

Sampler



229 QUESTIONS
FROM 2021

Questions, Answers, and
Unforgettable News Facts
from the Passing Year

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QUESTIONS
TOPICS



Popular
Music



Books



TV



Films



Celebrities



Arts



Culture



Language

Welcome

2021 was a year of change in the world. From climate change to technology. While the US saw a fresh start with the inauguration of President Joe Biden (and the first woman Vice President), in other parts of the world, dictators strengthened their grip through spreading fake news and increasingly violating human rights.

On the other hand, it was an excellent year for science and culture. Theaters finally reopened after the long pandemic break, three space missions landed on Mars, the world saw its first private space flights, Covid-19 vaccines proved effective, and superheroes became woke.

I hope this collection of stories and facts from 2021 serves as a helpful time capsule to educate and reminisce on the passing year.

WHY QUESTIONS?

There's nothing more intriguing than a question. Socrates thought of that first. Once the mind's intrigued, the answers (i.e., new facts) are more easily stored, and further questions arise, sparking our critical thinking process.

HOW TO USE THIS EBOOK?

Test and enrich your knowledge, utilize the contents index to reach your favorite subjects, print it (as ecologically as you can), rip it apart, make a trivia night out of it, zoom your friends, and screen-share the questions. You can even keep it unopened until 2031 ;-).

ABOUT THE CURATOR



Orr Knispel is a full-time journalist and part-time questions writer for TV, Trivia apps, and print, with experience of over 20 years covering current events.

HowSmart.net launched in 2020 as a news-based trivia quizzes website. I originally published the questions and answers in this ebook on the site's 2021 news quizzes. All answers are cross-checked with the most trusted news providers on the planet and relevant government agencies and NGOs. You'll find valuable and interesting clickable links on every page on this file.

Questions

Category:

Popular Music



1. WITH WHICH ARTISTS DO COLDPLAY COLLABORATE IN THEIR 2021 ALBUM, "MUSIC OF THE SPHERES"?

Screenshot: Coldplay on Youtube



Coldplay's 2021 album "Music of the Spheres" [includes a collaboration with BTS \("My Universe," which has already topped the Billboard Hot 100 songs chart\) and with Selena Gomez \("Let Somebody Go"\)](#).

HOW MANY "MUSIC OF THE SPHERES" SONGS ARE TITLED WITH AN EMOJI?

[Five of the album's 12 songs use emojis as titles](#): "Music of the Spheres" (stylized as 🌐), "Alien Choir" (stylized as 🌌), "Human Heart" (stylized as ❤️), "Music of the Spheres II" (stylized as 🌍), and "Infinity Sign" (stylized as ∞).

WHO PRODUCED COLDPLAY'S "MUSIC IF THE SPHERES"?

The album, released Oct. 15, 2021, was [produced by Swedish Max Martin](#), responsible for record-breaking recordings by Britney Spears, Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, and The Weekend. Martin is [the songwriter with the third-most number-one singles on the Billboard Hot 100 chart](#), behind only Paul McCartney and John Lennon.

2. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME BEFORE 2021 ADELE RELEASED NEW MUSIC?

Screenshot: Adele - Easy on Me



Adele's last album, 25, was released in 2015. The album sold more than 3.5 million copies in the UK, making it the country's 14th best-selling record of all time.

WHAT IS ADELE 30?

Adele's 2021 "divorce album" is titled 30. That's a follow-up to her successful albums 19, 21, and 25. The album is due Nov. 19, 2021. Adele released the first single from the album, "Easy on Me," on Oct. 15. [Within 12 hours, fans had streamed it 12 million times.](#)

WHAT WAS UNIQUE ABOUT ADELE'S 2021 PR CAMPAIGN?

