

Brain Aerobics Weekly

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Trivia Quiz – Quotable Women

March is Women's History Month, but rather than get too serious, I thought I'd open with a quotations quiz about famous women.

Here's one by Nadia Boulanger, born in 1887, the first woman to conduct the Boston Symphony Orchestra, that didn't quite fit this format, but that delights me:

I've been a woman for a little over 50 years and have gotten over my initial astonishment. As for conducting an orchestra, that's a job where I don't think sex plays much part.

Can you match the quotation to its author?

Note that all the *wrong* answers are also interesting women in their own right. Look them up!

1. Somewhere out in this audience may even be someone who will one day follow in my footsteps, and preside over the White House as the President's spouse. I wish him well! (Wellesley College Commencement Speech)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| a. Barbara Bush | c. Lady Bird Johnson |
| b. Betty Ford | d. Eleanor Roosevelt |

2. Some of us are becoming the men we wanted to marry.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| a. Betty Friedan | c. Gloria Steinem |
| b. Erica Jong | d. Dame Rebecca West |



3. I've given my memoirs far more thought than any of my marriages. You can't divorce a book.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Lauren Bacall | c. Simone de Beauvoir |
| b. Coco Chanel | d. Gloria Swanson |



4. I don't want to get to the end of my life and find that I lived just the length of it. I want to have lived the width of it as well.

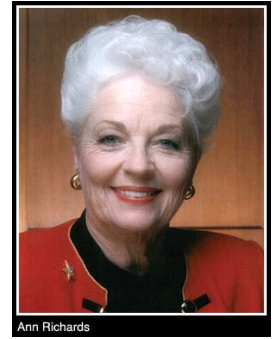
- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| a. Diane Ackerman | c. Lena Horne |
| b. Isak Dinesen | d. Sally Ride |

5. Deliver me from your cold phlegmatic preachers, politicians, friends, lovers and husbands.



- a. Abigail Adams
- b. Germaine Greer
- c. Ann Richards

- d. Mary Wollstonecraft



6. If women can sleep their way to the top, how come they aren't there? . . . There must be an epidemic of insomnia out there.

- a. Helen Gurley Brown
- b. Ellen Goodman
- c. Ann Landers
- d. Louise Nevelson

7. People are more fun than anybody.

- a. Pearl Bailey
- b. Dorothy Parker
- c. Dame Edith Sitwell
- d. Jane Wagner

8. I hate housework! You make the beds, you do the dishes – and six months later you have to start all over again.



- a. Erma Bombeck
- b. Julia Child
- c. Jean Kerr
- d. Joan Rivers

9. That is the best – to laugh with someone because you both think the same things are funny.

- a. Lady Nancy Astor
- b. Sandra Day O'Connor
- c. Jeannette Rankin
- d. Gloria Vanderbilt

10. I have everything I had twenty years ago, only it's all a bit lower.

- a. Jenny Craig
- b. Ella Fitzgerald
- c. Gypsy Rose Lee
- d. Sophia Loren

11. I never intended to become a run-of-the-mill person.

- a. Maya Angelou
- b. Marian Wright Edelman
- c. Barbara Jordan
- d. Margaret Mead

12. It is useless to hold a person to anything he says while he's in love, drunk, or running for office.

- a. Indira Gandhi
- b. Katherine Graham
- c. Alice Roosevelt Longworth
- d. Shirley MacLaine

Answers:

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. a | 4. a | 7. b | 10. c |
| 2. c | 5. a | 8. d | 11. c |
| 3. d | 6. b | 9. d | 12. d |



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Tapping into your memory



Women's History Month is meant to call attention to the accomplishments of women in all walks of life. All of us who are enjoying increased opportunities today owe a debt of gratitude to women like:

- Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone and other early suffragettes who led the movement for women's rights beginning in 1848
- Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to receive a degree from a U.S. medical school (1849)
- Victoria Woodhull, the first woman to run for U.S. President (1872)
- Chien-Shiung Wu, who was the first woman to teach physics at Princeton University at a time when women were not even admitted as students (1942)
- Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space (1963)
- Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman on the U.S. Supreme Court (1981)
- Tony Morrison, the first African American woman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature (1993)
- And hundreds more who have been groundbreaking role models

Think about how your life has changed as the role of women changed.

