MegaWhats 2025

Prelims **Prelims**

Brought to you by KQA (since 1983)

QMs: Movin Miranda, Manish Achuth, Thejaswi Udupa

How it works

60 questions, 60 points

If there are two parts, each answer is worth 0.5 points

Last names are enough, wrong first names with right last names won't get you points

Spelling variations are fine, as long as they "sound" like the correct answer

What's in bold in the answer slide is good enough for points

No trickery, no starred qns, no LCQs even, nothing – just guess

Don't cheat!

The questions follow

1. It used to be the building on the left that had this official name, but for a year or so, it's the building on the right. Name either this official name – or the name that the building on the left had when it was built in the 19th Century, that locals still use for it. Both these buildings are in the same city, around 15 kms from each other.





2. In what is now Morris Jeff Community School, Room 2306 is preserved as it would have been some 60 years ago. Over 1960-61, who was the lone student in this classroom?



3. Why does this chess piece have a slit / cut in the top?

4. Which name is often used by Trinidadians of Indian origin for that island? There is evidence that the name was invented in the 19th century to attract Indian (indentured) labour to that island, given the island's primary produce in that period.

5. What is common to these London Underground station names (full list): Angel, Elephant & Castle, Manor House, Maida Vale, Royal Oak, and Swiss Cottage?

6. In UK English, what word from Urdu/Hindustani is used informally to describe the period before an election or referendum when civil servants face restrictions? This "preelection period" aims to prevent any activity that could call their political impartiality into question and ensures public resources aren't used for party-political purposes.

7. What is currently the shortest international route to/from India? There are daily flights, with the distance covered being just 99 nautical miles (184 km).

8. In 1826, writing as "Malachi Malagrowther," who defended Scotland's right to issue its own banknotes through letters, a campaign that stirred public support, forcing the British government to preserve Scotland's banking autonomy, unlike Ireland and Wales? Today, his portrait appears on most Royal Bank of Scotland notes, symbolizing national pride and financial independence.

9. The Roman 'Twelve Tables' was a 451 BC promulgation that permitted creditors a rather extreme step as repayment.

Petronius's Satyricon parodied the law – in the work, the last will of a plutocrat decrees that any friend, parasite, or hanger-on who wants a part of the inheritance must eat a piece of the dead man's corpse.

We also find a reference to this law, in which literary work first published in 1600? OR give us the phrase from this work that references this Roman law.

10. The Nabakalebara ('new embodiment') ritual, which happens every 8, 12, or 19 years after the previous one, is a sacred renewal process that emphasizes mortality and rebirth. Rather than stone or metal, Nimba (neem) wood is the preferred material. What is/are replaced?



11. This is a method of capital punishment where the condemned is killed by **strangulation**, typically using a metal collar tightened by a screw behind the neck. It was most notably used in **Spain**, including during the Franco era as a formal, statesanctioned execution technique, before it was officially abolished in Spain in 1978. Which method?



12. This Lazio player's first name is Floriani. Given his surname (thanks to his great granddad), what appropriate position does he play in?

13. WWF (the wildlife one, not the fake wrestling one) was established in 1961. They chose the panda as it was beautiful, endangered and loved by many.

What was the other practical reason for choosing it - which helped the organization save a lot of money?

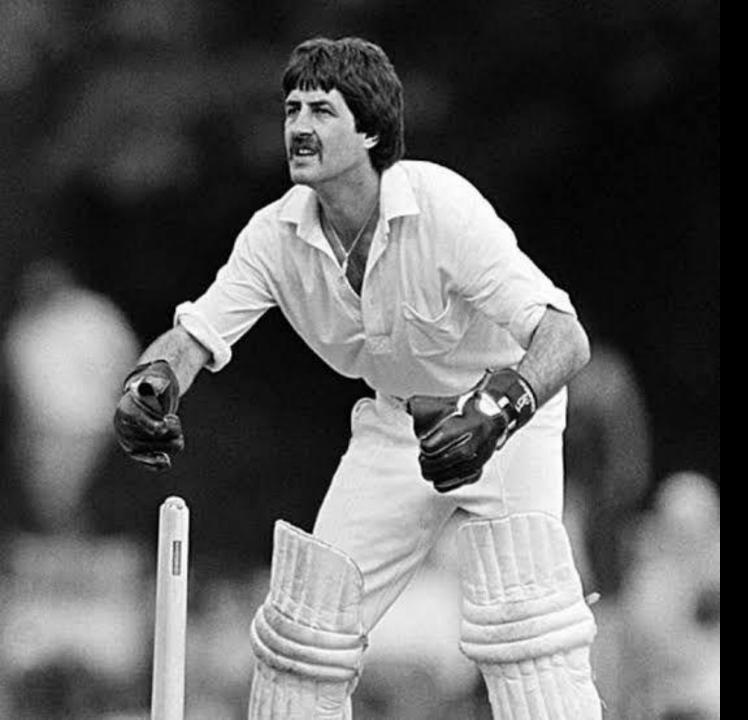
14. This four-word English idiom has nothing to do with the creature on the left (it is biologically impossible for it to do what the idiom implies) but instead comes from a thumb rule used for when one can transport the material that you see on the right. What idiom?



15. Ted Lasso's 3rd season has an episode called 'The International Break' which features players from the fictional AFC Richmond club playing for their national teams. They show a segment of Canada v Mexico game as some players from Richmond take on each other in that match.

Which famous Canadian duo are the commentators for that match?

We are not sure if they improvised the commentary or not.