Adele's team changed her Twitter and Instagram images on Oct. 5, 2021, and uploaded [a new music video](#) for the first time since 2016. Her team replaced Adele's old website with a link urging fans to sign up for information, raising [speculation that she is about to release her first new music since 2015's "25" album](#). Over the weekend, [the number 30 was projected onto the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Colosseum in Rome, Berlin's Brandenburg Gate, Amsterdam's Nemo Museum, and New York's Empire State Building](#). The logo reportedly appeared in Russia, Brazil, Mexico, Poland, Ireland, Italy, Canada, Malaysia, South Korea, and the UK. Although not officially confirmed as being linked to Adele, [the images appear to use the font featured on her previous albums](#).

3. WHO IS THE YOUNGEST ARTIST EVER TO HEADLINE THE GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL?

Screenshot: Billie Eilish on YouTube



The youngest performer ever to headline Glastonbury Festival was Mark Hamilton of UK band Ash. [He was approximately 20 years and three months old when the group replaced Steve Winwood as the headliner in 1997.](#) Ash frontman Tim Wheeler was 20 years and five months at the time.

WHO IS THE YOUNGEST SOLO ARTIST TO HEADLINE THE GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL?

Billie Eilish will become the youngest solo artist ever to headline the Glastonbury festival when she tops the bill on the 2022 festival, Glastonbury festival announced Oct. 4, 2021. Eilish is the first headliner for the 2022 festival after producers canceled the 2020 and 2021 events due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Eilish [teased the news on her Instagram account.](#)

HOW OLD WILL BILLIE EILISH BE IN GLASTONBURY 2022?

Eilish will be [20 years and six months old when she headlines the Glastonbury festival on Friday, June 24, 2022.](#)

4. WHO IS THE WEALTHIEST FEMALE MUSICIAN IN THE WORLD IN 2021?

Screenshot: Fenty Beauty By Rihanna on YouTube



As of August 2021, [Forbes estimates that Rihanna is worth \\$1.7 billion](#) — making her the wealthiest female musician globally and the second richest female entertainer after Oprah Winfrey.

HOW DID RIHANNA MAKE HER FORTUNE?

An [estimated \\$1.4 billion of Rihanna's fortune](#) comes from the value of [Fenty Beauty](#), of which she owns 50%. Her stake in her lingerie company, [Savage x Fenty](#), is worth an estimated \$270 million, and her earnings from her music and acting careers account for most of the rest.

5. WHERE WAS BTS'S NEW PERMISSION TO DANCE MUSIC VIDEO SHOT?

Screenshot: United Nations on YouTube.



On Sept. 20, 2021, [BTS unveiled a new music video for its single, "Permission to Dance,"](#) filmed at U.N. Headquarters in New York. The singers are dancing from the General Assembly hall to the garden overlooking the New York East River in the video. [Watch the video.](#)

WHAT ARE BTS DOING IN THE UNITED NATIONS?

K-pop band [BTS addressed the U.N. stage for a sustainability event on Monday, Sept. 20, 2021,](#) to help promote U.N. goals for 2030, including ending extreme poverty, preserving the planet, and achieving gender equality. South Korean President Moon Jae-in introduced the pop stars as special presidential envoys and an "[exceptionally outstanding group of young men who are connecting with the youth across the world.](#)" The [U.N. General Assembly with world leaders started Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021.](#)

