

World Languages Trivia: Questions, Answers, and Facts
Printable Trivia Pack

World Languages trivia highlights how thousands of languages have shaped trade, migration, religion, and everyday life across centuries. From widely spoken modern languages to endangered tongues and distinctive writing systems, it offers a fun, family-friendly way to test what you know while learning how language reflects culture and history.

HARD WORLD LANGUAGES TRIVIA

1. Which inscription is famed for being crucial to the decipherment of Old Persian cuneiform?

Answer: The Behistun Inscription was crucial to deciphering Old Persian cuneiform.

2. What writing system records the early form of Greek now known as Mycenaean Greek?

Answer: Linear B records Mycenaean Greek.

3. Which Indo-European languages were once spoken in the Tarim Basin, far from the better-known early Indo-European heartlands?

Answer: The Tocharian languages were spoken in the Tarim Basin.

4. What famously mysterious manuscript has still not yielded a generally accepted decipherment?

Answer: The Voynich manuscript remains undeciphered.

5. Which script was traditionally used by women in Jiangyong County in Hunan, China?

Answer: Nushu was traditionally used by women in Jiangyong County in Hunan, China.

6. The standard Babylonian version of the Epic of Gilgamesh was composed in which language?

Answer: It was composed in Akkadian.

7. Modern Georgian is commonly written in which script family member?

Answer: It is commonly written in Mkhedruli, part of the Georgian script family.

8. The sacred texts known as the Avesta are written in which language?

Answer: They are written in Avestan.

9. Much of the Aztec Empire used which language?

Answer: Much of the Aztec Empire used Classical Nahuatl.

10. The earliest surviving inscriptions in which script are found primarily in Ireland?

Answer: Ogham.

11. Which traditional language of the Isle of Man was declared extinct as a native language in 1974 before revival efforts grew?

Answer: Manx was declared extinct as a native language in 1974 before revival efforts expanded.

12. Which Finnic language of Latvia lost its last native speaker in the 21st century?

Answer: Livonian.

13. Which famous ancestral language of Eurasia is known only through reconstruction rather than direct written records?

Answer: Proto-Indo-European is reconstructed rather than directly preserved in writing.

14. If you wanted the oldest known cuneiform tablets in the world, which writing system would you be looking at from late 4th millennium BCE Mesopotamia?

Answer: You would be looking at Sumerian cuneiform.

FUNNY WORLD LANGUAGES TRIVIA

1. What English dictionary giant looks like a cat walked across the keyboard but is actually the longest word in a major English dictionary?

Answer: pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis

2. Which bizarre-looking line is a grammatically valid English sentence, despite seeming like eight buffalo started a union meeting?

Answer: Buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo

3. Which everyday English word quietly hides three consecutive doubled letters, as if bookkeeping also applied to consonants?

Answer: bookkeeper

4. If you count the okina as a letter, how many letters are in the Hawaiian alphabet?

Answer: 13 letters

5. Which language spoken in Papua New Guinea is often cited for having one of the world's smallest phoneme inventories?

Answer: Rotokas

6. Which language has been reported to use an extremely small set of numeral terms, making math class feel very minimalist?

Answer: Piraha

7. Which language is famous for having a very large number of click consonants, basically turning speech into a percussion solo?

Answer: !Xoo

8. True or false: Xhosa is one of South Africa's official languages and it uses click sounds.?

Answer: True

9. In Spanish, where do the upside-down question and exclamation marks go, besides apparently doing warm-up stretches?

Answer: At the beginning of questions and exclamations

10. Which language treats every noun like it deserves a fancy hat by capitalizing them all?

Answer: German

11. In which language are the dotted and dotless versions of the letter I considered separate letters?

Answer: Turkish

12. What symbol comes from a historical ligature of the Latin letters E and T in the word et?

Answer: The ampersand (&)

13. Which famous pangram manages to use every letter of the English alphabet while sounding like a fox was on a cardio program?

