

07

TRIVIAL TRIVIA

Aim

To practise polite question forms and polite responses to requests for information

Language

Indirect questions (*Do you know ...? Do you have any idea ...?*)

Expressions for responding (*I've no idea, I haven't a clue, I haven't the faintest idea, I'm pretty sure ...*)

Skills

Speaking

Lesson link

Use after Classbook Lesson 07

Materials

One copy of the *Question sheet* per student

One or more *Answer cards* per student (if you have more than twelve students, you need to copy the *Answer cards* sheet twice)

Pre-activity (10 minutes)

- Ask the students for an indirect way to ask questions like *What time does the next bus leave?* and how they would answer politely if they didn't know the answer or were not sure. Write their suggestions for question starters and responses on the board.

Suggested answers

Indirect questions

- Do you know ...?
- Do you happen to know ...?
- Any idea ...?
- Do you have any idea ...?
- Guess what / how many / who ...
- I bet you don't know ...

Responses

- No, I haven't a clue.
- Not off-hand, no.
- Not off the top of my head, no.
- Sorry, I haven't the faintest idea.
- I've no idea.
- I've a feeling it's ...
- As far as I know ...
- I'm pretty sure ...

- Divide the class into groups of four and ask them to practise asking and answering questions using the expressions. If they need ideas for questions to ask, write this list on the board or show it on an OHT.

Where is the nearest cash point?

How far is it to the station?

How much is it to get in to the National Gallery?

How long does it take to get to the airport?

When's our next meeting?

Do you know a good book on vegetarian cooking?

What's the best restaurant round here?

When's Jon coming back from holiday?

Procedure (20 minutes)

- Give each student a copy of the *Question sheet* and explain that they are going to play a quiz game where they have to find the answers to all the questions. Check that the students understand all the questions.
- Give out all the *Answer cards*. In a class of twelve or more students, make sure each student has one card. In a smaller class, each student may have one, two, or three cards.
- Explain that the students have to find all the answers by going up to a classmate and asking just one question politely. The classmate must answer the question if they know the answer; otherwise they should use a polite expression to show that they don't know.
- Demonstrate the game by walking up to one student (who you know hasn't got the appropriate *Answer card*) and asking the first question. They use a polite response, then you ask another student. Keep asking different students until you get the right answer.
- Ask the students to mill round and ask each other questions in the same way. Monitor and make sure they practise the target language and that they only ask each other one question before going on to the next student.
- Lead whole-class feedback on the answers.

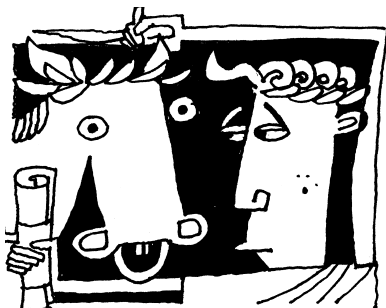
Note If the students ask you about /l/ and /t/ in *Question 7*, point out that /l/ is pronounced slightly differently in 'look' and 'ball', as /t/ is pronounced slightly differently in 'top' and 'stop'.

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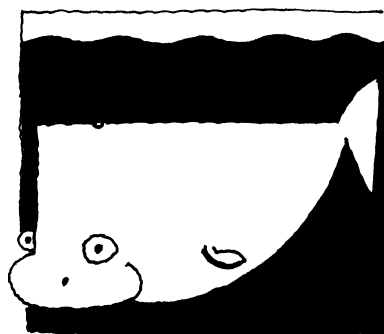
Question sheet

- 1 How many constellations of stars are there?
- 2 When and where did the card game poker originate?
- 3 Which professional footballer scored the most goals in one year?
- 4 Which Roman Emperor made his favourite horse a consul?



- 5 Which ear did the painter Vincent Van Gogh cut off?
- 6 In which event did Plato compete in the ancient Greek Olympic Games?
- 7 How many different sounds are there in the English language?
- 8 Which member of *The Beatles* died just before the group became famous?

- 9 How many different kinds of vitamins are there?
- 10 How many languages are spoken in the world today?
- 11 Why are interesting but useless facts sometimes called *trivia*?
- 12 How long can a sperm whale stay under water?



Answer cards

The International Astronomical Union recognizes eighty-eight constellations.	Poker was first played in New Orleans in the 1820s, but the modern rules date from about 1870.	Pelé, the great Brazilian player, who scored an astonishing one hundred and twenty-nine goals in 1959.
Caligula, who was Emperor of Rome from 37 to 41 BC, and was probably insane.	Van Gogh cut off part of his left ear while suffering from depression.	Plato wrote and performed philosophical dialogues, which was one of many non-sporting events at the ancient Greek Olympic Games.
It is generally agreed that there are forty-four phonemes (sounds which affect meaning) in English. However, some phonemes, such as /l/ and /t/, have more than one pronunciation, depending where they come in a word.	The fifth Beatle was Stuart Sutcliffe, a close friend of John Lennon, who died in 1962. He thought of the name <i>The Silver Beatles</i> and was the first to have a <i>Beatles</i> haircut.	There are thirteen vitamins: Vitamin A, eight types of Vitamin B, plus Vitamins C, D, E, and K.
About 6,000 languages are spoken worldwide, but people often disagree about whether two communities speak two dialects of the same language or two different languages.	The word <i>trivia</i> comes from the <i>trivium</i> , the three subjects studied as part of a Classical Greek or Roman education: grammar, rhetoric, and logic.	Sperm whales can stay under water for up to two hours.