

Trick Question or Stupid Question?

April 25, 2021

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 - ▶ **Trick Question**
 - ▶ **Stupid Question**

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4. When I do, for each question, we will vote:
 - ▶ **Trick Question**
 - ▶ **Stupid Question**
5. We will do this several times- there will be FIVE SETS of questions.

Trick Question or Stupid Question? PART I

1. What is the least common birthday in America?
2. What US state has the easternmost point in America?
3. What is the least common first names for a U.S. President as of 2021?
4. A bird's stomach can hold ten worms. How many worms can a bird eat on an empty stomach?

Answer to PART I, Q1

What is the least common birthday in America?

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CORRECT ANS Feb 29.

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VOTE Trick or Stupid?

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MISC Second Least: Dec 25.

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CORRECT ANS Feb 29.

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MISC Second Least: Dec 25.

MISC Most common: Sept 16. 9 months after Holiday Season.

Answer to PART I, Q2

What US state has the easternmost point in America?

Answer to PART I, Q2

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COMMON ANS Maine (Quoddy Head Maine).

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What US state has the easternmost point in America?

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CORRECT ANS Alaska (Cape Wrangell Alaska). The Prime Meridian is just east of Alaska's Islands so the easternmost point in America is in Alaska.

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My Opinion Who cares where some stupid line is. I STILL say MAINE!

Answer to PART I, Q3

What is the least common first name for a U.S. President as of 2021?

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COMMON ANS The following presidents have a unique first name among presidents: Thomas Jefferson, Martin Van Buren, Zachery Taylor, Millard Fillmore, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses Grant, Rutherford Hayes, Chester Author, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, Joe Biden.

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CORRECT ANS All of the names that no president had are tied.

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Prez Trivia On Next Slide.

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6. When I am sworn in as president, I will be sworn in as **Bill** instead of **William**.

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6. When I am sworn in as president, I will be sworn in as **Bill** instead of **William**.
7. I look forward to a second **Lincoln** presidency when **Lincoln Doney** runs in 2040.

Answer to PART I, Q4

A bird's stomach can hold 10 worms. How many worms can a bird eat on an empty stomach?

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VOTE Trick or Stupid?

OBJECTION Once the bird eats ϵ of the worm his stomach is no longer empty. So the question may be ill defined.

Trick Question or Stupid Question? PART II

1. An expert on tracking animals notices one day that there are bear tracks and rabbit tracks converging. He can estimate that they met at 6:00PM with a margin of error of 17 seconds. Hence they must have been there at the same time. He also notices that from the spot they met only rabbit tracks can be seen leaving that point. There are some bear bones in the area. **HOW CAN A RABBIT EAT A BEAR FOR DINNER?**
2. The following quote is from the back of a book that I dusted off and took off my shelf recently: **FORTRAN is one of the oldest high-level languages and remains the premier language for writing code for science and engineering applications.** What year was the book written? If you come within five years then you get it right.

Answer to PART II, Q1

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HISTORY When I first saw this I thought it was hilarious, but I was young at the time.

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COMMON ANS Fortran has not been *the premier language for writing code for science and engineering applications* for a very long time, and you had to dust it off, so early 1970's.

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MY 2CENTS The back of the book is incorrect.

Trick Question or Stupid Question? PART III

1. What are the next two numbers in the sequence below?

2, 4, 6, 30, 32, 34, 36, 40, 42, 44, 46, 50, 52, 54, 56, 60, 62, 64, ...

2. You have 6 blue socks, 8 white socks, and 10 black socks in a drawer. You take them out of the drawer randomly, one at a time. How many do you need to take out in order to ensure that you have a pair?
3. What is the degree of $(x - a)(x - b)(x - c) \cdots (x - z)$?

Answer to PART III, Q1

What are the next two numbers in the sequence below?

2, 4, 6, 30, 32, 34, 36, 40, 42, 44, 46, 50, 52, 54, 56, 60, 62, 64, ...

