



INTENSA WORL



mensa international photographer of the year - entries close at the end of july! p04

what's in the MWJ this month...

- * Mensa International's Workplace initiative is thriving; have you joined it yet? Stay in touch with what's happening globally; page 2 has all the information you need to join in!
- * This year might be your year for a photography win, but the closing date for the International Photographer of the Year competition is coming up! All the info you need is on p04.
- * A grateful British Mensan shares her pandemic experiences within Mensa as she toured NZ (p.5)
- * What do you give away without intending to? A new study has revealed that body language can be heard as well as seen. Have a look at this new research from the University of Connecticut. (p6)
- * Irish Mensan Shabnam Vasisht features as this month's Member Profile (p07),
- * A scary thought are you mixing with psychopaths? On p08, our Features Editor brings us some interesting research on whether all psychopaths are extremely intelligent!
- * Find out whether high IQ people are more prone to anxiety and other mental health disorders (p09),
- * Is 6 feet far enough for social distancing? Our science guru provides the answer (p10)
- * If you have ever wondered what the financial side of Mensa International look like, read what our Treasurer says. (p3)
- * And on a lighter note, Therese's Teasers are here for all you crypticpuzzle-lovers on p12!

Kate Nacard, Editor

workplace news

Join Mensa's community on Workplace!

Our newly launched member community is live and growing, with new members signing up daily. There are great conversations and sharing, SIGs and members are welcome to join and to start groups of their own. Did we mention that the platform comes with its own chat app? This means you can easily connect with all the volunteers and team members that you need to organise and collaborate for the society.

Are you a Direct International Member on Easter Island, wondering if there is anyone else out there? Or an Emerging National Mensa looking for help and reason to keep growing? With Workplace, not only can you see, you can also experience what being a part of a globally connected society is all about.

To get access, simply visit www. mensa.org/user/vanity-email to obtain your personal email and then use it to register at mensainternational.workplace.com. That is how we restrict access to members only.

National Mensas too are welcome to make official groups on Workplace and be in contact with every member all at once; posting announcements, discussions, files and forms that you need to keep your society growing. The best part is, access to the platform is automatically determined by active membership, as verified by having a member e-mail alias from the international website. This ensures that your society benefits members who are actively contributing, leading to a more sustained growth.

Tan Kee Aun, Chairman, Malaysian Mensa Society Mensa International Workplace Co-Admin

The Mensa World Journal Online...

Don't forget you can download the full-colour *Mensa World Journal* each month from www.mensa.org! Every issue since January 2013 (when the MWJ replaced the Mensa International Journal) is there for you to look at.

Also, every issue of the MIJ from January 1999 till December 2012 is there for you to either download or read online. KN - Ed

Cover photo courtesy Marcus Lompa on Unsplash.com

from the excomm...

Mensa finances are most likely not as interesting as socialising and making new friends, but they are quite important from the organisation's perspective. As the International Treasurer, I would like to raise Mensa members' awareness of what the financial side of our organisation looks like.

Mensa International has two main income streams: the component paid by National Mensas, and trademark income. Additionally, there is a small stream of income which comes from Direct International Members and testing. The component is like tax, in that it is paid quarterly at the rate of 7% on membership fees and at the rate of 2% on trademark income. Based on 2019 predictions it is expected that our turnover will be around 470,000 GBP.

You are probably interested in how this money is spent, aren't you? Expenses vary from year to year but do not exceed budgeted amounts. Based on 2019 predictions, the biggest cost is running the Mensa International Office (25%), followed by the organisation of the IBD meeting (20%) and name protection (19%). It is worth mentioning that in 2019 we spent around 30,000 GBP on Mensa International Elections. That cost will be significantly lower in the future years as Mensa International no longer reimburses National Mensas for printing election materials and

the frequency of the elections has changed from every two years to every three years. The list of the biggest expense group is closed with website maintenance, development, and hosting (5%). I strongly encourage you to use our website as it offers you a lot and it is constantly evolving.

