

# **FACTS & FICTIONS**

**BY SIMON RACKHAM 1999**

## FACTS & FICTIONS

1. **Beginning is the end of everything.**
2. **Nobody wants to know a somebody nobody knows.**
3. **Count to ten backwards.**
4. **Beware the sophistry of philosophy.**
5. **See what can be seen and ignore the rest, the best.**
6. **Now is over.**
7. **Belief is the abolition of reason.**
8. **Living is an abbreviation for life.**
9. **If a cat says "I am a cat," it cannot be a cat.**
10. **I can prove that time exists by reading this sentence.**
11. **Fox-trot, Uniform, Charlie, Kilo, Oscar, Fox-trot, Fox-trot, Yankee, Oscar, Uniform, Charlie, Uniform, November, Tango.**
12. **I just ate two boiled eggs.**
13. **Choice is the foundation of art.**
14. **The sky is green.**
15. **Value judgements are worthless.**
16. **I have never heard 4' 33" by John Cage, at least not intentionally.**
17. **By writing this I save paper.**
18. **" ."**
19. **Skill should be acquired before being abandoned.**
20. **C, C, D, B, C, D.**
21. **Evidence is required if creativity is to be believed.**
22. **An original idea is possible, but an original thought is not.**
23. **Pity the man who understands Dog.**
24. **Between now and then is approximately eleven millimetres if and is equal to seven.**
25. **If you're paid to do something you enjoy, be happy. If you're not paid to do something you enjoy, be happy.**
26. **X = the first unknown quantity.**
27. **An American went to Moscow and was shocked to discover that he had cancer.**
28. **Between heaven and hell there is nothing but imagination.**
29. **Luckily there are some things that are not possible.**
30. **There is a difference between what is written and what is read.**
31. **Form is everything.**
32. **A madman cannot lie.**
33. **Sometimes you are invisible.**
34. **Today is good, tomorrow can be better.**
35. **Some things cannot be better.**
36. **Knowing when to stop is the heart of art.**
37. **Try waiting for a person you know isn't coming if you want to understand patience.**
38. **Christ died for his sins not mine, so I'll never forgive him.**
39. **The object and the noun are not equal.**

40. Any statement of fact should be questioned, then question the question.
41. Knowledge is the art of knowing where to look.
42. A line is always curved.
43. Fate is fatal.
44. It is good to travel in five eight.
45. Wrap up promises carefully.
46. The first breath and the last breath, the rest is just hot air.
47. Do what you can, not what you must.
48. The most obvious is often the most beautiful.
49. How will the end of the world effect reincarnation?
50. The unexpected should be expected.
51. If I was an onion.
52. Man cannot be free while he wears the yoke of language.
53. Call a spade a spade in Hebrew.
54. Nothing is easier to change than the world.
55. Great enervates such as me are not rare.
56. Take "your" time.
57. Thought is an afterthought.
58. One plus one equals them.
59. On Friday it will rain milk.
60. As an exercise in humility, degrade your mother by kissing her feet.
61. Capture some light in a box and put it under your bed.
62. Q. which came first, the chicken or the egg? A. neither.
63. Knock, knock. Who's there? Me.
64. We didn't burn down the opera houses, perhaps we should just shut them.
65. Is art about what art is about art? or, is art the art of art?
66. What is the meaning of this?
67. Now and then come again.
68. Nothing is empty, it is always full with nothing.
69. The meaning of life is life.
70. You cannot kill belief but it can die naturally.
71. Value lies in others eyes.
72. One plus one equals millions.
73. One day the day will come when the day won't come.
74. The photograph always lies.
75. Just because something can't be explained doesn't mean it can't be explained.
76. Tread lightly when walking on water.
77. For a miracle to occur it must be possible for miraculous things to happen.  
If miraculous things happen we should not be surprised when miracles occur.
78. Think straight.
79. Where there is movement there is narrative.
80. A man has two dogs, he gives one a tasty titbit and pats the other on the head.
81. There is no such thing as facts.
82. Many people move to the city because they want to be alone.
83. The Earth is the centre of the universe.
84. If it's old it's good.

