

# QUESTIONS QUESTIONS



A SCAVENGER HUNT TO HIGHLIGHT  
DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONING

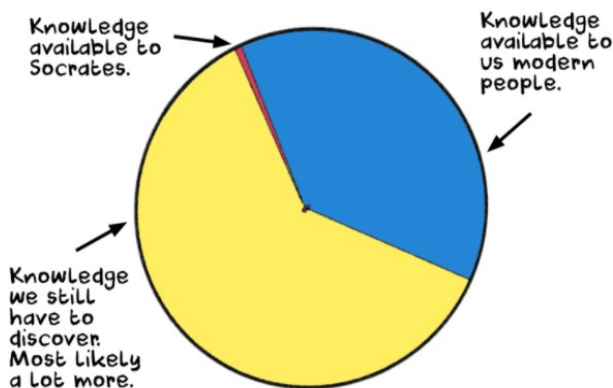
# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## WHAT IS THIS?

This scavenger hunt is one of several activities used to introduce a year-long theme – *Mysteries and Unanswered Questions* ~ to upper elementary students in a gifted pull-out program. Please read and watch the videos found [here](#) at *Big Ideas for Little Scholars* to learn more about how this activity might fit into the first week lesson plans for students in 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade gifted pull-out classes. *Time Needed: approximately an hour (8-10 min. directions; 20-30 min. for the hunt; 20-25 min. follow-up activity and discussion)*

## WHAT'S THE OBJECTIVE?

The main goal of the activity is to expose students to different types of *questioning* (not just questions), and reinforce the idea that questioning is a powerful tool in critical thinking. The activity also serves as an informal assessment of students' skill in distinguishing answerable questions from unanswerable ones and the resources and strategies that can be helpful in addressing both types.



Source: [HastyReader.com](http://HastyReader.com)

## WHAT ACTIVITIES LEAD INTO THIS ONE?

Prior to the scavenger hunt, students participate in *Question-Storming* with the graphic above as the focus. In small groups, students are directed to list questions related to the pie graph, writing down as many as they can in 3-5 minutes. The rules of Q-storming are similar to brainstorming in that participants are asked to write down all contributions, without judgment of the quality.

## HOW IS THIS SET UP?

1. Make one copy of page 4 for *each pair* of students participating in the scavenger hunt. Make 15 copies of page 5. Glue these to colored construction paper and laminate them if possible since page 5 serves as a "lift-the-flap" cover for each question (maybe enlist the help of a parent volunteer).
2. Print out pages 6-20. The 15 questions need to be taped, stapled or tacked to walls in various areas around the school. The placement of questions around the school can be random (*i.e., questions related to the school cafeteria do not necessarily need to be put up in or near the cafeteria*).
3. Place a copy of page 5 over each question, taping or stapling at the top so that it serves as as a cover page. Students will lift the cover page (*lift-the-flap style*) to read each question.
4. (Optional) Send out an all-school email alerting the staff of the activity and encourage them to send any students back to the classroom who are not adhering to campus norms. Think about the areas of the school that will be off-limits in the hunt (e.g., outdoor areas, the office, the clinic, the gym, etc.) so that you can advise students of these.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Students will work in pairs to complete the scavenger hunt, so assign each student a partner. Each pair needs a clipboard, a pencil, and a copy of page 4, the *Scavenger Hunt Recording Sheet*.

Direct students to read the directions and rules of the activity. Check for understanding. I would emphasize the hallway rules in your school. Have students write down the areas around the school that you have designated as *off limits*. Explain the word "debatable" if necessary. Then, dismiss the students to complete the hunt!

As students roam the school to find questions, walk around to monitor. When the first students return to the room, give them the directions below (you can write or display them on your board).

**Write the code letters in order on another page. Begin with the code for Question #1, then follow it with the code for Question #2, and so on. One partner can read the codes in order while the other one writes them. Work together to decipher the message.**

When the codes are written in order, they might look like this:

THEMOREILEARNTHELESSIREALIZEIKNOWSAIDSOCRATES

The message is: "*The more I learn, the less I realize I know,*" said Socrates.

## CONCLUSION:

Students will return to the classroom in waves, so you may want to have other activities for students to do so that all returning students have time to complete the decoding.

Display the questions on your screen, one by one, and discuss how students labeled them. It's possible they may have some labeled differently; encourage them to explain their thinking. Here are some additional question prompts you can use for further discussion:

**ANSWERABLE:** Where would you start in finding the answer to this question? How long might it take to get this information? Who would be interested in this information?

**DEBATABLE:** Who might bring up this question for debate? Do you have already have an opinion about this? Why? Is there a compromise that comes to mind? ("Green Hat" Thinking from 6-Hat Thinking)

**UNANSWERABLE:** Are all unanswered questions about the future? Are there things from the past that are still unanswered questions?

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KEY: A = Answerable, D = Debatable, U = Unanswerable (1) A (2) U (3) A (4) D (5) D (6) U (7) A (8) D (9) D (10) U (11) A (12) U (13) D (14) U (15) A

**NAMES:** \_\_\_\_\_

## SCAVENGER HUNT RECORDING SHEET

Work with your partner to find 15 questions posted around the school. When you find a question, lift the flap and read it. Determine which of the three column headings in the table below best describes the question. Write the question number and its code in the appropriate column. Question numbers *do not need to be in any specific order* on the table.

**RULES:**     *Talking is not allowed.*  
              *You may point and use hand gestures.*

AREAS OFF LIMITS:

The principal and all of the school staff are aware that we are doing this activity today and have been asked to serve as additional monitors to make sure you are following the rules. If you even whisper, you could be disqualified from the hunt.

When you have found all 15 questions and recorded the numbers and codes for each one, return to the classroom. **Walk** with purpose. Do not waste time. If you feel you recorded something incorrectly, don't go back to try to figure out where you went wrong. Just get all the codes down.

<b>ANSWERABLE</b> We don't know the answer, but we could get the answer with some time and effort.	<b>DEBATABLE</b> We could do some research to help form an opinion, but it would still be an opinion.	<b>UNANSWERABLE</b> We don't know the answer now, but we might be able to predict or pose a theory.
Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____
Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____
Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____
Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____
Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____	Question # _____ Code: _____



**On average,  
how many  
phone calls  
are answered  
in our school  
office each  
day?**

**Will cafeteria  
meals be served  
by robots within  
the next  
decade?**

**How many  
books in our  
library have  
information  
about *black  
holes*?**



**Should schools  
have indoor play  
areas so kids  
can run and  
play on rainy or  
cold days ?**

**Should students  
be required to  
take turns  
serving meals  
and cleaning in  
the school  
cafeteria?**

**Will schools  
still supply  
textbooks ten  
years from  
now?**

**How many fire  
extinguishers  
are there on our  
school campus?**

**Should schools  
purchase  
standing desks  
for kids?**

**Should  
zoos be  
banned?**

**In the next decade, will school bus drivers be replaced by self-driving school buses?**

**How much  
would it cost to  
replace all of  
the desks and  
chairs in our  
classroom?**



**How many  
students in  
kindergarten at  
our school this  
year will go on  
to graduate  
college?**

**What is the  
most important  
school subject,  
the one that  
would help  
students the  
most in the  
future?**

**What happened  
to Amelia  
Earhart, the  
pilot whose  
airplane  
disappeared?**

**How many  
students in  
our school  
have more  
than one pet?**