

Appendix A

Mulligan's Tinsel Trivia

Christmas Quiz #1

So you think you know a lot about Christmas traditions. Well, let's find out. A veteran AP reporter who never lets a Christmas go by without a special feature has designed a Tinsel Trivia quiz ranging from the Bible story to the writings of Truman Capote.

Here it is Christmas again, that “rolling time of the year,” as Charles Dickens called it, “a season of hospitality, merriment and openheartedness, of feasting and revelry.”

’Tis the season for summoning up memories of Christmases past, for retelling time-honored stories around the fire, and renewing cherished religious rituals.

And, like Mr. Pickwick and his friends at Dingley Dell, a chance to become a child again and “beguile the time with forfeits, blind man’s bluff, snap dragons” and other favorite parlor games after the bones of the noble bird have been removed from the groaning board.

But just how wide is your knowledge of this favorite feast?

Here are 20 questions to test your holiday IQ. This Christmas quiz can be played as a live after-dinner game show, perhaps with your guests arranged into teams to supply group answers.

Come then, everyone, rake up the fire, fill your goblets with Smoking Bishop or mulled cider and let us begin:

The Questions:

1. Who alone among the four Gospel writers told the story of The Three Wise Men?

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2. What navigational aid guided the The Three Wise Men to Bethlehem?
3. What instrument accompanied the first singing of the carol "Silent Night?"
4. "Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat, please to..." complete the quatrain.
5. Who wrote "White Christmas"?
6. Which singing cowboy popularized "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"?
7. Name the boy and girl featured in "The Nutcracker."
8. What was Scrooge's wish for Christmas well-wishers?
9. Whose name was on the weed-overgrown tombstone in the desolate churchyard where the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come led Scrooge?
10. In Truman Capote's "A Christmas Memory," what gifts did Buddy and his favorite cousin exchange each Christmas morning?
11. What was True Love's gift on the fifth day of Christmas?
12. What gifts did the young couple exchange in O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi?"
13. In a word, what was the American general's reply to the German panzer kommandant demanding the surrender of Bastogne that bleak Christmastide 50 years ago?
14. What was the peculiar thing about the Christmas goose Sherlock Holmes investigated in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle"?
15. What possible connection can there be between Christmas and the three gold balls hanging outside a pawnshop?

16. Which competing department stores altered their marketing methods because of the “Miracle on 34th Street?”

17. How many ships came sailing in “On Christmas Day in the Morning?”

18. Queen Victoria is credited with popularizing which Christmas custom in England?

19. Who assured Virginia that indeed there was a Santa Claus?

20. When Santa whistled up his team in Clement Clarke Moore’s “A Visit from St. Nicholas,” what names did he shout out?

The Answers:

1. Matthew.

2. “The star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.” —Matthew 3:9.

3. The guitar. Mice, you may recall, gnawed holes in the bellows of the church organ.

4. “Put a penny in the old man’s hat.”

5. Words and music by Irving Berlin.

6. Gene Autry.

7. Fritz and Clara in Tchaikovsky’s ballet; Fritz and Maria in E.T.A. Hoffmann’s original tale, “The Nutcracker and the Mouse King.”

8. “If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with ‘Merry Christmas’ on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart.”

9. Ebenezer Scrooge.

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10. They gave each other homemade kites.

11. Five gold rings.

12. Della sold her luxuriant brown hair to a wig maker to buy a platinum fob chain for the gold watch Jim sold to buy her a set of tortoiseshell combs for her shorn locks.

13. "Nuts."

14. In the words of the great detective himself: "It laid an egg after it was dead, the bonniest, brightest little blue egg that ever was seen." The egg, of course, was that valuable gem, the blue carbuncle, hidden in the crop of the goose.

15. Three gold balls are the emblem of St. Nicholas. In addition to bringing gifts to good little girls and boys, Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors, merchants, pawnbrokers and newlyweds. The gold balls symbolize the bags of gold the good bishop tossed through the windows of three impoverished virgins who were facing a life of prostitution for want of a wedding dowry.

16. Macy's and Gimbels.

17. Three.

18. Coaxed by her husband, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg, the queen adopted the German custom of decorating a fir tree at Christmas and helped make it a British tradition. With the advent of the penny post early in her reign, she also encouraged the sending of Christmas cards.

19. Editor Frank Church of the New York Sun.

20. "Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen! On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!"

Scoring:

Here is how our Christmas game show is scored. Award one point for each correct answer and assess your yuletide aptitude according to this scale:

20: A perfect score merits you and your team members an honorary D.T.T degree, Doctor of Tinsel Trivia.

16–19: Pin your own stars atop the tree, accompanied by spirited huzzas and an occasional “bah, humbug” from your less-gifted opponents.