Lastly, I would like to mention that as of 31 December 2019, Mensa International had 551,485 GBP in

bank accounts. If you are interested in more details, please go to our website, and check the agenda or minutes of the last IBD or check the financial statements which were attached to this very journal not long ago. Alternatively, you could attend the IBD meeting and see finance discussion in the flesh – sometimes they can be exciting! Hopefully, I haven't bored you too much, I will provide a further update when the

financial statements for the year ended on 31 December 2019 are approved. Thank you for now and please stay in touch with your family and Mensa members in these difficult times as they need you.

Jacek Cywinski Treasurer, Mensa International treasurer-mil@mensa.org

MENSA INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

The art of photography is an area where Mensans from over fifty countries with different languages, customs and traditions can converge with a single, visual language! Use your creativity, skills, and technical expertise to produce your entry in this year's Photocup competition. The theme is Shyness.

If your Mensa chapter is holding a national competition to select entries for the International phase, a set of the rules and closing dates will be available from your national office or board. (Contact your National Office for these.) The top three national entries are to be sent to mensaworldphotocup@gmail.com by August 20, 2020.

Direct International Members and members from countries not holding national contests are eligible to enter the International competition by sending two entries only to photocup2020@gmail.com by July 31.

medical research

People with high levels of neuroticism can be more avoidant in daily life as a coping mechanism, and this can commonly manifest into an addiction to the internet and social media.

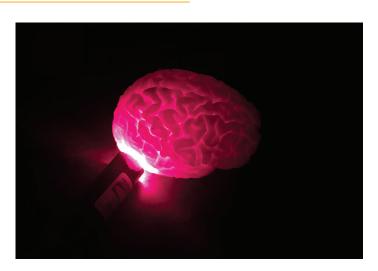


Image credited to Purdue University/Brian Bentz

Quality of life is an ancient concept dating back to at least Aristotle, although the philosopher equated a good life or doing tasks well with happiness, rather than what we refer to today as quality of life. There is much talk of mental health and wellbeing today and the purported problems of neuroticism and addictive behaviour. Nowhere does this seem to be more sharply in relief than when we talk of internet addiction and how this might be modulated by the neurotic type personality and be detrimental to quality of life.

Writing in the *International Journal* of Behavioural and Healthcare Research, a team from Iran discusses exactly how so-called internet addiction can have an effect on people of a neurotic disposition and their quality of life. Fundamentally, their study shows that neuroticism as a personality trait can lead to avoidance of everyday life as a coping mechanism and this is commonly

manifest in dependency and addiction to the internet and perhaps more obviously online social media.

"Our results indicate that those [students] who score high in neuroticism are more prone to move towards addictive behaviour such as internet addiction," the team writes. This corroborates earlier independent work and also reinforces the idea that neuroticism is usually accompanied by an avoidance of face-to-face communication with other people. The internet and online social media lend themselves heavily to this behaviour. The team adds that overuse of the technology required to engage with the internet—computers and mobile phones, for instance—often does not lend itself to appropriate posture nor physical activity and in many cases leads to avoidable repetitive strain injury, all of which can have a negative impact on quality of life.

Neurosciencenews.com

MENSA WORLD JOURNAL JULY 2020 04

mensa help during Covid-19

"So I would like

to say that it's

Mensa member-

ship that we got

safely home..."

thanks to my

Dear Editor,

I wanted to share my experience of how Mensa membership has helped me during the Pandemic.

I have been a Mensa member for many years and have always enjoyed travelling. I read an article about some of the inter-

national aspects of Mensa in the magazine, so when my daughter and I found ourselves in New Zealand on holiday (no friends or family there), I was so glad of my membership.

I had taken the information about the international group with me when we flew out in early March and as it became clear that the Coronavirus was developing worldwide, I realised we might get stuck in New Zealand with no place to stay.

