



2023 Curious Questions Contest Entries

Our students come from different backgrounds. Some of their honest questions are on some controversial or religious topics. Sharing these questions does not constitute an endorsement.

Briana S., 13, Oregon

1. Why do we see the moon during the day, but not the sun at night?
2. Does everyone see colors differently, but nobody knows because we've all learned our colors the same way?
3. How does such a spongy, blobby, squishy, pink thing like your brain do so much?
4. How come some eyes on living creatures are all the way black, but others have white around them?
5. Does Henry (our pineapple Conure) really know what my earbuds do, or does he just hate not having my ear all to himself while he's on my shoulder?

John L., 12, Texas – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Where do bad words come from?
2. Why do our faces reflect our emotions?

Olivia S., 12, New York

1. Is time travel possible?
2. Why do we feel pain?
3. If someone is born deaf, how do they know the proper pronunciations of words when they are reading?
4. Did dinosaurs and people actually live together?
5. Why do people say "Pardon my French" when they say a bad word?

Alexander S., 13, Illinois – 2ND PLACE

1. Was there color before the universe was created?
2. What was life like before the universe existed?
3. Who created God?
4. **If there are black holes, are there light holes in space?**
5. How do we create peace on earth?

Josephine T., 14, Maryland – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Why do people like music?
2. **Why are spiders so scary to some people, but ants are not?**
3. How do people come up with ideas?
4. Why do people like selfies?
5. If we think animals are adorable, do they think we're adorable?

Mary F., 13, Maryland – 1ST PLACE

1. Why do we leave paper yard waste bags on the curb in the rain when we want them to be able to stay functional?
2. Why is it socially unacceptable for a woman to have a beard?
3. **Can I survive by eating only smores?**
4. **Why do songs about suffering bring us so much joy?**
5. Who came up with the idea of a beef jerky store and why did they put it in a mall?

Jace R., 13, Texas

1. Why do people poison their bodies with toxic foods so willingly (It's just silly!)
2. Who is this kid named Jace? He's like the coolest person I ever met. He should win a competition of some kind.
3. Why do humans pollute their earth, see the all the negative effects, and do nothing about it?

Cal H., 13, Illinois

1. What causes Lightning?
2. Why are politics such a hot mess?
3. Why do weekends always seem boring, when the lack of school means I should be having a blast?
4. What did God let sin enter the world?
5. Why is being called a pig an insult when they have surprising intelligence?

Calvin F., 12, Oregon – HONORABLE MENTION

1. How does a bike shifter work?
2. **Why do dumb ads make people buy things?**
3. Do plants need real sunlight to survive, or can they use artificial light to grow?
4. Why do some people get sunburned while others don't?
5. Who discovered the octopus?

Lucy Y., 10, New Jersey

1. How can a fragment of a worm live after being cut into multiple pieces?
2. Why do certain animals kill their prey, but leave without eating it?
3. Why are ladybugs called ladybugs if there are male ladybugs?
4. Who was the oldest Olympian to compete in the Olympics?
5. What was the longest Shakespeare play?

Abigail P., 12, Nebraska – HONORABLE MENTION

1. **Why do people care so much about how you look rather than how you act?**
2. How can people be so fearful and so careless?
3. What is gravity like in the center of the earth?
4. What was the first thought Man had?
5. What surrounds the Universe?

Noah T., 11, Pennsylvania

1. Why is water wet?
2. Why do fish swim?
3. Why do pie dishes exist?
4. Why are rocks hard?
5. What is in baby wipes?

Lily S., 13, Colorado – HONORABLE MENTION

1. How do you describe color to someone who can't see?
2. If we all started in the same place, how did cultures get so different?
3. **When the money on gift cards expire, does the money just disappear from circulation?**
4. Around what time did “handmade” become a marketing point?
5. Is it impossible to buy an unused mirror?

Josiah H., 11, Alaska

1. Why is some old junk such as old coins valuable and some isn't? (If I found an old piece of metal, it would not be valuable, but an old coin is metal, and it is valuable.)
2. What is fun about listening to music? It's just our ear drums vibrating.
3. What exactly is our imagination? We can imagine things we have never seen. It's like creating things from nothing which is impossible?
4. Why does America still use the imperial system of measurement if the metric is easier?
5. If the whole world was made of concrete how much would it weigh?

