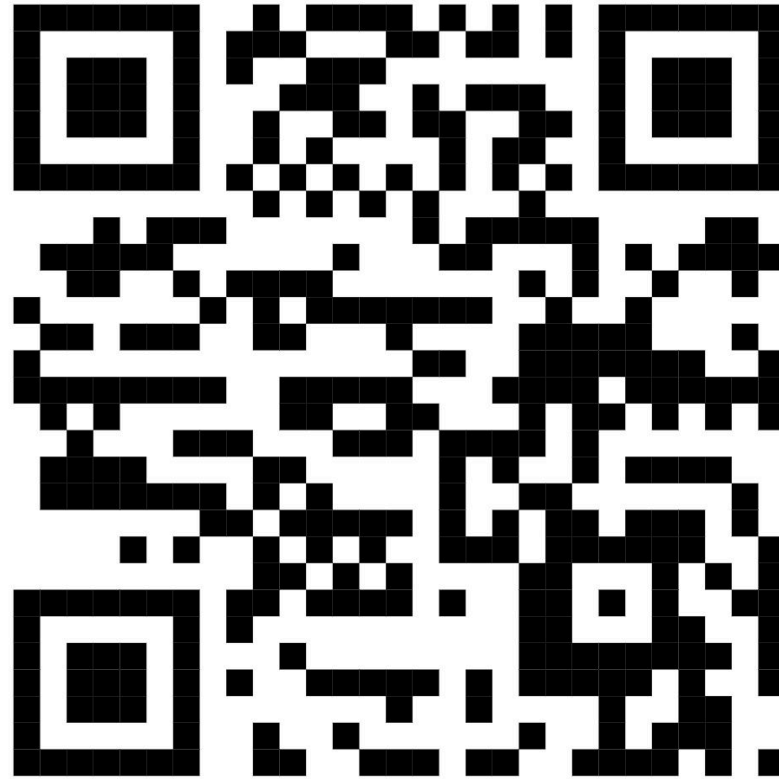


History · Etymology · Language · Mythology

HELM Tryouts



Join 'Quizzers of IITB' GC for updates on upcoming events



1. H

- The X Movement was a Chinese anti-imperialist movement, in 1919.
- Students gathered at a place, now famous for another reason.
- They were protesting a recent decision, agreed upon by countries, to allow the Empire of Japan to retain territories in Shandong that had been surrendered.
- **What is this decision? Also ID the place where they gathered.**
- Also, on this date, fans of a particular MELO franchise celebrate this day, in such a way that you can figure the date out :)
- **ID franchise.**

- **Decision: The Treaty of Versailles (Paris Peace Conference, 1919) — the “Shandong Problem”, Articles 156–158**
- **Place: Tiananmen Square, Beijing**
- **Franchise: Star Wars**
- X = the **May Fourth Movement** — students marched on 4 May 1919 after Germany’s Shandong concessions were handed to Japan instead of returned to China.
- Tiananmen is now better known for the 1989 protests and massacre.
- 4 May = **Star Wars Day**: “May the Fourth be with you.”

2. E

- The disease gets its name from Italian for 'bad air', as the term originally denoted the unwholesome atmosphere caused by the exhalations of marshes, to which the disease was formerly attributed.
- The capital city on the other hand gets its name from Spanish for 'good air', as the Spanish sailors were granted good winds by 'Holy Mary of the Good Winds'.
- **ID the disease and the city.**

- **Malaria (Italian *mala aria*, "bad air")**
- **Buenos Aires (Spanish, "good airs")**
- Miasma theory blamed malaria on marsh vapours until the mosquito–*Plasmodium* link was established in the 1880s–90s.
- The city's founding name was *Ciudad de la Santísima Trinidad y Puerto de Santa María del Buen Ayre*, after the sailors' patroness Nuestra Señora del Buen Ayre.