Following a couple of emails to Mensa UK and then New Zealand, I was allowed to join a New Zealand Mensa Facebook group and posted our potential predicament - being stuck in New Zealand during their lockdown. I asked if anyone could help.

I am extremely grateful to one Member (actually an American living in Auckland, New Zealand, as he offered to put us up if necessary.

In the end we did not need to

stay with him, but without his kindness we might never have made it home when we did (at the end of March). We managed to get tickets on the last Singapore Airlines flight home, but as New Zealand was in lockdown, it was not possible to use taxis, buses or trains to get to the airport.

The message was you could only go to the airport if you had a ticket and were taken by friends or family. I asked Dory if he would be kind enough to take us to the airport and despite not really knowing us at all, he willingly agreed, taking the risk of

meeting with us and sharing his car.

Were it not for him we might still be stuck in New Zealand - as thousands of British people still are - and whilst they have had fewer deaths there is still no place like home.

So I would like to say that it's thanks to my Mensa membership that we got safely home to where our family and friends are. It's good to know that Mensa has members in many countries and they may come to your rescue if necessary.

We have since been able to send a little something to Dory as a thank you and we are all still well.

Janet Hutchinson British Mensa

(Published with kind permission of Brian Page, Ed. *Mensa Magazine*, British Mensa)

Writing for the MWJ

The Mensa World Journal is your magazine and it would be wonderful if you were to share your thoughts with the rest of the Mensa world.

By and large, most of the articles are written by Mensans - for Mensans - and the opportunity is there for you to be one of these authors.

Topics can cover reports of Mensa events you've attended, your achievements, unusual hobbies and interests, or your successes.

Please limit your article length to 600 words and send it to me at mwjeditor@mensa.org.
Please also include a hires photo to accompany the article, your National Mensa and your membership number.

Has Mensa helped you in any way during the Covid-19 crisis? If so, we'd love to hear from you! Send your experiences to me at mwjeditor@mensa.org

Body language can also be heard

When people move their hands and arms while using their voices, listeners are able to hear it. Even without seeing the messenger, we can pick up each other's body language. Wim Pouw of the Donders Institute has published this finding in PNAS this week.

Most people gesture while talking. From a small wrist movement to complete sign language involving arms, hands and fingers. This form of non-verbal communication supports what someone says, and, in some cases, it is even indispensable in order to explain something properly.

This is difficult if you cannot see the other person, you'd think. But even during phone calls, or when shouting from another room, we often talk with our hands. And that is not pointless at all, according to the study conducted by Wim Pouw and his colleagues from the University of Connecticut: your gestures resonate in your voice.

Louder and higher

It's all about acoustics: the pitch and volume of a voice change together with the movement of arms and hands. "That change is very subtle with a wrist movement," says Pouw. "It is less subtle with an arm movement. The pitch jumps up slightly whenever a movement slows down."

According to Pouw, there are two different causes for these acoustic differences. One of the causes is the

creation of vibrations. The forces involved in a movement cause vibrations in your body. Through the connective tissue that holds your body together, vibrations end up in your lungs, affecting the pressure in your lungs.

The second cause is muscle tension around your lungs that is needed to maintain balance. We do not merely use our arm muscles when we move our arms. "When starting the process of stopping your arm from moving, for example, other muscles are suddenly addressed to prevent your body from falling over. These muscles that maintain balance include muscles around your lungs."

Unconsciously hearing an arm movement

As part of this study, Pouw instructed three men and three women to make a monotone sound, such as 'aaaa', while using all kinds of different hand and arm movements.

After that, 30 subjects were asked to listen to the recordings. Not only did they guess which movements were made, but, in many cases, they were also able to mimic these movements simultaneously.

It is easy to measure differences in pitch and volume. It is remarkable that listeners unconsciously identify at what point movement causes these differences. "The subjects not only picked up the speed of the movement, but they also heard the location of the movement."

