

Feeling dumb all of a sudden

Written by Deb Egenberger
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If you drive 40 miles to the next town at 40 miles per hour and return at 20 miles per hour, what is your average speed for the round trip?

In which U.S. state capital city does water boil at the lowest temperature?

Words such as “faculty” or “troupe” belong to what special category of nouns that names groups composed of members?

I used to think straight A's in high school and graduating from college with honors made me a pretty smart woman.

Then I sat through a high school quiz bowl competition.

It's a combination of “Jeopardy” and “Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?”

Six students each from two opposing schools play individually, buzzing in quickly to answer obscure questions. If the response is correct, the kids collaborate as a team for bonus points.

Although self-control was sometimes difficult, I did manage to resist the urge to raise my hand or blurt out answers.

Maybe that's because I didn't know as many answers as I thought I should and fear of failure kept me quiet.

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I sat there listening intently as these teenage brainiacs found answers to such things as: What is the smallest whole number less than one times 10 to the 4th power that includes the letter A?

Huh?

Quiz Bowl is a fantastic academic competition that broadens knowledge and encourages confidence. What the kids don't already know, they learn from listening.

As a matter of fact, one of the answers has already come in handy for me as allergy season hits full swing:

There is considerable clinical evidence that pressing a finger strongly to the region immediately below the nose can inhibit what reflex reaction?

For those who won't sleep until they get them, here are the answers to the above questions: 26.7 mph, Santa Fe, collective nouns, one thousand and sneezing.