



"Earth In Jeopardy"

Original Concept for a weekly ½-hour (22-minute) kids show aimed
at grades 6-8 (Middle School)

Created by Tom Stohlgren [Copyright TXu 2-183-946]

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TV SERIES BIBLE



Original Concept

Original Concept for a weekly ½-hour (22-minute) kids show aimed at grades 6-8 (Middle School)

but watched by the entire family.



Format

Similar to Jeopardy in the USA, but with two young-adult hosts (smart, comical). In homage to Alex Trebek (July 22, 1940 – November 8, 2020)



Mission

The show's **mission** is to: entertain first and educate second.



Contestants

We envision six contestants, with all of the six contestants in the local/easy round and three for the global/difficult round, with the best player continuing to the next episode or final playoffs.

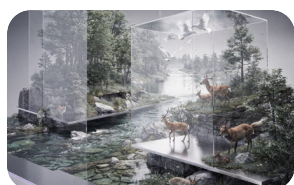
Prizes are provided by sponsors. The Grand Prizes are provided by sponsors and the show, but all contestants win something fun, educational, or cool.



Moderators

We envision two moderators for the show: one male and one female. They are young adults (20s or 30s), bright and witty University graduates, and charismatic communicators.

They are role models who are dressed in the latest styles. It's every kid's dream to become one of the show's moderators.



Theme

The **theme** represents a crossover of life science, environmental protection, and awareness.



Potential "Extras" & Production Notes



Tablet Computers

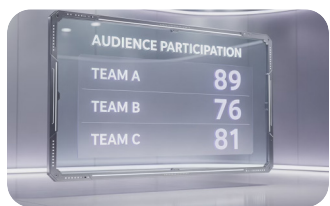
Contestants answer directly on tablet computers (from a sponsor?), with monitors in the control room.



Audience Participation

Apps or devices for smartphones (or at home), allowing the audience or viewing audience a chance to answer the questions in an interactive style.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/blog/audience-interaction-tools-ds00/>



Audience Scores

Audience scores or "viewing audience answers" can be incorporated into the show.