16. This is Warren Lees, who played for New Zealand from 1976 to 1983. Which South Indian superstar's hairdo in his early movies in the second half of 1980s was inspired by him? (full name needed)

17. In the USA, as we have seen in many movies and crime TV shows, it is a fancy meal. In India, it is much more banal and deals with transfer of assets such as gold, property, cash, etc. What conclusive act are we talking about?

His words were prophetic, and he repeated the same phrase in commentary the next day.

Fill in the blanks.



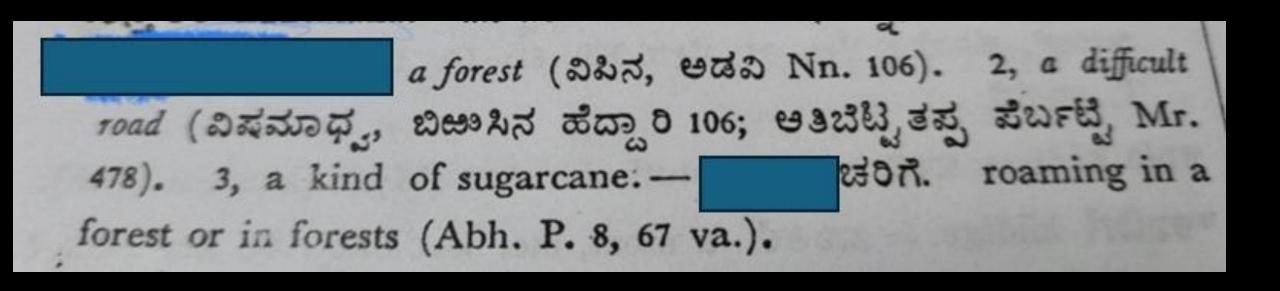
19. This is a painting called Last Bite by Krishen Khanna inspired by Jesus's Last Supper. Who is the only woman depicted in this painting – to help you along, the man in the centre of the painting with the white hair is MF Husain.

20. Jeremy Monga made his debut in the Premier League this season for Leicester City at the age of 15. How did his kit differ from those of the rest of his teammates?

21. When George Bush took over, following a controversial win against Al Gore, there was a lot of unhappiness in the White House. The general accounting office, said that "damage, theft, vandalism and pranks did occur in the White House complex" during the transition and had a bill of about \$14000 including about \$5000 to repair damaged keyboards.

What was the vandalism done to the keyboards, to indicate their displeasure of Bush winning?

22. This tune first became popular in South Africa in the year they won the World Cup. Two years later, an annual sporting event was held in South Africa instead of the usual location, and was prominently used during the event as a way of getting the crowd amped up. Since then, it has been associated with this annual sporting event. What tune am I talking about?



23. Ferdinand Kittel was a German priest who compiled the first Kannada dictionary. What is he describing here? The word became famous nationwide in 2022.

24. He wasn't even the crown prince for he was the second son of the king. But he was a man of great ambition and gave himself a unique title.

Who, only the 2nd Indian male in a particular list that has 36 male names? What title did he give himself?



25. This church is called the Church of Pieta. It's also called X's church after X who gave away the land.

The church was initially destroyed by X's grandson who later rebuilt it, with a nice garden leading up to the church like another of his creations.

Who is X?

26. Who carried the flag for Antigua and Barbuda in the opening ceremony of the 1998 Commonwealth Games?

It was unusual that he was not a member of the playing contingent but was a coach.

27. At West Point, military training is quite horrific. So those who finish the first year of training and graduate to the next, reward themselves with this activity. From 1897 to 2014 it seemed harmless, but West Point decided to "improve safety" by adding helmets in 2015. But it backfired as helmets were used as a weapon, leading to the activity itself being outlawed and discontinued.

What activity did the cadets indulge in to celebrate passing year one?



28. These were the teams that took part in the I-League in 2013-14 season. (The first ever season for Bengaluru FC and they won the league!)

Look at the picture - What was proposed as an approach for the league that year which was inspired by sporting leagues in America? Eventually it was not adopted, though.

29. "Garfield: The Movie" was released in June of 2004, starring Bill Murray as the voice of Garfield.

The movie, written by Joel Cohen, was panned by most movie critics.

Murray claims that his involvement in the film (and its sequel) was the result of carelessness on his part.

What was the carelessness that Murray was referring to?



season 12 of Masterchef Australia, Reynold Poernomo created this stunning dessert. What from the world of fiction was inspiration?



31. Connect etymologically with one word





32. This is a screenshot from which movie?

The defence structure that you see here is called Rommelspragel, which is German for "Rommel's " What from the world of flora fills in the blanks?

33. Both these English words with similar meaning eventually come from the PIE root *wer- meaning "to cover". The difference in spelling in these two words is thanks to French regional variation, with those in Northern France pronouncing the word with a hard "g" sound. What are the two words?





34. On the left, you see a statue of Menelaus dragging the dead body of Patroclus. A similar statue was commissioned by Cardinal Caraffa in Rome in 1501, whose current state you see on the right. The locals named this statue after a local schoolmaster, and for centuries has been used to post satirical verses and lampoons (you can some in the picture)

What word in the English language comes from this statue?

35. The earliest mention of a disease with similar symptoms is from the lost text of the Agnivesha Samhita, but as documented later by Charaka in his Charaka Samhita. The prescribed treatment is the extract of the Atmagupta (Mucuna pruriens) plant. Galen, the ancient Greek physician, also noted a disease with the same symptoms, and he called it σκελοτύρβη, which charmingly might be translated as "revelry of limbs".

How do we better know this disease?