Questions

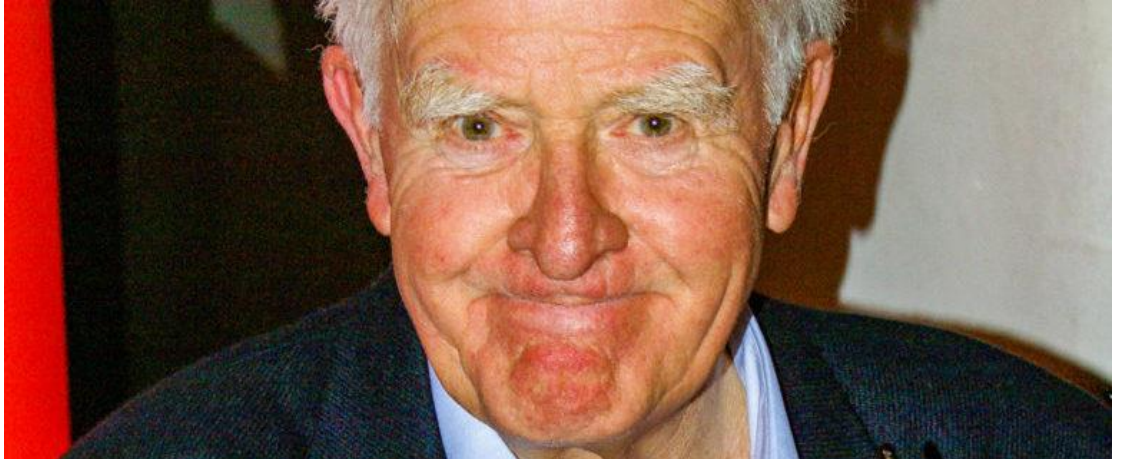
Category:

Books



6. WHAT'S JOHN LE CARRÉ'S LAST COMPLETED SPY NOVEL?

Photo: [Krimidoedel](#), [CC BY 3.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons



"Silverview" is [John le Carré's 26th and last completed novel](#). The novel revolves around Julian Lawndsley, who, at 33, [has dropped out of the financial rat race in London to open a bookstore in a small seaside town in East Anglia](#).

7. WHO IS JON KENT?

Image: [DCComics.com](https://dccomics.com)



Jon Kent is the new Superman, [son of Clark Kent and Lois Lane](#). The character was introduced in 2015 as Superboy before being encouraged by his father to [become the new Superman](#).

IS SUPERMAN COMING OUT?

DC Comics announced Monday, Oct. 11, 2021, that [Jon Kent and his friend Jay would share a kiss in a story published next month](#). That same-sex relationship continues several behaviors that make Jon Kent a different Superman. Since the new series, Superman: Son of Kal-El, began in July 2021, Jon has combated wildfires caused by climate change and protested the deportation of refugees."

8. WHICH CULTURAL PHENOMENA FEATURED THE CHARACTER OF KUNTA KINTE?

Screenshot: Roots / ABC



Kunta Kinte is [a character in the 1976 novel Roots: The Saga of an American Family](#) by Alex Haley. Haley based [Kunta Kinte on one of his ancestors: a Gambian man born in 1750, enslaved and taken to America, who died in 1822](#). "Roots" earned Haley a Pulitzer Prize and was turned into a TV miniseries watched by a record-setting 130 million people in 1977.

ALEX HALEY NEWS FACT

On the occasion of his 100th birthday, [Alex Haley's legacy is being invoked at the renovated Alex Haley Museum and Interpretive Center](#), which opened Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. Visitors are welcome to [view a short documentary film, visit a galley that includes a life-size replica of a slave ship, and tour the boyhood home of Alex Haley](#).

9. DR. SEUSS WAS A DOCTOR (PH.D.) OF WHAT?

Photo: Al Ravenna, New York World-Telegram and the Sun staff photographer, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Theodor Seuss Geisel adopted the name "Dr. Seuss" as [an undergraduate at Dartmouth College and a graduate student at Lincoln College](#), Oxford. He added the "Dr." to his pen name [because his father wanted him to practice medicine](#).

SEUSS FACTS:

On Dr. Seuss's birthday, Mar. 2, 2021, which is non-coincidentally [National Read Across America Day](#), the company that preserves the author's legacy announced it would no longer publish [Six of Dr. Seuss's books](#) because of racially insensitive imagery. The six children's titles are [If I Ran the Zoo](#), [Scrambled Eggs Super](#), [McElligot's Pool](#), [On Beyond Zebra!](#), [The Cat's Quizzer](#) and the 1958 Lewis Carroll Shelf Award winner [And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street](#), in which a character described as Chinese [has two lines for eyes, carries chopsticks and a bowl of rice, and wears traditional Japanese-style shoes](#).

