
NOBEL PRIZE

QUIZZES AND PRESENTATIONS ON NOBEL AND NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATES

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A teljes programcsomag elérhető: www.educatio.hu címen.

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1.1 NOBEL PRIZE – NOBEL QUIZ

Nobel Quiz¹

1 Who founded the Nobel Prize?

- a) Mary Anderson, the inventor of the windshield wiper
- b) Arthur Wynne, the inventor of the crossword puzzle
- c) James Naismith, the inventor of basketball
- d) Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite

2 When was the first Nobel Prize awarded?

- a) 1754
- b) 1895
- c) 1901
- d) 1933

3 How many Nobel Laureates have been awarded so far?

- a) 222
- b) 787
- c) 5364
- d) 12932

4 About what percentage of the Nobel Laureates are women?

- a) none
- b) 4%
- c) 32%
- d) 56%

5 How old was the youngest Laureate when he was awarded the Nobel Prize?

- a) 12 years old
- b) 16 years old
- c) 20 years old
- d) 25 years old

6 How old was the oldest Laureate when he got the Nobel Prize?

- a) 54 years old
- b) 67 years old
- c) 88 years old
- d) 93 years old

¹ Note: Some of the answers were updated in January 2007. You can find more up-to-date information at the website of the Nobel Foundation: http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/nobelprize_facts.html

1.1 NOBEL PRIZE – NOBEL QUIZ (CONT.)

7 How many Nobel Laureates have declined the Nobel Prize?

- a) none
- b) 2
- c) 15
- d) 23

8 How many Nobel Laureates have been forced to decline the Nobel Prize?

- a) none
- b) 4
- c) 8
- d) 32

9 Some laureates got the Nobel Prize more than once. How many times did the International Committee of the Red Cross get the Nobel Peace Prize?

- a) 3 times
- b) 5 times
- c) 6 times
- d) 10 times

10 Sometimes there are more people in a family getting the Nobel Prize. We call the Curies the most successful “Nobel Prize Family”. How many members of the Curie family got the Nobel Prize (not at the same time, though)?

- a) 4 – father, mother, daughter, son-in-law
- b) 3 – father, son, daughter
- c) 5 – father, mother, daughter, son, son-in-law
- d) 2 – mother and daughter-in-law

1.2 NOBEL TIMELINE

1833	Alfred Nobel (born) in Stockholm, Sweden. His father, Immanuel Nobel, (go) bankrupt.
1837	Immanuel Nobel (travel) to Finland and then to St. Petersburg, Russia where he (start) a mechanical workshop. His family (leave) in Sweden.
1842	The Nobel family (reunite) in St. Petersburg.
1850-1852	Alfred Nobel (go) to Paris and (work) for one year in the laboratory of T. Jules Pelouze. He (travel) to Italy, Germany and the U.S.
1853-1856	The Nobel Company first (flourish), but then (undergo) bankruptcy as the war ended.
1860	Experiments with nitroglycerine (start) by Alfred Nobel.
1863	The first patent on nitroglycerine (blasting oil) as an industrial explosive (obtain). Nobel (move) to Stockholm and (continue) experiments.
1864	Emil, Alfred Nobel's brother, (kill) during the preparation of nitroglycerine at Heleneborg, Stockholm. Nobel (continue) experiments.
1867	Alfred Nobel (obtain) patent for dynamite.

1.2 NOBEL TIMELINE (CONT.)

1868	Alfred Nobel and his father (award) the Letterstedt Prize by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.
1871	British Dynamite Company (Ardeer, Scotland, UK) (found). In 1877 the company name (change) to Nobel's Explosives Company.
1873	At the age of 40 Alfred Nobel (be) a wealthy man. He (move) to Paris and (settle) at Avenue Malakoff.
1875	Nobel (invent) blasting gelatine in Paris. It (patent) it in 1876.
1880	Dynamite Nobel (form) by the fusion of Nobel's Italian and Swiss companies.
1881	Alfred Nobel (buy) a laboratory at Sevran outside Paris.
1891	Alfred Nobel (leave) Paris and (settle) in San Remo, Italy after dispute with the French government over ballistite.
1895	The third and last will of Alfred Nobel (sign) at the Swedish-Norwegian Club in Paris.
1896	Alfred Nobel (die) in his home in San Remo, Italy on December 10.
1901	The first Nobel Prizes (award).