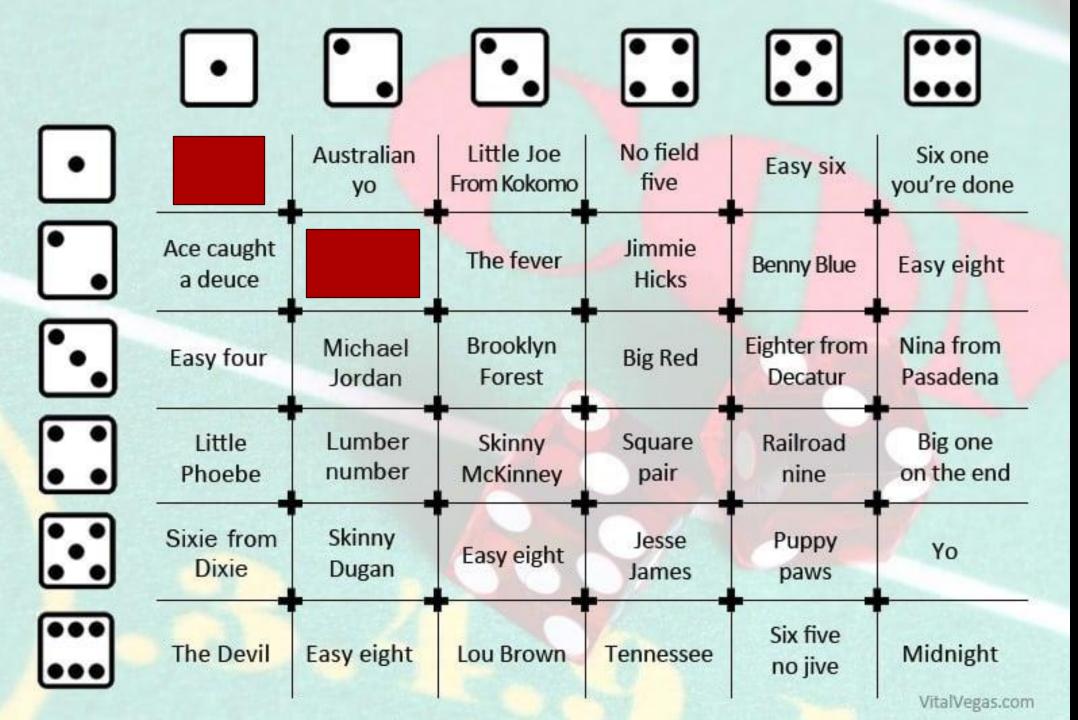
36. The last line of this poem goes —

"When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!"

What is the oft-quoted first line of the poem, that seems to contradict the resolution of the poem?



37. This is a portrait of Oliver Cromwell by Samuel Cooper. What phrase comes into the English language thanks to an instruction given by Cromwell to Cooper?



38. What are the nicknames for dice rolls of (1, 1) and (2, 2)?

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night Like a rich jewel in an ______'s ear — Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.

39. These are the lines uttered by whom when he spots the heroine of the play for the first time?

Also, fill in the blank with a word used by Romans to refer to people of African ancestry.

40. Ruchir Joshi's novel The Great Eastern Hotel begins on 7th August, 1941 – a date that some Bengalis consider as the day culture died. What happened on that date to trigger such remarks?

41. On Chinese maps, you will see a region named Zangnan. What name do you see for the same region in Indian maps?

42. Kanak(a) is a Sanskrit word for gold. But in the Punjabi language what does it usually refer to?



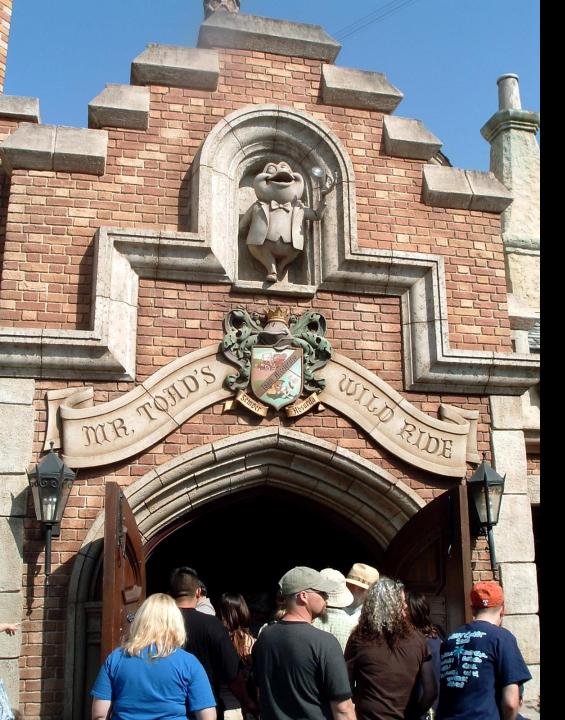
43. Because of what it resembles, what anatomical name is given to this spot in Allahabad aka Prayagraj?

44. Venkatamakhin aka Venkateshwara Dikshita was a minister in the court of Vijayaraghava Nayak, the ruler of Thanjavur. He is most known for his 1635 treatise Chaturdandiprakashika ("The Illuminator of Four Pillars" – the four pillars being aalaapa, taaya, geeta, and prabandha)

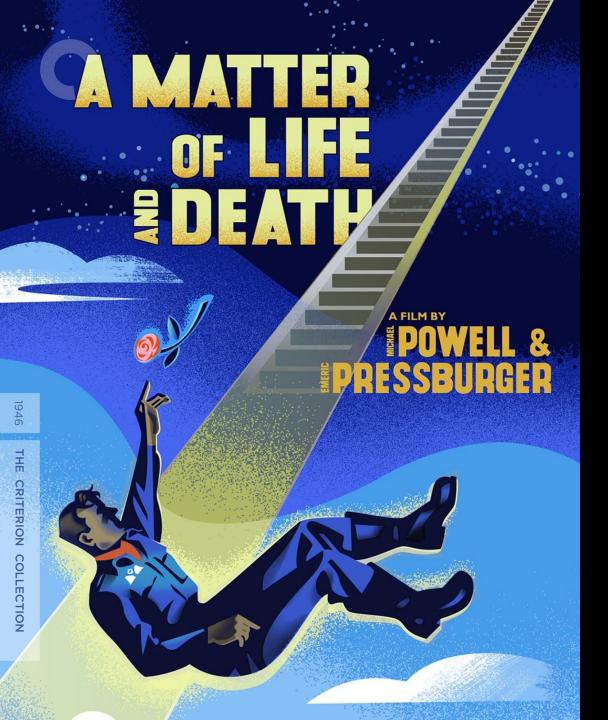
What concept did this treatise first introduce?



