

# CHEAP (yet ingenious) RATINGS PLOY

SPOILERS AHEAD:

IF YOU HAVE NOT SEEN THE 3-27 EPISODE OF ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A 5TH GRADER (AND CARE TO) SKIP THIS POST)

Last thursday night on the coming attraction for tonight's "Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader", it was announced that someone gets to the million dollar question and answers it. I was totally flabbergasted that they would actually announce that someone would finally win the top prize more than a year after the show first aired. Then I remembered watching "Live with Regis and Kelly" (or was it Kathie Lee at the time... who cares). On one particular morning, Regis announced that on that very night someone would win a million on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." At the time, it seemed exciting and of course I watched. I even remember the question (Which president made an appearance on the television series "Laugh In?"). Over the past few years, it seems like a cheap way to increase ratings.

It seemed like deja-vu while watching 5th Grader until the contestant who graduated from UCLA and has an MBA from USC got to the second question:

"What is the subject of the following sentence? Sierra baked a cake for Olivia." He even got the three choices:

A: pronoun; B: proper noun; C: common noun

Unfortunately, this smart (?) guy thought the subject of the sentence was "cake" so he chose answer C. Sorry to say, the fifth grade student who could have saved him also chose the wrong answer. So the bright guy who knew he would be the first million dollar winner on the show flunked out on the second

question and went home with nothing.

AH, but wait... since the man was sooooo sure that he would not only get to the top question but answer it correctly, Jeff showed the question and it was answered correctly.

I guess the advertisement did not say that the million dollars was actually won only that the question was asked and answered. CHEAP RATINGS PLOY. If it were five days from now, some would have shouted **"APRIL FOOLS!!!"**

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## **A Stick Figure Role-Playing Game.**

It took me 8 minutes to win this game. It will probably take you much longer.

[swf]<https://www.gigarcade.com/swf/20136.swf>[/swf]

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## **Still More Mini-Golf**

In case you haven't read the comments at the end of my Mini-Golf – The Sequel! post, I talked about how much I didn't like the new version I had posted because it was obscenely difficult. The first version was simplistic and easy to play after some practice. The second version I got (which was evidently the 3rd version of the game) turned out to be way too difficult, and the added complications (sandtraps, water) made the game lose part of its charm. Unfortunately, I did

not play the game before I posted the link, so that's why I had to comment on it. I suggest you give it a try if you like these computer mini-golf games though, I did appreciate the "bounciness" of the ball off the walls. But, if you're like me, and you think the second game (3rd version) I posted was way too difficult to enjoy, then give this one a try also:

<https://www.gigarcade.com/full-744-Forest-Challenge-2.html>

[swf]<https://www.gigarcade.com/swf/20754.swf>[/swf]

It has some sand and water traps, but it also has the "bounce-back" reaction of the ball, and the slope grades are depicted in such a way that you can actually tell the difference between them. I think I may have noticed a scoring glitch in the game though. If there's no glitch, then I am very good at this and scored a 3 ☐

Watch out for hole #18 – it's a par 8, so that should tell you something!

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## Mini-Golf – The Sequel!

Thanks to my awesome husband for finding this... I haven't had a chance to try it yet but I am about to, so I will post my best score... which will probably be at least twice the score of you "experts" out there! Oh well, they are fun... let's see how this one compares:

<https://www.gigarcade.com/full-960-MiniPutt-3.html>

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# Big Money Splits

...is the title of an AP article I read the other day about the price of celebrity divorces, inspired by, of course, the McCartney-Mills divorce that's been dominating the headlines lately. I took note of this article because I was surprised that the McCartney-Mills settlement was not in the top 5 most expensive divorce settlements. In fact, the top 5 were surprising to me; just people I would not have guessed that would have had that much money or who would have not been able to protect themselves and their assets any better. Actually, the McCartney-Mills divorce settlement at \$48.6 million equaled a little over half of # 5 on the list. Here it is:

1. Michael and Juanita Jordan – possibly more than \$150 million settlement pending, 2006.
2. Neil Diamond and Marcia Murphey – \$150 million, 1994.
3. Steven Spielberg and Amy Irving – \$100 million, 1989.
4. Harrison Ford and Melissa Mathison – \$85 million, 2004.
5. Kevin Costner and Cindy Silva – \$80 million, 1994.

