

Quizmaster's sheet - General Knowledge Questions - Page 1- Each question carries 10 points, a bonus offered across carries 5 points.

1/ What is a 'Wolf Number'?

- A statistical system of measuring sun spot activity developed by Randolph Woolf at the Zurich Observatory, taking into account sunspot groups as well as individual spots.

2/ What is a 'Foucault Pendulum'?

- It is an apparatus first used by Foucault to demonstrate the Earth's rotary motion. It consists of a heavy ball suspended by a very long wire. When set swinging the Earth's rotation will cause the pendulum to move slowly from its initial plane of motion.

3/ What is a 'Scotch Mount'?

- It is a simple form of camera drive for tracking celestial objects in an equatorial plane. Usually made from timber with brass nuts and bolts used as the hand operated drive mechanism.

4/ What are 'Alfvén Waves'?

- An Alfvén wave is like a wave travelling along a stretched string. The magnetic field line tension is analogous to string tension, and when the magnetic field is "plucked" by a perturbation, the disturbance propagates along the field line. This corresponds to wavelengths reaching an Earth radius - this long-scale coherence, coupled with the notion that the wave is carried by ions and is capable of transporting a significant energy flux towards the earth, indicates that Alfvén waves may play a significant role in magnetosphere-ionosphere coupling.

First suggested by Hannes Alfvén in 1942; observed by experiment in 1949.

5/ Who was the Greek god of sleep?

- Hypnos

6/ How many Natural Moons does Mercury have?

- None

7/ Which British industry was Nationalized in 1948?

- The Railways

8/ What is a "Tolles"?

- An eyepiece constructed from a single cylinder of glass

9/ What gas is formed when a Hydrogen Bomb explodes?

- Helium

10/ Where is the Sea of Nectar?

- On the Moon

General Knowledge Questions - Page 2 - Each question carries 10 points, a bonus offered across carries 5 points.

11/ What are (or were) 'China 14', 'Raduga 14' and 'Himawari 3'?

- Artificial Earth satellites.

12/ What is the collective name for the 'Minor Planets'?

- The Asteroids.

13/ What is 'Mel 8'?

- From the Melotte Catalogue it is an open cluster in Cassiopeia, perhaps better known as M103.

Bonus: When was the catalogue published?

14/ What is Dichotomy?

- The phase of the Moon or one of the inferior planets when it appears only half illuminated, and the terminator is a straight line.

15/ Which way round does the suns image appear when projected on to a card?

- North top – South bottom – West left – East right

16/ How many Time Zones are there?

- 24

17/ How far apart are the Time Zones in degrees on the Earth's surface?

- 15 Degrees

18/ What did BF Lyot do in 1938?

- Devised an 'Interference Filter' which is particularly useful in Solar work for observing prominences and disc features.

20/ Where would you find a 'Fossa'?

- On a non-gaseous planetary body, it is a long, narrow and shallow depression showing on the surface.