

Turkeys & Chickens Trivia

This activity includes 30 questions on Turkeys & Chickens. The questions are accompanied by the answers and additional information for discussion.

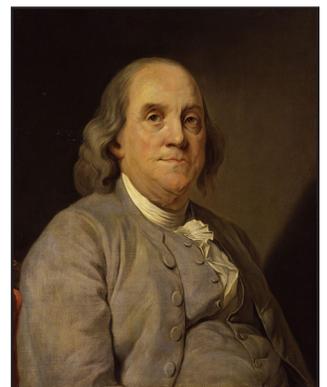
There are several activity possibilities:

- For a group activity, read and discuss the trivia questions and answers. Also print the [picture pages](#) to pass around during the activity.
- For independent activities, print and distribute fill-in-the-blank copies of the [questions without the answers](#). Also available are the [questions with the answers](#).
- Post one or more of the trivia questions on your bulletin board every day or so throughout the month using this [special sign](#).



Trivia Questions and Answers

1. What is the largest game bird in North America?
Answer: The wild turkey. These birds can weigh around 20 pounds and have a wingspan of up to five feet.
2. Chickens are a subspecies of jungle fowl from what continent?
Answer: Asia. Domesticated chickens are descendants of the red jungle fowl, native to southern Asia.
3. Which founding father once called the wild turkey “a respectable bird”?
Answer: Benjamin Franklin. Although he never *really* proposed the wild turkey as our national bird, a letter to his daughter indicated he approved of turkeys much more than bald eagles.
4. Are chickens flightless birds?
Answer: No. They can fly a short distance, enough to soar over a fence or make it into a tree’s lower branches.
5. What was the first bird to have its genome sequenced?
Answer: Chickens. The scientific breakthrough came in 2004.
6. True or false: Chickens will only lay eggs if given a “light cue”?
Answer: True. Photoreceptors in a gland near their eyes are triggered by sunlight, and this begins the egg-laying process.



7. Ancient turkeys were first domesticated by people in what region?
Answer: Mesoamerica (Central America/Mexico in modern day). They were then brought back to Europe by explorers.
8. During which decade was the popular “Chicken Dance” introduced?
Answer: The 1980s. The dance was originally called the “Duck Dance,” but performers had only a chicken costume, so it became the Chicken Dance instead!
9. Will a fresh chicken egg sink or float?
Answer: Sink. Stale eggs float, making this a good freshness test for store-bought eggs.
10. What is the term for a juvenile turkey?
Answer: A poult. Turkey poults hatch fully feathered and with open eyes.
11. Chicken eggs contain lutein, which helps prevent what eye condition?
Answer: Cataracts. It also helps prevent macular degeneration.
12. In what country is *pavochon*, a turkey stuffed with mashed plantains, a traditional Thanksgiving dish?
Answer: Puerto Rico. The name *pavochon* refers to a turkey cooked in the manner of a roasted pig.
13. Where does chicken rank in terms of the meats most consumed by the average American?
Answer: Number one. Chicken consumption increases yearly and has been first since the 1960s.
14. What author known for the *Little House* series also found a groundbreaking way to get chicken eggs in the winter?
Answer: Laura Ingalls Wilder. She observed how hens’ production was tied to their diet, allowing her chickens to lay eggs during the winter.
15. What sweet and spicy Chinese takeout chicken dish was invented in the United States by Taiwanese immigrants?
Answer: General Tso’s chicken. The dish was invented in the 1970s and named for a general from the Qing dynasty.
16. Turkeys are which of the following: herbivore, carnivore, or omnivore?
Answer: Omnivore. Turkeys are known to forage for nuts, insects, fruits, and they will even eat crabs if they can find them!
17. What does the Italian dish *chicken cacciatore* translate to?
Answer: “Hunter’s chicken.” The dish developed in central Italy during the Renaissance.
18. True or false: You can tell a turkey’s age by its droppings.
Answer: True. Not only that, but male and female droppings have distinct shapes.



19. What is the only U.S. state that does not have a turkey population?

Answer: Alaska. Turkeys are either native or have been introduced to every other state, including Hawaii.

20. Can turkeys swim?

Answer: Yes. Although they will do so only if necessary, they can swim by kicking and spreading out their tails.

21. What is the term for a female turkey?

Answer: A hen. Males are called toms or sometimes gobblers.

22. How many chicken breeds are there worldwide?

Answer: Nobody knows. Estimates range from 53 large breeds (American Poultry Association) to 500 fancy breeds (University of London).

23. Chickens have been linked through DNA to what giant extinct reptiles?

Answer: Dinosaurs. The link between these very different creatures is thought to be *Archaeopteryx*, a small, bird-like dinosaur.



24. What was the first reason chickens were domesticated?

Answer: Entertainment. It is thought that chicken fights were the first purpose for the domesticated chicken, around 8,000 years ago.

25. About how long does it take a chicken egg to hatch?

Answer: 21 days. The chicks are born covered in down and develop feathers within a month.