Questions

Category:

Television and Streaming



10. BEFORE BECOMING NCIS AGENT LEROY JETHRO GIBBS, MARK HARMON WAS A MEDICAL DOCTOR ON TWO CLASSIC TV SHOWS. WHICH?

Screenshot: NCIS / CBS



Before becoming NCIS agent Leroy Jethro Gibbs, [Mark Harmon was a medical doctor on '80s medical drama St. Elsewhere and '90s Chicago Hope.](#)

MARK HARMON LEAVING NCIS

Monday's, Oct. 11, 2021, episode of NCIS was [Mark Harmon's final leading the long-running CBS procedural.](#) He exits the show after [18 years of playing agent Leroy Jethro Gibbs](#), dating back to the character's introduction to the legal drama JAG in 2003.

11. HOW OLD IS WILLIAM SHATNER IN 2021?

Photo: Super Festivals from Ft. Lauderdale, USA, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons



William Shatner was born on Mar. 22, 1931, which makes him 90 years old in 2021.

IS WILLIAM SHATNER THE OLDEST PERSON IN SPACE?



Photo: Blue Origin

William Shatner became [the oldest person to travel to space](#) as he joined the four-person crew aboard [Blue Origin's New Shepard launch vehicle on Oct. 13, 2021](#). The "Star Trek" actor is flying as a guest of Blue Origin. The company says [it has also sold nearly \\$100 million in tickets to paying customers](#). Pioneering woman aviator [Wally Funk, 82, was the oldest person to reach space](#) when she joined Bezos on the July 2021 flight.

12. WHERE WAS NETFLIX'S "SQUID GAME" PRODUCED?

Screenshot: Squid Game, Netflix



Netflix's ["Squid Game"](#) was famously produced in South Korea. The series started streaming on Sept. 17, 2021, and [soon became Netflix's No. 1 show](#).

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE "SQUID GAME"?

"Squid Game" is a Netflix [nine-part series that describes a fictional competition where contestants are forced to play elaborately staged and deadly versions of childhood games for cash prizes](#). Critics say [the show taps South Korea's worries about expensive housing and scarce jobs](#).

Questions

Category:

Films and Movies



13. WHICH BOND RECORDS DOES "NO TIME TO DIE" BREAK?

Screenshot: No Time to Die / MGM



In addition to being [the longest Bond film ever at two hours and 43 minutes](#), "No Time to Die" took a [reported production budget of around \\$250 million](#), not including marketing costs, which reportedly exceeded \$100 million - which makes it the most expensive Bond film yet. Other than that, "No Time to Die" didn't break any pandemic or 007 box office records (for now).

14. IN THE 2021 FILM "THE MANY SAINTS OF NEWARK," WHO PLAYS YOUNG TONY SOPRANO?

Screenshot: The Many Saints of Newark / Warner Bros. Pictures



Michael Gandolfini, son of late actor James Gandolfini, [steps into his father's most prominent role of Tony Soprano in the 2021 David Chase Sopranos prequel](#), "The Many Saints of Newark."

WHAT'S "THE MANY SAINTS OF NEWARK" PREMISE?

In "The Many Saints of Newark," David Chase and co-screenwriter Lawrence Konner focus on [The Sopranos's 1960s and '70s prehistory](#) — particularly on the character of Dickie Moltisanti (father of Michael Imperioli's character, Christopher Moltisanti), who had been referenced on the TV series. The film was released on Sept. 30, 2021. [Watch the trailer](#).

15. IN WHICH MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE MOVIE WAS BLACK WIDOW FIRST INTRODUCED?

Screenshot: Black Widow, Marvel Studios, Disney+



Black widow first appeared as a sideline scene-stealer in 2010's "Iron Man 2."

IS BLACK WIDOW DEAD (MCU SPOILER)?

Black Widow [sacrifices her life in 2019's "Avengers: Endgame."](#) 2021's "Black Widow" naturally takes place before the character's death.

IN HOW MANY MOVIES, INCLUDING "BLACK WIDOW," DID SCARLETT JOHANSSON PLAY BLACK WIDOW?