3. L

- A 'double placename' prominently features the names of two or more constituents in double-barrelled form rather than inventing a new name. There are 7 sovereign states with a 'double placename' derived using a particular conjunction in their official titles.
- ID both these countries with a double placename in its official title:
 - a) The larger island was named after 'The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit' by Columbus while the smaller one gets its name from the product pictured here.
 - b) The larger island was named by Columbus after his own patron saint while the smaller one gets its name from Spanish for snow.



- **a) Trinidad and Tobago**

- Trinidad = the Holy Trinity; Tobago from tobacco (the product pictured).

- **b) Saint Kitts and Nevis**

- St Kitts = St Christopher (Columbus's namesake saint); Nevis from *Nuestra Señora de las Nieves* — the cloud-capped peak looked snowy.
- The conjunction is "and" — the others: Antigua and Barbuda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, São Tomé and Príncipe, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

4. M

- Although they are used synonymously the key distinction between the two is that one refers to a complex branching multicursal puzzle with choices of path and direction, while the other has an unambiguous route to the center and back, and presents no navigational challenge.
- The first word comes from a Middle English word meaning "to perplex" or "to bewilder", while the second is rooted in Greek mythology, where a hero (later linked to a famous thought experiment about identity) navigated such a structure with the help of a ball of thread.
- **ID both words**
- **Also ID the word derived from the aforementioned ball of thread**

- **Maze (multicursal) and Labyrinth (unicursal)**
- **Clue ← clew, a ball of thread**
- *Maze* from Middle English *masen*, "to confuse/bewilder".
- **Theseus** navigated Daedalus's Labyrinth with Ariadne's thread to kill the Minotaur — and gave his name to the **Ship of Theseus** paradox.
- Because the clew led Theseus out, "clue" came to mean anything that guides you to a solution.

5. H

- About this piece, George Wingfield Digby wrote in 1957: "It was designed to tell a story to a largely illiterate public; it is like a strip cartoon, racy, emphatic, colourful, with a good deal of blood and thunder and some ribaldry."
- The Simpsons memorably parodied this, in their episode, "E Pluribus Wiggum", shown on the next slide.
- **WAITA? Give some context as well if you can**

5. H



- **The Bayeux Tapestry**

- A ~70 m embroidered cloth narrating the events leading to the **Norman Conquest of England** — Harold's oath, the invasion, and the Battle of Hastings (1066).
- Likely commissioned by Bishop Odo of Bayeux, William the Conqueror's half-brother; Harold is famously shown with an arrow in his eye.
- The Simpsons used it as the episode's couch gag: in tapestry style, the Flanders family steal the Simpsons' couch and the Simpsons win it back.

6. E

- After the Norman invasion of 1066 a new law was created, declaring that in the cities at 8 o'clock fires had to be covered to prevent conflagration.
- Soldiers would stand on the city walls shouting a French word that meant "cover the fires", but locals who did not understand French heard 'X' instead, and thus the word X was born.
- At first it simply referred to the practice of having a set time for covering fires and going to bed, before evolving into the present-day definition of X.
- **ID X.**

- **Curfew**

- From Old French *couvre-feu*, "cover the fire".
- Originally the evening bell signalling hearths be banked for the night; it later came to mean any order to stay indoors after a set hour.

7.L

- Due to certain linguistic characteristics shared by the following set of words, what are they known as? (explanation works if you don't know the exact terms)
- a) pentasyllabic, definable, unhyphenated, nonpalindromic, harmless, nontrivial, unabbreviated, asexual (in English but not in French, Spanish, ...)
- b) chicken, inflammable, feasted, deteriorate, chariot, abnormality, action, devilish, falsified, plagiarist, strives
- c) Koala Bears, Panama Hats, Strawberry, Coconut, Bombay Duck, Isle of Dogs, The Hundred Years' War

- **a) Autological words (homological)**

- Each describes itself — “pentasyllabic” has five syllables, “unhyphenated” has no hyphen, “asexual” has no gender (unlike in French/Spanish). Opposite: heterological.

- **b) Kangaroo words**

- Each hides its own synonym (a “joey”) in order: chick·en, flammable, f·e·d, rot, cart, anomaly, act, evil, lied, liar, tries.