85. Maybe Nietzsche was right.
86. If something happens that doesn't seem to have a rational explanation it is foolish to try and explain it irrationally.
87. We only know what we know. We don't know what we don't know.
88. You may be wrong now but you may be right later.
89. I'm never more tired than when I'm awake.
90. There is no such thing as infinity.
91. What we learn we learn in relation to what we know. What we know we know in relation to what we knew. We never know what we knew.
92. If time travel is possible it will always have been possible.
93. Facts are concrete fictions.
94. The Earth was not always round.
95. In the beginning was the past.
96. After living, death is nothing to be frightened of.
97. Yes there is life after death, but not for the one who's died.
98. How old was Adam?
99. Jesus had at least two brothers.
100. Chair times table equals question mark.
101. Everything is acceptable in context.
102. Life is long, science is short.
103. Life is not like an onion.
104. We live in a noisy universe.
105. I am a better me than you, as you are a better you than me.
106. This is art. SR '99.
107. I have never read the Koran.
108. The sun is shining, is it not?
109. We are not free.
110. Education is mind pollution.
111. It is possible to get blood from a stone.
112. Today I found a frozen hair.
113. If love is anything it is chemical.
114. People can be both right and wrong at the same time. (e.g. I think you are an apple.)
115. I find it hard to believe that people believe in something I don't believe in.
116. Cauliflower.
117. What would you think if I were to paint myself with varnish, then dive into a pool filled with black ink?
118. We have a lot in common you and I.
119. Yesterday I did a painting of a man. I think you know what I mean.
120. It's interesting to remember that all that's left of Manzoni is shit.
121. If I ever die my life will have been wasted.
122. 'You have a beautiful cunt,' said the poet.
123. Gravity is misleading.
124. Some things should be done purely for the sake of history.
125. Two things are necessary to make good art, invention and intention.
126. The end is always predictable.

127. Truth? whose truth?
128. I've found a way of predicting the past.
129. Where do you put the window in a greenhouse?
130. Who can you trust when even your eyes lie?
131. Nothing is worth dying for.
132. Nothing is worth living for.
133. Things are, only in relation to what they are not.
134. Biologically speaking I am a cup of tea.
135. Just because I kill you does not give you the right to kill me.
136. The older I become the more of me there is in the world, until plop! that was me completely.
137. Imagine a world with no imagination.
138. Whatever you're doing now, stop it.
139. Typical. People never do as they're told.
140. Whatever you're doing now, stop it.
141. The meek will not inherit the world, but they did inherit meekness.
142. If you are a stone a tortoise seems fast.
143. It is not necessary to be able to read to be able to write.
144. Don't even think about it.
145. I can't speak Japanese.
146. There are two things worth remembering, one and two.
147. All human violence is the result of language.
148. Today I died.
149. If a dog smells bad to us, how much worse must we smell to a dog?
150. I may die tomorrow so I thought I'd better write this today.
151. So far I haven't died today.
152. When you take a photograph you frame the present but capture the past.
153. Move the boundaries.
154. The killing of Jesus is one of mankind's greatest achievements.
155. Write what you want and think of the meaning later.
156. Is the Big Bang effect without cause.
157. Philosophers have got a lot to answer, but even more to answer for.
158. By changing the present you also change the past.
159. It is a mistake to think of reality as being real.
160. Did Nostradamus predict that people would still be reading his predictions today?
161. Interpretation is very important.
162. There are two things I can be certain of, I was born and I will die, ( probably.)
163. My whole life has been leading up to this sentence. Yours too.
164. UFO's do exist, but they're only unidentified by people who don't know what they are.
165. There are as many dimensions as we can imagine.
166. The more you know, the more there is to know.
167. A drawing of a tree is also a self portrait.
168. The potential of a line, to write this or draw that.
169. Something, sometime.