11–15: You rate an extra dollop of brandy sauce on your plum pudding for an above-average performance.

6–10: Let nothing you dismay; perhaps you excel at charades, pin the tail on the donkey or some other holiday parlor game.

1–5: Better luck with the Easter egg hunt.

0: Santa’s team never got off the ground. If available and not in conflict with local ecological codes, a lump of coal should be inserted in the stockings you hung by the chimney with care.

Christmas Quiz #2

Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat, and our annual Christmas quiz deals with matters such as that. In fact, that jolly English jingle (or a version thereof) is the basis of one of the 20 questions designed to test your knowledge of our most joyous holiday.

The tinsels of trivia hanging from our Christmas Tree of Knowledge may brighten your day with offbeat items associated with the feast Shakespeare hailed as that “hallow’d and so gracious time... when the bird of dawning singeth all night long.”

Or that one day in the year when, as Mr. Pickwick put it, “many families, whose members have been dispersed far and wide in the restless struggles of life, meet once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good will, which is a source of pure and unalloyed delight.”

In that Dickensian spirit, team play among the family and your holiday guests is encouraged and can help postpone postprandial blahs and snoring after the groaning board has been cleared.

All set then? Button on your smiles, adjust your thinking caps and we’re off on our holiday quest with a flourish of coaching horns and a jingling of harness bells.

The Questions:

1. What relation was the Christ Child to John the Baptist?
2. Who was the Roman emperor when Christ was born?
3. Which emperor is credited with standardizing Dec. 25 as Christmas Day?

4. Luke tells us Mary and Joseph journeyed from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be enrolled in the imperial census. How many miles is that?

5. What explanations have astronomers offered concerning the Christmas star that the Wise Men saw in the east and followed to Bethlehem?

6. Where did the Grinch steal Christmas?

7. What did the goblins steal in a Christmas short story by Charles Dickens?

8. Why did President Theodore Roosevelt's young sons Archie and Quentin hide a Christmas tree in a White House closet?

9. What family tradition did President Franklin Roosevelt insist on performing every Christmas Eve?

10. In Truman Capote's "A Christmas Memory" what identical gift was bestowed on the bootlegger, the bus driver, the knife grinder, two Baptist missionaries in Borneo and the president of the United States?

11. What was True Love's gift on the second day of Christmas?

12. What did Harry Potter get for Christmas in his first semester at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry?

13. In the days before central heating, what did Santa put in the Christmas stockings of children who misbehaved?

14. Name the eight tiny reindeer in the order in which Santa summoned them in Clement C. Moore's classic poem.

15. Complete the jolly jingle "Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat..."

16. Did Norman Rockwell ever paint Grandma Moses?

17. When did good King Wenceslas go out?

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18. Which government agency provided proof of Santa's existence in the film classic "Miracle on 34th Street"?

19. What historic event heightened holiday spirits in Berlin a decade ago?

20. Which newspaper assured a reader: "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus?"

The Answers:

1. No closer than second cousin. Luke tells us John's mother Elizabeth was Mary's cousin.

2. Caesar Augustus.

3. Constantine in 325 A.D.

4. They journeyed 92.5 miles.

5. The German astronomer Johannes Kepler supposed it was a conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn. Modern authorities, like Arthur C. Clarke, conjecture it could have been a comet or a supernova, an exploding new star.

6. In Whoville.

7. They made off with Gabriel Grub, the grouchy grave digger.

8. Because their father, an ardent conservationist, feared a tree in the White House would encourage ravaging the forests for young pines and spruces.

9. Sitting beside the fire, he read aloud the Dickens classic "A Christmas Carol," exuberantly acting out all the parts.

10. A Christmas fruitcake.

11. "Two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree."

12. An "invisibility cloak."

13. A lump of coal.

14. “Dasher! Dancer! Prancer! Vixen! Comet! Cupid! Donder! and Blitzen!”

15. “Please to put a penny in the old man’s hat. If you haven’t got a penny, a halfpenny will do. If you haven’t got a halfpenny, God bless you.”

16. Yes. He depicted Grandma Moses among the friends and family greeting a boy returning from college in “Christmas Homecoming,” a 1948 Saturday Evening Post cover.

17. On Dec. 26, the Feast of St. Stephen.

18. The U.S. Post Office put in evidence sacks of mail addressed to Santa.

19. The fall of the wall.

20. The New York Sun. A famous editorial on Sept. 21, 1897, by Francis P. Church answered a letter by 8-year-old Virginia O’Hanlon. The paper ceased publication in 1950.

Scoring:

Here is how our Christmas game show is scored. Award one point for each correct answer and assess your yuletide aptitude according to this scale:

20: A perfect score lifts you or your team to the top of the Christmas tree, right up there with the twinkling star.

