## Test How 'Culturally Literate' You Are

E.D. Hirsch, professor emeritus of education and humanities at the University of Virginia, has become famous for his advocacy of <u>"cultural literacy."</u>

According to Hirsch, "To be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world." He emphasized that a "shared, canonical knowledge is inherently necessary to a literate democracy," and that, problematically, many Americans did not fully possess this knowledge. (In one experiment he conducted, his 17 and 18-year-old subjects didn't know who Grant and Lee were—and those subjects went to school in Richmond, Virginia!)

At the back of his 1987 book entitled *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, Hirsch provided a large list of the terms, references, and ideas that every educated American should be able to recognize and understand. Below, I have provided 50 items from this list. If pressed, how many could you define or briefly explain?

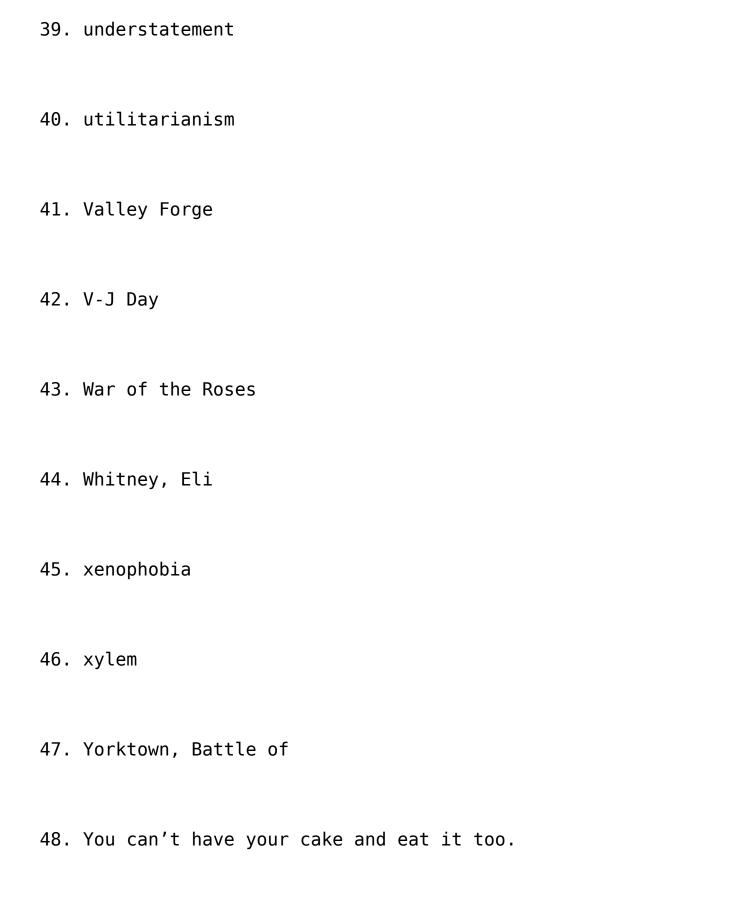
- 1. acrophobia
- 2. ad hoc
- Baconian method
- 4. Battle of Stalingrad

6. comme il faut
7. De Gaulle, Charles
8. Doctor Livingstone, I presume?
9. ecumenism
10. Elysian Fields
11. fermentation
12. fringe benefit
13. Ganges River
14. Goebbels, Joseph
15. hedonism

5. College of Cardinals

16.	Holy Roman Empire
17.	in loco parentis
18.	I came, I saw, I conquered.
19.	Jacob and Esau
20.	justification by faith
21.	Khomeini, Ayatollah
22.	Kitty Hawk
23.	Lee, Robert E.
24.	Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address
25.	Madrid
26.	montage

27.	NAACP
28.	nebula
29.	Occam's razor
30.	OPEC
31.	parabola
32.	Pope, Alexander
33.	realpolitik
34.	Remember the Alamo!
35.	Sacco-Vanzetti case
36.	Stradivarius
37.	Taj Mahal (image)



38. tilt at windmills

- 49. Zeitgeist
- 50. Zion, Mount