170. Christianity is based on the primitive need for a blood sacrifice.
171. Where things are is where things are found, not where you look for them.
172. Books are silent.
173. In the beginning was the pictogram.
174. It truly is a miracle that anybody believes in God.
175. We are still living in a dictatorship of the word.
176. It is so conformist to appear alternative.
177. Could it be that nostalgia is a disease affecting the memory?
178. No is a positive statement.
179. As far as the eye can see and no further.
180. Art like philosophy deals with the trivialities of life.
181. It's not that anything matters much anyway.
182. I am a physical memory.
183. If I could I would think better, if I was I would be better, if I am then I better be.
184. Certainly certainty is uncertain.
185. It's a comfort to know more than Plato.
186. The Big Bang need not have been big. Even the smallest something in nothing is bigger than anything we can imagine.
187. Think about time for roughly one minute.
188. Parks should be walked through not sat in.
189. I was awake, thinking of being asleep, dreaming that I was awake thinking of being asleep dreaming.
190. The sun is in.
191. If I had to choose I'd choose Hobson.
192. It's fifteen thousand million years since the beginning of time, depending on how long a year is.
193. Before the invention of the camera nobody had a photographic memory.
194. I had a good idea for a painting, surely that's enough.
195. The mathematical mirror distorts easily.
196. Art is defined by choices. Is it possible to make the wrong ones?
197. The object is, and cannot be better or worse.
198. Mystery is the absence of intelligence.
199. Yellow and blue do not make green. Humans make green.
200. Sometimes it is night, and sometimes it is day, sometimes it is light, and sometimes it is grey.
201. Abel was the first man to go to heaven.
202. Sometimes it's hard to know which way up an abstract painting should go
203. Oh, by the way, what is an abstract painting? Surely it's a painting, therefore not at all abstract.
204. Words, words, words!
205. It's nonsense to say everyone is born equal.
206. I am often misquoted or quoted out of context, but only by myself.
207. Art is about knowing what to do and when to stop doing it.
208. We live in increasingly commercial times. therefore it's about time that I joined in,(it's a zeitgeist thing.) Smoke Silk Cut cigarettes, they're good!

209. Language is a slippery thing.
210. Clouds are just rain shrouded in mystery.
211. Close your eyes when reading this sentence.
212. Truth is an idea not a fact, truly.
213. How much did Socrates know about dinosaurs?
214. If Jesus was the son of God he was not a man. If Jesus was a man he was not the son of God.
215. Guess and you may be right.
216. It is far better to begin and fail than to fail to begin.
217. Do you remember the story about the bear, the boat, and the ivory tower?
218. Eventually we will run out of numbers.
219. Light equals good.
220. The universe is dark.
221. Old people know about time travel.
222.  $X \times X = X$
223. I like lemons, they have a zest for life.
224. In the beginning was the word, and shortly afterwards came the lie.
225. I'm sure that someday, somewhere, someone will say something about the gravitational affects of cities.
226. There was a time before time was there.
227. I feel sorry for slugs, thought the snail.
228. Mistakes intentionally repeated soon lose the right to be called mistakes.
229. I don't know where time comes from but I know where it's at.
230. Two hundred and thirty one.
231. There are many good teachers but few good pupils.
232. I admire you, you have such an ability to do things badly.
233. People say realism in painting is possible. I tell you no, it is not. All paintings are the same, paintings.
234. The beauty seen by the doer may not be perceived by the viewer.
235. O onion, thou art such a cruel model. Your surface reflects your hidden depth.
236. The attempt to depict true life is like cutting through air with a knife.
237. Vanity is paper sculpture.
238. The salt pot will not deny pepper entry.
239. Eventually glass becomes too thick to see through.
240. Happy is the tree cut down to make a boat, it's destiny is travel, that's why it learnt to float.
241. In front of every silver lining lurks a dark cloud.
242. Music is just a disturbance in the air.
243. It is easier for a needle to pass through the eye of a man than it is for a camel to conceive the kingdom of heaven.
244. All religions say the same thing; that people are prepared to believe anything.
245. Speak, but don't expect to be understood.
246. Never trust mirrors.
247. Sometimes it's possible to do the impossible.
248. It depends on the distance between one and two.
250. All philosophy is based on each philosophers experience.