Emphasize words by hand

Hence, a voice is more than just an abstract collection of sounds, according to the researcher, "When you hear a voice, you literally hear aspects of a person's entire body."

These findings go against the assumption that gestures basically only serve to depict or point out something. "It contributes to the understanding that there is a closer relationship between spoken language and gestures. Hand gestures may have been created to support the voice, to emphasize words, for example."

Google Home

The insights contribute to knowledge about ourselves and to knowledge about speech recognition. Think of systems such as Google Home and Siri. "When developing speech recognition, we have to take movement into account. Think of gestures, but also of someone running while talking, for example."

By means of information about changes in voice, the way how systems can interpret meanings and weights of words can be improved. Or the other way around: noises in a voice produced by a speaker while running, does not affect the meaning of a word. "We can teach these kinds of systems what they should or should not filter out."

Neurosciencenews.com

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Member Profile

by Susan Jensen

Shabnam Vasisht, a member of Irish Mensa for twenty-five years, is a multi-talented artist who has achieved success in different mediums.

Born on St Patrick's Day in Delhi, Shabnam worked as a commercial artist in India. At age twenty-five, she travelled overland from England to India and back. When she came to Ireland she liked it so much she never left. She re-trained as a dressdesigner, and ran her own business for over two decades, using the waste materials from her trade to make art. She has had many exhibitions, including one in which an Irish prose-poet responded to her images.

Shabnam has held many significant posts within Irish Mensa, including Administrator, Public Relations
Officer, Committee Secretary and

Schools Testing Officer. She also designed all the promotional material for Irish Mensa – roller banners, posters, letterheads, test booklet covers, logos for Annual Gatherings etc.

In 2017, she was awarded the David Stewart trophy in recognition of her 'outstanding contribution to Irish Mensa'.

A published author, Shabnam's books blend memoir with history.

She inherited her interest in military history from her parents. Her father was an Indian Army officer and her mother acquired a Master's degree in History in 1943. Shabnam recorded her mother's interesting life as a Christian married to a high-caste Hindu in five books, each ending at a natural break in the story.

Starting with 'Anu, The Raj Years', the books are available on Amazon. Her sixth and latest book is nearly sold out. A dive into British India history, 'Digging up the Raj' (published Feb. 2020) was co-funded and launched by her local

County Council. The book details the exploits of Irish personnel, buried

in a Dublin cemetery, who were posted to India but also served in France, Mesopotamia and Turkey during the 19th and early 20th



centuries.

Shabnam loves to travel and has visited over thirty countries. She hopes to continue travelling, with New York City at the top of her bucket list.



Shabnam (pictured above), and at left her design "Remembrance"

Log into the
International
website
www.mensa.org
for the
calendar of
national events

Move Away, Hannibal Lecter: Mensa's doors are closed to you!

by Inham Hassen

Dr. Hannibal Lecter is a sophisticated, debonair gentleman. His speech is well-articulated. He has refined tastes in art, music and cuisine. His manners are impeccable. By day, he is the perfect gentleman. By night, he is a cannibalistic serial killer with extraordinary intelligence.

This is how Hollywood portrays

psychopaths who commit serial murder. Apart from the thirst to see blood, all modern moviemass-murderers have one thing in common - a high level of intelligence. From Hannibal Lecter (in the series of movies based on his character) to John Doe (in "Se7en") and to Patrick

Bateman (in "American Psycho"), serial killers are portrayed as brilliant but demented geniuses. After all, getting away with dozens of victims, does require the ability to plot highly complicated plans, which cannot be deciphered by the best minds in law enforcement. This argument appears to be very convincing.

But is this belief actually true? Do serial killers possess an astonishingly high intelligence? Research carried out in the 1940s, 60s and the 90s have all reinforced perceptions of above-average to superior

intelligence among criminals who commit serial murder. In addition, a 1986 assessment by the FBI corroborates these findings.

