

QUIZ: How Well Do You Know Your Arabian Horse History?

Courtesy of the Purebred Arabian Trust website – www.purebredarabiantrust.com

1. What is the oldest breed of horse?

The Arabian

2. When do we first see the imagery of a horse resembling the modern Arabian?

- a. Around 1890 BC b. Around 1520 BC c. Around 230 AD

(From the leader of a migrating community called the “Hyksos” that moved into New Kingdom Egypt and brought the first large numbers of horses into Egypt along with its military technology.)

3. Nearly 1,000 years later, what recognizable culture was instrumental in fostering the Arabian horse breed that descended from the Hyksos community?

- a. The Ancient Mesopotamians
b. The Egyptians
c. The Bedouins of the Arabian Peninsula

(This culture was instrumental in fostering the Arabian breed because they depended so heavily on the horse for its utilitarian and survival purposes in the desert.)

4. What color were Bedouin tents?

- a. White b. Tan c. Black

(Black to absorb the sun’s heat. The tents were traditionally woven from goats’ hair. When it rained, the weave contracted and did not let the water in. In the heat of the summer, the outside of the tent felt very hot to touch, but the inside stayed relatively cool.)

5. Arabians were often kept in tents along with the family rather than outside with other animals. What was their primary purpose inside the tent, besides companionship with the family?

- a. Representation of spiritual hierarchy
b. Safety from raids and predators
c. Protection of women and children

(Although they frequently became a pillow as well!)

6. Who were responsible for foals after they were weaned?

- a. The children b. The women c. The chieftains

(This role reinforces that Arabian’s innate desire for human interaction and companionship.)

7. “Asil” was extremely important to the Bedouins. What does “Asil” mean?

- a. Hand of God b. Purity of Blood c. Shield of God

(The Bedouins defined themselves by their tribe and family, and their Arabian horses were similarly)

defined by their equine families, or bloodline strains, i.e. “purity of blood” or “asil”.)

8. What were most important to the Bedouins?

- a. Mares b. Geldings c. Stallions

(Mares were esteemed above all because they could reproduce. It has been documented that when a “particular full-blooded mare died, the whole tribe went into mourning.” ~Travels in Arabian Deserts, by Charles Doughty, 1892)

9. As the religion of Islam began to spread from its Bedouin nucleus of the Near East, they did it mostly from the backs of Arabian horses. What is the Bedouin term that describes the essence of Arab preparation for and conduct of warfare?

- a. Ramadan b. Jalabiyya c. Furusiyya

(“Furusiyya”, literally translated “horsemanship”. It contains elements of both a religious and military culture that emphasized spiritual quest, brotherhood, generosity, discipline, and the relationship with horses.)

10. During “The Crusades,” when European military attempted to conquer the Christian Holy Lands, they were profoundly impressed by the Bedouins’ Arabian horses and warfare code, and brought home many of its elements to Medieval Europe. It became the notion of what common code of European conduct?

- a. Gallantry b. Chivalry c. Debonair

(“Chivalry,” which derives from the Latin term for “horseman”. And thus began the spread of the Arabian horse into Europe.)

11. The next major era to succeed the Crusades was the Ottoman Empire, from 1299-1920 (during WWI). It encompassed much of the Arabic-speaking world and extended from the Arabian Peninsula to the borders of Poland, and from the Caspian Sea to the Atlantic coast of Morocco. As the Ottomans spread into Eastern Europe, the Europeans developed a keen appreciation of the swift and sturdy Arabian horses upon which they rode, and often were seized after battle. One of the horses that came to Europe as a war prize was one of the three “Foundation Sires” of the Thoroughbred breed. Who was he?

- a. The Darley Arabian b. The Godolphin Arabian c. The Byerly Turk

12. In a similar fashion, Napoleon the Great acquired his favorite horse at the Battle of Aboukir in Egypt – a 14.1 hh 6-year-old Arabian stallion. What was his horse’s name?

- a. Marengo b. Leopard c. The Black

(Marengo lived to be 28 years old after taking Napoleon thousands of harsh miles across the European and Middle Eastern continents, and hundreds of battles. Marengo was captured by the British at the famous Battle of Waterloo in 1815 and then taken to England where he was put on show. His skeleton is on display at the National Army Museum in Chelsea, England.)

13. Beginning in the 1600s, Arabians were used in Europe to improve the quality of indigenous horses. In the mid-to-later 1800s, Arabians began being imported specifically to establish pure Arabian lines in Europe, thus beginning European Arabian stud farms as we know it today. The Crabbet Park Stud in England was established by Lady Anne and Sir Wilfred Blunt in 1879, and is considered the first major European stud for Arabian horses. What major sire was one of the foundations of this breeding program?

- a. Raffles b. Skowronek c. Naseem

(Direct descendants of Skowronek were sold throughout England and were exported to Argentina, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, South Africa, Spain and the USA.)

