play'.

A mythical creature with the torso of a human and the body of a horse is called what?

A centaur

The wise centaur Chiron was tutor to Achilles and other Greek heroes.

In Norse mythology, the hammer Mjölnir belongs to which god of thunder?

Thor

Mjölnir was forged by the dwarf brothers Sindri and Brokkr.

Which great American novel opens with the line 'Call me Ishmael'?

Moby-Dick

Herman Melville's whaling epic of 1851 was a commercial flop in his lifetime.

In Egyptian mythology, the god Anubis has the head of which animal?

A jackal

Anubis presided over mummification and guided the dead to the afterlife.

The epic poems 'The Iliad' and 'The Odyssey' are traditionally attributed to which ancient Greek poet?

Homer

Whether one man or many composed them is a mystery scholars still debate — the 'Homeric Question'.

Which Gorgon of Greek myth had living snakes in place of hair?

Medusa

Looking directly at Medusa turned viewers to stone; Perseus killed her using a mirrored shield.

Detective Sherlock Holmes lives at which famous (fictional) London address?

221B Baker Street

The address did not exist when Conan Doyle wrote — the museum there now answers fan mail.

Which legendary bird cyclically rises, reborn, from its own ashes?

The phoenix

In Greek tradition the phoenix lived for centuries before burning and renewing itself.

Who wrote the landmark magical-realist novel 'One Hundred Years of Solitude'?

Gabriel García Márquez

The Colombian author's masterpiece helped win him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982.

Who wrote the tragedy 'Romeo and Juliet'?

William Shakespeare

Shakespeare based it on an Italian tale — his lovers are just 13 and 17 years old in the play.

In Greek myth, who flew too close to the sun on wings of feathers and wax?

Icarus

His father Daedalus built the wings and warned him about both the sun and the sea spray.

Which Dickens novel opens: 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times'?

A Tale of Two Cities

Set in London and Paris during the French Revolution, it is among the best-selling novels ever.

What is the name of the great lion in C.S. Lewis's Narnia books?

Aslan

'Aslan' is simply the Turkish word for lion.

In Norse mythology, what is the name of the immense world tree that connects the realms?

Yggdrasil

A dragon gnaws its roots while an eagle watches from its crown — the tree holds all worlds between.

Who wrote the 'Harry Potter' series?

J.K. Rowling

Rowling wrote the first book as a struggling single mother; twelve publishers rejected it.

Which Greek hero slew the Minotaur inside the Labyrinth of Crete?

Theseus

Ariadne's ball of thread let him retrace his steps out of the maze.

The dystopian novel '1984', with its watcher Big Brother, was written by whom?

George Orwell

Orwell wrote it in 1948 — swapping the last two digits gave him his grim future date.

In Egyptian myth, which goddess gathered and restored the body of her husband Osiris?

Isis

Isis became the model of the devoted wife and mother across the ancient world.

Which author created the Belgian detective Hercule Poirot?

Agatha Christie

Poirot appeared in 33 novels — Christie grew to dislike him but kept him for the readers.

What is the popular nickname of the creature said to inhabit Scotland's Loch Ness?

Nessie (the Loch Ness Monster)

The loch is so deep and murky that all of England and Wales's lakes could fit inside it.

In Greek mythology, who is the goddess of wisdom and warfare, born from Zeus's head?

Athena

Athens took her name after she won the city with the gift of the olive tree.

Which 1818 novel tells of Victor, a scientist, and the Creature he assembles?

Frankenstein

Mary Shelley wrote it at 18, during a ghost-story contest with Lord Byron and her husband Percy.

The Hindu epic 'Mahabharata' contains which sacred dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna?

The Bhagavad Gita

The Gita's 700 verses are set on a battlefield, in the moments before the war begins.

Who wrote 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'?

Lewis Carroll

Carroll — real name Charles Dodgson — was an Oxford mathematics lecturer.

The Roman god of war, Mars, corresponds to which Greek god?

Ares

The Greeks disliked chaotic Ares; Rome elevated Mars to father of Romulus and patron of soldiers.

Which Bronte sister wrote 'Jane Eyre'?

Charlotte Bronte

She published as 'Currer Bell' to hide that the author was a woman.

In 'Charlotte's Web', what kind of animal is Charlotte, who writes words to save a pig?