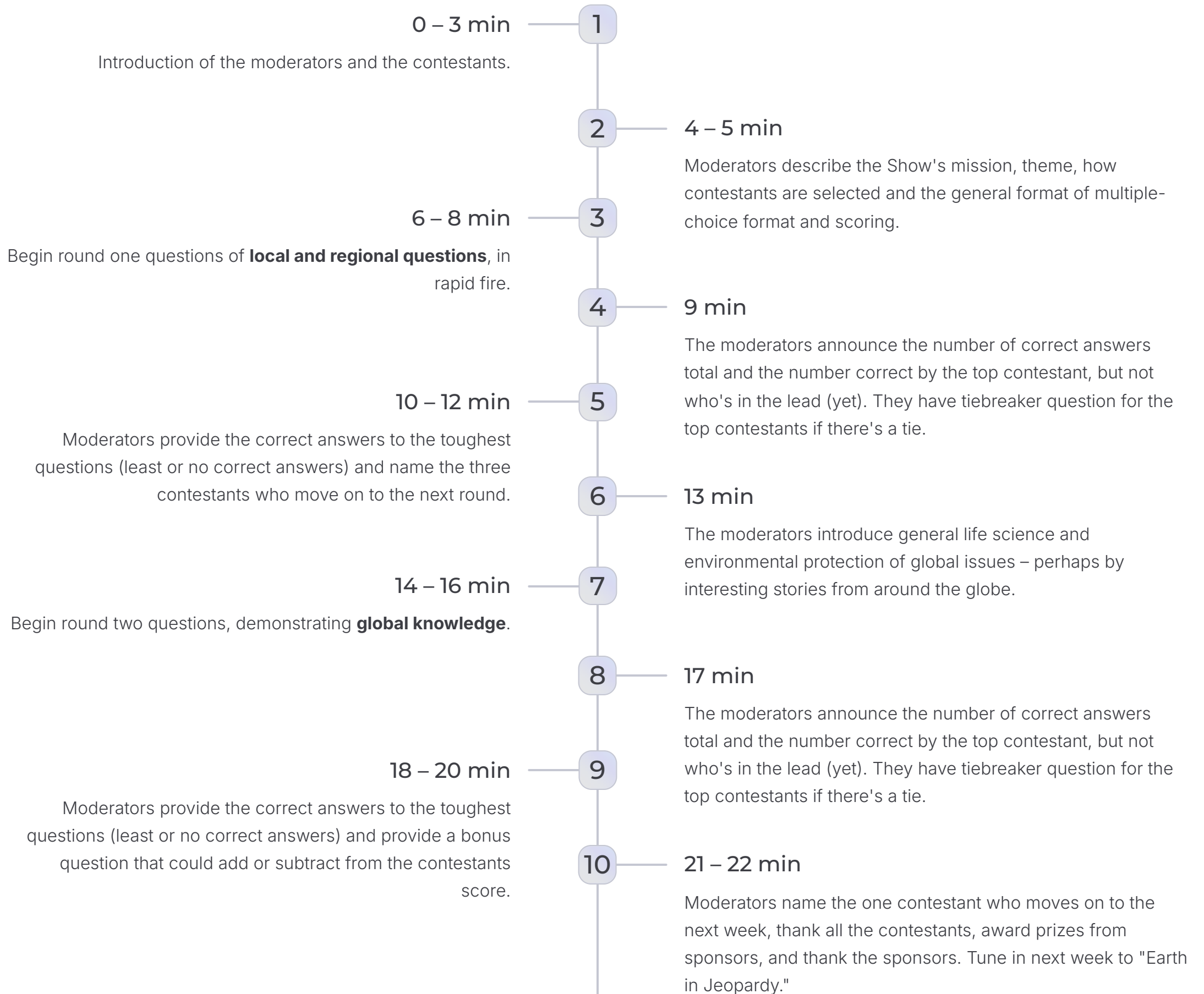
Reducing Costs

To save on studio time and technical staff, multiple shows can be filmed in one day, reducing "audience" participation for 2-3 shows in the morning and 2-3 shows in the afternoon, creating a 9 to 13-day "shooting season" for one year of shows.



Suggested 22-Minute Schedule

The **structure** of how the show could play out over the run of a season.



Question Format

All questions are in multiple-choice format.

At least one of the possible answers is humorous to keep the audience engaged and to make it a little easier for the contestants.

Round 1

Local & Regional Questions — All six contestants participate in rapid-fire format.

Round 2

Global Knowledge Questions — Top three contestants advance to demonstrate global environmental awareness.

Bonus Round

Funny or scary questions — A bonus question that could add or subtract from the contestants' score.



Example Local Round Questions

Question 1 — Invasive Species

Show a photo of an American Bullfrog in Singapore.



Ask, is this species:

- a. Native to Singapore
- b. Native to Southeast Asia, but not Singapore
- **c. Native to North America and invasive in Singapore ✓**
- d. Found only on the planet Mars.

Question 2 — Species Name

What would you name this species?

- a. Asian toad
- **b. American Bullfrog ✓**
- c. Singapore Brown Frog
- d. I-Toad-You-So

American bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) are highly destructive invasive species that severely impact native ecosystems through predation, competition, and disease transmission. As voracious, opportunistic feeders, they consume diverse prey, reducing native amphibian, reptile, and small mammal populations. They also carry chytrid fungus.

Question 3 — Air Quality

Air quality standards in Casper, Wyoming, and Honolulu, Hawaii, are often the best in the nation. What value of the Air Quality Index tells us that:

- a. when it's a negative number,
- **b. when it's below 50 ✓**
- c. when it's below 100, or
- d. When your eyes don't sting.

