mystery science

Grades K-5
Mini-Lesson: “How many questions have kids sent to Mystery Science?”

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

VIDEO 1

Hi, it's Jay. One of my favorite things about being a Mystery Science Guide is the questions that kids send in. We've answered hundreds of your questions.

> *What are fireflies doing when they flash their lights? What do you think astronauts could do to feel less sick in space? How does mail get from one mailbox to another mailbox? Could dragons have been real? Could they have been something that used to live on Earth? How do polar bears walk on ice and snow without slipping? Do you think the story of Atlantis could be true? What do you think makes a cheetah so fast? What do you think the world's first computers were like?*

…and so much more. Someone named Leon has a question about those questions. So let's give Leon a call now.

> **[Video Call]**
>
> - Hi, Jay!
>
> - Hi, Leon!
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> - I have a question for you. How many questions have kids sent to Mystery Science?

That's a great question, but it's also a really big question. So I'm going to need some help. Let's give two more Mystery Guides a call: Danni and Esther.

DANNI: Hi, Jay.

JAY: Hi, Danni.

DANNI: Esther, it's great to see you.

ESTHER: You too, Danni. Hey, Jay, what's up?

JAY: Hi, Esther. I need some help with a question. Someone named Leon wants to know how many questions kids have sent Mystery Science.

DANNI: Oh, that's a big question.

JAY: Right? To answer this, we've gotta let everyone in on a secret. At the end of videos like this, you get to vote on one of the questions we pull from the question jar. But if we tried to put every question into one jar just like this, we'd need something bigger.

ESTHER: Like dump truck big.

DANNI: Or swimming pool big.

JAY: At the time of filming this, we have received 2,849,580 questions.

ESTHER: Wait, make that 2,849,581.

JAY: The number keeps going up because some days we get more than 700 new questions from kids.

ESTHER: That's 700 in ONE day.

DANNI: And we read them all from our digital jar online.

JAY: We want to answer every question, but that will take some time. So for now, we'll just share a few of the great questions that kids have sent. But before we go on, I'm curious. What's something that you're curious about?

VIDEO 2

JAY: With more than two million questions in our digital jar, I was thinking we could each share some of the different kinds of questions that we're curious about. Sound good?

DANNI: Definitely.

ESTHER: Let's do it. Jay, do you want to start?

JAY: Sure! I've noticed that lots of kids are curious about how things were invented. Like, how were sunglasses invented, or ballet, or self-driving cars? Some kids wonder how you could invent a new sport, or if someone could invent a time machine. I love to ask questions like that too. I'm always curious about how things are made or how things work. Like this great question: What's the fastest plane? My dad worked on helicopters, so I've been curious about how things fly since I was a kid. That's me. I'm pretending to build an airplane out of couch cushions. My dad filmed this. He asked me questions like, what are the wings made out of? Which parts help you land? I loved it. His questions made me even more curious about how planes fly. Playing is a great way to explore science, and I still do that.

DANNI: Is that a foam volcano? That's awesome. So, something I've loved since I was little is the ocean, and it looks like a lot of kids are curious about it too. Kids want to know how many teeth a shark has, what makes electric eels electric, and if there are sea creatures that no one has ever seen before. I wonder that too. One reason I love the ocean is because there's still so much to discover. It reminds me of this great question: Is the ocean harder to explore than space? I've never been to space, but I have explored the ocean, and it's definitely challenging. Like an astronaut, you need all kinds of special gear. I usually scuba dive, but I've also trained to pilot submersibles like this one. You actually use your feet to steer it.

JAY: Wait, Danni, your feet?

ESTHER: Steering with your feet sounds difficult.

DANNI: Yeah, it's tricky but fun. The deeper you go, though, the harder it gets to explore. The deep sea is a totally different world, and the creatures that live there can seem like aliens. How amazing is it that we share the same planet?

ESTHER: Danni, that is so cool. Now I want to go research all kinds of weird ocean creatures. I love to uncover strange but true nature stories, like this cave of giant crystals.

DANNI: That's real? That's incredible.

ESTHER: Wild, right? But some of the weirdest nature mysteries are things kids have noticed in their everyday lives. Questions like, what makes garbage smell bad? Why does popcorn pop? And, do animals have their own language? Here's another great one: Do flowers ever get sick and then get better again? I grow all kinds of flowers in my yard, and I'm always curious about their secret lives. The other day, my neighbor asked if my rhododendrons were new. They're not. These plants and I go way back. Years ago, they used to make sad little buds that never really bloomed. That told me that they weren't healthy. A plant can tell you a lot if you notice.

JAY: So what did you do?

ESTHER: I moved them to a different spot. Now they grow big, juicy flowers, and I know these plants are feeling good. The more you observe things around you, whether it's a flower or an insect or a cereal in a bowl, you'll find more to be curious about.

JAY: I love that we're all curious about different things.

DANNI: Me too. And hearing all these questions makes me want to explore even more.

ESTHER: So, in summary, kids have sent more than two million questions to Mystery Science. To help you come up with even more, we have an activity for you called the Curiosity Wheel. Give it a spin. It's a great way to find new things to wonder about.

JAY: That's all for this week's question. Thanks, Leon, for asking it.

DANNI: And thanks to all of you out there for sending questions, too. Keep them coming. We can't wait to see what you're curious about this year.