26. Are chickens social or solitary animals?

Answer: Social. Flocks have a social hierarchy called a pecking order.

27. Tryptophan, an amino acid found in turkey, is thought to make people what?

Answer: Sleepy/drowsy. However, the level of tryptophan in turkey is not enough to actually cause drowsiness.

28. How many species of turkey exist?

Answer: Two. The wild turkey and ocellated turkey (found in Central America) are the only two.

29. Which are larger: male or female turkeys?

Answer: Males. They can weigh anywhere from 11 to 24 pounds, while females are usually under 12 pounds.

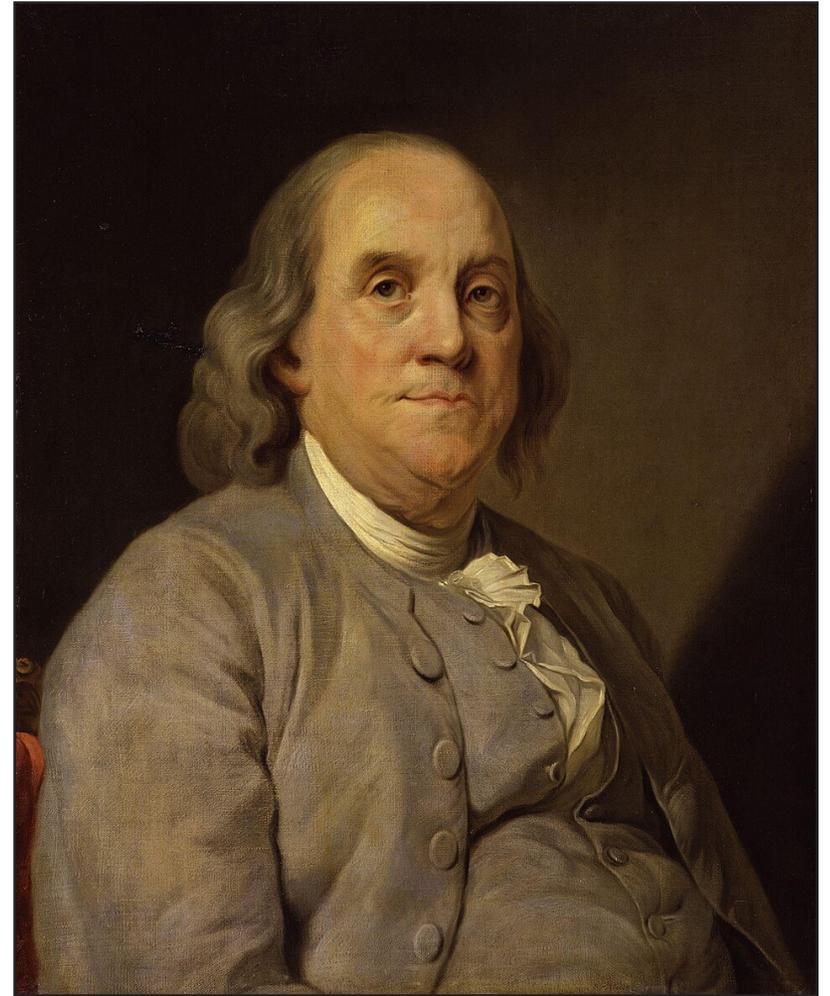
30. Turkeys are most closely related to which other bird?

Answer: Pheasants. Many members of this family are actually native to Eurasia.





Wild Turkey



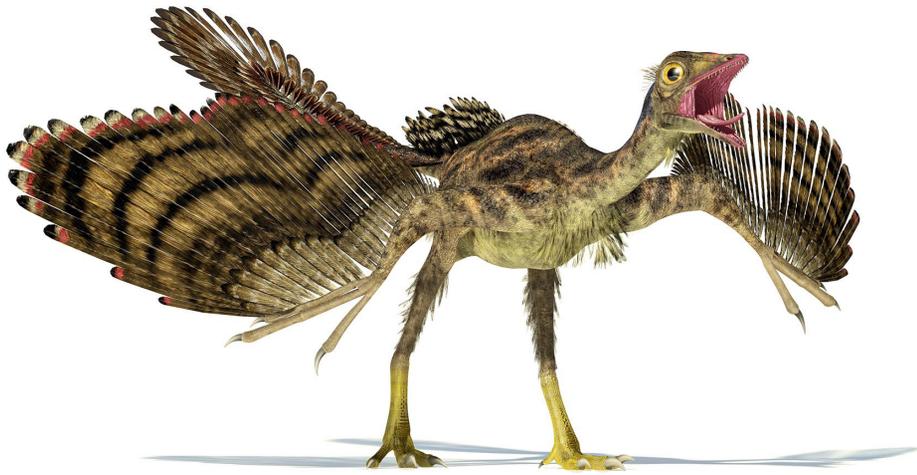
Benjamin Franklin



Poult



Laura Ingalls Wilder



Archaeopteryx



Pheasant

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(Questions Only)

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