I wonder what some of these amounts would be if adjusted for inflation also. This article would have been a little more interesting if they had included the wedding date or how long the couple was together before the divorce. I am often amused when I look in the local newspaper and see divorces between couples who were only married a few years, some only a few months! My dear friends are wedding photographers, and they've shared at least one story of a couple who was no longer together by the time their wedding photos were ready to be picked up! It's amusing, yet sad at the same time, especially of course any time there are children involved. I wish people would think a little bit harder about the commitment and sacrifice involved in marriage, and I wish that

more people would treat marriage like the institution it was meant to be.

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## More Great Movie Titles

To keep up with both blogs, allow me to post some more wonderfully hideous titles and synopses. OR... lets make it even more fun. I will give a list of titles and synopses. See if you can guess which one contains the actual description.

1. Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me. The story of a young child who falls into a well and finds herself in another world populated by giant red ants.

2. Fat Guy Goes Nutzoid. A large man with a Mohawk haircut escapes from a mental hospital and becomes the friend of two rich kids.

3. Night of the Day of the Dawn of the Son of the Bride of the Return of the Terror of the Attack of the Evil, Mutant, Hellbound, Flesh-Eating Subhumanoid Zombified Living Dead, Part 3. A horror movie aficionado takes her fascination too far when she unearths the remains of Dr. Frankenstein, Count Dracula, The Mummy, and The Creature from the Black Lagoon.

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# Lions and Tigers and Bears Oh My

I am greatly anticipating our scheduled visit to the Toledo Zoo next week. My daughter needs a specialty dentist in the big city, so we've decided to throw some fun in there as well with a trip to the zoo. It will probably be my last one until after I have the baby, unless they have a wagon available for rental that's big enough for very pregnant me AND the 3 kids. Since it's only March and I'm not due until July, I think I can still handle the large amount of walking it takes to get around the zoo – we'll see anyway. I naively thought that pregnancies would get easier with experience, but it seems that I forgot to factor in my increasing age – I am almost 10 years older than I was the first time I was with child – and I feel it!

Toledo Zoo is very large. It's a very nice zoo, but there is lots of walking. It remains one of my favorite zoos in the country however, and I've visited at least 20. Toledo has lots of animals, but they are pretty spread out. Also, because the zoo straddles a major road, you have to trek up and down a ramp and across a long pedestrian bridge; all of which is not so much fun if pregnant or in the heat of the summer. But overall, it is one of my favorite zoos. Even though the gorilla's indoor exhibit is pretty small, I really enjoy how close you can see them, and they don't seem unhappy being in a small exhibit... unlike a gorilla at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska. He had a really small indoor enclosure, and we witnessed him charge at a little boy – it was very scary and thank goodness that glass was thick! This was years ago, and I think Henry Doorly has since re-built their gorilla exhibit. Another zoo with a lot of walking is the Brookfield Zoo near Chicago, Illinois. Brookfield has lots of walking, but unlike Toledo, the animals are spaced

further apart, so much of the walking is without seeing animals. It's been a few years since I've been there, so maybe they've changed this, but it's not one of my favorite zoos, unless we're talking about sentimental reasons – it was the site of my husband's and my first “unofficial” date. One zoo that sticks out in my memory as one of my favorites is the Folsom Children's Zoo in Lincoln, Nebraska. The name is misleading, they had quite an array of animals there; including red pandas, camels, reindeer, leopards, monkeys, a variety of reptiles, seals, sloths, emus that like to be pet, and there are still many more I haven't named. All in only 19 acres, nestled right in the city. Which sounds large, but once you get in there, it was really the perfect size. Not much walking at all, lots of animals who all had lots of room in their environments, and it was very nicely landscaped with mature trees and such so that you forgot you were in the middle of the city. We used to live close enough to walk there, but the only problem with this great little zoo is that it was only open from April – October. If you are ever in Nebraska, the Folsom Children's Zoo is a must-see. Being a native Chicagoan, it's strange that I've never visited the Lincoln Park Zoo, which is also in the middle of a city, albeit a much larger one than Lincoln. But I've heard good things about it, and maybe one of these days, during one of our bi-yearly visits to the area, we will give Lincoln Park a whirl so I can add it to my zoo resume.