Answer to PART III, Q1

What are the next two numbers in the sequence below?

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COMMON ANS ???

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COMMON ANS ???

CORRECT ANS The sequence is all numbers that, when written in English, do not have an e in them. Answer is 66 and 2000

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What are the next two numbers in the sequence below?

2, 4, 6, 30, 32, 34, 36, 40, 42, 44, 46, 50, 52, 54, 56, 60, 62, 64, ...

COMMON ANS ???

CORRECT ANS The sequence is all numbers that, when written in English, do not have an e in them. Answer is 66 and 2000

VOTE Trick or Stupid

Answer to PART III, Q2

You have 6 blue socks, 8 white socks, and 10 black socks in a drawer. You take them out of the drawer randomly, one at a time. How many do you need to take out in order to ensure that you have a pair?

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CORRECT ANS 0. Note that the poly is

$$(x - a)(x - b) \cdots (x - w)(x - x)(x - y)(x - z) = 0$$

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One comment **Very interesting trick question, brings up all kinds of issues of type safety and lack of specificity in mathematics education.**

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Someone who does not like being tricked told me Degree is 26. Different types-of-variables. The 'x' in $(x - a)$ is of a different type then the second x in $(x - x)$.

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He would call it a stupid question.

I would call him a sore loser.

Trick Question or Stupid Question? PART IV

1. TRUE or FALSE:
If the powerset of A has 5 elts then A is infinite.
2. The universe of discourse is the natural numbers, which we will assume does not include 0. How do you compliment the set $\{1, 3, 5, \dots\}$?
3. What is the next letter in the following sequence?
W,I,T,N,L,I,T,F

Trick Question or Stupid Question? PART V

The following are two real conversations. For each one: (1) Is the examiner correct? (2) Where and when do you think this conversation took place?

Conversation 1:

Examiner: What is the definition of a circle?

Student: The set of points equidistant from a given point.

Examiner: Wrong! It is the set of *all* points equidistant from a given point.

Conversation 2:

Examiner: What is the definition of a circle?

Student: It is the set of all points equidistant from a given point.

Examiner: Wrong! You must say the distance is nonzero.

Answers to PART V, Q1

T or F: If the powerset of the set A has 5 elts then A is ∞ .

Answers to PART V, Q1

T or F: If the powerset of the set A has 5 elts then A is ∞ .

COMMON ANS F since the powerset of A cannot be five.

Answers to PART V, Q1

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COMMENTARY I did an experiment with this question.

Answers to PART V, Q1

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One year I put this on a Discrete Math exam as a

T-F-No-Explanation-Needed.

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T-F, if T give short proof, if F give counterexample.

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Hypothesis More would get second version right.

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VOTE Did more people get it right if they had to explain? Y or N?

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WHAT HAPPENED People did TERRIBLE on this question both times. Even the honors section.

Answers to PART IV, Q2

The universe of discourse is the natural numbers, which we will assume does not include 0. How do you compliment the set $\{1, 3, 5, \dots\}$?

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COMMON ANS $\{2, 4, 6, \dots, \}$

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COMMON ANS $\{2, 4, 6, \dots, \}$

CORRECT ANS

This question has multiple answers:

Answers to PART IV, Q2

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CORRECT ANS

This question has multiple answers:

Set, you look lovely today!

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This question has multiple answers:

Set, you look lovely today!

All your elements are odd which is very cool!

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COMMON ANS $\{2, 4, 6, \dots, \}$

CORRECT ANS

This question has multiple answers:

Set, you look lovely today!

All your elements are odd which is very cool!

Notice that I asked **compliment** not **complement**.

VOTE Trick or Stupid?

Answers to PART IV, Q3

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Nobody every got it right so I thought I would try making it easier.

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The following are two real conversations. For each one: (1) Is the examiner correct? (2) Where and when do you think this conversation took place?

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Comment On Next Slide.

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What struck me was that the fans yelled racist taunts at black players in 2020.

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The academic in me is thinking

This would be a good topic for a History PhD