This topic may seem to be aimed at women, but applies equally strongly to men.

Talk or write about your mother or the person who raised you. Was she a stay-at-home mother? What did society expect of her? Was she comfortable in her role? Did she have ambitions outside of the home? Were they fulfilled at some point in her life?



Talk about the expectations you were raised with. Were there certain roles for men and women you were expected to accommodate yourself to? Did you? What were they?



If you had a career outside the home (as a man or woman) what limitations if any did you find in terms of education, career choices, opportunities within those careers, pay, advancement, etc.?



Were you ever overtly aware of discrimination based on age, race or gender? Did you have any specific experiences you would like to share?



If you have daughters, granddaughters or other younger female relatives and friends today, how has life changed for them compared to 20 years ago or more? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these changes?





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Read and Discuss



Comparing Michelangelo and Leonardo

March begins a season of renewal and rebirth, an especially good time to talk about the Italian Renaissance (*meaning* rebirth) and two ideal Renaissance men, Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci – especially because Michelangelo was born March 6, 1475. Although da Vinci was 23 when Michelangelo was born, they were contemporaries (and sometimes rivals) for 44 years, until da Vinci's death in 1519. Here is a brief comparison of their lives:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Name | Leonardo da Vinci | Michelangelo Buonarroti |
| Dates | 1452 - 1519 | 1475 - 1564 |
| Birthplace | Near Florence ("da Vinci" means "of Vinci" referring to his birthplace) | Near Florence |
| Home | Florence, Milan, France, near Paris (Amboise) | Florence, Rome |
| Nickname | The First Modern Man | "Il Divino" (the Divine One) |
| Primary accomplishments | painter, scientist, inventor, philosopher, engineer, mathematician, architect | sculptor, painter, architect, engineer and poet (he wrote over 300 sonnets and madrigals) |
| Most famous works | Paintings: The Mona Lisa, The Last Supper Drawing: Vitruvian Man Also his notebooks (4000 pages survive) | Statues of David and the Pieta, (created before he turned 30), paintings in The Sistine Chapel and the dome of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome |
| Quotes | -- Art is never finished, only abandoned. -- The noblest pleasure is the joy of understanding. | -- Carving is easy; you just go down to the skin and stop. -- I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free. |
| What you probably don't know | Left-handed Leonardo wrote mostly backwards (mirror images) perhaps because for some left-handed people it is more natural to write right to left | He was considered ugly, in part because of a crooked nose, broken by a rival student sculptor who hit him with a mallet when he was a teenager |
| An odd thing they had in common | Learned anatomy by dissecting corpses | Ditto |
| Personality and habits | Handsome, engaging, vegetarian, seldom finished projects because he was distracted by new ideas | Solitary, indifferent to food and drink, considered rough and uncouth, arrogant with others, and dissatisfied with himself |

It is impossible to provide adequate biographies of these remarkable men in this short space, so I urge you to check out the resources listed below. Here are just a few more facts worth sharing:

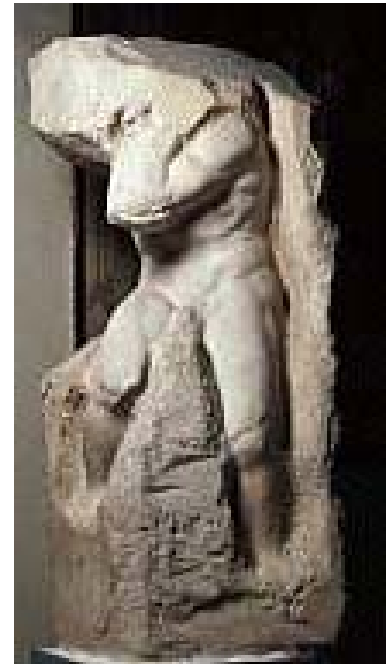


- Although he was considered one of the greatest painters of all time, few of Leonardo's works remain because he was always experimenting with new types of paint, some of which deteriorated quickly.
- Leonardo's thinking style: He doubted (radical for the time) that there could have been a Great Flood as described in Genesis which covered the whole earth, because where would the waters have receded to?
- Although the naked bodies portrayed by Michelangelo represented a rebirth of the ancient Greek and Roman statues that had been created a millennium earlier, some



considered them obscene. During Victorian England, the plaster copy of David in London's Victoria and Albert Museum had (still has?) a fig leaf in a box at the back of the statue. It was there to be placed over the statue's genitals so that they would not upset visiting female royalty.

