Spring Trivia

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Which month starts spring in Melbourne under Australia's standard four-season weather calendar?
   - A. September
   - B. March
   - C. June
   - D. December

   Correct answer: A. September
   In temperate parts of Australia, the weather calendar places spring in September, October, and November.

2. Which underground structure stores food that helps an established daffodil send up a new shoot in spring?
   - A. A taproot
   - B. A corm
   - C. A bulb
   - D. A rhizome

   Correct answer: C. A bulb
   A daffodil grows from a true bulb. Its thick layers hold reserves that support new growth.

3. Atlantic puffins spend much of the year at sea. What do they return to rocky islands off Maine to do in spring?
   - A. Hibernate through summer
   - B. Nest and raise young
   - C. Molt all their flight feathers at once
   - D. Move inland to spend the summer at freshwater lakes

   Correct answer: B. Nest and raise young
   Atlantic puffins come ashore during their breeding season. Rocky islands off Maine provide places for their nests.

4. Which celebration marks a new year and the start of spring in Iran and communities across parts of Central and West Asia?
   - A. Matariki
   - B. Diwali
   - C. Hanukkah
   - D. Nowruz

   Correct answer: D. Nowruz
   Nowruz is a spring New Year celebration. It has several names and many local traditions across the regions where it is observed.

5. In parts of eastern North America, which liquid collected from sugar maple trees in early spring is used to make maple syrup?

A. Flower nectar
B. Sap
C. Resin
D. Dew

Correct answer: B. Sap
Sugar maple sap contains dissolved sugars. Maple syrup is made by concentrating those sugars as water is removed.

6. South Africa's Namaqua National Park tracks how its spring wildflower display varies from year to year. Which earlier record is especially relevant to the timing and size of that display?

A. Rainfall during the preceding winter
B. The number of visitors in the preceding summer
C. The date of the highest autumn tide
D. The number of hours of moonlight the preceding November

Correct answer: A. Rainfall during the preceding winter
South African National Parks identifies winter rain as a major influence on when the spring flowers appear and how abundant they are.

7. A park notebook tracks the annual dates when trees first leaf out and migratory birds first return. What field studies the timing of events like these?

A. Climatology
B. Geology
C. Cartography
D. Phenology

Correct answer: D. Phenology
Phenology studies the timing of recurring events in the lives of plants and animals, including leaf-out and migration.

8. An Australian archive identifies a flower display on Canberra's City Hill in 1988 as part of the first Floriade. What national celebration was the festival part of that year?

A. The proclamation of Australia's national floral emblem
B. The opening of Australia's new Parliament House
C. Australia's bicentenary celebrations
D. The centenary of Canberra

Correct answer: C. Australia's bicentenary celebrations
ArchivesACT records that the inaugural Floriade was part of Australia's 1988 bicentenary celebrations. The City Hill flower beds incorporated the bicentenary logo.

9. Along the Blue Ridge Parkway in the eastern United States, a shallow woodland hollow holds water in early spring when frogs gather there. It dries up later. What kind of wetland fits this description?

A. A vernal pool
B. A tidal salt marsh
C. A year-round lake
D. A reservoir behind a dam

Correct answer: A. A vernal pool
A vernal pool is a temporary wetland. Along the Blue Ridge Parkway, these pools are important spring breeding sites for some frogs and salamanders.

10. A scene from an English village's traditional May Day festivities shows dancers holding ribbons attached to the top of a tall pole. What do the dancers do with the ribbons in this custom?

A. Wrap them around the edge of a flower crown
B. Tie them into wreaths for the doors
C. Lay them flat to mark a dance course
D. Weave them around the maypole by moving around it

Correct answer: D. Weave them around the maypole by moving around it
Dancers hold the hanging ribbons and move around the maypole in a pattern that weaves the ribbons together around it.

11. A U.S. report covers all of March through May. An Australian report covers all of September through November. Both describe local meteorological spring. Which report covers more days in the Gregorian calendar?

A. The U.S. report, by two days
B. The Australian report, by one day
C. The U.S. report, by one day
D. Both reports cover the same number of days

Correct answer: C. The U.S. report, by one day
March through May totals 31 + 30 + 31 = 92 days. September through November totals 30 + 31 + 30 = 91 days.

12. A fictional park log uses the same observation method at the same site each year. The first bloom is recorded on May 4 in Year 1, April 29 in Year 2, and April 22 in Year 3. How much earlier is the Year 3 record than Years 1 and 2, respectively?

A. 11 days and 7 days
B. 12 days and 7 days
C. 12 days and 5 days
D. 7 days and 12 days

Correct answer: B. 12 days and 7 days
April 22 is 12 days before May 4 and seven days before April 29. Those differences describe the recorded bloom dates at this site.

13. A fictional forest report records seven hours of direct sunlight in one day before the trees leaf out, and three hours in one day after they leaf out. What advantage could a wildflower gain by growing before the leaves appear?

A. The same direct sunlight in both readings, with more water earlier
B. Three extra hours of direct sunlight in the earlier reading
C. Four extra hours of direct sunlight in the later reading
D. Four extra hours of direct sunlight in the earlier reading

Correct answer: D. Four extra hours of direct sunlight in the earlier reading
The earlier reading has seven minus three, or four, more hours of direct sunlight. Some spring woodland wildflowers take advantage of light reaching the ground before the trees leaf out.

14. In a fictional mountain basin with no rain during the observation period, the snowpack shrinks from 105 cm to 67 cm as streamflow rises from 8 to 20 cubic meters per second. Which option gives the rise in streamflow and a likely source of the extra water?

A. 12 cubic meters per second, with melting snow contributing water
B. 12 cubic meters per second, with new rainfall contributing water
C. 28 cubic meters per second, with melting snow contributing water
D. 38 cubic meters per second, with new rainfall contributing water

Correct answer: A. 12 cubic meters per second, with melting snow contributing water
Streamflow rose by 20 minus 8, or 12 cubic meters per second. A shrinking snowpack during a rain-free period is consistent with snowmelt adding runoff.

15. A fictional September equinox occurs on September 22 at 18:40 UTC. Two Southern Hemisphere observatories use fixed offsets of UTC−3 for A and UTC+12 for B. What do their local clocks show for that instant?

A. A shows September 22 at 15:40 and B shows September 22 at 06:40.
B. A shows September 22 at 21:40 and B shows September 23 at 06:40.
C. A shows September 22 at 15:40 and B shows September 23 at 06:40.
D. A shows September 23 at 06:40 and B shows September 22 at 15:40.

Correct answer: C. A shows September 22 at 15:40 and B shows September 23 at 06:40.
Subtract three hours for A to get 15:40 on September 22. Add 12 hours for B, crossing midnight to 06:40 on September 23.