

# Questions no one knows the answers to by Chris Anderson

## GRAMMAR

### 1. Write one question to each answer. Ask for the underlined part.

a) Who did you go on holiday with?

I went on holiday with my parents.

b) Where is the train station?

The train station is in front of the supermarket.

c) Why haven't you done your homework?

I haven't done my homework because I wasn't feeling well.

d) When is your company going to develop a new system?

My company is going to develop a new system next year.

e) What would you like to study in the future?

I would like to study medicine in the future.

f) Do you like watching comedies?

Yes, I really like watching comedies.

### 2. Study the following sentences and introductory phrases given below.

DIRECT QUESTION	INDIRECT QUESTION
<u>Where can I find</u> the nearest post office?	Can you tell me <u>where I can find</u> the nearest post office?
<u>Do you want to go</u> to the cinema tonight?	I wonder <u>if/whether you want to go</u> to the cinema tonight?

### INTRODUCTORY PHRASES:

I wonder...

Can you tell me...

Do you know...

Let me know...

I was wondering...

Explain...

Tell me...

I'm not sure...

Please tell me...

I would like to know...

Could you tell me...

Do you have any idea...

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**3. Rewrite questions from exercise 1 using various introductory phrases.**

- a) (Students' own ideas)
- b) .....
- c) .....
- d) .....
- e) .....
- f) .....

**4. Work in pairs. Ask each other indirect questions connected with given topics.**

- |           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| FUTURE    | WORK          |
| FREE TIME | TECHNOLOGY    |
| SHOPPING  | ENTERTAINMENT |
| EDUCATION | CHILDHOOD     |



VIDEO & DISCUSSION

**5. Discuss:**

- Can you give some examples of questions children ask?
- Do you know any questions which cannot be answered?

**6. Watch the video and write down three questions the speaker asks. (see script)**

- .....
- .....
- .....

*How would you answer these questions?*

**7. Imagine that you are a parent and your child asks you a lot of difficult questions. Try to answer the following questions.**

- Why are pizza boxes square when the pizza is round?
- Does the President have to pay taxes?
- Why do donuts have holes?
- Why is the sea salty?
- How does Santa Claus get down the chimney?



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Below you'll find an alternative final task. Instead of questions children would ask, you have some crazy job interview questions. Ask students to try to figure out the answer to these questions. Below you will see what the real/best answers are.

- **Imagine that you are asked the following questions during a job interview. How would you answer them?**
  1. Why are manhole covers round?
  2. How many times in one day do a clock's hands overlap?
  3. If you were shrunk to a size of a dime and put in a blender which starts in 60 seconds, how would you get out?
  4. What do you think of Garden Gnomes?
  5. Can you name 5 uses of a stapler without staples?

### Answers:

1. This makes it impossible to take out a manhole cover and throw it inside. This way people will not end up falling inside sewers, however, nothing stops people from pulling the manhole aside and creating a falling hazard.
2. The answer is 22, but it's more important to try to figure it out.
3. There is no good answer to this question. The best option is to try to damage the electric motor.
4. This question is designed to be funny and the answer should be fun as well but think about how your answer can relate to the position you applied for. For example, you could say that you admire their reliability as they often stay rooted to the same spot. If you were going for an engineering or construction role you could question whether they have the right tools for the job and so on.
5. 1) paper weight 2) door stop 3) hammer 4) nut cracker 5) stress reliever, etc.

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### VIDEO SCRIPT

On a typical day at school,  
endless hours are spent  
learning the answers to questions.  
But right now, we'll do the opposite.  
We're going to focus on questions where you can't learn the answers,  
because they're unknown.  
I used to puzzle about a lot of things as a boy.  
For example, what would it feel like  
to be a dog?  
Do fish feel pain? How about insects?  
Was the Big Bang just an accident?  
And is there a God?  
And if so, how are we so sure that it's a He and not a She?  
Why do so many innocent people and animals suffer terrible things?  
Is there really a plan for my life?  
Is the future yet to be written,  
or is it already written  
and we just can't see it? But then, do I have free will?  
Who am I, anyway? Am I just a biological machine?  
But then, why am I conscious?  
What is consciousness? Will robots become conscious one day?  
I mean, I kind of assumed  
that some day I would be told the answers to all these questions.  
I mean, someone must know, right?  
Huh. Guess what? No one knows.  
Most of those questions puzzle me more now than ever.  
But diving into them is exciting  
because it takes you to the edge of knowledge,  
and you never know what you'll find there.  
So, two questions to kick off this series,  
questions that no one on Earth knows the answer to ...  
Text: How many universes are there?  
Why can't we see evidence of alien life?