

AMERICAN AVERAGES

by Mike Feinsilber and William B. Mead

Who is the average American, anyway? While few people we know admit to being average, ordinary, or run-of-the-mill, almost everybody is curious about who is. According to statistics collected by regular guys Mike Feinsilber and Bill Mead in their book, *American Averages*, the average American has some pretty peculiar habits. Do you recognize this person in the following quiz? Scores of 0 to 4 and 15 to 20 correct are unusual; 5 to 9 and 11 to 15 correct are fairly typical; and 10 correct, for better or worse, is exactly average.

Answer Drawer, page 72

1. On an average day, Americans buy 3,287

- a) IBM electric typewriters
- b) pairs of roller skates
- c) sets of encyclopedias
- d) clarinets

2. Between morning coffee and "lights out," the average married couple converses

- a) 2 hours a week
- b) 2 minutes a week
- c) 20 minutes a week
- d) 6 hours a week

3. According to time management expert R. Alan McKenzie, the average manager

- a) writes 45 memos a week
- b) spends 72 percent of his or her workday on the phone
- c) drinks 7 martinis a week
- d) is interrupted every 8 minutes all day long

4. Including signs, package labels, and all kinds of ads, the average American is exposed to ____ commercial messages each day.

- a) 200
- b) 65
- c) 1,800
- d) 482

5. At a typical Redskins game, fans will consume

- a) 16,000 hot dogs
- b) 2,250 servings of french fries
- c) 15,000 beers
- d) 500 glasses of wine

6. On a usual summer day, the average American's feet

- a) are bare 52 percent of the time
- b) swell 10 percent
- c) perspire 38 percent more than in the winter
- d) are, in all likelihood, the farthest thing from his mind

7. Each year, the average young, up-

and-coming executive spends ____ tying his tie.

- a) 24 hours
- b) 4 hours
- c) 1,460 seconds
- d) 68 minutes

8. In an average year, Americans use the Yellow Pages

- a) 8 out of 10 times to reach high shelves
- b) 43 percent more often than they use dictionaries to boost kids up to the dinner table
- c) 17 billion times for all kinds of information
- d) 2.3 percent of the time for kindling

9. The candy bar that satisfies the American sweet tooth more often than any other is:

- a) a Snickers bar
- b) an Almond Joy
- c) a Milky Way
- d) a Nestle's Crunch bar

10. Before it runs out of lead, a typical #2 pencil can draw a line

- a) 26 yards long
- b) 3.2 times faster than a ball-point pen
- c) 35 miles long
- d) 53½ times taller than Walt Frazier

11. In the course of their daily rounds,

- a) 538 out of 1,000 boxers are TKO'd
- b) 59 percent of average American interns are propositioned by their patients
- c) 2 out of 7 merry-go-rounds break down
- d) 28 mailmen are bitten by dogs

12. The favorite pastime of 1 out of 5 Americans is

- a) whittling
- b) daydreaming
- c) working crossword puzzles
- d) shooting the breeze

13. The average American will pack up

and move from one home to another

- a) every 10.6 years
- b) 59 percent more readily than his or her parents
- c) in 9.8 hours, with a U-Haul
- d) 14 times in his or her lifetime

14. The average person laughs

- a) 63 percent more often at slapstick than at subtle humor
- b) twice as loud as the average hyena
- c) at 2.5 out of 3 jokes
- d) 15 times a day

15. The average family car

- a) has 7 accidents in its lifetime
- b) is driven 12,000 miles a year
- c) goes through 35 tires
- d) receives 6 paint jobs before retiring to the junkyard

16. The average listener hears

- a) better at age 10 than he or she ever will again
- b) better at the dinner table than at the breakfast table
- c) exactly what he or she wants to hear 79 percent of the time
- d) 23 percent worse than a dog

17. The average person—when *not* flirting—bats his or her eyelashes

- a) every ten seconds
- b) 25 times per minute
- c) 2.5 times faster than Vivien Leigh
- d) on a par with Elsie the Cow

18. Between dawn and dusk on any given day in America, ____ couples are wed, and ____ couples are divorced.

- a) 10,015; 6,504
- b) 848; 12
- c) 3,150; 6,320
- d) 5,962; 2,986

19. The average American spends 16 cents of every dollar on

- a) a Big Mac
- b) off-track betting
- c) a new pair of Adidas
- d) a new car

20. For business or pleasure, on an average day Americans will make ____ telephone calls.

- a) 980,000
- b) 1.8 million
- c) 75 million
- d) 580 million