

Academic Scavenger Hunt

Grades 4-6

2012

The Sciences

1. What is a ventifact?
2. What did Dmitri Ivanovich Mendeleev (or Mendeleev) organize in the 1800s?
3. To which is an elephant shrew more closely related – an elephant or a shrew?
4. The detection of hematite on Mars is thought to be evidence that there might once have been what substance there?
5. What is a Scoville Heat Unit?
6. If you eat too many carrots, will you turn orange?
7. What are the rings of Saturn made of? (The primary ingredient)
8. People disagree about who actually invented the laser – which is an acronym for what?
9. What makes a flamingo pink?
10. What was the Gossamer Condor?

Language

11. How many different meanings are there for the word “fell”? Give as many definitions as you can (one point per definition).
12. The year 2012 is unusual in that it is a leap year.
What does **intercalation** mean when referring to calendars?
13. In 1939, Ernest Vincent Wright wrote a novel, "Gadsby", which contains over 50,000 words. What was unusual about this book?

Extra point: What is this form of writing called?

14. The word auto-antonym has Greek roots meaning a word that is the opposite of itself. These have also been called contronyms, contronyms, antilogies, Janus words (after the two-faced Greek mythical figure, from which "January" also derives), and enantiodromes. Whatever you call them, give two opposite meanings for the following words: (1 point each, with documentation)

- a. Cleave:
- b. Dust:
- c. Left
- d. Over:
- e. Trim:
- f. Fast:
- g. Buckle:
- h. Clip:

Miscellaneous

15. A few years ago Frito-Lay introduced a bag for their snack chips that was made from plants, not plastic, and could decompose in compost. It seemed like a good idea. However they had to discontinue using the bag for most of their chips after only 18 months. Why?

16. How many women have been awarded a Nobel Prize?

17. Where did the name "California" originate? (You need more than just the country/language)

History

18. What countries fought in the War of Jenkins' Ear?

19. In what year did Luther Burbank win a gold medal from the St. Louis International Exhibition for his Burbank Rose?

20. How long is a "smoot" and what was it originally used to measure?

21. For centuries explorers have searched for a Northwest Passage, an arctic sea route that would connect two great oceans. In recent summers, enough longstanding sea ice has melted away to temporarily open such a passage through a group of northern islands part of the year. Name the country that contains these islands and the Northwest Passage.

22. Anne Green was one of the few women in Colonial America to do what?

Sports

23. How many home runs did Babe Ruth hit?

24. What size shoe did Shaquille O'Neal autograph for President Obama?

25. Have hockey pucks always been round?

26. A sport that originated in South America and was brought back to the Basque area of Spain is claimed to be the "fastest sport" by the Basque government?
What sport is it and what different sport broke its "fastest ball" record?

For Fun and Extra Credit (no documentation needed) - 2 points each

27. What is the four-digit number in which the first digit is one-third the second, the third is the sum of the first and second, and the last is three times the second?

28. What holds water yet is full of holes?

29. What is interesting about this sentence?

Are we not drawn onward, we few, drawn onward to new era?

30. You have three containers. One has only red marbles, one has only blue marbles and the third has an equal number of red and blue marbles. Someone came along and switched all the labels so that each container is now marked incorrectly.

Red

Mixed

Blue

Your job is to re-label the containers correctly. You cannot look inside, but you can reach into any of the containers pull out one marble at a time. What is the fewest number of marbles you need to inspect in order to correctly label each container?