

## MERRY CHRISTMAS BRAIN TEASERS

Normally, I give you this month off and send you some jokes, or cute pictures, or something.

Not this month.

This year, we're going to make our brains sweat with some heavy exercise. I went online and gathered some neat "public domain" brain work to keep us all in shape during the Holidays....

### RIDDLES-WARMUP

1) What is once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?

2) What word can be read forward, backward, or upside down and can still be read from left to right?

3) Samuel was out for a walk when it started to rain. He didn't have a hat or an umbrella, and his clothes got soaked, but not a single hair on his head got wet. How did that happen?

4) Whoever makes it, tells it not. Whoever takes it, knows it not. And whoever knows it, wants it not. What is it?

### RIDDLES-STEP IT UP A NOTCH

5) How many times can you subtract the number 10 from 100?

6) A bicycle wheel has 64 spokes. How many spaces are there between the spokes?

7) Brad stared through the dirty, soot-smearred window on the 22nd floor of the office tower. Overcome with depression, he slid the window open and jumped through it. It was a sheer drop outside the building to the ground. Miraculously, after he landed he was completely unhurt. Since there was nothing to cushion his fall or slow his descent, how could he have survived the fall?

8) A black dog stands in the middle of an intersection in a town painted black. None of the street

lights are working due to a power failure. A car with two broken headlights drives towards the dog, but turns in time to avoid hitting him. How could the driver have seen the dog in time?

9) Four men sat down to play. They played all night till break of day. They played for gold and not for fun. With separate scores for everyone. When they had come to square accounts. They all had made quite fair amounts. Can you the paradox explain. If no one lost, how all could gain?

10) What is it, the more you take the more you leave behind?

### RIDDLES-HARDER

11) What row of numbers comes next in this series?

1

11

21

1211

111221

312211

13112221

12) If your sock drawer has 6 black socks, 4 brown socks, 8 white socks, and 2 tan socks, how many socks would you have to pull out in the dark to be sure you had a matching pair?

13) What English word retains the same pronunciation, even after you take away four of its five letters?

14) There once was an evil wizard. He took 3 women from their homes and turned them into rose bushes that looked exactly alike. He put them in his garden. One of the woman had a husband and children and begged the wizard to let her see them. He agreed. At night, he brought the woman to her house. In the morning he came and took her home. One day the husband decided to go rescue her. So he snuck into the wizard's garden. He

looked and looked at the 3 identical rose bushes trying to figure out which could be his wife. Suddenly, he knew the answer and he took his wife home. How did he know which rose bush was his wife?

15) A man was found murdered on Sunday morning. His wife immediately called the police. The police questioned the wife and staff and got these alibis: The Wife said she was sleeping. The Cook was cooking breakfast. The Gardener was picking vegetables. The Maid was getting the mail. The Butler was cleaning the closet. The police instantly arrested the murderer. Who did it and how did they know?

16) Because cigars cannot be entirely smoked, a hobo who collects cigar butts can make a cigar to smoke out of every 5 butts that he finds. Today, he has collected 25 cigar butts. How many cigars will he be able to smoke?

17) With pointed fangs it sits in wait,

With piercing force its doles out fate,

Over bloodless victims proclaiming its might,

Eternally joining in a single bite.

What am I?

18) A boy was at a carnival and went to a booth where a man said to the boy, "If I write your exact weight on this piece of paper then you have to give me \$50, but if I cannot, I will pay you \$50."

The boy looked around and saw no scale so he agreed, thinking no matter what the carny writes he'll just say he weighs more or less. In the end the boy ended up paying the man \$50. How did the man win the bet?

19) Two grandmothers, with their two granddaughters,

Two husbands, with their two

## CHRISTMAS QUIZ....CONT.

wives,

Two fathers, with their two daughters,

Two mothers, with their two sons,

Two maidens, with their two mothers,

Two sisters, with their two brothers,

Yet only six in all lie buried here,

All born legitimate, from incest clear.

Explain how this may be.

**20)** A man is found lying dead,  
face down in the middle of the desert.

He is wearing a backpack.

His ribs are crushed.

The post mortem shows that he  
died, suddenly, 2 months ago.

Yet no one has crossed the desert  
for 3 months.

What happened?

**21)** A horse travels the same  
distance every day.

Oddly, two of its legs travel 30  
miles each day and the other two legs  
travel nearly 31 miles.

It would seem that two of the  
horse's legs must be one mile ahead of  
the other two legs, but of course this  
can't be true.

Since the horse is normal, how is  
this situation possible?

**22)** Sabrina gave Samantha as  
many dollars as Samantha started out  
with.

Samantha then gave Sabrina back  
as much as Sabrina had left.

Sabrina then gave Samantha as  
back as many dollars as Samantha had  
left, which left Sabrina broke and gave  
Samantha a total of \$80.00.

How much did Sabrina and  
Samantha have at the beginning of their  
exchange?

**23)** A horse is tied to a 15 ft. rope  
and there is a bail of hay 25 ft. away  
from him. Yet the horse is able to eat

from the bale of hay. How is this pos-  
sible?

**24)** Paul is 20 years old in 1980,  
but only 15 years old in 1985. How is  
this possible?

**25)** I have four wings, but cannot  
fly, I never laugh and never cry; On the  
same spot I'm always found, toiling away  
with little sound. What am I?

**26)** What's black when you get it,  
Red when you use it, And white when  
you're all through with it?

**27)** Something very extraordinary  
happened on the 6th of May, 1978 at  
thirty-four minutes past noon. What was  
it?

**28)** A woman shoots her husband.  
Then she holds him under water for over  
5 minutes. Finally, she hangs him. But, 5  
minutes later they both go out together  
and enjoy a wonderful dinner together.

How can this be?

**29)** In a contest, four fruits (an  
apple, a banana, an orange, and a pear)  
have been placed in four closed boxes  
(one fruit per box). People may guess  
which fruit is in which box. 123 people  
participate in the contest.

When the boxes are opened, it  
turns out that 43 people have guessed  
none of the fruits correctly, 39 people  
have guessed one fruit correctly, and 31  
people have guessed two fruits correctly.

The Question: How many people  
have guessed three fruits correctly, and  
how many people have guessed four  
fruits correctly?

**30)** An old man wanted to leave all  
of his money to one of his three sons, but  
he didn't know which one he should give  
it to.

He gave each of them a few coins

and told them to buy something that  
would be able to fill their living room.

The first man bought straw, but  
there was not enough to fill the room.

The second bought some sticks,  
but they still did not fill the room.

The third man bought two things  
that filled the room, so he obtained his  
father's fortune. What were the two  
things that the man bought?

**EXTRA CREDIT:** Since this  
is an engineering newsletter, we have  
to finish this year's quiz off with a math  
question:

Use the numbers 1, 3, 4, and 6  
to equal 24. You can use the following  
mathematical functions, but only once  
each: + (plus), - (minus), / (divide),  
and x (multiply.)

In order to make sure we're all  
on the same page, I will give you an  
easy example:

1, 2, 3, and 4 can be combined  
to equal 4.

$$((1 + 2) / 3) * 4 = 4$$

-I added parentheses to the  
example above to illustrate the order in  
which the calculations are completed.

Note: This is a tough one. Don't  
give up too early.....

Well, that's it for the year. If you  
are anything like me, you are hoping  
that next year is an improvement on  
this one.

Best wishes to all for a Merry  
Christmas and a Happy New Year!

See you in 2010.

Oops, almost forgot-answers to  
the questions can be found at:  
[www.dabrownengineering.com/answers](http://www.dabrownengineering.com/answers)  
Just in case there were a couple you  
didn't get!



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