U.S. Patriotic Trivia

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Which song did Congress designate as the national anthem of the United States in 1931?

A. The Star-Spangled Banner
B. America the Beautiful
C. God Bless America
D. Hail Columbia

Correct answer: A. The Star-Spangled Banner
The Star-Spangled Banner was an established patriotic song by the time Congress made it the national anthem in 1931.

2. In 1986, a federal law designated which flower as the national floral emblem of the United States?

A. Dogwood blossom
B. Sunflower
C. Rose
D. Magnolia blossom

Correct answer: C. Rose
The 1986 joint resolution designated the rose as the country’s national floral emblem.

3. On what date does the United States observe Flag Day each year?

A. May 1
B. June 14
C. July 14
D. September 17

Correct answer: B. June 14
Flag Day falls on June 14, the date in 1777 when the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes.

4. Which event does the September 17 observance of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day commemorate?

A. The first meeting of the U.S. Supreme Court
B. The ratification of the Bill of Rights
C. The start of the first U.S. census
D. The signing of the U.S. Constitution

Correct answer: D. The signing of the U.S. Constitution
Delegates signed the Constitution in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787. The observance marks that date.

5. Which animal was designated the national mammal of the United States in 2016?

A. American black bear
B. American bison
C. Gray wolf
D. North American elk

Correct answer: B. American bison

The National Bison Legacy Act named the North American bison, also called the American bison, the national mammal.

6. A summit visit in 1893 inspired the opening of the poem that became ‘America the Beautiful.’ Which summit did Katharine Lee Bates visit?

A. Pikes Peak
B. Mount Elbert
C. Mount Washington
D. Mount Hood

Correct answer: A. Pikes Peak

The view from Pikes Peak in Colorado inspired Bates during her summer in the state. Her poem later became the words to ‘America the Beautiful.’

7. Which U.S. coin design, introduced in 1946, has a torch between olive and oak branches on its reverse?

A. The half-dollar
B. The nickel
C. The quarter
D. The dime

Correct answer: D. The dime

The U.S. Mint introduced the Roosevelt dime in 1946. Its torch, olive branch, and oak branch stand for liberty, peace, and strength, respectively.

8. The Statue of Liberty’s design includes a broken shackle and chain near her feet. Which idea does the National Park Service connect with this detail?

A. The growth of trade across the Atlantic
B. The security of navigation in the harbor
C. Freedom from enslavement and oppression
D. The principles of equality in a court of law

Correct answer: C. Freedom from enslavement and oppression

The broken shackle and chain express freedom from servitude and oppression. The detail is partly hidden by the folds of the statue’s robe.

9. Which metal did builders choose for the small cap at the very tip of the Washington Monument in 1884, when it was still costly to produce?

A. Aluminum
B. Silver
C. Copper
D. Tin

Correct answer: A. Aluminum
Builders chose aluminum for the Washington Monument’s cap. At the time, refined aluminum cost about as much per ounce as silver.

10. The Liberty Bell’s inscription spells the province’s name ‘Pensylvania’ with one n before the s. What does that spelling tell us about its time?

A. The single n identified the person who cast the bell.
B. The bell was made before the province had an official name.
C. The inscription used a standard abbreviation for small bells.
D. The name had several accepted spellings in the 1700s.

Correct answer: D. The name had several accepted spellings in the 1700s.
In the 18th century, ‘Pensylvania’ was an accepted variant. Spelling of the name had yet to settle on the modern form.

11. A museum mounts one U.S. flag vertically on an indoor wall and another vertically in a street-facing window. According to the U.S. Flag Code, where should viewers see the flag’s blue field of stars?

A. Upper left facing the wall display and upper right from the street for the window display.
B. Upper right facing the wall display and upper left from the street for the window display.
C. Upper left facing the wall display and upper left from the street for the window display.
D. Upper right facing the wall display and upper right from the street for the window display.

Correct answer: C. Upper left facing the wall display and upper left from the street for the window display.
The code places the blue field at the upper left from the viewer’s perspective. For the window display, the viewer is outside on the street.

12. A draft program credits both the words and music of ‘Lift Every Voice and Sing’ to James Weldon Johnson. Which revision reflects the original credits?

A. Words by J. Rosamond Johnson and music by James Weldon Johnson.
B. Words by James Weldon Johnson and music by J. Rosamond Johnson.
C. Words and music both by J. Rosamond Johnson.
D. Words by James Weldon Johnson and music by an unknown composer.

Correct answer: B. Words by James Weldon Johnson and music by J. Rosamond Johnson.
James Weldon Johnson wrote the words for a school program in 1900. His brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, set them to music.

13. The back of a $1 note shows both an eagle and a pyramid. A museum draft says these are two separate national seals. Which caption corrects that description?

A. The pyramid is the entire Great Seal, and the eagle is a seal of the U.S. Treasury.
B. They are two faces of the Great Seal. The pyramid is on the front and the eagle is on the reverse.
C. The eagle is the entire Great Seal, and the pyramid is a seal of the U.S. Mint.
D. They are two faces of the Great Seal. The eagle is on the front and the pyramid is on the reverse.

Correct answer: D. They are two faces of the Great Seal. The eagle is on the front and the pyramid is on the reverse.
Both faces of the Great Seal appear together on the back of the note. The seal’s front bears the eagle, and its reverse bears the pyramid.

14. A guide counts 36 columns around the Lincoln Memorial and 48 state names on its highest carved band. Which interpretation explains why the counts differ?

A. The columns represent the states in the Union at Lincoln’s death, and the upper band records the states at the memorial’s dedication.
B. The columns represent the states at the dedication, and the upper band records the states in the Union at Lincoln’s death.
C. The columns represent states at the signing of the Constitution, and the upper band records the states at Lincoln’s death.
D. The columns represent the states at the dedication, and the upper band records the states at the signing of the Constitution.

Correct answer: A. The columns represent the states in the Union at Lincoln’s death, and the upper band records the states at the memorial’s dedication.
The design records two moments. There were 36 states when Lincoln died and 48 when the memorial was dedicated.

15. A Smithsonian record lists the Star-Spangled Banner as about 30 feet high and 42 feet long when made, and about 30 feet high and 34 feet long now. Which caption matches those listed dimensions?

A. The flag is roughly 4 feet shorter in height and 4 feet shorter in length.
B. The flag is roughly 8 feet shorter in height, with the same listed length.
C. The flag is roughly 8 feet shorter in length, with the same listed height.
D. The flag is roughly 12 feet shorter in length, with the same listed height.

Correct answer: C. The flag is roughly 8 feet shorter in length, with the same listed height.
The listed lengths differ by about 8 feet because $42 - 34 = 8$. The height is listed as about 30 feet in both cases.