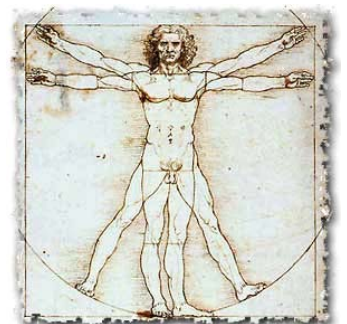
- Because Michelangelo always insisted he was releasing the statue within a block of marble, some of his most intriguing sculptures are the unfinished series of slaves. two of which are pictured here.



Talk about it:



- Do you know anything else about these two remarkable men that isn't listed here? Share it!
- Do you admire the work of one of these men more than the other? If so, which one and why?
- Do you think certain periods in history have been more open than others to the flourishing of the arts and to creative thinking? Can you name other periods and places like the Italian Renaissance? What conditions foster such flourishing?



Resources: Wikipedia and

<http://www.biography.com/search/article.do?id=9407628>,

<http://art.learnhub.com/lesson/4979-artist-profile-michelangelo>,

<http://www.mos.org/leonardo/>, <http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/vinci.html>

The comparison chart was inspired by a similar one in *An Incomplete Education*, by Judy Jones and William Wilson (© 1987), a fascinating book in its own right. To order, [click here](#).



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Word Games – Homophones



Homophones are words that are spelled differently and have different meanings, but are pronounced the same – part of what drives foreigners crazy as they try to learn English. Examples are bear and bare, bee and be, berth and birth, and bored and board, among the ‘B’ words. English has hundreds of them.

Part 1: Can you identify the homophone for these words?

1. ate _____

2. aloud _____

3. ceiling _____

4. dependence _____

5. fazed _____

6. flare _____

7. great _____

8. hair _____

9. hire _____

10. idle _____

11. mall _____

12. medal _____

13. nicks _____

14. nose _____

15. pier _____



16. plate _____

17. red _____

18. rain _____

19. recede _____

20. sell _____

21. surf _____

22. sees _____

23. side _____

24. threw _____

25. time _____

26. urn _____

27. vain _____

28. way _____

29. weather _____

30. wood _____

Can you think of more homophones? How long a list can you create?



Part 2: Homophones as anagrams

Will Shortz is famous as the editor of the New York Times crossword puzzles, but he is also the creator of lots of other word and number games. His well-deserved nickname is “The Puzzlemaster,” and he has written at least two books with that nickname in the title.

Following is an excerpt from one of his exercises found in *The Puzzlemaster Presents, Volume 2*. (To order, [Click here.](#))

In this quiz, Will Shortz has scrambled the homophones to make new words (anagrams) as in the sample below. Try to unscramble the rest of the anagrams to come up with new homophones. Hint: Whenever possible, try to make a new word from the shorter word first.

Sample: words sword adores soared

1. keep _____ equip _____
2. organ _____ wrong _____
3. tire _____ girth _____
4. raspy _____ aspire _____
5. waits _____ sweat _____
6. dower _____ redo _____
7. rail _____ rely _____
8. sealed _____ slate _____
9. naked _____ eden _____
10. cashed _____ scathe _____



Answers, Part 1:

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. eight | 9. higher | 17. read | 25. thyme |
| 2. allowed | 10. idol | 18. reign | 26. earn |
| 3. sealing | 11. mall | 19. reseed | 27. vein or vane |
| 4. dependents | 12. meddle | 20. cell | 28. whey or weigh |
| 5. phased | 13. nix | 21. serf | 29. whether |
| 6. flair | 14. knows | 22. seize, seas | 30. would |
| 7. grate | 15. peer | 23. sighed | |
| 8. hare | 16. plait | 24. through | |