251. One thinks clearer if the sun is not too hot.
252. A lie becomes truth if enough people believe it.
253. Today is Wednesday, depending on what day you read this.
254. Art lies.
255. I look forward to the day when philosophy no longer has anything to do with belief, and is just a complicated matter of right and wrong.
256. Things before facts.
257. There is more fruit in the bowl than the painting shows.
258. Today I saw an eclipse. Tomorrow I will see another one. (11:8:99)
259. I am just another object in my room.
260. We cannot both be free.
261. Even I can change my mind.
262. Just shut the fuck up.
263. Compromise, compromise, not out of necessity but out of choice.
264. It is easy to fail silently.
265. Even if I die I will have lived.
266. Numbers mean more to some people than to others, e.g. 95% or 96%.
267. Play a very loud note on a very quiet instrument.
268. The police do a very good job, but the job sucks.
269. You can be sure that the sun will rise tomorrow. (But if it doesn't, so what?)
270. If you don't have evidence guess, but don't expect to be believed.
271. The universe is not as old as I thought it was. No, I'm joking, it's exactly as old as I thought it was.
272. Only now is it possible to understand the past. In the future more will be known about now.
273. There will soon be life on Mars.
274. There are two main reasons for intelligent life; life and intelligence.
275. Why are you upset? I'm upset because you're not upset.
276. Some people need no excuse to be happy.
277. It can take as long to make a cup of tea as to write an opera.
278. The difference between a cricket team and a herd of cows is minimal when seen from a distance, but there's no difference when not seen.
279. You can never be sure that others see the same as you.
280. To know where you are it's best to remember where you came from.
281. Mankind will really have achieved something when we've learnt to harness the power of lightning.
282. Silence is not the absence of sound, it is the absence of hearing.
283. Doing one bad painting is not enough to prove that you cannot paint.
284. Something may be possible, but believing it's possible may be impossible.
285. Writing is like chatting with a deaf person in a dark room.
286. There are more books than people to read them.
287. Dust is a thing of the past.
288. Open doors are like invitations.
289. Fire, air, water, earth, I'm sure there's something missing.
290. I thought I saw a camel. but it turned out to be a cloud.
291. Black, dark, cold, yellow!

292. There is no room for taste in artistic matters, e.g. music is the organisation of sound, regardless of the sound. Neither good or bad, art just is.
293. The problem is not the words but the definitions.
294. Geometrically speaking a triangle makes sense.
295. Oblong.
296. It could be possible that everybody's right.
297. Yesterday the truth knocked on my door, I didn't open it because I was out. It left no massage.
298. The Sun has no sense of humour, but it seems as though the clouds have.
299. Flies know the value of shit.
300. Sometimes a works badness is its only redeeming feature.
301. Whenever two are concerned one each is best.
302. Humans have a tendency to think that a sentence should make fishmonger, when of course it doesn't have to.
303. Slavery was abolished for humanitarian reasons. Now humanity should be abolished for environmental reasons.
304. If I don't do it now I will forget it. Now I've done it I'm beginning to regret it.
305. When a person goes the love remains.
306. When I think of dinosaurs I think how lucky I am to think of dinosaurs.
307. Sometimes the best writers are those with the least to say.
308. The cleverest men are often the most stupid.
309. If I say banana skin you want to slip on it.
310. I am not I.
311. You don't exist, I imagined you. You think you exist, but you are not the you I'm referring to.
312. This is a truism.
313. At least I have biology on my side.
314. There are many different ways to see something.
315. I'm not so big but you are so small.
316. There are many sides to every fence.
317. I am English. (Even a simple sentence like this is impossible to understand, or is easy to misunderstand. Each person will read it differently.)
318. Dog asks more questions than it answers.
319. Dogs ask more questions than they answer.
320. Even banality requires research.
321. "I am, I certainly am actually," as Tony Blackburn once said.
322. Imagination is not infinite.
323. You cannot measure time, but you can measure what you think time is.
324. Language defines culture.
325. I dreamt I met a psychoanalyst who convinced me I was awake. (I am probably still asleep.)
326. Have you ever been intellectualised into a corner?
327. One would expect the universe to be round, but I have not yet been able to prove it.
328. Today I have taken eight photographs and written two sentences. I consider that to be a good days work.

