

## ***One Hundred Percent American***

by noted anthropologist Ralph Linton

*The American Century* vol. 40, 1937

There can be no question about the average American's Americanism or his desire to preserve this precious heritage at all costs. Nevertheless, some insidious foreign ideas have already wormed their way into his civilization without his realizing what was going on. Thus, dawn finds the unsuspecting patriot garbed in pajamas, a garment of East Indian origin; and lying in a bed built on a pattern which originated in either Persia or Asia Minor. He is muffled to the ears in un-American materials: cotton, first domesticated in India; linen, domesticated in the Middle East; wool from an animal native to Asia Minor; or silk whose uses were first discovered by the Chinese.

On awakening he glances at the clock, a medieval European invention, rises in haste, and goes to the bathroom. Here, if he stops to think about it, he must feel himself in the presence of a great American institution; he will have heard stories of both the quality and frequency of foreign plumbing and will know that in no other country does the average man or woman perform their ablutions in the midst of such splendor. But the insidious foreign influences pursue him even here. Glass was invented by the ancient Egyptians, the use of glazed tiles for floors and walls in the Middle East, porcelain in China, and the art of enameling on metal by Mediterranean artisans of the Bronze Age. Even his bathtub and toilet are but slightly modified copies of Roman originals. The only purely American contribution to the ensemble is the steam radiator, against which our patriot very briefly and unintentionally places his posterior.

Returning to the bedroom, the unconscious victim of un-American practices removes his clothes from a chair, invented in the Near East, and proceeds to dress. He puts on close-fitting tailored garments whose form derives from the skin clothing of the ancient nomads of the Asiatic steppes and fastens them with buttons whose prototypes appeared in Europe at the close of the Stone Age. He puts on his feet stiff coverings made from hide prepared by a process invented in ancient Egypt and cut to a pattern which can be traced back to ancient Greece and makes sure they are properly polished, also a Greek idea. Lastly, he ties about his neck a strip of bright-colored cloth, which is a vestigial survival of the shoulder shawls worn by seventeenth-century Croats. He gives himself a final appraisal in the mirror, an old Mediterranean invention and goes downstairs to breakfast.

Here a whole new series of foreign things confront him. His food and drink are placed before him in pottery vessels, the popular name of which - china - is sufficient evidence of their origin. His fork is a medieval Italian invention and his spoon a copy of a Roman original. He will usually begin his meal with coffee, an Abyssinian plant first discovered by Arabs. The American is quite likely to need it to dispel the morning after affects of over-indulgence in fermented drinks, invented in the Near East; or distilled ones, invented by the alchemists of medieval Europe.

If our patriot is old-fashioned enough to adhere to the so-called American breakfast, his coffee will be accompanied by an orange, or orange juice, domesticated in the Mediterranean region, a cantaloupe domesticated in Persia, or grapes domesticated in Asia Minor. From this he will go on to waffles, a Scandinavian invention, with plenty of butter, originally a Near-Eastern cosmetic.

Breakfast over, he sprints for his train - the train, not the sprinting, being an English invention. At the station, he pauses for a moment to buy a newspaper, paying for it with coins

invented in ancient Lydia. Once on the train he settles back to inhale the fumes of a cigarette invented in Mexico, or a cigar invented in Brazil. Meanwhile, he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites by a process invented in Germany upon a material invented in China. As he scans the latest editorial pointing out the dire results to our institutions of accepting foreign ideas, he will not fail to thank a Hebrew God in an Indo-European language that he is one hundred percent (decimal system invented by the Greeks) American (from Americus Vespucci, Italian geographer).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Immigrants in Our Family's Past

**Before writing on this paper, it would be good to talk to your parents, grandparents, or a relative who knows about your family's history. It would be nice to have all of the information completed below but it is okay to leave out information that it felt to be confidential.**

1. When did your ancestors (family members before you) come to America? Estimate if you don't know the exact date.
2. From what countries did your ancestors come?
3. Where did they enter the U.S.? At least decide if they came to the eastern or western part of the United States.
4. Why do you think they came to the U.S.?
5. What do you think was the hardest thing about their move?
6. Attach any photos or other memorabilia you could show of your immigrant ancestors?

Parent signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
We have done our best to help our son or daughter with this project, or we really know nothing of our family's past and cannot answer these questions.

## Citizenship Quiz-- Sample of the 100 Questions

<http://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/100q.pdf>

What does the Constitution do?

The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?

How many amendments does the Constitution have?