However, a new study carried out by researchers at the Florida South Coast University, with a wider and more comprehensive data set, unearths evidence contrary to current opinions.

"...but collectively, serial killers do not possess an intelligence level any higher than the wider society."

Leary, Larry
Southard
and Michael
Aamodt of
Florida South
Coast University and
Radford
University, using a data set

Terence

of 303 perpetrators, compared the variability of IQ among serial killers to that of the parameters that are identified with the general populace. Leary, Southard and Aamodt also compared the intelligence levels of each offender to factors such as how organized the methodology was, what kind of motives existed and how the crimes were carried out.

While a pattern was identified between the serial killers' intelligence levels and the methodology employed as well as the primary motivations, there was no identified association between the perpetrators in general, and high IQ levels. In other words, the researchers found out that offenders with a higher IQ did employ more sophisticated ways to carry out their crime and often had more complex motives, but collectively, serial killers do not possess an intelligence level any higher than the wider society.

Sensationalization of sparse cases such as Ted Kaczynski (a former professor of mathematics) and Ted Bundy (a former assistant to a highprofile politician), has given rise to public misunderstanding about the IQ levels of serial killers in general. And finally, Hollywood took over and applied its magic to exacerbate this misbelief among the public.

The researchers emphasize that data from a small sample of highly profiled serial killers, does show a higher intelligence, but this is not typical of serial killers in general. Hannibal Lecters do exist in this world, but the chances of them possessing Mensa-level IQs would be very rare!

Source: Leary, T., Southard, L. & Aamodt, M. (2019). Serial Killers and Intelligence Levels: Variability, Patterns, and Motivations to Kill. North American Journal of Psychology. 21 (4). p.p. 787.

Hyper Brain, Hyper Body: The Trouble With High IQ

A new study in the journal *Intelligence* reports that highly intelligent people have a significantly increased risk of suffering from a variety of psychological and physiological disorders.

Lead author of the study, Ruth Karpinski, says the findings have implications both for the study of intelligence and for psychoneuroimmunology, which examines how stress responses to the environment influence communication between the brain and immune system.

"Our findings are relevant because a significant portion of these individuals are suffering on a daily basis as a result of their unique emotional and physical overexcitabilities. It is important for the scientific community to examine high IQ as being front and centre within the system of mechanisms that may be at play in these dysregulations," she says.

Karpinski and her colleagues developed a hyper brain / hyper body theory of integration. It posits that individuals with high cognitive ability react with an overexcitable emotional and behavioural response to their environment. Due in part to this increased awareness of their surroundings, people with a high IQ then tend to experience an overexcitable, hyperreactive central nervous system.

"A minor insult such as a clothing tag or an unnatural sound may trigger a low level, chronic stress response which then activates a hyper body response. When the sympathetic nervous system becomes chronically activated, it finds itself in a continuous fight, flight, or freeze state that triggers a series of immune changes in both the body and the brain-altering behaviour, mood, and functioning," explains Dr. Nicole Tetreault, co-author.

To explore the premise, Karpinski and her colleagues surveyed 3,715 members of American Mensa, Ltd. whose documented IQ scores fall at or above 130. Each was asked to self-report their experiences of both diagnosed and/or suspected mood and anxiety disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and physiological diseases that include autoimmune disease, environmental and food allergies, and asthma. The team compared the survey data against the statistical national average for each disease or disorder.

"If high intelligence was not a risk factor for these diseases and disorders, we would see a similar prevalence rate between the two groups," explains Audrey Kinase Kolb, co-author. "However, in this study, the Mensa population had significantly higher rates across the board. For example, just over 10% of the US has a diagnosed anxiety disorder, compared to 20% for Mensans. For these conditions, having a high intelligence is related to having between 2 to 4 times the chance of having a diagnosis compared to the average American."