329. I am not a chimpanzee, but I almost am.
330. It is interesting to think you are reading this in the future.
331. Restless nights of planning, scheming, mind to full for sleeping, dreaming.
332. There is always hope that tomorrow will be better than today.
333. I don't think the universe is big enough for a book containing all human knowledge.
334. Surely it should be; to carry on being, or to have been? (that is the question.)
335. To say today is Tuesday would be a lie. But it might just be true.
336. Which is the more selfish, reading or writing?
337. Accept the shape of things.
338. If Newton was alive today he'd be turning in his grave.
339. If we measured time differently we could live to be much older.
340. Evolution is fine, but what's for dinner?
341. The best tricks are learnt from old dogs.
342. Dying is just stopping hopping.
343. Photography is slicing the world into little bits.
344. Sometimes I'm surprised when I do things well, but I'm rarely surprised when I do things badly.
345. In the future everyone will die.
346. I do like a nice cup of coffee though.
347. Hey you! stop eating that carpet, don't you care about the environment?
348. I will never be as old as I am today.
349. History is an ocean of spilt milk.
350. Writing music is just a way of organising your time.
351. Which is darker, black or white? It depends.
352. "Measuring the happiness of cows is a tricky but interesting enterprise," said the actor to the pope.
353. I cannot remember being an egg, and I cannot remember not being. I will not remember being, but will probably have been.
354. Which is faster, thought or light? (Or to put it another way, which is slower.)
355. Words kill the mystery of music.
356. If it wasn't this it could have been anything.
357. I'm thinking something incredibly rude now!
358. Being dead is very different from never having been born. (Not necessarily better.)
359. I thought I saw a flea, but on closer inspection it turned out to be a small black car.
360. All ideas about the future are wrong apart from this one.
361. The future will end.
362. Lists always make something look important, especially if they're printed.
363. Never say ever.
364. I wonder if Plato ever said, "you may be cleverer than me, but I bet my cock's bigger than yours."
365. Pleasure is a mixture of please and sure. (Or, Sure! please.)
366. I can't remember how amazed I was when I first found out about dinosaurs,

- but however amazed I was, I wasn't amazed enough.
367. Messiness it often equated with freedom.
  368. There are two stages to intelligence, thinking and remembering.
  369. It is in with.
  370. My spelling is awefull.
  371. Happiness is the carrot.
  372. Whenever I hear the word cynic, I think of young swans.
  373. There is an expert for everything somewhere.
  374. What does it mean to spell God with a small g?
  375. There are many things that will never be imagined.
  376. Think about the implications of a microscopic camel.
  377. I remember well that day in the garden spent staring at the sun.
  378. As well as being what it is something can be what it isn't.
  379. It's about time people woke up to the fact that God isn't going to save the Queen.
  380. Although I'm almost fifty, the number sixty nine still brings a smile to my face.
  381. Now I'm up to three hundred. (The past always catches up with the present.)
  382. The written word conceals more than it reveals.
  383. Humans love being lied to. Do pigs?
  384. We are heading towards a world computarchy.
  385. Chance is too small a word for all its implications.
  386. Something's are just sentences waiting to be written.
  387. If I wasn't me I could have been anything, even nothing.
  388. It is impossible to waste time.
  389. If a butterfly can do such damage imagine what a sneeze can do.
  390. Some people try to do too much and achieve it, while others try to do nothing and fail completely.
  391. Trees translate the speech of the wind.
  392. I. W. T. F. Y. S. L. A. B! (Make up your own sentence using these letters as the first letter of each word. You can't go wrong.)
  393. Words are just clues in the mystery of understanding.
  394. It's hard to imagine Shakespeare in modern clothing, but it's quite good fun to try.
  395. I wonder who the most fucked woman in history is.
  396. A wise man is he who knows when to show off his ignorance.
  397. There is always something quietly satisfying about reaching a hundred.
  398. Knowing what you want is the hardest part of getting it.
  399. Everest is the highest mountain, but only for the time being.
  400. Facts change.
  401. Why is always secondary.
  402. Artists have gone down many different roads, but they've always started from the same place.
  403. Art is about definitions.
  404. Accomplishment is often tinged with disappointment.
  405. That plant has ten leaves, but two flowers it has also.
  406. It's very unlikely that intelligent life on other planets has evolved at the same