Before our trips to the zoo, I like to visit a really cool website to brush up on my animal facts. It really makes zoo trips more interesting if you know a little more about what you're looking at. Check out this online database that is maintained by the University of Michigan:  
<https://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/index.html>

And finally, if you are still reading this, you must be an animal lover like me. If you also like to read, I highly recommend my favorite book written by my favorite celebrity:

Jack Hanna, called "Monkeys on the Interstate". If you ever watch The Late Show with David Letterman, you know that poor Jack often comes across as a bumbling fool when he's on the show. He is an animal expert however, and he is much more entertaining to watch than most animal experts. He and Letterman tease each other mercilessly, and there is almost always some sort of animal mishap that occurs when Jack is involved, always with hilarious results. His book is a narrative of the same sort of episodes, all taken from his life as he was growing up and also from when he went on to become the director of the Columbus Zoo. By the way, being an Ohioan, I've had the opportunity to visit the Columbus Zoo, and I will say that it did not disappoint. If you read Jack's book, you will read about how he brought the zoo from anonymity (he notes in his book that when he first arrived in Ohio, people would always ask him, "there's a zoo in Columbus?!?") to one of the most renowned facilities in the world. There was a lot of trial and error involved in achieving this, and again, many hilarious hijinks, all of which are detailed in the book – it is really entertaining reading. And it's not just a clever title – there really *were* Monkeys on the Interstate, thanks to Jack and one of his hare-brained ideas! Maybe I will take another look at it on the long ride to Toledo next week...

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## **When Forwards Are Addicting...**

I'm talking about email forwards. And just about everyone knows someone or is someone (even if they won't admit it) who just can't seem to resist forwarding EVERY forward they get to EVERYONE in their address book. I've mentioned before that my mom's neighbor from about 5 years ago *still* forwards me stuff... and it's not like I knew them all that well to begin

with. They just got my email address from a forward list one time (I think), and just forward every forward to everyone they know – and some people they don't know, apparently. I get about 3-5 forwards in my email per day from various people. I don't read them all – who has time for that? Some of them I pass along, and others I don't. I always feel a little guilty when I do pass them on though because there is a slight chance they could contain viruses or just be incredibly annoying to those poor people I do send them to... So, with my apologies ahead of time to those who don't like it, here is a link that I got as a forward the other day. It links to this really fun and addicting mini golf game that my husband and I have had lots of fun with. So far, my top score – well it's golf, so my low score is a 42... holes #14 and #18 kill me every time. See what you think: <https://www.ibogleif.dk/spil/flashspil/minigolf/minigolf.swf>

[swf]https://www.ibogleif.dk/spil/flashspil/minigolf/minigolf.swf[/swf]

Oh, yeah, and DO NOT open this at work – I do not want to be responsible for getting anyone into trouble on the job! I know I can't put the game down... enough of this posting, the baby needs a diaper change... I'll change her after one more game, just gotta play while holding my nose...

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## **Come On, Get Happy**

The last job I would ever even consider having is a school bus driver. Not only do you have to put up with crabby, rowdy children for up to two hours a day while trying to get them safely to and from school, you have to put up with their

guardians. My mother drives a school bus. She is up at 6am every morning. She drives a morning route, a kindergarten route, and the afternoon route. Last Tuesday NIGHT, the grandmother of one of these tykes visited our humble abode. It seems that her car was totally ruined and completely undrivable after my mother backed into it with a bus that morning. The woman stated that she was outside in the yard at the time of the incident. Yet she did not attempt to stop the bus or call the school or police after she watched the bus damage her vehicle. Not only that, but who would wait until 9 o' clock that night to do anything about it. Plus, if the car was damaged as badly as it was claimed to be would the bus driver or kids not have noticed hitting it?