Answer: The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

FUN WORLD LANGUAGES TRIVIA

1. Who cracked the ancient code of Linear B in 1952, giving linguists a very good year?

Answer: Michael Ventris deciphered the Linear B script in 1952.

2. Before the big Linear B breakthrough, whose pattern analysis quietly laid crucial groundwork?

Answer: Alice Kober's analysis of Linear B patterns helped make the decipherment possible.

3. Which scholar announced the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs in 1822?

Answer: Francois Champollion announced the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs in 1822.

4. On the Rosetta Stone, Greek and hieroglyphic text share the stage with which other script?

Answer: Demotic Egyptian appears alongside hieroglyphic and Greek text on the Rosetta Stone.

5. Who is widely known for helping bring Hebrew back into everyday modern speech?

Answer: Eliezer Ben-Yehuda is widely known for helping revive Hebrew as a modern spoken language.

6. Which linguist became especially noted for fieldwork on Indigenous and endangered languages?

Answer: Ken Hale was noted for his fieldwork on Indigenous and endangered languages.

7. Which nation uses the Cherokee language as an important part of its cultural and educational programs?

Answer: The Cherokee Nation.

8. Who compiled the Kalevala from oral poetry in the 19th century, basically turning spoken tradition into an epic book?

Answer: Elias Lonnrot compiled the Finnish national epic Kalevala from oral poetry in the 19th century.

9. True or false: Basque is a language isolate spoken in parts of Spain and France.?

Answer: True

10. Which language is famously described as a language isolate in parts of Spain and France?

Answer: The Basque language.

11. In 1928, which language switched from Arabic script to a Latin-based alphabet?

Answer: Modern Turkish changed its writing system from Arabic script to a Latin-based alphabet in 1928.

12. What is the name of the Latin-based script used to write Vietnamese today?

Answer: Vietnamese is written today with a Latin-based script called quoc ngu.

13. If a sentence in Arabic is taking the scenic route across the page, which direction is it going?

Answer: Arabic is written from right to left.

WORLD LANGUAGES FAMILY TRIVIA

1. Which country is widely cited as having the greatest number of languages?

Answer: Papua New Guinea

2. Who created the constructed international language Esperanto?

Answer: L. L. Zamenhof

3. The Cherokee syllabary was created by which person?

Answer: Sequoyah

4. In Korea, who is credited with the creation of Hangul?

Answer: King Sejong

5. Which dictionary did Noah Webster publish in 1828?

Answer: An American Dictionary of the English Language

6. Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language was published in what year?

Answer: 1755

7. Who was the first chief editor of the Oxford English Dictionary?

Answer: James Murray

8. What major dictionary traces the history of English words through dated quotations?

Answer: The Oxford English Dictionary

9. Who proposed in 1786 that Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin shared a common source?

Answer: William Jones

10. Which early scholar is especially known for work on Indigenous languages of North America?

Answer: Franz Boas

11. Whose name is associated with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis?

Answer: Edward Sapir

12. Which British author is known for books on the English language and linguistics?

Answer: David Crystal

EASY WORLD LANGUAGES TRIVIA

1. Miguel de Cervantes originally wrote Don Quixote in which language?

Answer: Spanish

2. The Little Prince was first written in what language?

Answer: French

3. Which online service is known for multilingual machine translation?

Answer: Google Translate

4. What standardized test is commonly used to measure English proficiency?

Answer: TOEFL

5. If someone says they are studying for the JLPT, which language are they being tested on?

Answer: Japanese

6. Which language has official status in Wales alongside English?

Answer: Welsh

7. Malta has two official languages. One is English, what is the other?

Answer: Maltese

8. Chinese and English are official languages in which place?

Answer: Hong Kong

9. Which country recognizes Maori as an official language?

Answer: New Zealand

10. Tetum and Portuguese are official languages of which country?

Answer: East Timor

11. In Catalonia, which language is co-official with Spanish?

Answer: Catalan

12. If you visit Aruba, which language is widely spoken there?

Answer: Papiamentu

13. Sardinian is traditionally spoken on which island?

Answer: Sardinia

Source: <https://triviagong.com/themes/world-languages>