Scarlett Johansson played the character of Black Widow in [seven movies spanning over ten years.](#)

Questions

Category:

Entertainment and Celebrities



16. HOW OLD IS FASHION DESIGNER VERA WANG IN 2021?

Photo: [Vera Wang on Instagram](#)



[Vera Wang](#), famous for her bridal boutiques in New York, London, Tokyo, Seoul, and Sydney, [celebrated her 72nd birthday](#) on June 27, 2021. She [shared some unbelievable pictures on Instagram of the celebration](#) involving a Cher impersonator.

17. WONDER WOMAN ACTRESS GAL GADOT IS A MOTHER OF HOW MANY CHILDREN?

Photo: [Gal Gadot on Instagram](#)



Gal Gadot [welcomed her third daughter with her husband, Yaron Varsano](#), in late June 2021. On June 30, [she took to Instagram to announce the news](#).

BONUS QUESTION: WHAT DID GAL GADOT NAME HER THREE DAUGHTERS?

Gadot and Varsano [named their oldest daughter Alma](#) (Hebrew for damsel), their [middle child Maya](#), and [their newborn Daniella](#).

18. PRINCE HARRY AND MEGHAN NAMED THEIR SECOND CHILD LILIBET "LILI" DIANA MOUNTBATTEN-WINDSOR. WHO IS SHE NAMED AFTER?

Screenshot: Oprah with Meghan and Harry / Harpo Productions



Prince Harry and Meghan named their second child, born Friday, May 4, 2021, in California, Lilibet "Lili" Diana Mountbatten-Windsor. [The name pays tribute to Harry's grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II, whose family nickname is Lilibet, and his late mother, Princess Diana.](#)

CONGRATULATIONS FACT:

A Buckingham Palace spokesperson released a statement Sunday, May 6, 2021, written on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, and Prince William and Kate Middleton. According to the statement, "The Queen, The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall, and The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have been informed and are delighted with the news of the birth of a daughter for The Duke and Duchess of Sussex." William and Kate subsequently tweeted a supportive message reading, "We are all delighted by the happy news of the arrival of baby Lili. Congratulations to Harry, Meghan, and Archie."

Questions

Category:

Arts, Culture, and Language



19. WHO IS TERENCE BLANCHARD?

Screenshot: [NBC News on YouTube](#)



Terence Blanchard became the [first Black composer whose work was performed by the New York Metropolitan Opera](#) on Monday, Sept. 27, 2021, when the [Met Opera returned from its 566 days covid-19 time-out](#). An [audience of about 4,000 watched the performance of "Fire Shut Up in My Bones,"](#) the first staged work in the house since March 2020 and [the first by a Black composer in the company's 138 years of history](#). The return was [simulcast live to video screens in Times Square and Harlem's Marcus Garvey Park](#).

WHAT IS "FIRE SHUT UP IN MY BONES"?

"Fire Shut Up in My Bones," with an all-Black cast, premiered in 2019 at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and was brought to the Met as part of a co-production that will travel to the Lyric Opera of Chicago in March and Los Angeles Opera in a future season. The final Met performance of "Fire Shut Up" will be broadcast to movie theaters worldwide on Oct. 23, 2021."

20. WHAT'S THE NAME OF BANKSY'S HALF SHREDDED PAINTING?

Image: [Sothebys.com](https://www.sothebys.com)



"Love is in the Bin" is [the shredded 2018 copy of Banksy's 2006 painting of what was then known as "Girl with Balloon."](#) It was ["destroyed" immediately after Sotheby's sold it at an auction for a record £1,042,000 \(\\$1.4 million\).](#)

"LOVE IS IN THE BIN" NEWS FACT

On Friday, Sept. 3, 2021, Sotheby's said that ["Love is in the Bin" would be offered at a sale in London on Oct. 14.](#) The piece has a [pre-sale estimate of 4 million pounds to 6 million pounds \(up to \\$8.3 million\).](#)"

The Full Questions List

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