pace as on this one. The future may be full of extraterrestrial life, by then of course it's very unlikely that there will still be life here.

407. I have a cold, yet when I'm asleep I think I feel fine.
408. I closed my eyes and imagined I was on a crowded train. When I opened them I was.
409. There is no reason to think that aliens are visible.
410. I want to learn to speak binary.
411. Music is a sound idea.
412. Eventually the moment will pass.
413. Can the grains of sand be accurately counted?
414. Use more of the same day by deciding quicker.
415. Never perform miracles, unless you're prepared to deal with the consequences.
416. To every question there is an answer, but it's not always right.
417. Look above to name yourself vertically. (It would probably have happened anyway, but why rely on the abstract notion of chance, fat chance?)
418. The people you meet later benefit from the mistakes you made earlier.
419. Good ideas are the mutations of thought.
420. Clocks have no understanding of time.
421. Normal is what's normal to you.
422. Don't be too proud to apologise to yourself.
423. Something's are better left unread.
424. To properly understand anything you read you must have written it yourself. Even then you may still have problems.
425. If you need to think of something to say it's probably not worth hearing.
426. The difference between today and tomorrow is purely intellectual. I started this today and finished it today on different days.
427. Great art has a tendency to undermine the notion of good art.
428. The number of teaspoons full of water in the oceans is not infinite, but it would take forever to count them.
429. Dreaming is the closest thing to time travel possible.
430. Idea for an abstract painting; take a large piece of canvas and paint something non-representational on it, or don't. ©SR 99
431. Tell the smallest lie you can think of. For example, I imagined I saw a flea today, or, I swallowed a carbon atom this morning.
432. Many great things have been achieved by the religions of the world, unfortunately God is not one of them.
433. The only way to become a better person is to be a better person.
434. Mankind is like a dinosaur walking on tiptoe towards extinction.
435. Imagination is only possible with reference to something.
436. Saffron is red poetry stigmatised.
437. Autumn is pessimistic, winter is nihilistic, spring is optimistic, and summer is summary.
438. Something's are just not worth inventing, like a helicopter that runs on toast.
439. Music is aural fascism. We are told what to listen to and when.
440. Four thousand eight hundred and fifty three, is four hundred and forty more than there should be. But what is a word?

441. Theory is the fact supposed.
442. Now is always an interesting time to be living.
443. Time only applies to the living.
444. Today I wrote a landscape, full of clichés and things non-existent.
445. The fact that it hasn't been done before doesn't mean it's worth doing.
446. History is like a broken mirror.
447. If you have power you can judge without evidence.
448. Success and failure are based on expectation not results. (A man tried to jump to the Moon, he wasn't even close but broke the world high jump record.)
449. Computers make a whole new set of problems available.
450. Images only exist in words.
451. It is impossible to imagine the end of imagination.
452. I have decided to paint an invisible picture. (Now I just need to decide what it's of.)
453. Before everything there was absolutely nothing.
454. The mind is the most unreliable part of the body.
455. Newton stood on the shoulders of giants, the rest of us just walk in their footprints.
456. In the search for meaning you may lose the feeling.
457. You should do what you want to do, (not do what you think people might think you should do,) or do nothing, (often the hardest thing to (not) do.)
458. Mankind and man are irreconcilable. A-men.
459. Art is a label that can be stuck on anything.
460. The last but one must come.
461. Ending is the beginning of something else.