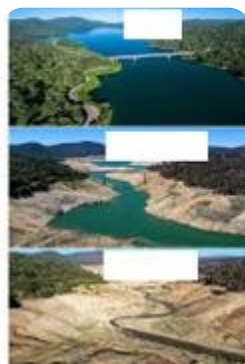
- In the United States, 46% of people live in an area that received a failing grade for at least one air pollutant. This amounts to roughly 156 million Americans breathing unhealthy air, with 42.5 million people living in areas with failing grades for all three air pollution measures.

Question 4 — Megadroughts

A prolonged, multidecadal drought—typically lasting 20 years or more—is called a megadrought. How many megadroughts occurred in North America between 800 AD and 1600 AD?

- a. 1
- b. 2
- **c. 4 ✓**
- d. 8

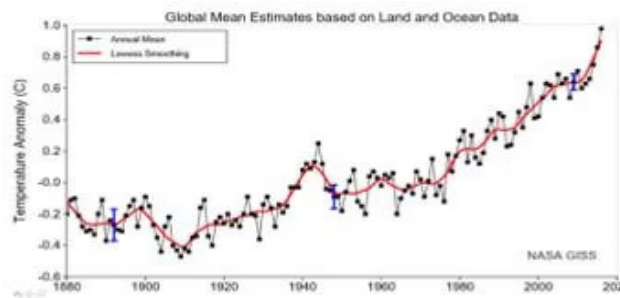
We're experiencing one now: Since 2000, the region (from Montana to Mexico) has seen soil moisture deficits worse than most ancient megadroughts. Water is the "Transparent gold of the West."



Example Regional to Global Round Questions

Question 1 — Global Temperature

Since 1850, the mean annual temperature of the globe has increased by approximately:

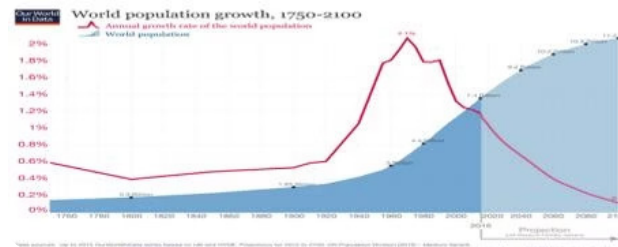


- **a. 1.1 to 1.35 degree C ✓**
- b. 2 to 2.5 degrees C
- c. 3 to 3,5 degrees C
- d. 4 to 4.5 degrees C

Correct answer is a. 1.1 to 1.35 degree C. Moderators – but things could get worse! Since 1982 rising more than three times as fast as the historical average, at 0.36 $\frac{^{\circ}\text{F}}{\text{decade}}$ (0.20 $\frac{^{\circ}\text{C}}{\text{decade}}$) per decade.

Question 2 — World Population

The world's population in 2018 is closest to how many billion people?



- a. 6.3 billion people
- b. 7.3 billion people
- **c. 8.3 billion people ✓**
- d. 9.3 billion people

The moderators show that as of early 2026, the current estimated world population is over 8.3 billion people. The global population, which surpassed 8 billion on November 15, 2022, is growing by roughly 83 million people per year, with projections suggesting it could reach over 9 billion by 2037.

Question 3 — Greenland Ice Sheet

How much faster is the Greenland ice sheet melting compared to 30 years ago?

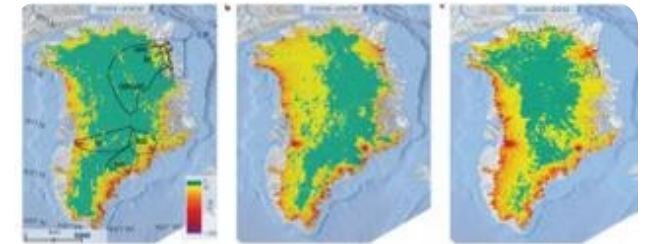


Figure 1. Changes in surface elevation detected using ICESat, altimetry and DEMM data. (Temperature Scales: Left: 1.0 to 0.0 m; Middle: 1.0 to 0.0 m; Right: 1.0 to 0.0 m)

- a. Slower than 30 years ago.
- b. Same rate as 30 years ago.
- c. Three times faster than 30 years ago.
- **d. Seven times faster than 30 years ago. ✓**

It has experienced net-annual mass loss for 29 consecutive years, with an average of roughly 264-400 billion tons lost annually since 2002, significantly contributing to global sea-level rise (NASA SVS .gov).

