

THINK YOU KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND THE PLANET? FIND OUT WITH OUR GEOGRAPHY QUIZ

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Name the only nation in the world with Latin as an official language.
 2. What's the biggest nation in the world that shares a land border with only one neighbor?
 3. When the Soviet Union broke up, who got stuck with Chernobyl?
 4. What are the more common names for zero degrees latitude and zero degrees longitude?
 5. Three sovereign nations are wholly within the borders of Italy. Name them.
 6. According to the International Monetary Fund, the five richest countries in the world, as defined by gross domestic product per person, are Luxembourg, Norway, the United States, Ireland and Iceland. Which of the five is the richest by far?
 7. Which lake is on the Uganda-Kenya border? (It is the biggest lake in Africa)
 8. What is, by far, the most common three-color combination on the flags of the world's nations?
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ISLANDS

9. Cape Horn is generally considered to be the very bottom of South America, even though it's on an island. Which country does it belong to?
 10. This Asian island was formerly known as Formosa. What do we call it today?
 11. This island's major claim to fame • other than being one of the least strategically useful territories in the board game "Risk" • is that it's the only place (almost) you can see wild lemurs, those strange primates with the perpetually startled expressions.
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RIVERS

12. If you crossed the bridge over the River Kwai, what country would you be in?
 13. Which river passes through, or forms the border of, nine European nations and four capitals?
 14. Which is longer - the Nile or the Amazon?
 15. What is the world's longest river confined to one nation?
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THE NAME GAME

16. An inlet in Alaska, a mountain in New Zealand, a town on the island of Hawaii and an island group in the South Pacific are named for a former grocer's apprentice from Yorkshire, England. Name him.
 17. Speaking in their own language, the residents of this country call it Cymru (pronounced coom-ree). What do the rest of us call it?
 18. Which nation's name derives from an acronym of its original regions • Punjab, Afghania (also known as the North West Frontier Province), Kashmir and Sind?
 19. Which nation in South America took its name from a city in Europe?
 20. What is the only nation in the world named after a mountain? (We're talking here about a single peak, not a mountain range. Hint: it's in Africa.)
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ANSWERS

1. Vatican City, although you're far more likely to hear Italian spoken.
2. Canada.
3. Ukraine.
4. Zero degrees latitude is more commonly known as the equator. Zero degrees longitude is known as the Prime Meridian, which traditionally separates east from west. Unlike the equator, the Prime Meridian is entirely arbitrary • it could have been any line connecting the poles. That being the case, British geographers decided it would pass right under the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England • specifically, under the observatory's main telescope. Incidentally, when representatives of 25 nations met in 1884 to formally agree upon this, the French abstained. They wanted it to run through Paris, and for 30 years French maps showed it that way.
5. Italy (of course), Vatican City and San Marino, whose official name, incidentally, is the Most Serene Republic of San Marino.
6. Luxembourg, with a 2005 gross domestic product per person of \$69,800. The U.S. is third, with \$41,399. (The question lists the top five in order.)
7. Lake Victoria, the largest in Africa.
8. At least 30 of the world's 193 sovereign nations fly the old red, white and blue • including Russia, Cuba and North Korea.
9. Chile. Incidentally, Cape Horn was named not for its shape but for the city of Hoorn in the Netherlands.
10. Taiwan.
11. Madagascar. There are also a few on the nearby island of Comoros, which were probably introduced by humans.
12. Thailand.
13. The Danube, also known as the Donau. The countries are Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and the Ukraine. The capitals are Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava and Belgrade.
14. It's close, and depends how they're measured. Various sources put the Nile at 3,400 to 4,180 miles long, the Amazon at 3,900 to 3,999. Most geographers give the title to the Nile. In terms of volume, though, the Amazon wins, no contest.
15. The Yangtze, the world's third-longest river at about 3,950 miles, is entirely within China.
16. Capt. James Cook.
17. Wales.
18. Pakistan. It was coined in 1933, 14 years before the country came into existence, by Cambridge student Choudhary Rahmat Ali, who added the suffix "stan," meaning "land of," and threw in an extra "i" to make it easier to pronounce.
19. Venezuela means "Little Venice." An early European explorer took note of the houses local Indians had built on stilts above a lake and thought it resembled Venice.
20. Kenya took its name from its highest point, Mount Kenya.

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