- **c) Misnomers**

- Koalas are marsupials; Panama hats are from Ecuador; strawberries aren’t berries; coconuts aren’t nuts; Bombay duck is a fish; the Isle of Dogs isn’t an island; the war lasted 116 years.

8. M

- X originally belonged to the God Surya, who wore it around his neck. It was said that whichever land possessed this would never encounter any calamities such as droughts, floods, earthquakes or famines, and would always be full of prosperity and plenitude.
- When God Surya himself appeared before Satrajit, father-in-law of Y, in an indistinct and fiery shape, Satrajit asked him to appear in a less blinding form. For this, the sun god took off X from his neck, and Satrajit saw him possessing a dwarfish stature, with a body like burnished copper, and slightly reddish eyes. Satrajit got X as a boon.
- Later this X played a major role in Y's marriage to Jambavan's daughter and subsequently that of Satrajit's daughter.
- **ID X and Y.**

- **X = Syamantaka Mani (Syamantaka jewel)**
- **Y = Krishna**
- Satrajit's brother Prasena wore the gem hunting and was killed by a lion; Jambavan slew the lion and took it. Accused of theft, Krishna tracked it down and fought Jambavan.
- Jambavan yielded and gave Krishna the gem and his daughter **Jambavati**; a remorseful Satrajit then gave his daughter **Satyabhama** in marriage.

9. H+E

- S5E6 of Silicon Valley sees Dinesh mocking Gilfoyle with a series of puns.
- Dinesh asks a coder reading a book if it is by Gilfoyle's favourite author (6,5,6). What pun (6,5,6) does he make? A fantasy author's middle initials are altered to indicate that he makes a lot of blunders.
- He later asks a bunch of coders if they were talking about Toy Story because Gilfoyle's favourite character is (4,9). What pun (4,9) does he make? It alters the name of a central character to include a term (in plural) for a common coding defect.

- **George Error Martin**
 - George R. R. Martin → "R. R." read aloud becomes "Error".
- **Bugs Lightyear**
 - Buzz Lightyear → "Bugs", the plural of the coder's favourite defect.

10. M

- Captain Hendrick Van der Decken was the captain of a ship that sailed between Netherlands and East Indies. During one of the voyages to Amsterdam, the captain thought of establishing a settlement near the Cape of Good Hope as a respite from the rough waters.
- When the ship neared the Cape, a heavy storm surrounded the ship. Though the crew requested him to turn back, the captain ordered them to go forward even if it meant sailing "until doomsday". This angered the Gods, who trapped his soul onto the ship where he sails it for eternity.
- **This serves as a legend for which famous entity, whose name contains a nod to the captain's origins?**

- **The Flying Dutchman**

- A ghost ship doomed never to make port, said to haunt the Cape of Good Hope; sighting it is an omen of doom.
- "Dutchman" nods to the captain's Dutch (VOC) origins. The legend inspired Wagner's opera *Der fliegende Holländer* and Davy Jones's ship in *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

11. H

- After Usain Bolt smashed both the 100m and 200m world records at the 2009 IAAF World Championships, the German capital city's mayor marked the occasion with an unconventional present.
- Bolt was handed a 'souvenir' which stood almost 12 feet tall, 4 feet wide, weighed almost 3 tonnes and was later shipped off to the Jamaican Military Museum. Painted on its surface was Bolt sprinting on the event's blue track, alongside the words NEW WR.
- **What is this unusual souvenir?**

- **A segment of the Berlin Wall**
- Berlin mayor Klaus Wowereit presented the ~2.7-tonne slab after Bolt ran 9.58 s (100 m) and 19.19 s (200 m) at the 2009 Worlds in Berlin.
- 2009 also marked 20 years since the Wall fell — Bolt was “tearing down barriers” of his own.