45. High Note for Hemen is a cocktail at AMPM in Kolkata that pays tribute to Hemen and Co., a quaint little music shop tucked in one corner of Rash Behari Avenue. What is the shape of the glass that this cocktail is served in a tribute to?



46. Which work of literature is the inspiration for this ride in Disneyland, one of the few rides that have been active since the amusement park's inception?



47. Under what title was this movie released in the US?

48. In Dante's Inferno, at the bottom of Hell is the three-faced Lucifer. In each of his mouths, he is chewing up history's greatest traitors. If Brutus and Cassius are in two of his mouths, who is being chewed in the third mouth?

49. Vodou is Haiti's national religion that worships Bondye. Bondye and all other ancestral spirits live in the land of Ginen, a lush green land of sunshine, peace, and ease. What are the etymologies of Bondye and Ginen respectively?

50. While we associate this three-word phrase with Native Americans, none of the indigenous tribes there have this concept. It was instead something that James Fenimore Cooper came up with in his 1823 novel 'The Pioneers'. What is this phrase, whose usage has even seeped into sports — used for example for Mahela Jayawardene with respect to SSC in Colombo?

51. Names of some of the restaurants in comedy series The Good Place are clever references to both food items and band names. Fill in the blanks in the names of these restaurants with appropriate food items.

____ and the Jets ____ and the Banshees 52. While most of the work that we associate with this style are from earlier decades, the term was first used in print only in 1966 by Hillary Gelson in an article in The Times, and widely popularised a couple of years later by historian Bevis Hillier through his groundbreaking publication '____ of the 20s and 30s'.

What style?



53. When penguins want to move fast on land, they slide on their bellies as shown in the picture. What is this called, named for a mode of transport?

This is our new song
Just like the last one
A total waste of time

54. Fill in the blanks, with the name of this Radiohead song. Also, what previous song of theirs is it making a reference to?

55. Fill in the blanks in the names of these courses offered in US colleges (all sets of blanks are the same)

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"_____: Musical Aesthetics and Politics" at Yale University

"_____: Race, Gender, and Empire in Reggaeton" at

Wellesley College

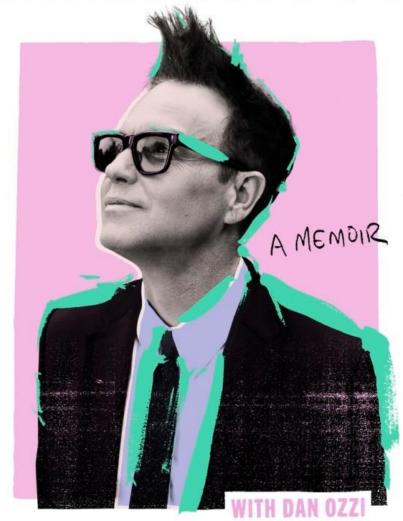
"_____ and Resistance in Puerto Rico" at Loyola

Marymount University
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56. This Hublot watch has been made in collaboration with which artist?

WARK HOPPUS



57. What is the name of Mark Hoppus's memoir? It references both the name of the band he is famous as the frontman of, as well as a 1953 novel. Both the band and the novel have 3 digit numbers as part of their names.

58. Whom did disability rights activist Tom Shakespeare describe as "the man who mistook his patients for a literary career"?

59. The person who came up with it called it "homo bene figuratus". What do we better know it as?



60. Thamesmead was a London neighbourhood built to rehouse families from inner-city Victorian tenements. Its brutalist architecture struck a movie director as the perfect location for a dystopian movie he was making. Which 1971 movie was shot in Thamesmead?

The answers follow

Yes, they do

1. It used to be the building on the left that had this official name, but for a year or so, it's the building on the right. Name either this official name – or the name that the building on the left had when it was built in the 19th Century, that locals still use for it. Both these buildings are in the same city, around 15 kms from each other.



Answer

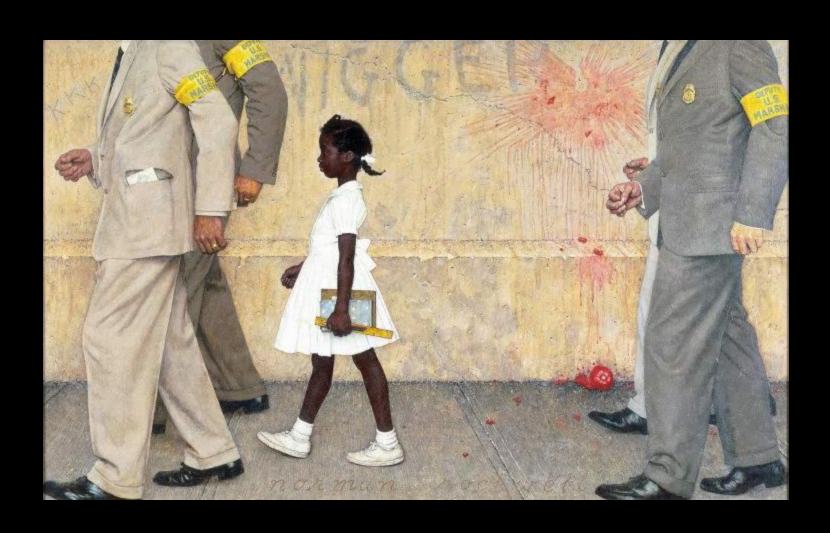
Rashtrapati Niwas OR Viceregal Lodge



2. In what is now Morris Jeff Community School, Room 2306 is preserved as it would have been some 60 years ago. Over 1960-61, who was the lone student in this classroom?

