



Twenty Years of Quiz Night

The Only Trivia Competition in Palestine

By Afnan Mahmoud



Every Monday at 7:00 pm we convene. A team of twelve volunteers sets up the hall for the weekly game: sound system, projector, camera, questions, the black box, seating arrangements, reservations, winning-team table, and all the nitty-gritty details! We do it all, and we start the game at 8:00 pm sharp! Because after twenty years of quizzing, we know how it's done.

Quiz Night is the first and only trivia competition in Palestine. It started in 1996 on the second floor of a local café in downtown Ramallah then known as "Kan Bata Zaman," by a group of friends who tested each other's knowledge in various topics. The challenge was well received by the group, their friends, and observers, and it transformed into a weekly challenge organized by Rana Warrad, Naser Abu Diab, Raed Haddad, and Riad Mustafa. Since then, the challenge evolved; rules were created, and secrecy, transparency, and credibility were achieved. Riad Mustafa became the sole organizer and presenter of Quiz Night, leading a team of voluntary referees and supported by players and private-sector sponsors. Quiz Night became part of many people's lives. Riad, for example, when asked what Quiz Night meant to him, said: "All my professional accomplishments are because of Quiz Night. My personal achievements as well. I met the love of my life, and I proposed to her during a Quiz Night game. I am now a well-known trainer, event manager, and a father of two, but I can't imagine life without Quiz Night."

Quiz Night is not just another get-together for the regular random chitchat! It is a weekly competition that takes priority when any



of the participants need to schedule an important life event or plan a vacation. Teams convene in order to network, make new friends, learn new information, and compete. We never announce what the grand prize is for the winner of the season, and teams never ask. It is not because of a materialistic prize that people participate in Quiz Night; it is because of their love for learning. Rawan Khader, a team member of "Les Quizerables," said: "The team awaits Monday night with impatience. It is when we learn something new in a fun and friendly atmosphere. We enjoy the competition and feel it's an amazing investment of our free time."

Riad's is not the only life that has been influenced by Quiz Night. One of the oldest teams that started playing twenty years ago used to bring along their children to observe. Sons and daughters now compete against their parents. Quiz Night has significantly encouraged these young men and women to engage in research, explore new topics, and acquire new knowledge. Quiz Night promotes competition through knowledge, continuous exploration, and advancement aside from specialization, which is the main objective of the game.

Competing teams consist of four to six players; each assigns a team

Interesting Statistics

During the 20 years of quizzing, 302 teams have played in different leagues and different years, with 1,812 players of various age groups and gender. Twenty-five referees have learned and applied the rules of the game and led a total of 474 games.



captain, chooses a name, and designs a logo. Players are between 18 and 75 years old, and come from various backgrounds. Currently there are three leagues. Newcomers join the **Silver League** and play on Tuesdays. Winning one game during the season enables them to join the **Golden League** in the following season. Teams that win the title of the Golden League season three times in a row rise to the **Diamond League**.

Every season includes eight games; teams get three minutes to answer



any given question, and they answer ten questions a game. Questions are derived from all fields of knowledge and science: politics, geography, sports, music, arts, history, IT, math, and general information. Questions aim to trigger new methods of thinking, logic, and common sense. Two of the ten questions during each game present hints to help teams guess which object has been placed inside a black box. The idea is to add creativity to traditional thinking patterns.

During each season, Quiz Night referees vote for an “Ideal Team” according to pre-set criteria that revolve around the attitudes of team members, their commitment, resiliency, and respect of the game’s rules and regulations, which we believe promote the characteristics that define positive behavior.

Throughout the past twenty years, Quiz Night teams have organized additional events at schools and other venues to instill a culture that emphasizes general knowledge as well as out-of-the-box thinking methods. The team plans to continue implementing similar events, given the increase in demand.

This year, on June 3, the Quiz Night team played an honorary game to celebrate the 20th anniversary. Fifty-three of Quiz Night’s total of 302 teams joined in the celebration. Many memories were shared and words of appreciation were sent out to those who played, contributed, and supported.

I joined the Quiz Night team eight years ago. Today I feel as though I am a member of a second family, connected not by blood, but by the simple thirst for knowledge and self-actualization.

Our Readers Say ...

Anyone can be creative and can still be called an artist. We all have various means of stating our views, and art is a healthy way of expressing those feelings. Culture to me is what defines a certain group of people, and unfortunately our culture seems to be slowly fading away. The reasons for this are occupation and excessive and abusive communication. We are becoming Westernized, and we are forgetting who we are as Arab Palestinians.

Aya Khatib, Jerusalem