UK Citizenship Test

Questions (As devised by BBC Radio 4, 21 January 2006, answers overleaf)

1. Which king had his powers curbed by the Magna Carta?
   a) Alfred the Great   b) Charles I   c) John

2. Which year did all women over 21 get the vote in Britain?
   a) 1945   b) 1900   c) 1928

3. Which three branches of the authority need to agree to a law before it can come into force?
   a) The House of Commons, Lord Chancellor and the Queen
   b) The House of Commons, the Lords and the Queen
   c) The Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the police

4. Are you a
   a) subject of the Crown   b) citizen of the Crown   c) defender of the Crown

5. Why is the Union Jack made up of its particular colours?
   a) It was chosen by Henry VIII
   b) It’s made up of the flags of St George of England, St Patrick of Ireland and St Andrew of Scotland
   c) It’s made up of the flags of England and the flags of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex

6. Is a man allowed to punish his wife physically as long as it’s in his own home?
   a) Yes, although, not with any recognised weapon
   b) Yes, though only under provocation
   c) No

7. Which English monarch broke away from the Roman Catholic Church?
   a) Charles   b) Elizabeth I   c) Henry VIII

8. Who was the only politician in British history to abolish parliament?
   a) Cromwell   b) Gladstone   c) Churchill

9. What did Guy Fawkes famously fail to do?
   a) Blow up Buckingham Palace
   b) Blow up the Houses of Parliament
   c) Blow up 10 Downing Street

10. How long can a British government stay in office before a general election?
    a) 4 years   b) 6 years   c) 5 years

Background: The BBC Today Programme invited a politician (Barry Sheerman MP), a historian (Andrew Roberts), a race equality specialist (Trevor Phillips), a Muslim journalist (Zara Joseph) and an economist (Madsen Pirie) to devise these questions, to test the knowledge of British law, history and constitution by potential UK citizens.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/reports/archive/politics/citizenship.shtml#
1. Which king had his powers curbed by the Magna Carta?
The answer is John. His name during his lifetime, incidentally, was Jean, not John, for he was French.

2. Which year did all women over 21 get the vote in Britain?
The answer is 1928. The decision to extend the franchise, however, was made in 1918. There were about six female MPs before women actually voted.

3. Which three branches of the authority need to agree to a law before it can come into force?
The answer is the House of Commons, the Lords and the Queen. The Lords frequently make amendments to proposed legislation, but when there is disagreement between Lords and Commons the view of the Commons prevails – in practice, though not constitutionally. The role of the monarch is purely symbolic and does not involve her or him personally.

4. Are you a a) subject of the Crown, b) citizen of the Crown, c) defender of the Crown?
The answer is that strictly speaking the British are subjects, not citizens.

5. Why is the Union Jack made up of its particular colours?
The answer is that it's made up of the flags of St George of England, St Patrick of Ireland and St Andrew of Scotland. It was created in 1801. Subsequently (1923) the country now known as Ireland (as distinct from Northern Ireland) left the United Kingdom.

6. Is a man allowed to punish his wife physically as long as it's in his own home?
The answer is No. It is arguably worrying, or indeed very worrying, that the experts who phrased this question thought it worth asking.

7. Which English monarch broke away from the Roman Catholic Church?
The answer is Henry VIII. The break occurred in the 1530s and the monarch's motivation was secular not religious. As individuals, not all English people converted. Within the Church of England to this day, there are individuals whose practice and beliefs are barely distinguishable from those of members of the Roman Catholic Church.

8. Who was the only politician in British history to abolish parliament?
The answer is Oliver Cromwell (mid 17th century).

9. What did Guy Fawkes famously fail to do?
The answer is that Guido Fawkes, known after his death as Guy, failed with his fellow-conspirators to blow up the Houses of Parliament. The year was 1605 and the day was 5 November. Nowadays, 'Guy Fawkes Day', as it is known, is widely celebrated by children with bonfires and (especially) fireworks. Fawkes and his fellow conspirators were Catholics and did not want a Protestant monarch (James I) on the English throne.

10. How long can a British government stay in office before a general election?
The answer is five years. Most governments, however, last rather less than this. Typically, the government of the day calls an election when it judges it has the best chance of winning – usually after about four years.