Answer

Ruby **Bridges**





3. Why does this chess piece have a slit / cut in the top?

Answer

To make it look like a **mitre**

If they say bishop's headgear without saying mitre, give 0.5

4. Which name is often used by Trinidadians of Indian origin for that island? There is evidence that the name was invented in the 19th century to attract Indian (indentured) labour to that island, given the island's primary produce in that period.

Chinidad

5. What is common to these London Underground station names (full list): Angel, Elephant & Castle, Manor House, Maida Vale, Royal Oak, and Swiss Cottage?

They're all named after **pubs**

6. In UK English, what word from Urdu/Hindustani is used informally to describe the period before an election or referendum when civil servants face restrictions? This "preelection period" aims to prevent any activity that could call their political impartiality into question and ensures public resources aren't used for party-political purposes.

Purdah

7. What is currently the shortest international route to/from India? There are daily flights, with the distance covered being just 99 nautical miles (184 km).

Trichy or Thiruchirapally (0.5)

Jaffna or Palaly (0.5)

8. In 1826, writing as "Malachi Malagrowther," who defended Scotland's right to issue its own banknotes through letters, a campaign that stirred public support, forcing the British government to preserve Scotland's banking autonomy, unlike Ireland and Wales? Today, his portrait appears on most Royal Bank of Scotland notes, symbolizing national pride and financial independence.

Walter **Scott**

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We also find a reference to this law, in which literary work first published in 1600? OR give us the phrase from this work that references this Roman law.

Pound of Flesh

Or

Merchant of Venice

10. The Nabakalebara ('new embodiment') ritual, which happens every 8, 12, or 19 years after the previous one, is a sacred renewal process that emphasizes mortality and rebirth. Rather than stone or metal, Nimba (neem) wood is the preferred material. What is/are replaced?

Idols at **Puri Jagannath** temple





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Garotte



12. This Lazio player's first name is Floriani. Given his surname (thanks to his great granddad), what appropriate position does he play in?

Right Winger

(He is Benito Mussolini's great grandson)

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What was the other practical reason for choosing it - which helped the organization save a lot of money?

It being black and white meant colour printing costs could be saved

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Sweating like a pig

(when pig iron, an intermediate material when manufacturing steel, is cool enough to be moved, it "sweats", i.e. water droplets appear on its surface)

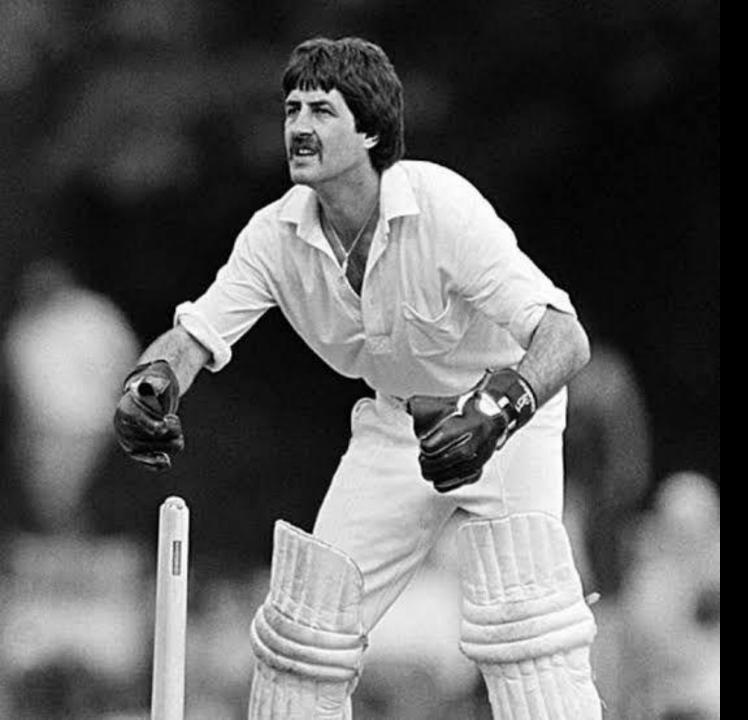
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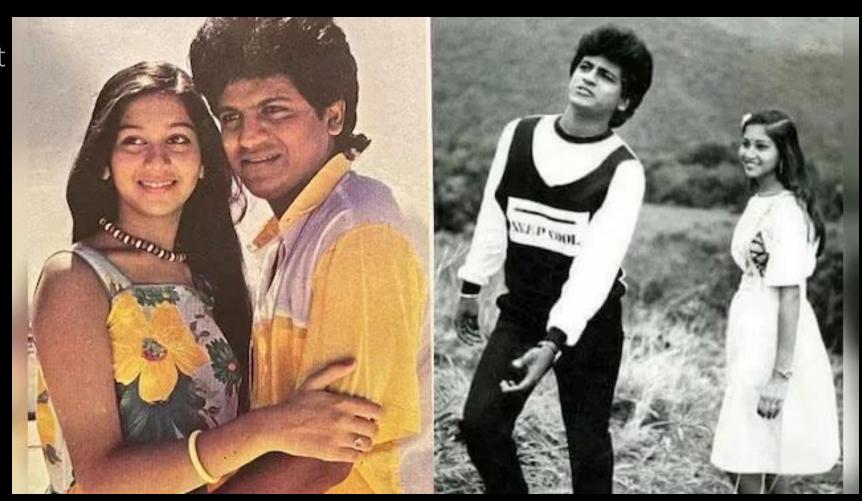
Ryan **Stiles**Colin **Mochrie**





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Shivarajkumar (accept Shivanna)



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"last wish" of people on death row

His words were prophetic, and he repeated the same phrase in commentary the next day.

