

“Bienvenido”

Welcome to



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How much do you know about Spain? Take this quick quiz to find out.

Read the six sentences below. Three of the statements are true. Three are false. Do you know which statements are true? Which are false?

1. The Spanish national anthem has no words.
2. Beyonce was born in Spain.
3. The Eiffel Tower in Paris was originally going to be built in the Spanish city of Barcelona.
4. The Spanish name for Spain is Spandex.
5. The national animal of Spain is the bull.
6. Spanish is spoken by more people in the world than any other language.

A Very Brief History of Spain



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Spain is a very old country. People from Europe and Africa settled here more than 35,000 years ago.



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In the 8th century BC, the Phoenicians called the peninsula "Span," or "hidden land." (BTW, it was never, as far as we know, called Spandex.)

Then, in the first century BC, Romans conquered Spain. They were followed by Germanic tribes from Europe called the Vandals and the Visigoths.



In A.D. 711, Muslims from Africa invaded Spain. They ruled for the next four hundred years.



The World's Biggest Food Fight

La Tomatina Festival

The “Tomatina” Festival

By the Numbers

9,000: Brunol’s population.

20,000: Number of people taking part in Tomatina.

220,000 pounds: Amount of tomatoes thrown at Tomatina.

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It may sound like the craziest idea ever. But for thousands of people every year it’s got to also be the “fun-est” day of the year.

It’s the “Tomatina” festival — a wild and crazy event that takes place in the small town of Buñol, Spain.

“What’s a Tomatina festival?” you ask. It’s quite simply the world’s biggest food fight — with tomatoes of all things. For exactly one hour on the last Wednesday in August each year, people throw tomatoes at each other. Why?

Well, why not!

Like kids everywhere, kids in Spain love sports. Here are some of the most popular sports among Spaniards of all ages.

FOOTBALL (SOCCER)

If you're looking for some of the best soccer players in the world, you don't have to look much farther than Spain. Two teams in Spain have some of the best soccer players in the world. One is Real Madrid; the other is Barcelona.

Madrid has another interesting team. It's called "the team of the people," called Atlético de Madrid.

So, in Madrid, you'll always be able to catch a soccer – er, football game.

Basketball is the second most popular sport in Spain after football (soccer). The top Spanish basketball league is considered the best in Europe. Spain has also been successful internationally. They are ranked second best at basketball in the world. Want more? Spain has also won three Olympic silver medals and one bronze.

BASKETBALL



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TENNIS

Tennis is also very popular, and Spain has two tennis superstars: Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz. There are courts all over Spain and multiple tennis schools, too. Every year, there is a tennis event called the "Mutua Madrid Open," held in early May. So, be sure to check that out if you love tennis.

Human Tower

Every other year in October a “towering” event takes place in the city of Tarragona, Spain. Hundreds of people do their best to create the world’s tallest human tower. It’s all part of The Concours de Castells Festival.

This unusual event is a major tradition in Spain and has been going on since the late 18th century.

It’s got to be the ultimate example of great teamwork. Teams create 9- and 10-story castells. (A castell in English means “human tower,” though the word in Spanish means castle.)

The human towers are awesome. But don’t try this at home. It takes months and months of practice for castellers to learn how to build their towers.

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Tanaonte



An **Imaginary** Interview with **Miguel de Cervantes**

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES is one of the most famous writers in history. He wrote *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. It's been translated into more languages than any other book in history except for the Bible.

Yet, Miguel de Cervantes' life was filled with misfortune and, well, just plain bad luck. So, suppose you could have a conversation with Cervantes. What would you ask him?

Here is what these curious kids wanted to know.



Were you born in Spain?



Yes, in a city not far from Madrid. But in 1569, when I was about twenty-two years old, I had some bad luck. I was charged with wounding a man in a duel. So, I ran away to Italy.

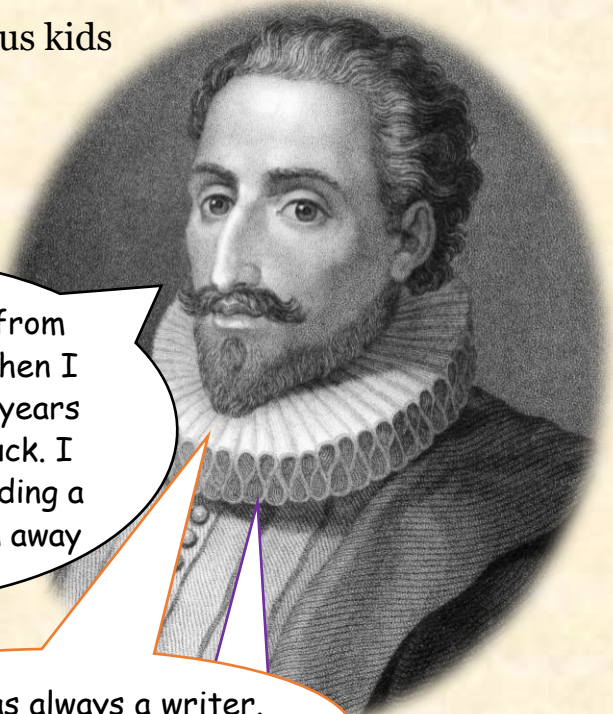
When did you first start writing?

I guess I was always a writer. As a kid, I used to write poetry. Cool, huh?