12. M

- "If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst at once into the sky, that would be like the splendor of the mighty one ..."
- X recalled that this quote came to his mind upon witnessing a certain event. Many years later, in a 1965 TV interview he mentioned a more famous second quote, which he also thought of at the moment.
- X is falsely attributed with having uttered these words, while his brother claimed that all he said was, "It worked."
- **Who is X, and what was the quote?**

- **X = J. Robert Oppenheimer**
- **"Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds."**
- Both lines are from the **Bhagavad Gita** (Ch. 11), which Oppenheimer read in Sanskrit; the event was the **Trinity test**, 16 July 1945.
- He said in the 1965 NBC documentary *The Decision to Drop the Bomb* that the verse came to mind; brother Frank recalled he only said "I guess it worked."

13. H+E

- 'The ----- Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution' is a 2020 book by Dan Hicks, Professor of Contemporary Archaeology at the University of Oxford.
- **Fill the blanks with a pun on a place where “you will see the curated spoils of Empire”, referring to the nature of how they sourced their stuff.**

- **The Brutish Museums**
- British Museum → **Brutish**: the Benin Bronzes were looted in the 1897 British punitive expedition against Benin City.
- Hicks argues for their restitution to Nigeria; many institutions have since begun returning pieces.

14. H+E

- K is an American educational technology company that produces learning apps and provides language certification. K offers courses on 43 languages, even constructed languages such as Klingon.
- Very aptly for their *species* of company, their weekly, company-wide meeting is called a "L". Do not get confused with its tiered namesake, extremely more significant on a larger scale.
- Luis von Ahn, who founded K, also founded another company M (before K). Now owned by Google, M has probably come really close to solving an *existential question*, one that we all have to *answer from time to time*.
- **Give K, L and M.**

- **K = Duolingo**
- **L = Parliament**
- **M = reCAPTCHA**
- Duolingo's mascot is Duo the owl, and a group of owls is a **parliament** — not to be confused with a (bicameral, "tiered") national Parliament.
- reCAPTCHA, acquired by Google in 2009, keeps asking us the existential question: **"Are you a robot?"**

15. L

- Canting arms are heraldic symbols that represent the bearer's name, often through a visual pun or rebus.
- Ex. A Scottish noble family (Bowes-Lyon ... bows and lions)



15a. L

- Which poet received the following canting arms from their grandfather?
- The coat of arms shows a connection with the sea, where the figure met his tragic fate later in life.



- **Percy Bysshe Shelley**
- The arms carry **whelk shells** — “shell” for Shelley — inherited via his grandfather, Sir Bysshe Shelley, 1st Baronet.
- Shelley drowned in 1822 when his boat, the *Don Juan*, sank in a storm in the Gulf of La Spezia.

15b. L

- Which writer had the following canting arms, representing the family name which came from a Gaelic word meaning "haste"?
- The three deer running at full course were used as a symbol of agility, appropriate for the writer and his quick satirical wit and maybe also his sojourns.



- **Jonathan Swift**
 - Swift = haste; the three bucks "courant" (running) cant on the name.
 - Fitting for the sharp satirist of *A Modest Proposal* — and the "sojourns" are **Gulliver's Travels**.

16. M

- There are many varieties of this story. Some say that the Jade Emperor, the one who rules the heavens, called a 'race' on his birthday to create the _____. Others say that it was in fact the Buddha who did it. The Great Race is a famous fable told to children across China every Chinese New Year.
- The race involved crossing a great river, which would prove challenging for many of the participants. But despite this, the first few participants crossed the river using their intelligence, strength, swiftness, sensitivity, graciousness, cleverness, friendliness and other traits. The emperor thus honoured them, due to which they are still relevant even today.
- **How were these participants honored / how are they still relevant today?**

- **The Chinese Zodiac — each of the first 12 animals got a year named after it**
- Order of finish: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, Pig — the 12-year cycle used to this day.
- The Rat won by riding the Ox and leaping ahead at the end; the Cat, pushed into the river by the Rat, never made it — hence cats chase rats.