Bonus Round — Funny or Scary Questions

Question 1 — Africanized Bees

We show a photo of a bee swarm. When a swarm of 70,000 Africanized honeybees is chasing you in Central or North America, do you...



- a. Jump in the swimming pool 5 m away?
- **b. Run for 40 m as fast as you can? ✓**
- c. Call for a bee-control expert?
- d. Surrender to your fate?

Correct Answer is b: you run 40 m as fast as you can. If you jump into the swimming pool, they'll just wait for you to come up.

Question 2 — Burmese Pythons

Burmese pythons are invading Everglades National Park in Florida, United States.



Tens of thousands live in Southern Florida now. They can eat deer. How many eggs were once found in a 22-foot-long Burmese python?

- a. No eggs, but 13 live babies.
- b. 30 eggs?
- c. 60 eggs?
- **d. Over 90 eggs. ✓**

Correct Answer: 90 eggs. The moderators describe the animals that the adult pythons are eating.

Question 3 — Brown Tree Snake, Guam

How many species of birds went extinct on the island of Guam after the brown tree snake invaded in the early 1950s?



- a. 6 bird species
- **b. 10 bird species ✓**
- c. 18 bird species
- d. Every bird on the island.

Correct Answer: 10 species

The introduced brown treesnake (*Boiga irregularis*) has caused ecological devastation on Guam, causing the extinction of 10 of 13 native forest bird species and multiple lizard species, as well as the disappearance of the Pacific sheath-tailed bat. Without natural predators, snake populations skyrocketed to roughly 2 million, decimating native species.



Resources & Closing Vision

There are dozens of online resources for possible questions – but to make them entertaining is an "art" and a "science."

Penn State Sustainability Resources

<https://cgs.la.psu.edu/teaching-resources/k-12-resources-1/teaching-sustainability-resources-for-educators>

MEEA Environmental Quizzes

<https://www.meea.org/quizzes.html>

These are just a sample of questions. Other environmental problems can be discussed, including: Ozone Depletion, Greenhouse Effect and Global Warming; Desertification, Deforestation, Loss of Biodiversity, and Disposal of Wastes. However, the moderators always end each show with positive stories and suggestions about what you can do to make the world a better, more sustainable place.

Why here? Why now? Every major city in America has local environmental issues concerning air and water quality, loss of biodiversity, effects of harmful invasive species from other countries, and the transformation to renewable sources of energy. Awareness and caring are making all the difference in the world. However, there is still much to be done to support sustainability locally, regionally, and globally. That's where this show can help – and be wildly entertaining and sought after in other markets.



Author's Bio

Tom Stohlgren, Ph.D.

Tom Stohlgren, Ph.D., is a Senior Research Scientist Emeritus at the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory, where he has held an Affiliate Faculty position from 1991 to 2020. Tom was recognized as one of the top ten most productive scientists in the world in the field of biological invasions. He has published over 200 scientific papers and a textbook on methods of assessing plant diversity.

He received a bachelor's degree in forestry from the University of California, Berkeley; a master's degree in biology from California State University, Fresno; and a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of California, Davis. Tom enjoyed working for the U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center, and the Department of the Interior for 35 years.

Stohlgren has won several national awards, including two Partners in Conservation Awards and the Meritorious Service Award. In 2009, Tom was recognized as one of the top ten "Invasive Species Scientists" in the world. In September 2012, Stohlgren received the top honor of "Resident Distinguished Ecologist" by a vote of faculty and graduate students at Colorado State University.

He taught graduate classes on philosophy of science, plant ecology, invasion ecology, and technical writing. Because of his expertise in biological invasions, he is invited around the globe to lecture on harmful invasive plants, animals, and diseases.



"Earth In Jeopardy"

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