1.2 NOBEL'S LIFE

Alfred Nobel was born in Stockholm in 1833 into a family of engineers. Having gone through a recent bankruptcy, when Alfred was five years old his father Immanuel Nobel moved to St. Petersburg. In 1842, when Alfred was nine years old, the rest of the family also moved to St. Petersburg. By then his father's fortunes had improved, enabling the family to live in a high bourgeois style. Immanuel Nobel's sons did not attend school, but were instead educated at home by teachers at the level of university professor. Considering the specialty of his teachers, it was perhaps no coincidence that Alfred took a liking to chemistry.

During the years 1850-52, Alfred was allowed a few study-oriented stays abroad. He spent one year in Paris with the famous chemist Jules Pelouze, a professor at the Collège de France who had just opened a private training laboratory. During that year, Alfred completed his training as a chemist. It was then that he must have heard about the remarkable explosive called nitroglycerine.

The end of the Crimean War in 1856 caused disaster for Immanuel Nobel's factory. The factory went bankrupt, and Alfred's parents and their youngest son Emil moved back to Sweden. Faced with this situation, Alfred and his brothers discussed various projects with their former teachers. During the years around 1860, Alfred conducted experiments with nitroglycerine involving great risks. After several successful explosions outside St. Petersburg on the frozen Neva River, Alfred traveled back to Stockholm. In October 1863, Alfred Nobel was granted a patent for the explosive that he called "blasting oil".

In September 1864, a major explosion at the Nobel factory in Stockholm claimed the lives of Alfred's brother Emil and four other people. Just one month later, Alfred founded his first joint stock company. A year later, in 1865, Alfred improved his blasting cap which is still of the same type used today. He then left for Germany, set up a company there and bought land outside Hamburg where he built a factory. In the summer of 1866, Alfred Nobel traveled to America. He received patents, formed companies and built factories there.

In 1867, he was granted patents for dynamite in various countries, for example in Britain, Sweden and the United States. Dynamite was very important in the construction of the St. Gotthard tunnel through the Swiss Alps in the 1870s.

In 1868, the year after the first patent for dynamite, Alfred Nobel and his father were awarded the Letterstedt Prize by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

By the age 40, he had already made his greatest discoveries, he had built up a worldwide industrial empire, he had become wealthy, and he had bought a large house in the center of Paris. He later made new discoveries – blasting gelatine, for example – and he got the patent for it in 1876. In 1880 the fusion of Nobel's Italian and Swiss companies formed a new company: Dynamite Nobel.

1.2 NOBEL'S LIFE (CONT.)

Alfred Nobel had many different homes during the final decades of his life. In 1891, he left Paris to live in San Remo, Italy, after disputes with the French authorities.

For Alfred Nobel, the idea of giving away his fortune was no passing fancy. He had thought about it for a long time and had even re-written his will several times. On November 27, 1895, Nobel signed his final will and testament at the Swedish-Norwegian Club in Paris.

After a long illness, on December 10, 1896, Alfred Nobel passed away in his home in San Remo.

Nobel's will was hardly longer than one ordinary page. It attracted attention throughout the world. It was unusual at that time to donate large sums of money for scientific and charitable purposes. Many people also criticized the international character of the prizes, saying they should be restricted to Swedes. Some of his relatives contested the will. Complicated legal and administrative matters also had to be sorted out. All this took time, but eventually it was all settled.

In 1901, the first Nobel Prizes were awarded. The donor himself could hardly have dreamed of the impact that his goodwill would have in the future.