The next day the sheriff's department came to the house to investigate. Apparently, the victim's automobile was not nearly as damaged as everyone was lead to believe. To make matters seem funnier or more ironic, the woman is the mother of the rather plump boy who broke my sister's arm in phys ed nearly 20 years ago when he sat on it while playing scooterboard hockey. It does not take a genius to realize that you should report an accident immediately after it happens and not 14 hours later.

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## **What a Day!**

We had our annual board meeting dinner banquet last night, and it went well; dinner was delicious. However, we didn't get home until late, and as I already posted, the kids have been having trouble settling down at night, so we didn't get to bed until very late. Today was no exception with the early morning whisperers, so I did not get much sleep last night. I was planning on napping today, but it didn't happen and the

following is a lengthy explanation of why:

We made the rare decision to go out to lunch. We never do that because my husband never gets a lunch break from work. But our local bowling alley was advertising the best reuben sandwiches in town, thru St. Pat's day only, of course (even though I've heard reubens were invented by a Jewish person, go figure), so we decided to take a lunch break to check them out. The sandwiches were excellent, and it was well worth the trip, UNTIL...

It all began when 2 of our 3 dogs decided to follow us out the door and into the car. Since it's nice out, we figured, why not, let them come with for a change. When we got to the bowling alley, somehow, and I'm not going to place blame here – except to say that it wasn't MY fault, I wasn't driving ☐ – the keys got left in the car. It would not have normally been a problem. We live in a nice safe area, I really don't think someone would have stolen the car, especially since the dogs were in it – wait, the DOGS were in the car, and they jumped on the power lock button and LOCKED the doors with the KEYS INSIDE THE CAR!!!

So, like desperate idiots, we stood outside the car, trying to coax the dogs back onto the UNLOCK button this time, but to no avail. So, we went into the bowling alley and called the taxi company, of which there is only one in town. It was busy, and busy, and busy again, but luckily the owner of the bowling alley knew the taxi guy, so he tracked him down at the bar he owned (!) – all the while so nicely using his own phone because (surprise!) our cell phones were BOTH locked in the car with the dogs. Luckily, I had sense enough to bring my purse inside with me, so throughout the ordeal at least I had diapers and a stash of toys and candy to occupy our toddler. Finally got ahold of the taxi, and he's on his way when I realize that the garage door opener is in the car, along with the house key, and of course, all the doors in the house are locked! So the taxi picks up my husband (I really

don't know why we didn't call a friend – we blanked at the time and couldn't think of anyone in town who would be home during the day. In hindsight, we thought of 2 people of course, but too little, too late), and I'm waiting at the bowling alley for 40 minutes, wondering how he's going to get into the house. At this point, I knew it was going to be too late for me to get a nap for the day (sigh), and it's becoming clear that the baby is really in need of one and soon! I was just out of candy and toys when my husband the hero walks thru the door, holding the extra set of car keys. Turns out, he found a window to crawl through that we had never fixed – I guess thank goodness for that! When we got into the car, we were like, what is that AWFUL SMELL – something like a dead fish! WARNING – THIS IS EXTREMELY GROSS!!! If you want to know more about this (must be a dog-lover and have a strong stomach), see explanation of canine anal draining [here](#). Otherwise, you can just take my word for it, we had to shampoo the car carpet when we finally got home. I also stashed a spare set of car keys in my purse – now I just have to make sure my purse is with me at all times because sometimes, I leave it in the car. What would happen if the spare set of car keys is locked in the car?!? Tomorrow will be better, I'm sure, it's the community Easter egg hunt, and a Saturday, we might go see Horton Hears a Who at the movie theater also – can't beat that!