Fill in the blanks.

"Remember the name, Carlos Braithwaite"



19. This is a painting called Last Bite by Krishen Khanna inspired by Jesus's Last Supper. Who is the only woman depicted in this painting – to help you along, the man in the centre of the painting with the white hair is MF Husain.

Bhanu **Athaiya** (the only woman who was part of the Bombay Progressive Artists Group)

20. Jeremy Monga made his debut in the Premier League this season for Leicester City at the age of 15. How did his kit differ from those of the rest of his teammates?

No King Power logo because they are a gambling/betting site

(points if either lack of gambling/betting site logo, or King Power logo is mentioned)

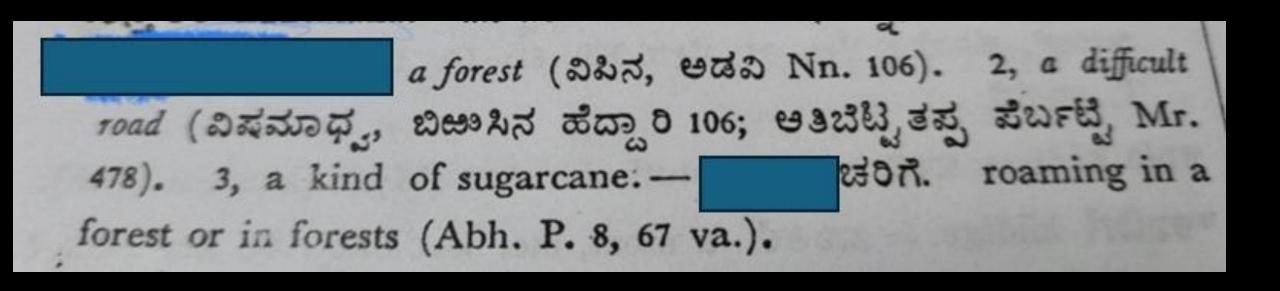
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What was the vandalism done to the keyboards, to indicate their displeasure of Bush winning?

All the \mathbf{W} keys were removed

22. This tune first became popular in South Africa in the year they won the World Cup. Two years later, an annual sporting event was held in South Africa instead of the usual location, and was prominently used during the event as a way of getting the crowd amped up. Since then, it has been associated with this annual sporting event. What tune am I talking about?

IPL trumpet tune (as long as they are describing this, with IPL in the answer, give points)



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Kantara

24. He wasn't even the crown prince for he was the second son of the king. But he was a man of great ambition and gave himself a unique title.

Who, only the 2nd Indian male in a particular list that has 36 male names? What title did he give himself?

Pusapati Vijaya Ananda Gajapati Raju or Vizzy

Maharajkumar



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The church was initially destroyed by X's grandson who later rebuilt it, with a nice garden leading up to the church like another of his creations.

Who is X?

Akbar

26. Who carried the flag for Antigua and Barbuda in the opening ceremony of the 1998 Commonwealth Games?

It was unusual that he was not a member of the playing contingent but was a coach.

Sir Vivian Richards

27. At West Point, military training is quite horrific. So those who finish the first year of training and graduate to the next, reward themselves with this activity. From 1897 to 2014 it seemed harmless, but West Point decided to "improve safety" by adding helmets in 2015. But it backfired as helmets were used as a weapon, leading to the activity itself being outlawed and discontinued.

What activity did the cadets indulge in to celebrate passing year one?

Pillow fighting



28. These were the teams that took part in the I-League in 2013-14 season. (The first ever season for Bengaluru FC and they won the league!)

Look at the picture - What was proposed as an approach for the league that year which was inspired by sporting leagues in America? Eventually it was not adopted, though.

Eastern vs. Western Conferences

29. "Garfield: The Movie" was released in June of 2004, starring Bill Murray as the voice of Garfield.

The movie, written by Joel Cohen, was panned by most movie critics.

Murray claims that his involvement in the film (and its sequel) was the result of carelessness on his part.

What was the carelessness that Murray was referring to?

He thought Joel Cohen was one of the Coen brothers



season 12 of Masterchef Australia, Reynold Poernomo created this stunning dessert. What from the world of fiction was inspiration?

The Golden **Snitch** from Harry Potter



31. Connect etymologically with one word



Pomegranate (grenade, Anora, Anarkali, garnet)



32. This is a screenshot from which movie?

The defence structure that you see here is called Rommelspragel, which is German for "Rommel's " What from the world of flora fills in the blanks?

Saving Private Ryan

Asparagus

33. Both these English words with similar meaning eventually come from the PIE root *wer- meaning "to cover". The difference in spelling in these two words is thanks to French regional variation, with those in Northern France pronouncing the word with a hard "g" sound. What are the two words?

Guarantee

Warranty





34. On the left, you see a statue of Menelaus dragging the dead body of Patroclus. A similar statue was commissioned by Cardinal Caraffa in Rome in 1501, whose current state you see on the right. The locals named this statue after a local schoolmaster, and for centuries has been used to post satirical verses and lampoons (you can some in the picture)

What word in the English language comes from this statue?

