

An Insurance Man Math Logic Puzzle

The following is a really neat puzzle, because although originally it seems that there is not enough information given, and in fact really weird information is given, once you begin to look at it logically, the answer just “falls out”.

An Insurance man rings the doorbell of a lady’s house. When the lady answers, he asks her if she could answer some questions for him. She, grudgingly, replies “Ah, I guess so”.

So he asks her, “How many children does she have?”. She replies, “Three”. He then asks her, “What are their ages?”. She smiles, and refuses to tell.

He asks her a hint. She says, “Multiply their three ages and you get 36 (using exact, whole numbers for their ages)”.

He thinks for a while, then asks, for another hint. She grins and states, “Add their ages and you get the number on the house next door”.

He goes next door, and then returns and asks the lady for one more hint. “All right”, she says, “the oldest plays the piano”.

With that information, the Insurance man had his answer. Can you solve it?

Answer next week.

Answer to last weeks puzzles

The first of last week’s puzzle is below:

- (1) Take 5 toothpicks and form 2 joined equal equilateral triangles. Now take 7 toothpicks and form 3 joined equal equilateral triangles. Pretty easy eh? Now take 6 toothpicks and form 4 joined equal equilateral triangles!

The trick here, is that the first two parts are very easily done, merely by laying the toothpicks on a desk and very quickly, the two answers pictured on the right (top and middle) appear.

However, the third part is a head scratcher because you have to use fewer toothpicks, but yet get more equal equilateral triangles! And of course, you have been set up because you have the other two answers by LAYING THE TOOTHPICKS FLAT ON A DESK. Hence, your mind is locked in two dimensions.

The solution, is to look in a different direction, the 3rd dimension, and the answer of a tetrahedron, pictured on the right, (bottom) appears.

Use 5 toothpicks and make 2, joined equal, equilateral triangles.



Use 7 toothpicks and make 3, joined, equal, equilateral triangles.



Use only 6 toothpicks and make 4, joined, equal, equilateral triangles.



The next two toothpick puzzles appear on the right. The “theme” of the puzzles was to “look outside the box”, or look in a different direction.

The answer to number (2) is to look at the toothpicks as representing something other than numbers, or Roman Numerals. By moving one of the vertical toothpicks from the numerator, turning it sideways, to make it horizontal, and place it on top of the two right hand vertical toothpicks, you get a very familiar grade school formula:

$$\frac{22}{7} = \pi$$

The “other direction”, in this case, is to look at other symbols.

Now, once you are open to looking at “other symbols”, the answer to number (3) sort of falls out. It helps to sort of look at the right first, and say to yourself, “Self, what are some of the symbols that result in an answer of one?”. Ahaha!! Take the right hand vertical toothpick from the left hand side, turn it sideways to make it horizontal, and place it over top of the left hand side. What you end up with is another grade school equation:

$$\sqrt{1} = 1$$

Here are the answers in “toothpick” form:

On both of these puzzles, move only one toothpick and leave a true equality. Your answer must have an equals sign, not something like this: = Also, your answers can be any symbol, number, roman numeral, etc...



Finally, the last question was to remove six letters and leave a common word. No letters have to be switched in any other order.

BSAINXLEATNTEARS

Again, we must think differently. After trying all sorts of canceling out 6 letters and finding no solution, try reading the question as remove “six letters” and leave a common word. In other words, remove the words: “six letters”, as I do below:

~~B~~~~S~~~~A~~~~I~~~~N~~~~X~~~~L~~~~E~~~~A~~~~T~~~~N~~~~T~~~~E~~~~A~~~~R~~~~S~~

And of course, what you are left with is:

BANANA

A very common word!!

Hopefully, you now have an idea of “looking outside the box”, and will add it into your toolbox. You do have a toolbox don’t you?