

*250 Years in the Making: How well do you know your city? Take our quiz and find out. (Who knows!? You just might learn something.)*

## Answer Key

1. What is the name of the Fairmount Park mansion built by Henry Pratt in 1800 as a botanical “showpiece” for 700 different types of plants? *Pratt’s showpiece is c), Lemon Hill, one of the six extant historic Fairmount Park houses that make up the museums now known as “the Charms.” The others, in addition to those listed, are Mount Pleasant and Woodford. Throughout the 18th century, Philly was the largest city in British North America, so a lot of rich folks lived here.*
2. What do we call the stew whose recipe was brought here by enslaved West Indians and became Philly-famous in the 1800s? *Ladle up a big bowl of d), pepper pot, a mix of meat (often tripe) and veggies, dumplings, spices, and cayenne pepper that’s a product of Spanish and West African cuisines. Funchi is a Dutch Caribbean cornmeal mush, joumou is a Haitian pumpkin soup, and goat water stew is ... well, a pretty self-explanatory Caribbean dish.*
3. Speaking of foodstuffs, which culinary delicacy became famous-famous in the early 1800s thanks to its short shelf life? *Belly up to b), cream cheese. While it wasn’t invented here, it was considered a rare and expensive delicacy, made by local farmwives who sent it to markets in Philly, whose shoppers spread it around. Its rep became synonymous with the city. Bagels seem to have come from Poland, btw. And Philadelphia brand cream cheese? It’s from New York.*
4. Which famous literary figure lived in Philly from 1838 to 1844? *That would be a), Edgar Allan Poe, who dwelt (and drank) in various residences here, including the one on North 7th Street that’s now a National Historic Site dedicated to him. Walt Whitman lived in Camden; Paine was born a century earlier; and Louisa May Alcott was born in Germantown in 1832 but moved to Boston as a child in 1834.*
5. By 1845, how many dentists were listed in McElroy’s Philadelphia City Directory (a sort of early Yellow Pages)? *Brush up on c), about 130. There was one lone dentist to serve Camden’s choppers. Prior to 1800, most dental work was done domestically (and amateurlly). Many of the Philly dentists listed in McElroy’s were medical doctors; others were more like artists or craftsmen, making a living by fashioning dentures. The first dental college in the city, the Philadelphia College of Dentistry, was founded in 1852.*
6. In the wake of anti-Black mob violence in Cincinnati, Ohio, Philadelphia preacher Richard Allen, founder of Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, set up a national meeting of Black leaders here in 1830. What was the purpose of this newly formed American Society for Free Persons of Color? *Grab a point for c), to establish a settlement for Black Americans in Canada, a nation chosen because of its relative lack of institutional racism, comparable climate, and use of the English language. But this initial meeting of what became known as the national Colored Conventions Movement would take up the rest of the causes at later meetings.*
7. Which cultural organization was founded in Philly in 1820? *Tune in to a), the Musical Fund Society, which grew out of a group of aficionados who in 1816 started gathering weekly in one another’s homes for guest performances. Eventually the group moved its gatherings to Carpenters’ Hall, then to Washington Hall, before constructing Musical Fund Hall at 8th and Locust for the princely sum of \$23,000. Today, it’s been turned into condos. Establishing dates for the others? The Opera Company, 1975, through the merger of the Philadelphia Lyric Opera Company and the Philadelphia Grand Opera Company; the Orchestra, 1900; the Philadelphia Ballet (originally the Pennsylvania Ballet), 1963.*
8. From the early 1800s through the end of the century, which of the following became a focus of intense Philadelphia fascination, with public exhibitions and shows? *Wrap it up for a), Egyptian mummies, with interest spurred by Napoleon Bonaparte’s 1799 expedition to that country. Medical schools and colleges sought to add them to their anatomical collections, and museums put them on public display. Physician Samuel George Merton collected a number of mummy heads (along with other skulls) to promote his (false) theories of the correlation of skull size with intelligence; the assemblage was eventually donated to Penn’s Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, which in 2021 apologized for its “unethical collection” and vowed to repatriate the remains.*
9. What was the name of the club team in Philly that as early as 1831 was already playing “town ball,” which was a predecessor to baseball? *You knocked it out of the park if you said b), the Olympics. The Athletics were a Philly team, but they didn’t appear until 1859; the Atlantics and the Knickerbockers were New York teams. Olympics games were often played at a field at 25th and Jefferson streets in Brewerytown. By 1845, town ball had evolved into baseball. Go Phils!*
10. What is the Carstairs Row? *That’s a lot of buildup for c), the first planned set of identical Philly rowhomes. Sansom bought the land for the city’s first speculative housing project and had Carstairs design a row of 22 identical homes on the south side of what’s now Sansom Street. A few of these houses still stand as part of Jewelers’ Row and retain some aspects of their original appearance.*