14. Of the countries breeding purebred Arabian horses, Poland’s stud farms surely suffered the most during the periods of World Wars I and II, likely because the Arabian had become such a deep part of their cultural heritage. Its most memorable figure came when the state stud, Janow Podlaski Stud, came under German control in WWII after the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939. What was the name of the Arabian yearling colt that dramatically escaped the Nazis?

- a. Witez b. Witez II c. Witez III

*(*Witez II was then imported to the United States where he had a famous history as a stud siring many champion horses. *Witez II died in 1965.)*

Match the oldest stud farm to their country of origin: (draw a line)

- | | | |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 15. Germany | → | Babolna Stud (Founded 1789) |
| 16. Russia | → | Yeguada Militar (Founded 1847) |
| 17. Hungary | → | Weil-Marbach Stud (Founded in 1817) |
| 18. Spain | → | Tersk Stud (Founded 1921) |

19. Around 1766, the Arabian stallion “Ranger” was a gift from the Emperor of Morocco to the commander of the British frigate. Ranger later sired “Magnolio” who became the mount of which famous early American hero?

- a. Teddy Roosevelt b. John Adams c. George Washington

20. In 1856, the first mass importation of Arabians to America took place. Who spearheaded this?

- a. A. Keene Richards b. W.R. Brown c. Spencer Borden

(In fact, with the support of the New Orleans Jockey Club, he traveled to the near East and personally picked out horses to be imported to America.)

21. What watershed moment in the history of Arabian breeding in America

happened in 1893?

- a. Near Eastern Exhibition at the Chicago World's Fair
- b. Fire that nearly burned down Chicago
- c. Henry Ford builds first Model T automobile

(It shifted the emphasis in America from using Arabians as improvement for existing American horses to establishing purebred Arabian bloodlines and breeding programs for preservation in a new auto-driven, horseless society. A total of 40 horses were imported for the exhibition.)

22. What horse became the first registered Arabian horse in America?

- a. Najine
- b. Nazlina
- c. Nejdme

(From the Near Eastern Exhibition at the Chicago World's Fair.)

23. What famous political cartoonist was inspired by the Near Eastern Exhibition and shortly thereafter was responsible for what is largely considered the most major importation of Arabian horses to America?

- a. General Dickenson
- b. Ulysses S. Grant
- c. Homer Davenport

24. What year was his (answer to #23) importation?

- a. 1902
- b. 1903
- c. 1906

25. In 1908, he and others returned to Chicago, and met in a hotel to discuss an official organization for preserving and registering Arabian horses in America. By the time they left the hotel, the first American registering authority was started. What was the name of it?

- a. Arabian Horse Club of America
- b. American Arabian Horse Registry
- c. The Arabian Horse Club

(It is still in existence today, and is the largest registering authority in the world. It is managed by AHA, and celebrated its 100th Anniversary in 2008.)

26. A plethora of influential businessmen followed Davenport's interest in Arabian horses, thereby creating the foundation for the great early American breeding programs: W.R. Brown, William Randolph Hearst (the newspaper giant), Albert Harris, Peter Bradley, Roger Selby, Philip Wrigley (Wrigley Gum), Bazy Tankersly and many others. Who was the cereal magnate whose influence can still be seen today?

- a. W.K. Kellogg
- b. W.P. Post
- c. Armand Hammer

27. Arabians entered Hollywood as a result of its group of influential supporters. What was the name of the Arabian that Rudolph Valentino rode in "The Son of the Sheik"?

- a. Jadem
- b. Jadaan
- c. Jakaam

(Sired by one of Davenport's desert bred horses. Jadaan was Registry No. 196.)

28. Buffalo Bill Cody's favorite mount was a white Arabian stallion loaned to him by his friend Homer Davenport. What was his horse's name?

- a. Muson b. Nagden c. Lottum

*(*Muson was foaled in the desert in 1899. Cody always rode him in his Madison Square Garden appearances. *Muson died in 1918.)*

29. In a post-Depression world still reeking of poverty and suffering, a young boy in Brooklyn, NY began writing down his idyllic stories of a boy and a black Arabian stallion. How old was Walter Farley when he began writing his first book, *The Black Stallion*?

- a. 15 years old b. 16 years old c. 17 years old

(It was later published when he was 26. The Black Stallion series has become a literary, cinematic and educational phenomenon still thriving today.)

30. What preeminent Arabian stallion has sired more registered progeny than any other in the Arabian breed?

Khemosabi, of course!

(He sired 1251 foals by the time he died on March 1, 2001 at the ripe age of 34. He was decorated with national championships, had a die-hard fan club, and was the hero in a cartoon series.)

How'd you do?

25-30 correct: "Museum Curator"

20-25 correct: "Pretty Good"

10-20 correct "Better brush up!"

<10 correct: "Camp out for a while in the Arabian Horse Galleries!"