A spider

Her web-words — 'Some Pig', 'Terrific' — save Wilbur from the smokehouse.

In the original Greek story, Pandora opened not a box but what container, releasing the world's evils?

A jar (a pithos)

A mistranslation by Erasmus turned the jar into a box — and the box stuck for 500 years.

Who wrote 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings'?

J.R.R. Tolkien

Tolkien began with one line, scribbled on an exam paper: 'In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit.'

Which legendary British king is said to have wielded the sword Excalibur?

King Arthur

In some tales Excalibur comes from the Lady of the Lake; in others, from the stone.

In Japanese folklore, the shape-shifting kitsune takes the form of which animal?

A fox

Kitsune grow extra tails as they age — the wisest are said to have nine.

Which American poet wrote the gothic classic 'The Raven' (1845)?

Edgar Allan Poe

Poe was paid just $9 for the poem that made him famous overnight.

Aphrodite, Greek goddess of love, has which Roman counterpart?

Venus

The planet Venus keeps her Roman name, as do all the planets — a Roman sweep of the sky.

In 'The Great Gatsby', who narrates the story of Jay Gatsby?

Nick Carraway

Nick is both insider and outsider — Gatsby's neighbour, cousin to Daisy, and the reader's conscience.

A mythical creature that is half human and half fish is called what?

A mermaid (or merman)

Sailors' mermaid sightings are now widely blamed on manatees and dugongs.

Ray Bradbury's dystopia about book-burning is named for the temperature at which paper burns. What is it?

Fahrenheit 451

Bradbury wrote the novel on a rented typewriter in a library basement, for $9.80 in dimes.

In Norse myth, which shape-shifting trickster god is Thor's frequent companion?

Loki

Loki is by turns the gods' cleverest helper and the architect of their doom at Ragnarok.

Which ancient Greek storyteller is credited with fables like 'The Tortoise and the Hare'?

Aesop

Whether one man or a tradition, 'Aesop' has fronted talking-animal wisdom for 2,500 years.

The 1897 novel 'Dracula' was written by whom?

Bram Stoker

Stoker researched Transylvanian folklore for years — but never actually visited Romania.

In Egyptian mythology, the sun god travels the sky in a boat. What is his name?

Ra

Each night Ra sailed the underworld and battled the serpent Apophis to rise again at dawn.

Which children's author wrote 'Matilda' and 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'?

Roald Dahl

Dahl wrote in a garden shed he called his 'Gipsy House hut', in pencil, on yellow legal pads.

What is the name of the one-eyed giant blinded by Odysseus and his men?

Polyphemus (the Cyclops)

Odysseus gave his name as 'Nobody' — so the giant's cries that 'Nobody' hurt him brought no help.

Who wrote the epic poem 'Paradise Lost'?

John Milton

Milton composed the entire epic blind, dictating verses to his daughters and assistants each morning.

In Arthurian legend, who was King Arthur's queen?

Guinevere

Her love affair with Lancelot is the crack that eventually shatters Camelot.

Which Russian author wrote the vast novel 'War and Peace'?

Leo Tolstoy

Tolstoy's wife Sophia copied out the manuscript by hand at least seven times.

The mythical city of gold hunted by Spanish conquistadors across South America was called what?

El Dorado

The legend began with a real ritual: a Muisca king covered in gold dust, bathing in Lake Guatavita.

Who wrote 'The Picture of Dorian Gray', his only novel?

Oscar Wilde

Wilde's wittiest lines were used against him as evidence at his trial in 1895.

In Greek myth, which hero was invulnerable everywhere except his heel?

Achilles

His mother Thetis dipped him in the River Styx — holding him, fatally, by that heel.

NEXT ROUND

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND · QUESTION 1 · 300 PTS

What is the smallest prime number of all?

2

Two is also the only even prime number — every other even number divides by it.

The chemical symbol 'W' stands for which metal?

Tungsten

The W comes from its German name, Wolfram — which is why the symbol confuses everyone.

In which year did the Berlin Wall fall?

1989

The wall fell on 9 November 1989, opening the way to German reunification the next year.

What is the official currency of Japan?

The yen

The yen was introduced in 1871 as part of Japan's Meiji-era modernisation.

Which post-impressionist painter famously severed part of his own ear in 1888?

