

Reference SHELF Scavenger Hunt

CHOOSE ANY OR ALL OF THE CHALLENGES BELOW - NO GOOGLING! JUST GRAB A PENCIL AND YOUR REFERENCE BOOKS.

1. 🔍 FIND A WORD

Find a word you've heard before but couldn't define. Look it up in a dictionary. What does it mean? Can you use it correctly in a sentence?

2. 🖋️ FIND A BETTER WORD

Choose an ordinary word you use frequently. Find it in a thesaurus and write down three alternatives. Which one would make your writing stronger? Why?

3. 🌐 PICK A PLACE

Choose a country you've never visited. Find it in an atlas. Find its capital, a neighboring country, and a nearby body of water. What else did you notice?

4. 📖 OPEN AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

Find an encyclopedia entry that interests you. Write down one fact you didn't know. What does that fact make you wonder?

5. 🗺️ MAP MYSTERY

Find something on a map that you don't recognize—a symbol, abbreviation, boundary, scale, compass rose, or something else. Can you figure out what it means?

6. 🔍 BE AN INDEX DETECTIVE

Choose a topic in a nonfiction book and use the index to find every place it appears. Which page looks the most interesting?

7. 🐦 TAKE IT OUTSIDE

Grab a field guide and identify something you've actually seen outside—a bird, plant, insect, tree, rock, etc. What clues helped you identify it?

8. 🧠 THE RESEARCH TOOL CHALLENGE

Choose three questions below. Before you look, decide which reference book would be your best starting point—and why.

- What does *meticulous* mean?
- What is another word for *beautiful*?
- Where is the Strait of Gibraltar?
- Why does the moon have phases?
- Who was Florence Nightingale?
- What kind of bird keeps visiting your backyard?

9. 🧐 THE “REALLY?” CHALLENGE

Find a fact in one of your reference books that makes you say, “Really?” Now see if you can find the same information in another source. What did you discover?

10. ⌚ THE FIVE-MINUTE CHALLENGE

Set a timer for five minutes. Choose a reference book, open it to a random page, and find:

- ☐ A fact you didn't know
- ☐ A word you've never seen before
- ☐ A picture, chart, map, or illustration
- ☐ A name you've never heard before
- ☐ Something that makes you want to keep reading

11. 😬 THE WEIRDEST THING ON THE SHELF

Find the strangest, funniest, most surprising, or most fascinating thing you can discover on your reference shelf. What did you find?

12. ★ YOUR OWN QUESTION

Think of something you've genuinely wondered about. Can you find the answer using a reference book before you search online?

My question: _____

My answer: _____

My book: _____

