



Fun Facts #1



1. In 1922, a man built a house and all his furniture entirely out of 100,000 newspapers. The structure still stands today in Rockport, Massachusetts. What if he simply stacked the newspapers. How many miles high would the pile be?

Given:

- 1 newspaper = 40 pages
- 1 page = 0.1 millimeter
- 100,000 newspapers = 1 pile
- 1,000 millimeter = 1 meter
- 1,000 meter = 1 kilometer
- 1 mile = 1.6 kilometer



Estimate: # miles / 1 pile

2. There is an average of 13 billionths of a gram (that's 13 *nanograms*) of gold in each liter of the ocean. If we could collect it and share it among the humans, how much would each person get? (Perhaps a better question is ... would that harm any beings that need the gold for something other than wealth? And don't even ask me about the gold dust on the ocean floor that – if given totally to the humans (and shared) – would amount to 9 pounds per person, where currently in 2019 gold is worth about \$15,000 per pound).



Given:

- 13 nanograms / 1 liter water
- 7.4 billion people / sea
- 1.26×10^{21} liters / sea
- 1 billion nanograms / gram
- 454 grams / pound

Estimate: # pounds of gold / 1 person

3. The Library of Congress contains approximately 838 miles of bookshelves. (This would be long enough to stretch from Chicago to Denver.) Estimate the number of books, compact discs, woodcuts, and other small bookshelf articles contained in the Library of Congress, if the typical width of a bookshelf article is 1 inch. [In actual fact, there are about 36 million articles!]

Given:

- 838 bookshelf miles / Library of Congress
- 5,280 feet / mile
- 12 inches / foot
- 1 article / inch

Estimate: # articles / 1 Library of Congress



4. In 1867, Russia sold Alaska to the United States for about \$7.2 million. How much was that per acre? [This actually comes out to 1.9 cents per acre. I wish I had put my two cents in on that deal!]

Given:

- 1 Alaska = 7.2 \$
- 1 Alaska = 586,412 square miles
- 1 acre = 43,560 square feet
- 1 square mile = 27,878,400 square feet
- 1 \$ = 100 cents



Estimate: # cents / 1 acre