**Q&A**

**Why are humans so curious?**

To the human brain, new information is like food. A recent study at the University of Reading found that participants’ curiosity to find out how a magic trick worked triggered activity in the same area of their brains as hunger. The most curious were even prepared to risk a mild electric shock for the chance to have the magic explained. So humans, it seems, are hardwired to be curious. This instinct would have been a potential lifesaver for our ancestors, as the person who dared poke their head around the corner may have found new food or water, or spotted a predator approaching.

**Is it possible to fly around the equator non-stop and stay in daylight?**

Yes – but only in theory. The Earth is roughly 25,000 miles in circumference at the equator, and completes one rotation every 24 hours. This means the sun effectively zooms across the face of the Earth at the equator at over 1,000 mph. So you’d have to travel at least this fast to stay in daylight. But that’s around 1.5 times the speed of sound – and twice as fast as a passenger airliner. A supersonic jet could do it, but in-flight refuelling and speed restrictions over land would reduce speed to well below what’s needed. Not even Concorde managed it. In 1992, it achieved its fastest circumnavigation of the Earth, and still took over 33 hours.