

## Example Trivia Questions

These are questions that we have asked the students in our Watson School Team Trivia Challenge. Students teams are typically given 20 questions per challenge. Some questions are genuine trivia; many of them require students to estimate values or apply their knowledge of physics, chemistry and mathematics.

Occasionally we add “canary” questions, basic tests of prerequisite knowledge such as calculus, in order to verify that students have retained material from their first year.

1. Condensation Trail.
2. A human infection that began as an infection of non-human animals, e.g. bird flu.
3. Aluminum, although astronomers regard oxygen as a “metal”
4. 69C, 156.2F
5. The 5-digit ZIP (zone improvement plan) code
6. Eggs
7. 466.16Hz on an equally tempered scale.
8. A scalene triangle has no equal sides
9. Californium
10. Thanks to Doug Summerville for finding SISSIES (.....)
11. 4186.01Hz on an equally tempered scale.
12. St. Patrick’s day, presumably because alcohol is a potent diuretic.
13. A superintelligent shade of the color blue.
14. Functions.
15. Safety Orange
16. Safety Orange is Hex FF6600
17. COLECO, creator of the ColecoVision, along with Cabbage Patch Dolls and various other famous toys.
18. Chromium.
19. I accepted any formula for a Gaussian variable regardless of mean or variance.
20. Vigesimal.
21. Accepted: 59th street Queensboro bridge (cantilever,) Third Avenue Bridge, Willis Avenue Bridge, and parts of the Triborough maybe. The Brooklyn bridge is mostly suspension, part cable-stay.
22. GATTACA
23. Blue is refracted more.
24. Hydrogen: it’s about 8/9 by molecule count, and about 4/5 by mass. Remember, Jupiter is a failed star.
25. The yottabyte is the largest, followed by zetta and exabyte.
26. 88, according to the International Astronomical Union
27. The N-side is the cathode: A P-N junction becomes conductive when supplementary voltage shrinks its depletion zone.
28. A bowling ball made of liquid water will weigh between between 11.22 and 12 pounds. Bowling ball circumference is between 26.4 and 27 inches.
29. No it isn’t: it’s caused by parasitic protozoa of the genus *plasmodium*
30. Charles Babbage invented the Kasiski test for breaking Vigenere; Alan Turing found a way to factor out the plugboard permutations of the German Enigma cipher.

31. There are 729 ways to get all even numbers, and 720 ways to roll each outcome once.
32. Annual US consumption ranges from 300-600 million pounds/year. Lard has approximately the density of water, and the continental US is approximately 3.1 million square miles. That would be about 1.5 million pounds of lard per person per year, if we ate that much lard.
33. The four ghosts in Pac-Man
34. List Processor
35. Accepted any variation of  $-\cos(2x)/4$ ,  $\sin^2-\cos^2/4$ ,  $\cos^2/2$ , etc
36. A fish.
37. Possible answers: FORTH, Postscript, (Factor, Ambi, RPL, Mouse), FORTH variants (FALSE, F-CODE from OpenFirmware, Abundance, Parakeet), will accept: Joy, Sy, Lapis, Cat, Befunge, Z.
38. *Calcium oxide, CaO, but will accept any (CaO)<sub>n</sub>(oxide)*
39.  $1/1.93742631 \times 10^{-11}$ , or  $0.516148663 \times 10^{11}$
40. n!
41. *Tapper*
42. Abraham Lincoln held a patent for lifting boats with inflatable buoys.
43. The tilde ~ has value 126
44. He targeted UNiversities and Airports.
45. The lighter predated the strike-anywhere match.
46. Silver
47. Blood pressure
48. 3.9674 km, or 2.465 miles or 13016 feet
49. Argentina is named after silver.
50. As of February 1, 2009, Voyager 1 is about 108.60 AU (16.247 billion km, or 10.095 billion miles) from the Sun
51. 342.29648 g/mol
52. The centroid of the continental US is approximately Lebanon, Kansas
53. Zaphod Beeblebrox The Second
54. Because they are named after people.
55. The whip.
56. ca 29.77 Km/s. Its orbital velocity, on the other hand, is zero.
57. Hurricane wind speed
58. The Kama Sutra
59. True. Quicksort is  $O(n \log n)$ , but by definition this is also  $O(n^2)$ .
60. 495
61. Jerk.
62. The Beagle.
63. *E. T. the Extra Terrestrial.*
64. A cherry.
65. The electric sewing machine (1889 vs 1906)
- 66.
67. Video Graphics Adapter
68. Milk.