Asking How Questions

Practice asking and answering how questions.

1. Discuss

Discuss the questions and decide which number is best for each.

a. 51,000

b. 331,900,000

c. 8,891

d. 3,767

e. 6,190

f. 50

g. 8,468,000

h. 13

Photo by Karolina Grabowska

1. _____ How many stripes does the USA flag have?

2. _____ How many stars does the USA flag have?

3. _____ How long is the border between the USA and Canada in kilometers?

4. _____ How many people live in the USA?

5. _____ How many people live in New York City?

6. _____ How high is the highest mountain in the USA in meters?

7. _____ How long is the longest river in the USA in kilometers?

8. _____ How many people visit Disneyland every day?

2. Reading

Read some interesting facts about the USA and check your answers.

The USA is a country on the North American continent that is made up of fifty states. The national flag has thirteen stripes and fifty white stars on a blue background. The thirteen stripes refer to the thirteen British colonies that declared independence from the kingdom of Great Britain in 1776 and the fifty stars refer to the fifty states.

The USA shares borders with Canada and Mexico. The border shared with Canada is the longest international border in the world. It is 8,891 kilometers long.

The USA is the third most populated country in the world after China and India and has a population of 332 million. The largest city in the USA is New York with about 8.46 million residents.

The highest mountain in the USA is Mount Denali. It is 6,190 meters high and it is located in Alaska. The longest river in the USA is the Missouri River and it is 3,767 kilometers long. It flows through seven states.

Disneyland saw 80% fewer visitors in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but now, Disneyland has an average of 51,000 visitors every day.

3. How Questions

A. Read the information about constructing questions with 'how' expressions .

1. **Object questions** are the most common types of questions in English.

    They ask when, where, why, and how someone does something.

How expression	Auxiliary verb	Subject	Main verb
a. How often	do	you	do exercise?
b. How many sports	does	he	play?

2. **Subject questions** ask who or which person or object does something.

How expression	Main verb	
a. Who	is	the President of the USA?
b. How many people	live	in the USA?

3. In addition, when using the verb 'to be' to ask about nouns and adjectives, the auxiliary verb 'do' is not required in the present simple and past simple question forms.

How expression	Main verb	
a. How old	is	he?

B. Complete the questions with the best 'how' expression then match them to their functions.

☐ How far	☐ How old	☐ How long
☐ How many	☐ How much	☐ How often

1. _____ .... does a Disneyland ticket cost?   a. To ask about duration or length.
2. _____ .... states are there in the USA?   b. To ask about amount or price.
3. _____ .... are Presidential elections held?   c. To ask about quantity.
4. _____ .... is the USA?   d. To ask about frequency.
5. _____ .... does it take to travel from New York to LA?   e. To ask about distance.
6. _____ .... is it from New York to LA?   f. To ask about age.

C. Complete the answers (a-f) and match them with the 'how' questions above.

☐ 6.5	☐ 83	☐ 50
☐ 3,936	☐ 246	☐ 4

a. _____ .... states   d. _____ .... years old

b. _____ .... hours by plane   e. _____ .... kilometers by plane

c. _____ every .... years   f. _____ $ .... a day

4. Trivia Quiz

Form how questions to match the trivia answers and guess which answer you think is correct.

1. _____

   An octopus has _____ hearts. a. 1 b. 2 c. 3

2. _____

   A full moon occurs once every _____ days. a. 29.5 b. 30 c. 30.5

3. _____

   A liter of water weighs _____ grams. a. 450 b. 500 c. 1000

4. _____

   The Colosseum is _____ years old. a. 950 b. 1950 c. 2950

5. _____

   London is _____ kilometers from Tokyo. a. 6,553 b. 9,553 c. 11,553

6. _____

   There are _____ individual squares on a chess board. a. 36 b. 49 c. 64

7. _____

   There are _____ calories in a McDonald's Big Mac. a. 550 b. 650 c. 750

8. _____

   The Amazon River is _____ kilometers long. a. 640 b. 4,600 c. 6,400

5. Conversation

Ask your partner how questions to find out the following. Ask follow-up questions to continue the conversation.

Which of you...

1. has the oldest parents?
2. has the most siblings?
3. has had their phone the longest?
4. looks at their phone most frequently?
5. spent the most money yesterday?

6. lives the furthest from English class?
7. drinks the most coffee each day?
8. eats vegetables more frequently?
9. has visited the most countries?
10. has the most money in their wallet?

Asking How Questions

Level:		Elementary: A2 Pre-Intermediate: A2+
Updated:		Feb 24, 2023
Language:	Function:	Asking and answering questions. Describing people, places, and things.
	Forms:	Adjectives. Modal and auxiliary verbs. Present tense.
Teaching time:		120 minutes.
Overview:		Students learn about and practice asking and answering 'how' questions through a discussion based activity about the USA and a series of communicative exercises.

1. DISCUSS

In pairs, students discuss and guess the answer to the trivia questions about the USA, writing their answers in the spaces provided. There is no need to check answers as they are explained in the next activity.

2. READING

A. In pairs, students take turns reading the information about the USA and check their answers in Part 1. Answer any questions that arise.

1. h. 13
2. f. 50
3. c. 8,891
4. b. 331,900,000
5. g. 8,468,000
6. e. 6,190
7. d. 3,767
8. a. 51,000

3. HOW QUESTIONS

A. In pairs or as a class, students read about constructing object and subject questions with 'how'. Answer any questions that arise. You might choose to board examples and discuss the differences between the two types of questions. Most questions in English are object questions – we want to know about the receiver of the action. These questions follow the QUASM formula: Question word – Auxiliary verb – Subject – Main verb. However, sometimes we want to ask about the subject. We don't know the person or thing who performed the action, and we want to find out. This type of question is called a subject question. Subject questions do NOT use the auxiliary verbs do, does, and did.

B. Check students' understanding of the words: duration, length, amount, price, quantity, and frequency.

Individually or in pairs, students complete the questions with the correct 'how' expressions then match them with their functions. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. b. How much
2. c. How many
3. d. How often
4. f. How old
5. a. How long
6. e. How far

C. Individually or in pairs, students match the answers with the questions from the previous exercise. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers by reading the answers to the class.

a. 2. There are **50** states in the USA.
b. 4. It takes **6.5** hours to travel from New York to LA by plane.
c. 2. Presidential elections are held every **4** years.
d. 3. The USA is **246** years old.
e. 6. New York is **3,936** kilometers from LA by plane.
f. 1. A Disneyland ticket costs $**83** a day.

4. QUIZ

In pairs, students write 'how' questions to match the trivia answers. Students then discuss the questions and try to guess which answer is correct. Monitor and assist if necessary. Ensure that the 'how' questions are constructed correctly. Read the correct answers to the class. Which student pair answered the most correctly?

1. c. How many hearts does an octopus have?
2. a. How often does a full moon occur?
3. c. How much does a liter of water weigh?
4. b. How old is the Colosseum?
5. b. How far is London from Tokyo?/How many kilometers is London from Tokyo?
6. c. How many individual squares are there on a chess board?
7. a. How many calories are there in a McDonald's Big Mac?
8. c. How long is the Amazon River?

5. CONVERSATION

In pairs, students ask each other how questions to find out the information. Encourage students to ask follow-up questions to continue the conversation. As an extended activity, students can present the information they learned about their partner to the class.