15–20: Designates you as master toy makers in Santa’s workshop at the top of the world.

10–14: Ranks you in the top half of the class in our Christmas SATs—Santa’s Annual Testing.

5–9: Could indicate an early wavering of the holiday spirit or perhaps overindulgence in the same.

0–4: Puts you deep in the bargain basement, but be of good cheer. That’s where most department stores have

their post-Christmas sales, so you may come up a winner yet.

Christmas Quiz #3

Here it is Christmas time again, a traditional time of peace and piety, but also a time for parties and presents, pageants and poets, and posing questions just for fun around a blazing hearth.

Let us begin our annual Christmas quiz with the poets, who proclaimed this the season of love:

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

Who wrote that lovely quatrain? If your answer is Christina Rossetti, award yourself a bonus five points. Then proceed, either on your own or in a contest of wits and witticisms with your holiday guests, to tackle the next 20 questions.

Score one point for each correct answer, given below.

A perfect score of 25, bonus included, ranks you as a master or mistress of the revels. Scores between 20 and 24 put you alongside Santa in the driver's seat on that midnight sled run. From 15 to 19 points designates you elf emeritus in Toyland. Scoring between 10 and 14 entitles you to don a lampshade and frolic like Old Fezziwig, the father of the office Christmas bash.

A tally below 10, down to six, leaves you a bit out in the cold, chanting out of tune with the carolers or tooting a tuba off key in a sidewalk Salvation Army band.

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Five down to zero? Well, old Scrooge said it best: "Humbug." Perhaps you weren't meant to join in any reindeer games.

The Questions:

1. Who in Whoville caught the Grinch shoving the Christmas tree and presents "up the chimbley"?
2. In Gian Carlo Menotti's opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors," what did Amahl offer the Three Kings?
3. Which of the "Tales of Hoffmann" became a classic Christmas ballet?
4. Did Santa Claus ever win an Academy Award?
5. When and what is Boxing Day?
6. What new gift was given to True Love on the fifth day of Christmas?
7. Which former railroad telegrapher became Rudolph's all-time best-selling balladeer?
8. Who among Hollywood's masters of horror delighted children at bedtime with his recorded readings of Kipling's "Just So" stories?
9. On what date is the Twelfth Day of Christmas?
10. In what form did the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come present itself to Ebenezer Scrooge?
11. Was the Old Testament Ebenezer, like Scrooge, a "squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner"?
12. Who was the most famous Scrooge of the airwaves?
13. Luke in his second chapter tells us Mary "brought forth her firstborn and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes." What are swaddling clothes?
14. What is the all-time bestselling Christmas recording?

15. How many days is Hanukkah?

16. How many candles are in the Hanukkah candelabrum?

17. President Rutherford B. Hayes is credited with inaugurating in 1880 the custom of giving Christmas gifts to the White House domestic staff. What did each receive?

18. Each Christmas season found Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt in hot water with the D.C. fire department. Why?

19. Every Christmas the White House chef creates a gingerbread house. What was used to pave the driveway of the delicacy baked for President Ronald Reagan?

20. On which two oceans would you find a Christmas Island?

The Answers:

1. "Little Cindy-Lou Who, who was not more than two," that's who.

2. The only thing of value he had: his crutch.

3. "The Nutcracker," with Tchaikovsky's enchanting score.

4. Yes, in 1947, Edmund Gwenn's Santa in "Miracle on 34th Street."

5. The first weekday after Christmas when, in British stately homes and offices, "Christmas boxes"—gifts, sometimes cash—are given to the help.

6. Five golden rings.

7. Singing cowboy Gene Autry.

8. Boris Karloff.

9. Jan. 6, also known as "Little Christmas," when by tradition Christians observe the arrival of the Wise Men at Bethlehem.

10. Only an outstretched hand protruding from a black hooded shroud, a hand that eventually dissolved into a bedpost.

11. No way. Ebenezer was not a person but a stone memorial set up by Samuel in gratitude for heavenly help in defeating the Philistines. The Hebrew word means “stone of help.”

12. Lionel Barrymore. His radio version, later a best-selling record, is considered the definitive rendering of the Dickens classic “A Christmas Carol.”

13. “Strips of linen to restrict the movement of a newborn infant,” according to the Oxford English Dictionary. In Elizabethan English the term was “swaddling clouts.”

14. Bing Crosby’s recording of Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas.”

15. The Jewish festival, also spelled Chanukah, lasts eight days.

16. Nine.

17. A \$5.00 gold piece.

18. They insisted on burning real candles on the real evergreen tree in the second-floor family quarters of the White House.