Pasquinade

35. The earliest mention of a disease with similar symptoms is from the lost text of the Agnivesha Samhita, but as documented later by Charaka in his Charaka Samhita. The prescribed treatment is the extract of the Atmagupta (Mucuna pruriens) plant. Galen, the ancient Greek physician, also noted a disease with the same symptoms, and he called it σκελοτύρβη, which charmingly might be translated as "revelry of limbs".

How do we better know this disease?

Parkinson's Disease

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"When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!"

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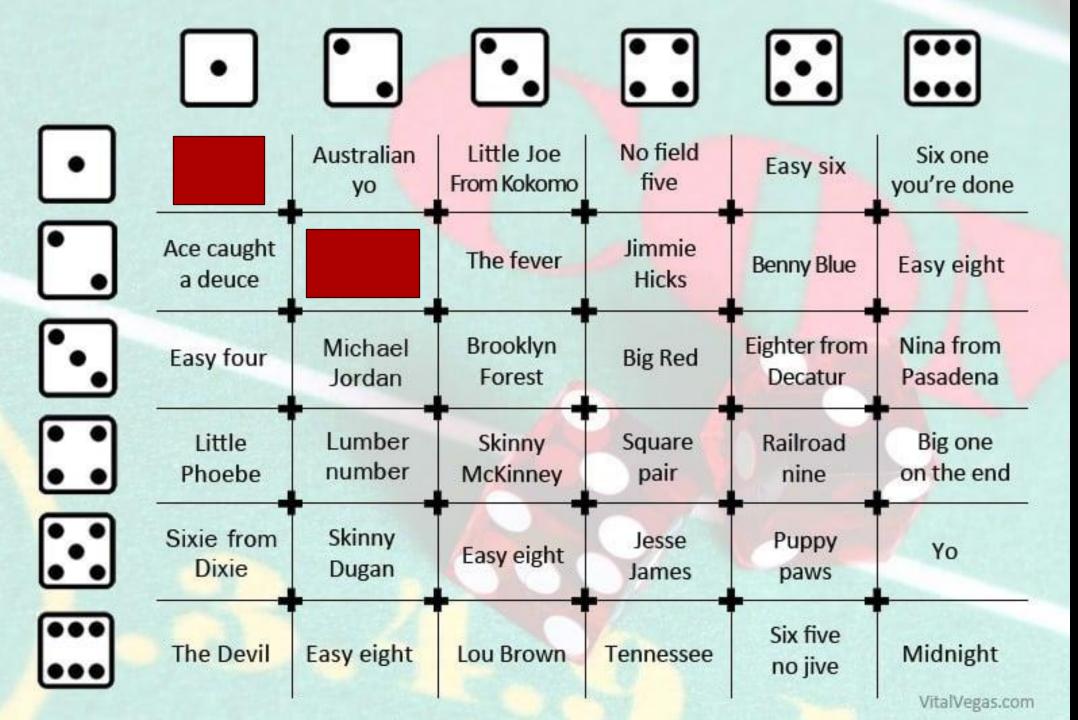
"East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet"

(give points as long as they're roughly saying the same thing)



37. This is a portrait of Oliver Cromwell by Samuel Cooper. What phrase comes into the English language thanks to an instruction given by Cromwell to Cooper?

"Warts and all"



38. What are the nicknames for dice rolls of (1, 1) and (2, 2)?

Snake eyes

Ballerina (from two-two -> tu-tu)

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night Like a rich jewel in an _____'s ear — Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.

39. These are the lines uttered by whom when he spots the heroine of the play for the first time?

Also, fill in the blank with a word used by Romans to refer to people of African ancestry.

Romeo

Ethiope

40. Ruchir Joshi's novel The Great Eastern Hotel begins on 7th August, 1941 – a date that some Bengalis consider as the day culture died. What happened on that date to trigger such remarks?

Death of Rabindranath **Tagore**

41. On Chinese maps, you will see a region named Zangnan. What name do you see for the same region in Indian maps?

Arunachal Pradesh

42. Kanak(a) is a Sanskrit word for gold. But in the Punjabi language what does it usually refer to?

Wheat



43. Because of what it resembles, what anatomical name is given to this spot in Allahabad aka Prayagraj?

(Sangam) Nose

44. Venkatamakhin aka Venkateshwara Dikshita was a minister in the court of Vijayaraghava Nayak, the ruler of Thanjavur. He is most known for his 1635 treatise Chaturdandiprakashika ("The Illuminator of Four Pillars" – the four pillars being aalaapa, taaya, geeta, and prabandha)

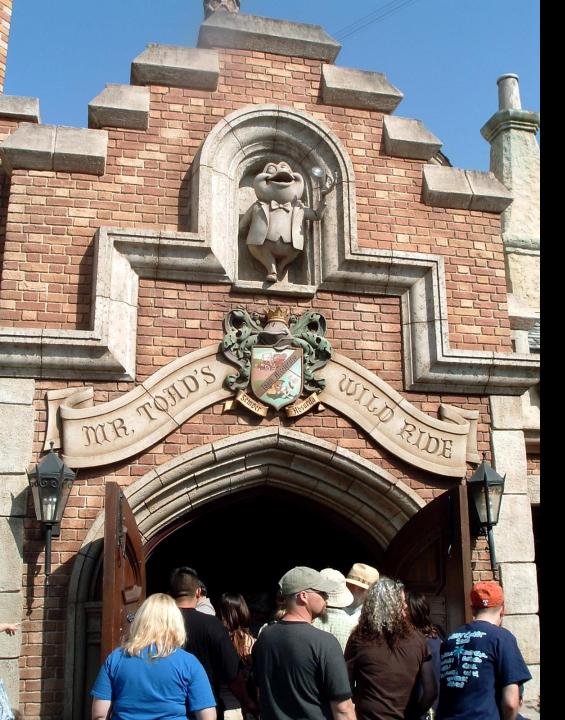
What concept did this treatise first introduce?