"While falling within the extreme right tail of the Bell Curve is generally touted as a 'gift' leading to exceptional outcomes, this is not always the case," says Karpinski. "Those with high IQ possess unique intensities and overexcitabilities which can be at once both remarkable and disabling on many levels."

The results are surprising given that previous studies have shown high intelligence to be a protective factor for many health outcomes including heart disease, stroke, smoking-related cancers, respiratory disease, and dementia. However, these disorders and conditions are not specifically rooted in immune dysregulation. Additionally, these studies looked at increases in IQ, but stopped short of including participants with gifted intelligence in their samples.

"We know that for many of the examined conditions there must be a combination of genetics and environment for them to manifest," says Karpinski. "The results of this study support our hyper brain/hyper body theory, and may help direct future studies regarding high intelligence as a potential genetic piece of a psychoneuroimmunological puzzle."

NeuroscienceNews would like to thank Nicole Tetreault, PhD for submitting this research news for inclusion.

Source: Pitzer College.

Neurosciencenews.com

supplementally...

by john blinke

Unsafe Air

Science News, April 17, 2020. "Why 6 Feet May Not Be Enough Social Distance to Avoid COVID-19." We have been told to maintain a safe distance of six feet from other people to avoid airborne viral infections. That might be OK for large droplets of spit, because gravity takes them out of the air fairly quickly. But, people exhale a whole spectrum of droplet sizes, and the smaller ones can hang in the air for a long time. So, you might be sickened by someone who left the room several hours ago. If you are outside in free air, you are still not safe. Even though there is a lot of air out there to dilute viruses, a breeze can still carry small droplets a long way. If you want to be as safe as possible, wear a mask — and stay far away from everyone, as well!

PM2.5

Eurekalert: American Lung Association News Release, April 21, 2020. "Nearly Half of US Breathing Unhealthy Air; Record-Breaking Air Pollution in Nine Cities." https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-04/ala-nho041720.php The COVID-19 virus attacks our lungs and upper airways. That's the bad news. The worse news is that half the USA is living in the worst outdoor air conditions that we have on record. The American Lung Association rates cities by several different meas-

ures: Short term particulates (PM2.5); Year-around particulates; and Ozone (smog). (Ozone exposure has been called "a sunburn for the lungs.") 20.8 million people in the U.S. live in counties that scored badly on all three measures. There is also a much shorter list of cities with the best air in the coun-

try. Those clean cities are: Bangor, Maine; Burlington-South Burlington-Barre, Vermont; Honolulu, Hawaii; and Wilmington, North Carolina.

Ice Bonus

Science, April 17, 2020, p. 224. "Ice Monitor Delivers a Bonus: Seafloor Maps."

Data doesn't care what we use it for. So, when NASA's ICESat-2 satellite set about making measurements of ice thickness, researchers were happy to find that their instruments



Photo: Ahmed Bedawy on Unsplash.com

also showed the depth of the sea floor down to 40 metres. This makes it possible to map coral reefs and to fill in a blind spot around 5 metres depth where sonar mapping cannot be used. The work was made easier by the coronavirus pandemic because lower shipping traffic reduces the amount of sediment that blocks ICESat-2's green laser beam.

Death from Above

Audubon online, "The Silent Flight

10

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of Owls, Explained." https://www. audubon.org/news/the-silent-flightowls-explained Contributed by Frank Pennypacker.

Many voles have gone to the happy hunting ground without ever knowing what happened. This is because owls can fly almost silently. They do this by using a whole toolkit of stealth features. Huge wings let them fly very slowly. Special feathers on leading and trailing edges of the wings smooth out air currents, preventing noisy eddies. Owls have two reasons for being so quiet. Obviously, they don't want their prey to know they are coming. And, noisy flight would interfere with the birds' own

keen hearing, which they need to detect small critters sneaking through the dark woods.

Liquid Mercury

Smithsonian, March 24, 2020. "Mercury's Messy Surface May Have Once Had Crucial Ingredients for Life." (Scientific Reports) Contributed by Stephen Darnell.