What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?

What is the economic system in the United States?

What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?

Who is in charge of the executive branch?

What are two Cabinet-level positions?

The House of Representatives has how many voting members?

Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?

What does the judicial branch do?

Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?

There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.

There were 13 original states. Name three.

Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

Name one state that borders Mexico.

What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?

**Answer Key** to Constitution Quiz (One of the following is considered the right answer (A))

What does the Constitution do?

A: sets up the government

A: defines the government

A: protects basic rights of Americans

The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?

A: We the People

How many amendments does the Constitution have?

A: twenty-seven (27)

What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?

A: life

A: liberty

A: pursuit of happiness

What is the economic system in the United States?\*

A: capitalist economy

A: market economy

What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?

A: checks and balances

A: separation of powers

Who is in charge of the executive branch?

A: the President

What are two Cabinet-level positions?

A: Secretary of Agriculture

A: Secretary of Commerce

A: Secretary of Defense

A: Secretary of Education

A: Secretary of Energy

A: Secretary of Health and Human Services

A: Secretary of Homeland Security

A: Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

A: Secretary of Interior

A: Secretary of State

A: Secretary of Transportation  
A: Secretary of Treasury  
A: Secretary of Veterans' Affairs  
A: Secretary of Labor  
A: Attorney General

The House of Representatives has how many voting members?

A: four hundred thirty-five (435)

Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?

A: (because of) the state's population

A: (because) they have more people

A: (because) some states have more people

What does the judicial branch do?

A: reviews laws

A: explains laws

A: resolves disputes (disagreements)

A: decides if a law goes against the Constitution

Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?

A: provide schooling and education

A: provide protection (police)

A: provide safety (fire departments)

A: give a driver's license

A: approve zoning and land use

There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.

A: Citizens eighteen (18) and older (can vote).

A: You don't have to pay (a poll tax) to vote.

A: Any citizen can vote. (Women and men can vote.)

A: A male citizen of any race (can vote).

There were 13 original states. Name three.

A: New Hampshire

A: Massachusetts

A: Rhode Island

A: Connecticut

A: New York

A: New Jersey  
A: Pennsylvania  
A: Delaware  
A: Maryland  
A: Virginia  
A: North Carolina  
A: South Carolina  
A: Georgia

Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

A: (Franklin) Roosevelt

Name one state that borders Mexico.

A: California  
A: Arizona  
A: New Mexico  
A: Texas

What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?

A: Atlantic (Ocean)

## The Great Fear of the Period----Political Cartoon on Immigration



Primary Source SUMMARY (from LoC): A one panel, three scene cartoon showing, in the first scene, an Irish man with the head of Uncle Sam in his mouth and a Chinese man with the feet of Uncle Sam in his mouth, in the second scene they consume Uncle Sam, and in the third the Chinese man consumes the Irish man; on the landscape in the distant background are many railroads.

MEDIUM: 1 print: lithograph.

CREATED/PUBLISHED: San Francisco:White & Bauer, [between 1860 and 1869]

REPOSITORY: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

DIGITAL ID: (b&w film copy neg.) cph 3a23482 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a23482>

VIDEO FRAME ID: LCPP003A-23482 (from b&w film copy neg.)

CARD #: 98502829

I, Too  
by  
Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America

I am the darker brother,  
They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh,  
And eat well,  
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes.  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the kitchen,"  
Then.

Besides,  
They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

# Roots and Wings Poem

(Outline only--rewrite on another sheet of paper)

\_\_\_\_\_ (your first name)

Son or daughter of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_ (you may choose one or more ancestors)

From \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and

\_\_\_\_\_. (countries or regions)

Whose roots \_\_\_\_\_.

(Use your imagination and strong words)

Who fears \_\_\_\_\_.

Who loves \_\_\_\_\_.

Who has learned to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_\_. (a family member)

Who has wings made of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

Who flies \_\_\_\_\_. (Use your imagination and strong words)

\_\_\_\_\_. (last name)

## Example of Roots and Wings Poem

Rhonda

Daughter of Eva Mae Gore, Rebecca Jane Casner, and Maggie Baker.

From Ireland, Scotland, France, Arizona, and the Cherokee Nation.

Whose roots dig deep into the Arizona Mountains and deserts.

Who fears clowns and the derision of others.

Who loves my family and teaching social studies.

Who has learned to love and live fully from my mother and to crochet and quilt from my grandmother.

Who has wings made of iron and gossamer.

Who flies with purpose and power.

Gonzalez