17. E+M

- Often associated with the tree of life, the X of Kashmar is worshipped in Zoroastrianism. It is regarded to be what coniferous tree that the Greeks noticed grew in abundance on a Mediterranean island?
- Yggdrasil is the central world tree in Norse cosmology. It is considered to be what hardwood tree Y of the olive family whose twigs were carried by children to school in parts of England on a particular holy day?
- **Give X and Y.**

- **X = Cypress**
 - The legendary Cypress of Kashmar, said to have been planted by Zoroaster; the name traces to **Cyprus**, where the tree grew abundantly.
- **Y = Ash**
 - Yggdrasil is described as an ash (*Fraxinus*, family Oleaceae). On **Ash Wednesday**, English children carried ash twigs to school — those without risked having their feet stamped.

18a. Quad 1 (H+E)

- Darkest Dungeon is a videogame that sees the player enlist the help of various character classes.
- **What is the name of this class (8) that is a holy warrior fighting with righteous fury against the forces of evil?**
- Although the game lacks a specific timeline, the class's real-life counterparts could have been active in wars any time from 1096 to the 1300s.

18a. Quad 1 (H+E)



18b. Quad 1 (H+E)

- Darkest Dungeon is a videogame that sees the player enlist the help of various character classes.
- **What is the name of this class (6,6) from Darkest Dungeon that is a mercenary targeting specific enemies to turn them in for a reward?**
- Historically, such private agents worked for bail bondsmen, capturing fugitives and criminals for a commission.

18b. Quad 1 (H+E)



18c. Quad 1 (H+E)

- Darkest Dungeon is a videogame that sees the player enlist the help of various character classes.
- **What is the name of this class (5) from Darkest Dungeon that is defined by the horrible disease ravaging the skin and nerves?**
- The class's name is often also used metaphorically for someone shunned by society, with the face mask being a reference to a film depiction of King Baldwin IV in Kingdom of Heaven.

18c. Quad 1 (H+E)



18d. Quad 1 (H+E)

- Darkest Dungeon is a videogame that sees the player enlist the help of various character classes.
- **What is the name of this class (9) from Darkest Dungeon that is a competitive sharpshooter using a type of long gun?**
- If you knew the answers to all other questions in the quad, your answer for this one should be right on target to join this class yourself. A small group of these have also been featured elsewhere in pop culture.

18d. Quad 1 (H+E)



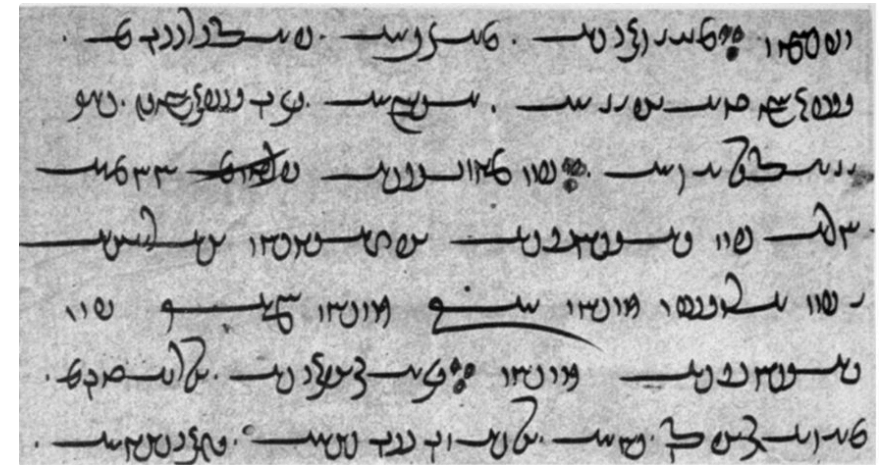
18. Quad 1 (H+E)

ANSWER

- **a) Crusader · b) Bounty Hunter · c) Leper · d) Musketeer**
- Crusader — the Crusades ran from 1096 (First Crusade) into the 1300s.
- Bounty Hunter — bail-enforcement agents chasing fugitives for a cut.
- Leper — leprosy (Hansen's disease); the mask echoes Edward Norton's Baldwin IV, the "Leper King".
- Musketeer — the Arbalest's alternate skin; the quad's four answers make you one of **The Three Musketeers**... plus d'Artagnan.