The face of the planet Mercury looks like it lost a street fight. Planetary scientists figure it was battered by asteroid impacts like Earth's moon. But, parts of Mercury's landscape seem to have been disrupted by eruptions from below. Other places are sunken, John Blinke like beachballs that are leaking air.

These features could be explained if volatile material had been expelled from the subsurface. After studying data returned by NASA's Messenger spacecraft, scientists at the Planetary Science Institute think this is exactly what happened a couple of billion years ago. Water was probably among those volatile substances, and that means precursors for life could have been there, too. But there is no definitive explanation as to how water got into Mercury's subsurface in the first place.

Johnb44221@cs.com

OFFICER DIRECTORY

Chair: Mr Björn Liljeqvist chairman-mil@mensa.org Director Admin: Ms Isabella Holz admin-mil@mensa.org

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SIG Co-Coordinator: Ms Barbara Kryvko sigs@mensa.org Ombudsman: Mr Martyn Davies ombudsman@mensa.org

Executive Director: Mr Michael Feenan, Slate Barn, Church Lane, Caythorpe, Lincolnshire NG32 3EL, UK

Tel/Fax+44(0)1400272 675 mensainternational@mensa.org

Editorial Staff

Editor: Ms Kate Nacard 407/23 Corunna Rd, Stanmore NSW 2048 Australia mwjeditor@mensa.org T: +61 402152858

Science: Mr John Blinke Johnb44221@cs.com

Puzzles: Ms Therese Moodie-Bloom tmb@ozemail.com.au Profiles Editor: Dr Susan Jensen suejensen57@gmail.com Features Editor: Mr Inham Hassen http://bit.ly/inham

Proofreader: Ms Jean Whittle

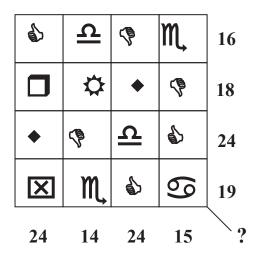
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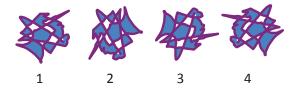
THERESE'S TEASERS

Cryptosum

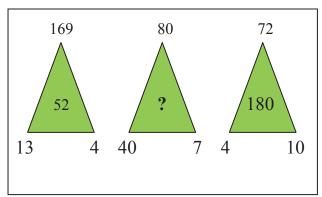
Each symbol represents a different digit from 1 to 9. The sum of the digits in each row and column is shown. Find the sum of the numbers along the diagonal line from the top left-hand corner.



Odd One Out



Missing Number



Rebus

Which religious man is represented below?

CAPACEONE

Magic Mixture

Take some arsenic and add phosphorous, iodine and a dash of carbon. What edible savoury jelly have you formed?

Which dogs can be produced by:

- a. Wrapping a POST around an OVERDOSE
- b. Placing a PRIMARY BOOK before a RAPTOR
- c. Putting a muffled 'HEY!' into the EARTH
- d. Adding ONE and THE SPANISH after a bridge
- e. Rearranging A NEGATED 'R'
- f. Taking FIVE and an EGGHEAD from a confused RETRIEVER

Anagram riddle

- 6 letters have I, you can change them around To find words which vary by more than a sound:
 - * Rules; keeps order across the wide land;
 - * Surrender, give up throw in your hand!
- * A crooner, a songstress can be heard on CD;
- * Autographer, lessee, or blind man maybe.

Answers

Cryptosum: 23 (5 + 3 + 8 + 7) Odd One Out: 1 Missing Number: 14 (80/40x7) Rebus: Card-in-Al [Capone] Magic Mixture: Aspic Dogs: a) Poodle b) Beagle c) Greyhound d) Spaniel e) Great Dane f) Terrier Anagram Riddle: Reigns, Resign, Singer, Signer