January 2027 quiz: host's script

Read the questions aloud. Answers are in blue, with a fact to share.

How to run the quiz

1. Before you start: print one quiz (multiple-choice or open) for each team and the scoring sheet once. Keep the answer pages and this script with you.

2. Make teams of two to five, and mix quick talkers with careful thinkers. A table can be a team.

3. Read each question twice, slowly, facing the room. Read the four answers too if you are playing multiple choice.

4. There is no time limit: wait until every team has written something, then go on.

5. At the end of each round, read the answers and the fact under each one. Teams mark their own sheet or swap with the next table.

6. Add up the scores on the scoring sheet after each round, and use the tie-break if two teams draw.

Say: Welcome to our January quiz. There are four rounds of ten questions. Take your time, talk it over with your team, and write down your best answer: a guess is better than a blank.

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Round 1: General knowledge and words

Say: Round 1 is general knowledge and words. Here is question one.

1. How many days are there in a leap year?

Answer: 366 (C)

The extra day is 29 February. The next leap year is 2028.

2. What is the plural of mouse, the small animal?

Answer: Mice (A)

Louse and lice work the same way.

3. How many colours are there in a rainbow, as they are usually listed?

Answer: Seven (C)

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Isaac Newton chose seven.

4. What do we call a word that means the opposite of another word?

Answer: An antonym (C)

Hot and cold are antonyms; big and large are synonyms.

5. What is the nickname of the great bell in the clock tower of the Palace of Westminster?

Answer: Big Ben (D)

The tower itself was renamed the Elizabeth Tower in 2012.

6. In chess, which piece can only move diagonally?

Answer: The bishop (D)

So a bishop that starts on a white square stays on white squares.

7. How many strings does a standard violin have?

Answer: Four (C)

They are tuned G, D, A and E.

8. Who wrote the play Romeo and Juliet?

Answer: William Shakespeare (C)

It was written in the 1590s and is set in Verona, Italy.

9. What is the chemical symbol for gold?

Answer: Au (B)

Au comes from aurum, the Latin word for gold. Ag is silver.

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10. What is a group of lions called?

Answer: A pride (B)

Lions are the most social of the big cats: a pride is mostly related females and their cubs.

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Round 2: Nature and places

Say: Round 2 is nature and places. Here is question one.

1. Which is the largest planet in our solar system?
Answer: Jupiter (D)
More than 1,300 Earths could fit inside Jupiter.

2. On which continent is the Sahara Desert?
Answer: Africa (C)
It is the largest hot desert in the world.

3. The kookaburra, famous for its laughing call, is native to which country?
Answer: Australia (A)
Kookaburras are large kingfishers. They also live in New Guinea.

4. What is the largest and heaviest living bird?
Answer: The ostrich (C)
The wandering albatross has the widest wings, but the ostrich is the biggest bird.

5. What is the capital city of Australia?
Answer: Canberra (C)
Canberra was chosen as a compromise between Sydney and Melbourne.

6. Snowdon, also called Yr Wyddfa, is the highest mountain in which country? (UK question)
Answer: Wales (C)
A railway has carried visitors to the top since 1896.

7. Which US state is made up entirely of islands?
Answer: Hawaii (C)
Hawaii became the 50th state in 1959.

8. What do honeybees make from the nectar of flowers?
Answer: Honey (C)
Bees fan the nectar with their wings to dry it into honey.

9. Which river flows through Paris?
Answer: The Seine (B)
The Seine flows into the English Channel at Le Havre.

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10. The leaf of which tree is on the flag of Canada?

Answer: The maple (D)

The maple leaf flag was first raised on 15 February 1965.

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Round 3: Food, music and films

Say: Round 3 is food, music and films. Here is question one.

1. Which fruit is traditionally used to make marmalade?

Answer: Oranges (A)

Bitter Seville oranges are in season in January, so it is marmalade-making month in Britain.

2. Lamingtons are squares of sponge cake dipped in chocolate and rolled in what?

Answer: Coconut (C)

They are a favourite in Australia and New Zealand.

3. Parmesan cheese comes from which country?

Answer: Italy (D)

Its Italian name is Parmigiano Reggiano, after Parma and Reggio Emilia, where it is made.

4. Which pastry is used to make eclairs and profiteroles?

Answer: Choux pastry (D)

Choux pastry puffs up with steam and is hollow inside, ready for cream.

5. Which vegetable gives borscht soup its deep red colour?

Answer: Beetroot (B)

Borscht is eaten across Ukraine, Poland and Russia.

6. Which band released the album Abbey Road in 1969?

Answer: The Beatles (C)

Abbey Road is the London street where their recording studio stands.

7. Which singer was known as the Man in Black?

Answer: Johnny Cash (D)

He sang about the black clothes he wore on stage in a 1971 song.

8. Who directed the 1960 film Psycho?

Answer: Alfred Hitchcock (A)

Hitchcock was born in London in 1899.

9. Which instrument did Louis Armstrong famously play?

Answer: The trumpet (D)

His nickname was Satchmo.

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10. Judith Durham was the lead singer of which Australian group, a big hit in Britain in the 1960s?

Answer: The Seekers (D)

The Seekers were among the first Australian groups to top the British charts, in 1965.

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Round 4: January days

Say: Round 4 is January days. Here is question one.

1. January is named after which Roman god, who had two faces looking forwards and back?

Answer: Janus (C)

Janus was the god of doorways and beginnings.

2. On which date is Australia Day? (Australia question)

Answer: 26 January (C)

It marks the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove in 1788.

3. Burns Night, held on 25 January, honours a poet from which country? (UK question)

Answer: Scotland (C)

Robert Burns was born on 25 January 1759. Haggis is the traditional supper.

4. The third Monday in January is a US holiday honouring which civil rights leader? (US question)

Answer: Martin Luther King Jr. (A)

The holiday was first observed in 1986.

5. On 1 January 1901, six British colonies joined together to become which country?

Answer: Australia (A)

Canada had become a dominion in 1867. New Zealand chose not to join.

6. Which tennis Grand Slam tournament is played in January?

Answer: The Australian Open (A)

It is played in Melbourne, in the middle of the Australian summer.

7. Which gemstone is the traditional birthstone for January?

Answer: Garnet (B)

Garnets are most often deep red.

8. Which British prime minister was given a state funeral in London on 30 January 1965?

Answer: Winston Churchill (C)

Churchill had died six days earlier, aged 90.

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9. In January 1880, which inventor was granted a US patent for his electric light bulb?

Answer: Thomas Edison (B)

The patent was granted on 27 January 1880.

10. In January 1958, which New Zealander led the first party to reach the South Pole in land vehicles, driving farm tractors? (New Zealand question)

Answer: Edmund Hillary (C)

Hillary had also been one of the first two people to climb Everest, in 1953.

Tie-break: closest answer wins

T. In which year was the Sydney Harbour Bridge opened?

Answer: 1932 (nearest wins)

It opened on 19 March 1932, after eight years of building.

> **Say:** That is the end of the quiz. Thank you all for playing. Let us add up the scores.