19a. Quad 2 (H)

- Which language of the Indo-European language family, originally spoken during the Old Iranian period (c. 1500–400 BCE), is named after the central text of a religion whose adherents exalt the all-wise deity Ahura Mazda?



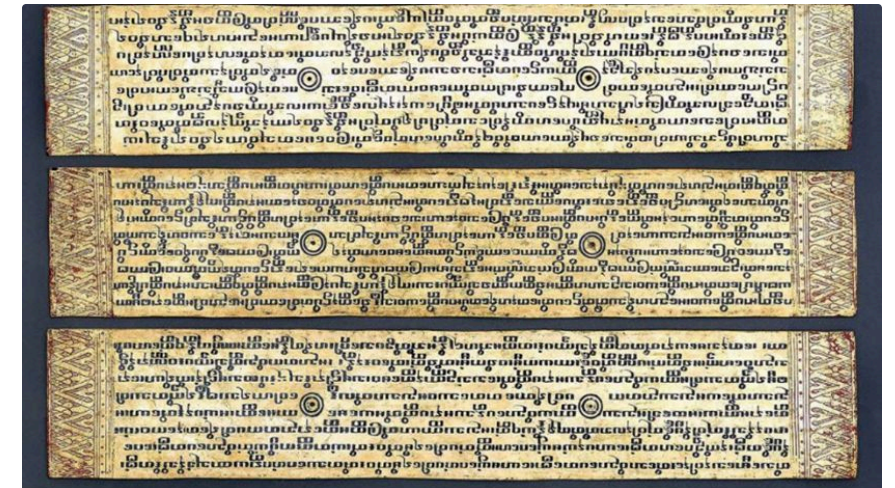
19b. Quad 2 (H)

- Which Northwest Semitic language, that originated in Ancient Syria, was the lingua franca of the Near East from the 3rd century BCE to the 7th century CE and used to write the Talmud, the central text of Rabbinic Judaism?



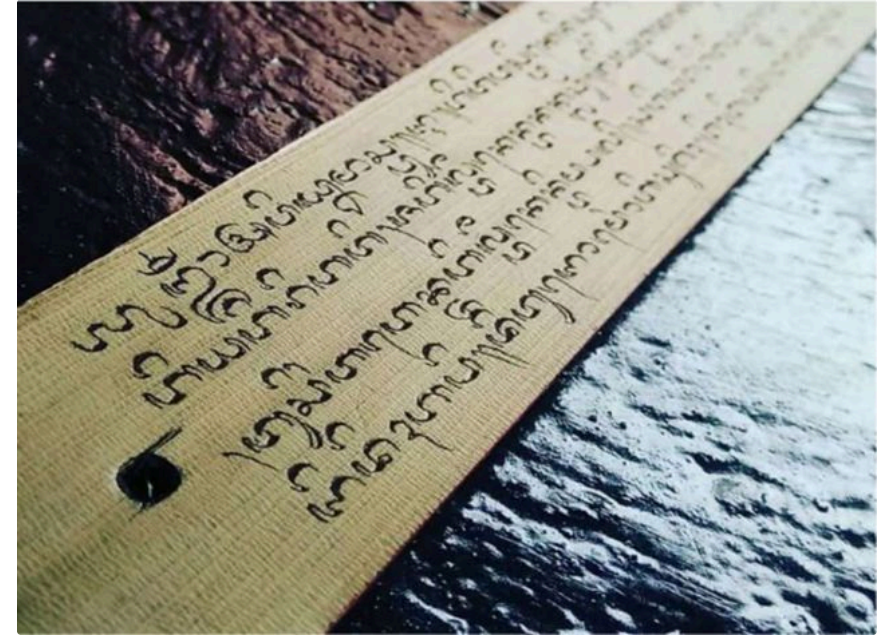
19c. Quad 2 (H)

- Which classical Middle Indo-Aryan language of the Indian subcontinent was used to compose several religious texts of a particular religion, including a namesake canon which is also referred to as the Tipitaka ("Triple Basket")?