Vincent van Gogh

Van Gogh sold almost nothing in his lifetime and died at just 37.

How many sides does a dodecagon have?

12

A dodecagon: 'dodeca' means twelve in Greek.

In biology class terms, what organelle is nicknamed 'the powerhouse of the cell'?

The mitochondria

Mitochondria generate most of the cell's chemical energy, ATP.

The mysterious Bermuda Triangle lies in which ocean?

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND · ANSWER 8

The Atlantic Ocean

Its rough corners are Miami, Bermuda and Puerto Rico.

The abbreviation DNA stands for what?

Deoxyribonucleic acid

Its double-helix structure was published by Watson and Crick in 1953, using Rosalind Franklin's data.

Which chess piece moves only along diagonals?

The bishop

Each bishop stays forever on the colour of square it started on.

What is the square root of 144?

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND · ANSWER 11

12

12 × 12 = 144 — one of the neatest perfect squares.

The vast majority of Brazil's 200+ million people speak which language?

Portuguese

Brazil is the largest Portuguese-speaking country in the world by far.

Three continents are crossed by the Equator. South America and Africa are two — which is the third?

Asia

The Equator clips Indonesia and island nations of Oceania-Asia on its way around the planet.

Which metal is liquid at ordinary room temperature?

Mercury

Mercury melts at -39 C — old thermometers used its steady expansion to measure heat.

How many minutes are there in one full day?

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND · ANSWER 15

1,440

60 minutes x 24 hours. Spend them wisely — the lightning round is watching.

What is 15 percent of 200?

30

Ten percent is 20, five percent is 10 — add them for a fast pub-quiz calculation.

Which gas makes up about 21% of the air you are breathing right now?

Oxygen

Nitrogen takes 78%; oxygen's 21% is the slice that keeps every fire and body burning.

Who painted the Mona Lisa?

Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo carried the portrait with him for years, refining it until his death in 1519.

Including wisdom teeth, how many teeth does a typical adult human have?

32

Eight incisors, four canines, eight premolars and twelve molars.

Which planet is known as the Red Planet?

Mars

Its colour comes from iron oxide — literal rust — across its dusty surface.

How many sides does a heptagon have?

7

From the Greek 'hepta', seven — one more than a hexagon, one fewer than an octagon.

In which year did World War II end?

1945

The war in Europe ended that May; Japan's formal surrender followed in September.

What is the chemical symbol for sodium?

Na

Na comes from 'natrium', sodium's Latin name — the same root as the word natron.

Which is the smallest and shallowest of the world's oceans?

The Arctic Ocean

Most of it sits under a floating cap of sea ice that grows and shrinks with the seasons.

How many legs does an insect have?

Six

Six legs is the defining trait of insects — spiders, with eight, are not insects.

Which flightless bird is the largest bird in the world?

The ostrich

An ostrich eye is bigger than its brain — and bigger than any other land animal's eye.

What does the abbreviation 'USB' stand for?

Universal Serial Bus

One of its designers joked the name was so dull it could only succeed on merit.

How many colours are traditionally counted in a rainbow?

Seven

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet — Newton chose seven to match the musical scale.

The Great Wall, over 21,000 km of fortifications, was built across which country?

China

The wall is a network of many walls built by successive dynasties over 2,000 years.

How many grams are there in one kilogram?

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND · ANSWER 30

1,000

The kilogram was the last unit defined by a physical object — a platinum cylinder in Paris — until 2019.

Who wrote the tragedy 'Hamlet'?

William Shakespeare

Hamlet's 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy may be the most quoted speech in English drama.

What is the fastest land animal over short distances?

The cheetah

A cheetah can hit about 60-70 km/h in seconds — but only for a few hundred metres.

Which element, symbol Ca, is essential for bones and teeth?

Calcium

Calcium is the most abundant metal in the human body — about a kilogram of it in each adult.

What is the currency of the United Kingdom?

Pound sterling

The pound is the world's oldest currency still in use, dating back over 1,200 years.

Which instrument is used to measure temperature?

A thermometer

Galileo built an early version in the 1590s that measured air with floating glass bulbs.

The Gobi Desert spans the border of Mongolia and which other country?

China

The Gobi is a rain-shadow desert — the Himalayas block the moist air that might water it.

