March Trivia

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. The digits 3.14 suggest what date for Pi Day on a U.S. calendar?
   - A. March 14
   - B. February 14
   - C. April 3
   - D. March 4

   Correct answer: A. March 14
   A U.S. calendar can write March 14 as 3/14. Those are the first three digits of pi.

2. The United Nations lists International Women’s Day on which date?
   - A. March 18
   - B. March 1
   - C. March 8
   - D. March 28

   Correct answer: C. March 8
   International Women’s Day is observed on March 8.

3. Which of these stones does the Gemological Institute of America list as a March birthstone?
   - A. Ruby
   - B. Aquamarine
   - C. Amethyst
   - D. Peridot

   Correct answer: B. Aquamarine
   Aquamarine and bloodstone both appear in the institute’s March listings.

4. In the Northern Hemisphere, which astronomical season begins at the March equinox?
   - A. Winter
   - B. Summer
   - C. Fall
   - D. Spring

   Correct answer: D. Spring
   The March equinox starts astronomical spring in the Northern Hemisphere and astronomical fall in the Southern Hemisphere.

5. A March 22 calendar entry from the United Nations asks people to think about freshwater. What is the day called?

A. World Oceans Day
B. World Water Day
C. Earth Day
D. World Soil Day

Correct answer: B. World Water Day
The United Nations observes World Water Day on March 22.

6. In which city did Juliette Gordon Low register the first Girl Scouts of the USA members on March 12, 1912?

A. Savannah
B. Charleston
C. Richmond
D. New Orleans

Correct answer: A. Savannah
The Girl Scouts mark March 12 as their birthday. Low registered the first 18 members in Savannah, Georgia.

7. On a Roman calendar, which day of the month is called the Ides of March?

A. The 21st
B. The 1st
C. The 7th
D. The 15th

Correct answer: D. The 15th
The Ides fell on day 15 in March. Roman calendar names also marked the first day and the seventh day of March separately.

8. A notebook entry dated March 10, 1876 describes Alexander Graham Bell speaking through an experimental device to Thomas Watson. What device was being tested?

A. A motion-picture camera
B. A phonograph
C. A telephone
D. A radio receiver

Correct answer: C. A telephone
Bell’s experimental notebook describes a successful test of transmitting speech by telephone.

9. Which university defeated Ohio State in March 1939 to win the first NCAA men’s basketball tournament?

A. Oregon
B. Villanova
C. Oklahoma
D. Wake Forest

Correct answer: A. Oregon
Oregon beat Ohio State 46–33 in the championship game at Northwestern’s Patten Gymnasium.

10. Helen Herron Taft and Viscountess Chinda planted the first two Yoshino cherry trees in a March 1912 ceremony at Washington’s Tidal Basin. Which country gave the trees?

A. Italy
B. Canada
C. France
D. Japan

Correct answer: D. Japan
Japan sent the cherry trees. The first lady and the wife of the Japanese ambassador planted two of them together.

11. Voyager 1’s March 1979 Jupiter flyby revealed an active eruption on which moon?

A. Ganymede
B. Europa
C. Io
D. Callisto

Correct answer: C. Io
Voyager 1 recorded evidence of active volcanism on Io during its Jupiter encounter.

12. Who made the first spacewalk, leaving Voskhod 2 during its March 18, 1965 mission?

A. Ed White
B. Alexei Leonov
C. Yuri Gagarin
D. John Glenn

Correct answer: B. Alexei Leonov
Alexei Leonov was the first person to leave a spacecraft and walk in space.

13. In March 1781 William Herschel noticed a faint object moving against the background stars, initially taking it for a comet. Which planet had he observed?

A. Mercury
B. Neptune
C. Saturn
D. Uranus

Correct answer: D. Uranus
Herschel’s observation led to the identification of Uranus as a planet beyond Saturn.

14. An earthquake record lists the same 1964 Alaska event as 5:36 p.m. on March 27 locally and 3:36 a.m. on March 28 in UTC. Why are the dates different?

A. The clocks use different time zones
B. The record describes two separate earthquakes
C. UTC uses the previous calendar year
D. The local record uses the date of an aftershock instead

Correct answer: A. The clocks use different time zones
The two timestamps describe the same instant. The UTC clock had passed midnight while the local Alaska clock was still on March 27.

15. A March equinox illustration marks the Sun’s center and the top edge of its disk. Why can measured daylight last a little more than 12 hours?

A. The Sun’s disk becomes larger only on the equinox
B. Earth stops turning for a moment at the equinox
C. Sunrise and sunset are measured from the upper edge, and the atmosphere bends sunlight
D. The date marks Earth’s farthest point from the Sun

Correct answer: C. Sunrise and sunset are measured from the upper edge, and the atmosphere bends sunlight
The measured day starts when the upper edge is visible and ends when that edge disappears. Atmospheric refraction also makes the edge visible when its geometric position is below the horizon.