



Test Your Knowledge of Dental History

1. Name the American patriot and Revolutionary War hero who practiced dentistry?

- A. Benjamin Franklin
- B. Paul Revere
- C. Thomas Paine
- D. George Washington

2. Which one of these cities was named after a dentist?

- A. Cleveland, OH
- B. Burbank, CA
- C. Williamsburg, VA
- D. Austin, TX

3. What year was the American Dental Association founded?

- A. 1927
- B. 1898
- C. 1859
- D. 1775

4. Who is the dentist famous for writing westerns as well as deep-sea fishing?

- A. Max Brand
- B. Utah Phillips
- C. Louis Lamour
- D. Zane Grey

5. Where is the National Museum of Dentistry located?

- A. New York City
- B. Chicago, IL
- C. Baltimore, MD
- D. Los Angeles, CA

6. During the 18th and 19th centuries the instrument known as the turnkey was used for what routine dental procedure?

- A. Fitting dentures
- B. Prophylaxis
- C. Filling teeth
- D. Extraction

7. Name the U.S. president who had oral surgery done in secret to avoid a national panic?

- A. Rutherford Hayes
- B. George Washington
- C. Grover Cleveland
- D. Abraham Lincoln

8. What 19th century invention came to revolutionize the marketing and retailing of toothpaste?

- A. Toothpaste gel
- B. Collapsible metal tube
- C. Toothbrush
- D. Billboards

9. What piece of equipment invented by a dentist changed how golf was played?

- A. Iron club
- B. Golf cart
- C. Golf tee
- D. Golf ball

10. In what year was the current ADA headquarters building opened?

- A. 1974
- B. 1965
- C. 1980
- D. 1959

11. Who was the first woman to receive a dental degree?

- A. Geraldine Morrow
- B. Ida Gray Nelson
- C. Gillette Hayden
- D. Lucy Hobbs Taylor

12. From what materials were George Washington's dentures mainly constructed?

- A. Lead & ivory
- B. Wood & human teeth
- C. Rubber & bone
- D. Silver & gold

See other side for answers

- 1. B. Paul Revere.** Paul Revere was a skilled maker of dentures. He advertised that he made dentures in Colonial newspapers.
- 2. B. Burbank, CA.** The city was named after Dr. David Burbank (1823–1895), a New England dentist who went to California to seek his fortune after the Civil War. He amassed a huge landholding which he successfully farmed and ranched until 1886 when he sold his property to a group of land speculators for a hefty profit. The speculators laid out a business district, and subdivided the property into small farms and residential lots. They opened the tract for sale on May 1, 1887, and the town of Burbank was born.
- 3. C. 1859.** The ADA was founded on August 3, 1859 in Niagara Falls, NY where a group of dentists gathered to hold a meeting for the purpose of establishing a national dental society.
- 4. D. Zane Grey.** Zane Grey was a dentist who wrote over 50 novels about the old west. He was also a well-known outdoorsman and expert fisherman who held 10 deep sea fishing records at one time.
- 5. C. Baltimore, MD.** The museum is located on the University of Maryland campus in downtown Baltimore in the original building that housed the world's first dental school, Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, which merged with the University of Maryland dental school in 1923.
- 6. D. Extraction.** The turnkey resembles a hook with a handle. The hook was wrapped around the tooth and a twisting motion was used to pull the tooth out. It required some skill to use and fell out of favor because if not done properly it often caused the patient more harm than good!
- 7. C. Grover Cleveland.** The operation, which took place aboard a yacht in the East River in NYC, removed a malignant growth from the roof of his mouth. It was done in secret to avoid a stock market panic because the U.S. was involved in an international monetary crisis. The operation was successful and Cleveland was able to finish his term without any sign that the operation took place largely because of the placement of prosthesis by a dentist that corrected the resulting speech impediment and restored his appearance.
- 8. B. Collapsible metal tube.** Toothpaste was first put into tubes during the 1880s. Prior to this paste dentifrice was commonly sold in ceramic or glass pots in which the toothbrush was dipped. Dr. Washington Wentworth Sheffield, a Connecticut dentist, is credited as being the first in the United States to sell toothpaste in a metal tube. He was seeking a better method of packaging his creamy toothpaste in a more hygienic and convenient manner when he discovered artist paints in tubes while vacationing in Europe. His toothpaste, Sheffield's Creme Dentifrice, sold in tubes was a big seller of its era in the late 1800s. The tube quickly caught on and soon became the customary package for toothpaste.
- 9. C. Golf tee.** William Lowell (1860–1954), a New Jersey dentist, is given credit for the invention of the common wooden golf tee in use today. Prior to his invention in 1920, the usual method for teeing up a golf ball was to place it on a tuft of grass or mound of dirt. Dr. Lowell whittled the first wooden tee using his dental tools. He called his invention the Reddy Tee and quit dentistry to invest in the manufacturing and selling of it. After Dr. Lowell managed to get professional golfers to use and promote the item, it caught on so fast and copied so easily that he actually lost money on the invention. Another dentist, Dr. George Grant of Boston also received a patent for a golf tee in 1899. His design had a wood base and rubber top. However, Dr. Grant did not attempt to promote or capitalize on his invention so it did not catch on.
- 10. B. 1965.** ADA offices began to move into the new building in November, 1965.
- 11. D. Lucy Hobbs Taylor.** Lucy Hobbs Taylor who received her dental degree in 1866 from the Ohio College of Dental Surgery in Cincinnati, OH. Ida Gray Nelson was the first African American woman to receive a dental degree (in 1890).
- 12. A. Lead & ivory.** Washington actually had several dentures constructed for him during his lifetime. They were made of a variety of materials including lead, gold, steel, ivory and human and animal teeth. The denture base was either made of ivory or lead (usually ivory). Washington's own teeth or other human or animal teeth were inserted into the base with metal rods or wires. Springs and wires were used to hold the uppers and lowers in place. There is no evidence to support the widespread myth that any part of George Washington's dentures were ever made out of wood.

**Have a question on dental history?
Contact the ADA Library!**

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