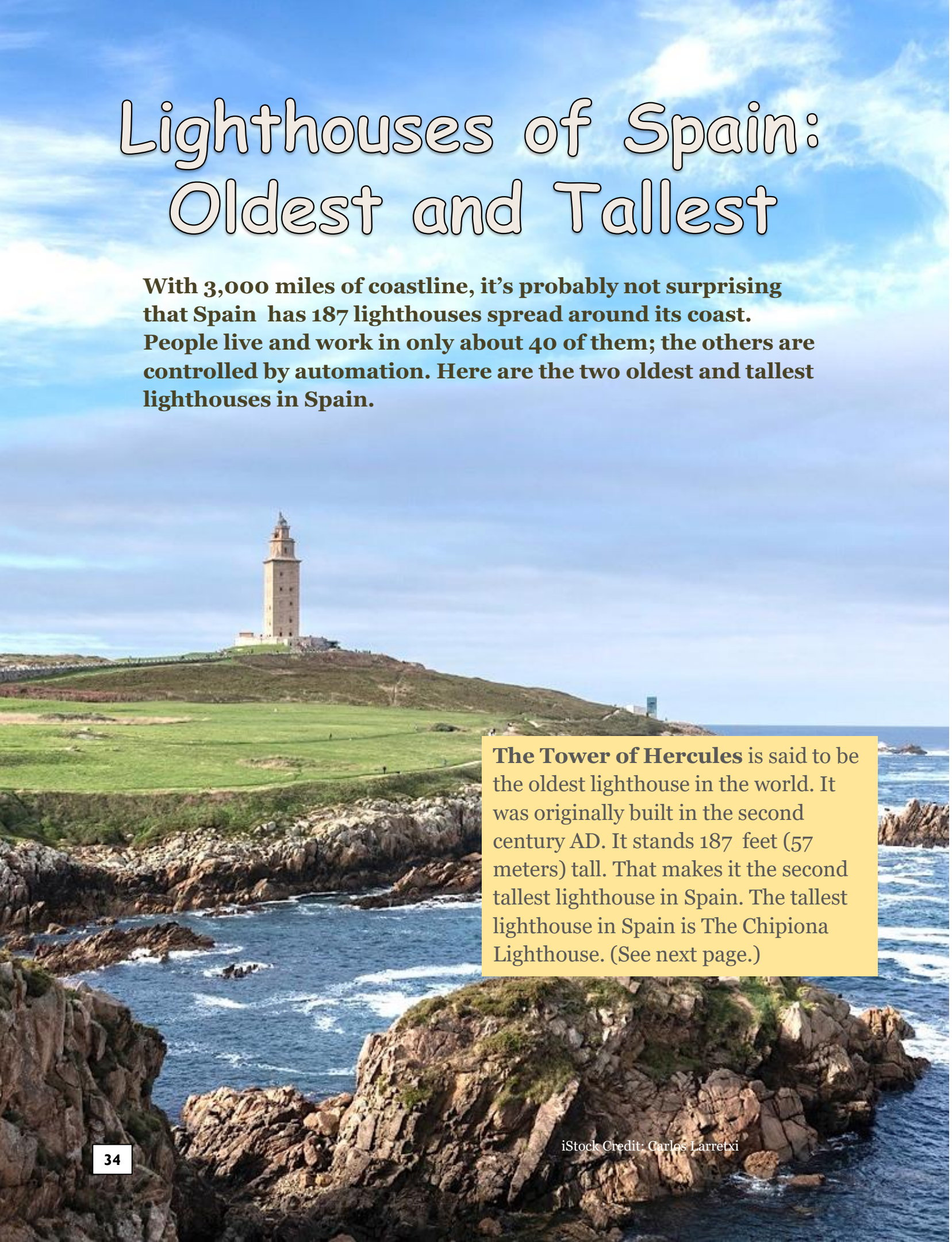
I heard you lost the use of your left hand. What happened?

Another stroke of bad luck, I guess. I was in the army in Italy. In one battle, I got shot in my left hand — three times!



Lighthouses of Spain: Oldest and Tallest

With 3,000 miles of coastline, it's probably not surprising that Spain has 187 lighthouses spread around its coast. People live and work in only about 40 of them; the others are controlled by automation. Here are the two oldest and tallest lighthouses in Spain.

The image shows the Tower of Hercules, a tall, cylindrical stone lighthouse with a lantern room at the top, situated on a grassy hill overlooking a rocky coastline. The sea is blue with white waves crashing against the rocks in the foreground. The sky is a clear, bright blue with some light clouds.

The Tower of Hercules is said to be the oldest lighthouse in the world. It was originally built in the second century AD. It stands 187 feet (57 meters) tall. That makes it the second tallest lighthouse in Spain. The tallest lighthouse in Spain is The Chipiona Lighthouse. (See next page.)

The Wildlife of Spain

What do you think is the most dangerous animal in Spain? The Iberian wolf? The black vulture? A sting ray?

Guess again. Would you believe the most dangerous animal in Spain is — wait for it — the caterpillar — but not just any old caterpillar, but a special creature known as the processionary caterpillar.

This harmless looking animal can actually be pretty, well, harmful. It can cause really bad symptoms in minutes, not only for humans but for dogs and cats as well.

So, if you come across one of these creatures, back off — way off.



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How They Got Their Name

These caterpillars live in communities usually in pine trees. At night they march out in single file — in a long “procession” — to feed on the needles.