Which vitamin does the human body produce when skin is exposed to sunlight?

Vitamin D

Just 10-30 minutes of midday sun can cover a day's needs in summer at mid-latitudes.

Which river, at about 6,300 km, is the longest in Asia?

The Yangtze

A third of China's population lives in the Yangtze basin.

How many strings does a standard cello have?

Four

Tuned C, G, D and A — exactly one octave below the viola.

H2SO4 is the formula of which powerful acid?

Sulfuric acid

Known historically as 'oil of vitriol', it is among the most produced industrial chemicals on Earth.

Paper was invented in which ancient country?

China

Cai Lun standardised papermaking in 105 AD, using bark, rags and old fishing nets.

How many moons does the planet Mars have?

Two (Phobos and Deimos)

Both are lumpy, cratered little worlds — probably captured asteroids.

In the air humans exhale, which gas is still the most abundant?

Nitrogen

Exhaled air is still about 78% nitrogen — we only swap a little oxygen for carbon dioxide.

What is the smallest unit of life, the building block of every organism?

The cell

Your body holds roughly 37 trillion of them — and hosts about as many bacteria besides.

Which astronomer published the three laws of planetary motion in the early 1600s?

Johannes Kepler

Kepler derived his laws from Tycho Brahe's obsessively precise star charts.

How many time zones does Russia officially span today?

11

Russia shrank from 11 zones to 9 in 2010, then restored 11 in 2014.

The ancient city of Petra, carved into rose-red cliffs, is in which modern country?

Jordan

Petra was the Nabataeans' capital and was 'lost' to the West until 1812.

Which type of blood vessel carries blood away from the heart?

Arteries

Remember it with 'A for Away' — veins bring blood back to the heart.

How many Nobel Prize categories are awarded in a typical year?

Six

Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature, Peace — and Economics, added in 1968.

Which planet has the fastest winds in the solar system, gusting past 2,000 km/h?

Neptune

Neptune radiates more heat than it receives from the Sun, powering its supersonic storms.

How many years are there in one millennium?

THE ULTIMATE HIGH-STAKES LIGHTNING ROUND · ANSWER 51

1,000

Ten centuries, one hundred decades — and roughly forty human generations.

TIE-BREAKERS

FOR A LEVEL FINISH

TIE-BREAKER 1

How many hearts does an octopus have?

TIE-BREAKER 1 · ANSWER

Three

Two pump blood to the gills; the main heart serves the rest of the body.

TIE-BREAKER 2

In what year was the very first iPhone released?

TIE-BREAKER 2 · ANSWER

2007

Steve Jobs unveiled it in January 2007; it went on sale that June.

TIE-BREAKER 3

By the standard count used in most classrooms, how many continents are there on Earth?

TIE-BREAKER 3 · ANSWER

Seven

Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Europe, North America, South America and Oceania/Australia.

TIE-BREAKER 4

At sea level, water boils at what temperature in Fahrenheit?

TIE-BREAKER 4 · ANSWER

212°F

That is 100°C — the two fixed points Anders Celsius built his scale around.

TIE-BREAKER 5

How many players does a football (soccer) team field at one time?

TIE-BREAKER 5 · ANSWER

Eleven

Ten outfield players plus one goalkeeper.

TIE-BREAKER 6

Which planet is nicknamed the Morning Star?

TIE-BREAKER 6 · ANSWER

Venus

Venus shines so brightly near dawn and dusk that it earned the name in ancient times.

TIE-BREAKER 7

How many minutes are there in one full week?

TIE-BREAKER 7 · ANSWER

10,080

60 minutes × 24 hours × 7 days = 10,080 minutes.

TIE-BREAKER 8

What is the largest mammal in the world?

TIE-BREAKER 8 · ANSWER

The blue whale

A blue whale's heart alone can weigh as much as a small car.

TIE-BREAKER 9

In what year did humans first walk on the Moon?

TIE-BREAKER 9 · ANSWER

1969

Apollo 11 landed on 20 July 1969; Neil Armstrong stepped out first.

TIE-BREAKER 10

How many letters are there in the English alphabet?

TIE-BREAKER 10 · ANSWER

26

The shortest complete sentence using them all: 'The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.'

THAT'S THE NIGHT!

Champions, collect your glory.