

Hugh Mulligan's Christmas Quiz

By HUGH A. MULLIGAN

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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 D. 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?
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?"

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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 fruit cake.
11. "Two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree."
12. An "invisibility cloak."
13. A lump of coal.
14. "Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer! and Vixen! On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, 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.