The **Melakarta** system to classify raagas



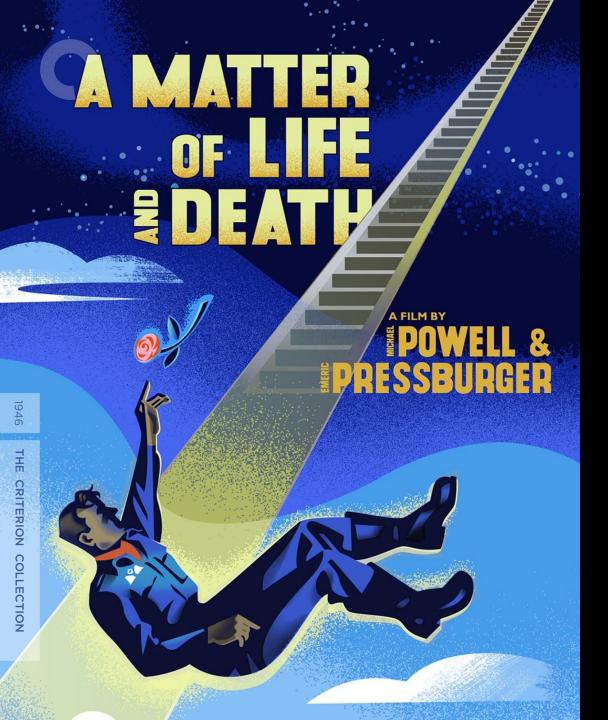
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The (tumba) **gourd** used in **Sitars**



46. Which work of literature is the inspiration for this ride in Disneyland, one of the few rides that have been active since the amusement park's inception?

Wind in the Willows



47. Under what title was this movie released in the US?

Stairway to Heaven

48. In Dante's Inferno, at the bottom of Hell is the three-faced Lucifer. In each of his mouths, he is chewing up history's greatest traitors. If Brutus and Cassius are in two of his mouths, who is being chewed in the third mouth?

Judas

49. Vodou is Haiti's national religion that worships Bondye. Bondye and all other ancestral spirits live in the land of Ginen, a lush green land of sunshine, peace, and ease. What are the etymologies of Bondye and Ginen respectively?

Bondye from "bon dieu" – "Good God" in French Ginen from Guinea, their ancestral land in West Africa 50. While we associate this three-word phrase with Native Americans, none of the indigenous tribes there have this concept. It was instead something that James Fenimore Cooper came up with in his 1823 novel 'The Pioneers'. What is this phrase, whose usage has even seeped into sports – used for example for Mahela Jayawardene with respect to SSC in Colombo?

Happy Hunting Ground

51. Names of some of the restaurants in comedy series The Good Place are clever references to both food items and band names. Fill in the blanks in the names of these restaurants with appropriate food items.

____ and the Jets ____ and the Banshees

Beignet

Sushi

52. While most of the work that we associate with this style are from earlier decades, the term was first used in print only in 1966 by Hillary Gelson in an article in The Times, and widely popularised a couple of years later by historian Bevis Hillier through his groundbreaking publication '_____ of the 20s and 30s'.

What style?

Art Deco



53. When penguins want to move fast on land, they slide on their bellies as shown in the picture. What is this called, named for a mode of transport?

Tobogganing

This is our new song
Just like the last one
A total waste of time

54. Fill in the blanks, with the name of this Radiohead song. Also, what previous song of theirs is it making a reference to?

My Iron Lung

Creep

55. Fill in the blanks in the names of these courses offered in US colleges (all sets of blanks are the same)

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"_____: Musical Aesthetics and Politics" at Yale University

"_____: Race, Gender, and Empire in Reggaeton" at

Wellesley College

"_____ and Resistance in Puerto Rico" at Loyola

Marymount University
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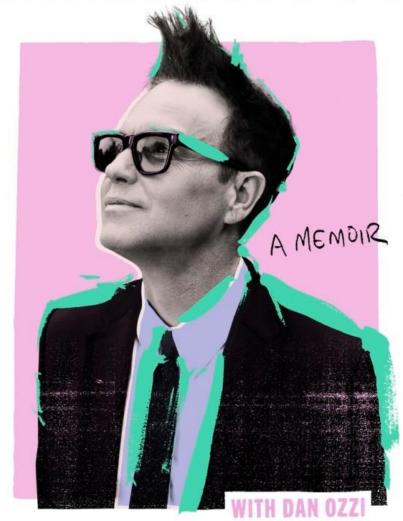
Bad Bunny



56. This Hublot watch has been made in collaboration with which artist?

Takashi **Murakami**

WARK HOPPUS



57. What is the name of Mark Hoppus's memoir? It references both the name of the band he is famous as the frontman of, as well as a 1953 novel. Both the band and the novel have 3 digit numbers as part of their names.

Fahrenheit 182

58. Whom did disability rights activist Tom Shakespeare describe as "the man who mistook his patients for a literary career"?

Oliver Sacks

59. The person who came up with it called it "homo bene figuratus". What do we better know it as?

The Vitruvian Man



60. Thamesmead was a London neighbourhood built to rehouse families from inner-city Victorian tenements. Its brutalist architecture struck a movie director as the perfect location for a dystopian movie he was making. Which 1971 movie was shot in Thamesmead?

A Clockwork Orange