Quick! Can You Solve This Question?

Shôn Ellerton, August 30, 2021
If you can solve this question, you may be a genius!

Wow! Check this out! Guess what I found in my Facebook feed? Yes, it's a really difficult question this time. Oh, my goodness. Can I do it? Is it possible? Wait…. Here's the question. Now don't be shocked and taken aback when you get the question, but here it is. Here is that question now… It's coming up….just a minute… So. What is the answer to this? **5+5+5x0**? Yikes! What a corker of question because, obviously, it must be hard because it's posted by Mr Rap, and all of his stuff must be really hard because he's got, like, how many comments? 2 million! That is a lot, isn't it? But wait. I'm really clever. I *know* the answer. Oh yes, I do. I do, indeed! Indeedy doo da! Because I remember what my teacher back in school taught me and, obviously, because this post attracted thousands and thousands and thousands of comments, you would have to be a *genius* to work this out. And let's face, the others won't know the answer because it's obvious everyone's just going to work it out from left to right. I mean. You know how it goes. Everybody else is a cretin, right? And this is the thing. I *know* the secret and I'm sure nobody else does, unless they're a mathematical genius, what? You see, the author of the post is very very clever, because, not only does he have a cool name by Mr. Rap, but he cleverly forgotten the secret brackets around the **5x0**. Kind of like this: **5+5+(5x0)**.

Naturally, no one is going to know that, heeeh heeeh heeeh! But I do! Yep, honest to God, I do! And I know for a fact that everyone else is just going to go 5 **plus** 5 **plus** 5 **times** 0, and, you know, if you multiply anything by zero, it's just going to be one big fat zero. So, everyone will say zero, but not me. You see. I'm clever. I'm going to add the secret brackets because, you know, the *times* stuff happens before the sums bit. Well, I'm really excited now, because, not only have a I rambled unnecessarily and extensively with absolutely little in the way of regarding the rules of proper formatting and readability, I can say with absolute conviction and certainty that the answer is….TEN! OH MY GOD!! Ten. Nobody'll know this one. And, oh, the excitement and anticipation of putting my comment down exclaiming TEN. Because everyone who reads my comment will be thinking. Wow! He's so good at this. I clearly need to patch up my arithmetical deficiencies, even though I got a great degree in the social sciences! Ahhh! I'm about to post my comment now. But I'm going to be extra vigilant and explain why because no one will know about the *operational hierarchies*. You know that stuff about brackets, then multiplications and divisions and then the really easy sums and substractions. My answer will reign supreme. It will blow the minds of those who read. Man, this guy is a genius! Yes, my comment will be one in two million others, but my comment will be read by everyone, certainly my Facebook friends. And, oh, the heights of knowledge we're learning from this post. I don't want to know about cool unexplored regions of the Outer Hebrides. Nor do I want to learn of any really cool movies and TV shows worth watching. I especially don't want to read any of my friend's writings, because, obviously, answering the question of **5+5+5x0** is far more important. In fact, debating the answer, whether it is 0 or 10 is a scintillating debate in its own right. I can elaborate for hours and hours with others on Facebook about the virtues of using brackets in their proper places or have extensive arguments about 'new' mathematics in which it isn't cool to be mathematically right anymore because we have to think 'out of the box' and

open up new vistas in pseudo-mathematics. Otherwise we'd all feel the restraints of traditionalism and conservatism of the absolute correct value of that question. Nice! I can debate this very topic while sitting on the train. While being especially antisocial at a restaurant while the rest of the group talk about dangerous adventure holidays in the Swiss Alps. I can even debate whilst sitting on the 'can' because no sound is required, and as we all know, *that sound* would be a dead giveaway due to the echoes coming off the hard tiles. But leaving that aside, let's talk about those serious posts reflecting on philosophy, politics, science, art and nature. Meh! Boring! Family photos? Nah! Boring. I'd much rather concentrate my life energies on posts like these! But hold it! There's so much more than posts like this. Yes. Honestly. There is. There was another post which was…. How should I put it? ….. exemplary to the degree of being sublime! This was the question. **Name a woman's name that begins with A and ends with A**. Christ! That's a hard one. This one has nearly ten million comments. TEN MILLION comments! No effing way. …. Oh. Hang on, does *Anna* count? Surely it can't be that easy? Or can it? You won't believe it. I came up with another answer! That's two of them! *Anastasia*. You see, the first letter is *A* and the last letter…. Oh … you get the gist. The world of Facebook is getting SO much better now. Now I don't get those awful philosophical discussions with friends anymore. Nor do I get those nice photographs of how the family is doing. We don't need the family photos anymore because we get those really great posts about memories from one year ago or two years ago or three. Heck, why would I want to know what's happening *now*? Oh. And stories. Isn't it just so cool that you can *add to your story*? Quick. I've gotta open that up… b e f o r e i t d i s a p p e a r s ! I can sit here all day and idolise those cool people which are clearly gods, like Mr Rap, who can have my comment anytime. A friend of mine said he is a 'generated character' from the Facebook crew to mine data, but my friend's also a geek and clearly doesn't know how great Mr Rap is. I bet Mr Rap's got rings on *all* his fingers! The

goldy glittery ones. There's also this chick who gets hundreds of thousands of comments too. Her name is. Get this. Ms Sexy Fox. All the boys must be after her, because, not only is she EXTREMELY popular, but she's got an amazing profile of her cat dressed up in a bowtie next to a real cool poodle with tassles in its fur. That is just so awesome. And the question she posted the other day? She said this. She actually said this. '**Let's settle the debate. Salt on watermelon or not?**' My cerebral cortex has just blown a gasket. The sheer and utter brilliancy of it. The poignancy. The sheer gravitas! Quick! Who puts salt on their watermelon? I have GOT to find out! Wait. Wait. My son is asking me to help him study on his English test. No time! No time! This question is far more important and absorbing to be involved with petty and trifle activities such as helping your son study for his test. But far worse is the fact that I've got to go and 'spend a penny' if you know what I mean. I'm bursting. That's ok. I'm using a mobile so I can hold the mobile in one hand whilst conducting my business with the other. Therefore, no time is wasted. I can continue pontificating the matter whether the culinary experience of adding salt to watermelon would be a superior one. That's better. Better wash my hands, but I fear I cannot because that involves *TWO* hands and I need one to hold the phone. Also, water might get in the phone. I'm getting……oh. What's this? No battery charge left? Seriously? I just had this puppy charged an hour ago! Where's the damned charger? Maybe it's here. Yes! I found it! No! The phone just flatlined……!