19. Jelly beans.

20. The Pacific and the Indian.

Christmas Quiz #4

It's Christmas again, that "rolling time of the year," as Charles Dickens called it, a time to give and a time to get, and time to get rolling again with our annual Christmas Quiz.

Santas are once more abroad in the land, jingling their bells at every mall, sidewalk chimney and department store toy department. On almost every downtown corner Salvation Army trombones pump out "Joy to the World," and towering fir trees, gaily bedight, rise over New York's Rockefeller Plaza, the White House and virtually every village green, city hall and state capital.

What do you really know about our most celebrated and venerated holiday?

Here are 20 questions for you and your guests to mull over with the mulled ale before settling down to a long winter or, at least, an after-dinner nap.

Answers and a scoring code follow the questions.

The Questions:

1. What were the first names of Scrooge and Marley?
2. How many Magi or Wise Men came to Bethlehem?
3. What prompted the Magi to choose another way home?
4. Which Old Testament prophet predicted great happenings in tiny Bethlehem?
5. Who wrote the words to the carol "Silent Night"?
6. When is the feast day of Santa Claus celebrated?
7. What Christmas delicacy did Mrs. Bob Cratchit prepare in a copper cauldron in her wash house?

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8. Which renowned Christmas card artist was still turning out "a batch of three or four paintings a week" at age 100?

9. Which of James Joyce's "Dubliners" short stories takes place at Christmas time? Clue: Film director John Huston made it into a memorable movie.

10. Who was the surprise guest speaker when President Franklin D. Roosevelt lit the National Tree at the White House in 1941?

11. Which Nativity masterpiece was stolen from a church in Palermo, Sicily, in 1969 and has not been seen since?

12. What were True Love's first and last gifts in the delightful rondelet "The Twelve Days of Christmas"?

13. For what crime did William Sydney Porter, alias O'Henry, the author of "The Gift of the Magi," spend several Christmases in the Ohio State penitentiary?

14. What popular revel, evocation of the Middle Ages, takes place in Philadelphia during the holiday season?

15. Which movie has the most TV reruns during the holiday season?

16. Who were the stars of the film "White Christmas"?

17. Who played Santa Claus in the 1947 original film version of "The Miracle on 34th Street"?

18. Who played the little girl?

19. How did the della Robbia wreath get its name?

20. Sherlock Holmes, Ellery Queen, Inspector Maigret and many other fictional sleuths have solved Christmas crimes. What is today's best-selling mystery novelist Mary Higgins Clark's contribution to the genre?

The Answers:

1. Ebenezer and Jacob.

2. St. Matthew, who tells of their visit in his gospel, did not specify how many. In early Christian times their number varied from two to six. A 4th century fresco in the Catacombs of Domitilla, outside Rome, depicts four. By the 6th century, tradition settled on three. Any number from 2 to 6 is acceptable.

3. In Matthew's gospel the Magi were "warned in a dream" not to return to Herod, who sought to kill the child, so "they departed into their own country another way." (Matthew 2:12)

4. Micah, an 8th century B.C. Hebrew prophet, prophesized: "But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me one who is to be ruler of Israel, whose origin is from the beginning, from the days of eternity." (Micah 5:2)

5. Father Joseph Mohr, the parish priest in the little Austrian village where the mice had eaten the bellows of the church organ.

6. Dec. 6 is the Feast of St. Nicholas, the original Santa Claus.

7. Her Christmas pudding.

8. Anne Mary Robinson, better known as Grandma Moses.

9. "The Dead."

10. Winston Churchill.

11. Caravaggio's "Nativity," one of the master's last works, painted in 1609, the year before he died.

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12. If sung properly as a rondelet, with each day's new gift followed by a repetition of all the previous gifts, the answer is "a partridge in a pear tree."

13. Bank embezzlement.

14. The Mummers Parade.

15. Frank Capra's "It's a Wonderful Life."

16. Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye.

17. Edmund Gwenn.

18. Natalie Wood.

19. It is the family name of an uncle and nephew, Luca and Andrea della Robbia, acclaimed sculptors in Florence, Italy, during the early Renaissance. From the workshop came exquisite ceramic wreaths sculpted with a floral motif in brightly enameled glazed terra cotta.

20. Her recent short novel "Silent Night," where the criminal trial begins under the tree in Rockefeller Plaza.

Scoring:

Award one point for each correct answer. Compute your holiday IQ via this scoring scale:

20: You are the brightest star on anybody's Christmas tree of knowledge.

16-19: Qualified for lead reindeer on Santa's midnight run.

11-15: Up on the rooftops with the season's headiest performers.

6-10: down the chimney with a thud.

1-5: Meltdown time for Frosty the Snowman.

0: Goose eggs are more traditional at Easter.