Answers, Part 2:

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. peek, pique | 5. waste, waist | 9. knead, need |
| 2. groan, grown | 6. rowed, rode | 10. chased, chaste |
| 3. rite, right | 7. liar, lyre | |
| 4. prays, praise | 8. leased, least | |



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Potpourri

Doodling is Good

An article in Newsweek on February 26, 2009 (<http://www.newsweek.com/id/186738>)

By Dina Fine Maron reported the good news: "In a victory for absent-minded scribblers everywhere, one study now suggests that doodling can help your memory. Though research suggests multitasking or daydreaming can be distracting, psychologist Jackie Andrade of the University of Plymouth in England thought it might be a different story for a simple task like doodling."

In an experiment in which 40 people were told to doodle by filling in some random printed shapes while listening to a dull telephone message and 40 were not given the doodling option, the doodlers were able to recall about 30% more facts (and names) from the message on a surprise memory test.

Ms. Andrade said that she was really interested in daydreaming, but that is harder to measure. Plus, "Daydreaming takes up a lot of mental energy and can be distracting. I had the idea that maybe some small, simple task would catch just enough energy to keep you focused on the [main] task at hand, and though it wouldn't make the task you're doing less boring, it could help you focus." The results seem to agree with that premise, which could be a relief to doodlers everywhere, especially in the classroom. She notes, "doodling isn't necessarily a sign of your students being naughty—it's a sign that it may be hard for them to concentrate without something visual." So there.

Women's voting rights

In the U.S. women were granted the right to vote in national elections in 1920, but more than a dozen states had granted that right years before, with Colorado leading the way in 1893 and Utah and Idaho following in 1896. The U.S., however, was neither the first nor the last country to give women the right to vote.



Which country was first to give women the right to vote?

- a. Austria
- b. France
- c. New Zealand
- d. Portugal

Which of the following countries gave women the right to vote before 1920?

- a. Australia
- b. Canada
- c. Finland
- d. Russia

Which of the following countries did not give women the right to vote until after 1990?

- a. Kuwait
- b. Moldova
- c. South Africa
- d. United Arab Emirates



Which country still has not granted women the right to vote?

- a. Iran
- b. Kazakhstan
- c. Namibia
- d. Saudia Arabia

Source: <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0931343.html>

Answers: 1. c in 1893; 2. All of them, plus Norway, Denmark, Austria, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands; 3. All of them; 4. d



Time to revisit daylight savings time?

According to an article by Maura J. Casey that appeared in the New York Times on March 8, 2008, (http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/08/opinion/08sat4.html?_r=1) Benjamin Franklin first “conceived of a system similar to daylight saving time in 1784 while serving as America’s first ambassador to France. In a letter to the editor of the Paris Journal, he estimated that the simple act of awakening at sunrise and retiring at sunset in the months between spring and fall would result in an annual saving of a little more than 64 million pounds in candle wax for Paris’s residents.”

Conserving energy – not getting more or less sleep – has always been at least one goal of daylight savings time since it began to be adopted in various countries beginning in 1916, as a means of conserving coal during World War I. One of its strongest and earliest advocates, English builder and outdoorsman William Willett, wanted to adopt it so that he could have a longer day for golf. The sporting industry and retailers have long supported it. Farmers, contrary to popular belief, long opposed it. As for conserving energy, people do tend to use slightly less electricity for lighting during daylight savings time, but some studies show greater use for air conditioning and heating. There is little consistency in its use and starting and ending times worldwide, which can cause confusion in our global society. It tends to be most appealing to people in northern climates who have much greater variance in summer daylight than those closer to the tropics.

What do you think? Do you like or dislike daylight savings time? Why?



This article was supplemented by information found at Wikipedia.

**As Michelangelo illustrates:
Connect!**

Current plans for next week’s celebrations (subject to change):

- St. Patrick’s Day
- Irish proverbs
- Brain Awareness Week
- Color