19d. Quad 2 (H)

- Which Austronesian language with about 3.5 million speakers is used for the traditional performances and rituals associated with a form of Hinduism practiced at the namesake island whose holiest site is the Besakih Temple?



- **a) Avestan · b) Aramaic · c) Pali · d) Balinese**
- Avestan — language of the **Avesta**, scripture of Zoroastrianism.
- Aramaic — Jewish Babylonian Aramaic is the main language of the Babylonian Talmud.
- Pali — language of the **Pali Canon** (Tipitaka) of Theravada Buddhism.
- Balinese — used in the rituals and performances of Balinese Hinduism; Pura Besakih is its “Mother Temple”.
- Link: each is a liturgical language tied to a religion’s sacred texts or rites.

20a. Quad 3 (H/E/L)

- **Deriving from an Old Turkic word meaning "elder brother", what title was reserved in the Ottoman era for senior military officers, such as the commander of the Janissaries?**
- It appears today as part of the title of the imam of Nizari Ismailism, one of whom started a coveted award for architecture.

20b. Quad 3 (H/E/L)

- **Deriving from a Persian word meaning "master", what title was often used for teachers or professors during the Ottoman period?**
- The title is associated with a wise character who appears in a number of humorous Muslim folktales, and the Persian cognate of the title is used for Sufi masters.

20c. Quad 3 (H/E/L)

- **Deriving from Turkish for "head" or "chief", what title was a high rank in the Ottoman political and military system, typically granted to governors and generals?**
- Aside from being associated with the dictatorial Young Turk triumvirate, the title was also assumed in the past by rulers of Egypt and Morocco.

20d. Quad 3 (H/E/L)

- **Deriving from an Arabic word meaning "burden bearer", what title was given to the de facto prime minister of the sultan in the Ottoman Empire?**
- The honorific was also bestowed upon high-ranking ministers, governors, and political advisors in many kingdoms and empires of the Near East.

20. Quad 3 (H/E/L)

ANSWER

- **a) Agha · b) Hodja (Hoca) · c) Pasha · d) Vizier**
- Agha — the Janissary Agha; today in **Aga Khan**, whose Aga Khan IV founded the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (1977).
- Hodja — **Nasreddin Hodja** of the folktales; Persian cognate *Khwaja*, used for Sufi masters (e.g., Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti).
- Pasha — the “Three Pashas” Talaat, Enver and Djemal; also a title of rulers of Egypt and Morocco.
- Vizier — from Arabic *wazīr*; the **Grand Vizier** was the sultan’s chief minister.

21a. L

- ChattyFeet has a line of sock designs dedicated to literary authors, with word plays on their names.
- **a) Which writer inspired this sock design, which aptly represents both the author and one of his most famous works? (5)**



21b. L

- b) Described as being so comfortable that every woman must have a pair of her own. The design's name is a wordplay that removes a letter from the author's name to refer to the sock's material.
- **ID the design's title. (5)**



21c. L

- **c) Which writer inspired this sock design by ChattyFeet, that may give one the feeling of being under constant surveillance?**
- Reviews describe it as an appropriate gift for one's elder sibling. (5)



21d. L

- **d) Which writer inspired this sock design, with the macabre design depicting a corvid at a windowsill?**
- The design's name is a wordplay that replaces the author's last name with the part of the foot that the sock snugly wraps around. (5)



- **a) Ernest Hemingway — sold as “Ernestoe Hemingway”**
 - Grey beard plus fish on a sea-blue sock: *The Old Man and the Sea*.
- **b) “Virginia Woolf”**
 - Virginia Woolf minus the f = wool; “a pair of her own” riffs on *A Room of One’s Own*.
- **c) George Orwell**
 - The all-seeing eyes are Big Brother from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* — hence the “elder sibling” gift.
- **d) Edgar Allan Poe — “Edgar Allan Toe”**
 - The raven at the window is *The Raven*.