Sophie S., 13, Colorado – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Is tomato soup a smoothie? Because tomatoes are fruit.
2. Should you take antibiotics if you are a vegetarian? Technically you are killing living things...
3. Why is the most expensive thing in the world the International Space Station?
4. **Why aren't eyebrows considered facial hair?**
5. Why does time move faster when you are having fun?

Callie N., 12, Texas

1. Why do people swallow knives?
2. How many cars get shocked by lightning in a year?
3. How many people are billionaires?
4. Who named the dwarf planet Pluto?
5. What's the biggest cave on earth?

Lucy G., 13, Western Australia – HONORABLE MENTION

1. **Why does some food shrink when cooked and other food expand when cooked?**
2. Why is pink mainly a girls' colour and blue a boys' colour? Why not vice-versa?
3. Why is there no oxygen in space?
4. Why is fear so powerful?
5. Why did people live so long in the Old Testament?

Hudson G., 11, Western Australia – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Why can't we just live off nutrients in the air and water like plants?
2. Do we all see colours differently?
3. **Why does Mr S. like steampunk?**
4. Is it possible to have a 119th Element of the Periodic Table?
5. Could there be endless new elements on other planets, waiting to be discovered?

Alice J., 16, Florida – 3RD PLACE

1. How can humans think with their hearts, scientifically or figuratively?
2. **Why do myths exist?**
3. What is baking soda made of, or is it a chemical I can find on the periodic table of elements?

Ben M., 12, Burundi – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Why do the Germans brag about school, the French about their food, the English about flavored, scalding water, and the Americans about everything?
2. Why do humans believe that the only way to make peace is war?
3. **Why does paper money cost more than solid metal coins?**
4. Why do people love the sensation of fear, so much so they would risk their lives for a simple pleasure?
5. Why do humans travel so much, don't they realize traveling is practically torture on this planet?

Zeke B., 12, Burundi

1. Why don't tables have a fifth leg in the middle?
2. Why do people hold on to old junk just to eventually throw it away?
3. What worth does money really have?
4. What is chalk made of?
5. Did Mr. S. draw all the pictures in the journal?

Mary L., 10, Texas – HONORABLE MENTION

1. **Was sushimi originally a suicidal mission?**
2. **When is your real birthday if you were born on February 29th?**
3. How am I so obsessed with fluff wrap and yarn?
4. What makes me enjoy puzzles?
5. Why are us kids expected to be so perfect when you can't name any perfect grown-ups?

Sid T., 14, Illinois

1. How does photoconductivity work?
2. How does ionization work?
3. How do photoreceptive cells work?
4. How does rust work?
5. How does silicon conduct electricity?

Grace O., 11, Minnesota

1. If there was nothing at all, what would you see?
2. Why do people love diamonds even though they look just like glass?
3. Is love physical or spiritual?
4. Is fire an object?
5. What is time?

David O., 15, Minnesota – HONORABLE MENTION

1. **Why can't we choose what we remember?**
2. Why is it considered normal to spend two-thirds or more of your day working?
3. Why do people who have tools to learn about literally everything use them just to entertain themselves?
4. Why are arbitrary things, such as the way you eat, considered weird?
5. Why are the foods that are needed most by the body the least delicious?

Eliana L., 13, Texas

1. Why do nurse sharks have the ability to stop under water when all other sharks can't stop under water?
2. Why do some people tear others down to build themselves up, since I know they would hate it if others did the same thing to them?
3. Why do people love making the same horrible mistake of war?
4. Why do people watch or listen to stuff that makes them cry?
5. Why do I feel so nervous for my oldest sister to get married when I know he is a perfect match for her?

Tyler E., 13, Louisiana – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Why does my geometry want me to prove that a triangle is a triangle?
2. **Why is it called pickleball when nothing in the game has to do with pickles?**
3. Why does my dog fart so much? (Seriously, what is going on in there?)
4. Why do people think Texas is so cool?
5. Why put deodorant on your armpits when your feet end up smelly?

Faith E., 10, Louisiana

1. Do narwhals scream?
2. Is there anything beyond the planets and universe we already know?
3. Why do people only hear what they WANT to hear?
4. What's for dinner?
5. Why when one thing goes wrong everything else does too?

Grace E., 17, Louisiana – HONORABLE MENTION

1. Why do people say “believe none of what you hear and only half of what you see” and expect you to believe what they just said?
2. Do animals at the zoo think we are as entertaining to watch as we think it is to watch them?
3. Why are stupid things so funny?
4. Why does it make it so much easier to forgive someone when you can understand where they are coming from?
5. **If an orange is called an orange, why is a banana not called a yellow?**