English 9 Ms. Valani and Ms. Fleming

**Quiz Review Answers**

**1. What is Arthur angry about? What does he do?**

Arthur Dent is angry because there is a bypass planned that will go through his house. Due to this, his house is being planned for demolition. Arthur is made even angrier by the fact that the plans for this bypass were not on display, and were in fact in a locked filing cabinet hidden in an old bathroom that has a sign outside stating "beware of the leopard." Arthur proceeds to lie down in front of the bulldozers poised to destroy his house.

**2. How does Ford Prefect manage to get Arthur to stop lying in front of the bulldozers?**

Ford attempts to reason with Mr. Prosser, telling him that since Arthur was not going to move and Mr. Prosser and his crew were resigned to doing nothing all day anyway, they did not actually need Arthur to continue lying in front of the bulldozer. Mr. Prosser is confused by this, but agrees to lie down in the place of Arthur in exchange for a chance to visit the pub himself later on. This, of course, makes absolutely no sense, but since Mr. Prosser is not an intelligent man and is accustomed to being fooled by people, it works for the time being.

**3. Why are towels so important?**

The towel is an extremely versatile instrument. It can be used to keep oneself warm, to lie down on, as shelter, as a weapon, and many other things. Furthermore, the possession of a towel suggests that a hitchhiker is also in possession of other useful tools. Finally, a person who is really together and a force to be reckoned with is a person who really knows where his towel is.

**4. Who is Zaphod Beeblebrox?**

Zaphod is the President of the entire universe, though this is only a figurehead position that wields absolutely no real power. Zaphod is a manic and half-crazy form of intergalactic celebrity, whose decision to run for the presidency caused controversy throughout the universe. He is also two hundred years old, and has two heads and three arms.

**5. What does Ford fail to understand about humans?**

Ford Prefect does not understand why humans constantly feel the need to state the blatantly obvious. He tested a few theories in regards to why humans do this, such as if they do not keep exercising their mouths, then their brains will start working. All theories were abandoned, because Ford really cannot explain the strange mannerisms of the human race.

**6. What is the significance of the babel fish?**

The babel fish is significant for two reasons. First of all, it allows anyone with a babel fish in their ear to understand any language spoken to them due to the unique manner in which the babel fish feeds on and excretes brain wave matrices. Secondly, it is proof of the non-existence of God due to a rather circular argument stating that it proves His existence, and therefore proves His non-existence because God refuses to have any proof of his existence at all.

**7. How does Arthur try to save Ford and himself from the Vogon? What happens?**

Arthur attempts to tell Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz that he really liked the poetry. He makes up a story about how the imagery was effective, and how Jeltz writes poetry because he just wants to be loved. Unfortunately, this is not true. Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz writes poetry to make himself even more horrid, and decides to throw the two hitchhikers off the ship anyways.

**8. What is the significance of the chances of being picked up in space?**

The Hitchhiker's Guide states that the chances of being picked up in deep space by a passing spacecraft are two to the power of two hundred and seventy-six thousand, seven hundred and nine to one against, which just happens to be the telephone number of an apartment where Arthur once went to a party. At the party, he met a girl he really liked, but completely failed to hook up with. The girl left the party with an uninvited guest.

**9. Where do Ford and Arthur find themselves immediately after being rescued? What is happening, and why?**

Ford and Arthur find themselves on the Starship Heart of Gold, which has been stolen by Zaphod Beeblebrox. The improbability drive of the ship has created a series of strange events and a highly distorted reality, which Ford and Arthur find rather bizarre. As the improbability decreases, normality is slowly restored.

**10. How was the Infinite Improbability Drive created?**

Scientists had long understood how to create finite amounts of improbability, but were unable to figure out a way to create the infinite improbability necessary to make an engine out of it. The scientists concluded that the drive was virtually impossible, but a student reasoned that since it was virtually impossible, it must have some sort of probable success. By calculating this probability and feeding it into a machine, the Infinite Improbability Drive was finally created.

**11. What is the interior of the Starship Heart of Gold like?**

The Heart of Gold is a brand-new ship, with plastic still covering some of the seats and sales brochures lying around. It was designed in a very exciting and creative way, and perhaps made to look more important or powerful than it really is. It features many products of the Sirius Cybernetics Corporation, which have their own annoying personalities that get on the nerves of both the crew and the robots themselves.

**12. What is the problem with Marvin the android?**

Marvin is a manically depressed robot, and a product of the ill-planned Genuine People Personality program of the Sirius Cybernetics Corporation. Marvin has, according to him, 'a brain the size of a planet,' and is utterly bored with everything around him. His programming seems to have been specifically designed this way, since he has specialized circuits for irony and other types of negative emotions.

**13. Why does Zaphod pretend to be stupid? What does Trillian think of this?**

Zaphod is sometimes quite clever, but is also frequently quite stupid. He also often pretends to be stupid in order to throw people off guard, or to hide the fact that he really does understand something. Zaphod prefers people to be puzzled rather than contemptuous, which Trillian thinks is rather stupid in and of itself. Zaphod seems to drive her a little crazy.

**14. Why does the computer say that most people's lives are governed by telephone numbers?**

This is a reference to something earlier in the novel. It turns out that the odds of Ford and Arthur being picked up in deep space were by a bizarre co-incidence also the number of the Islington apartment where Arthur originally met Trillian.

**15. What were the circumstances of how Arthur and Zaphod originally met?**

Arthur was trying to pick up Trillian at a party, because she was everything he ever wanted in a woman. Just when he finally got a chance to talk to her, Zaphod swooped in and told her to talk to him instead because he was from a different planet. This was, after all, the truth.

**16. What does Trillian say about her degree in math and astrophysics? What does she mean?**

Trillian says that her only choices were to go with Zaphod, or to go back to the dole queue on Monday. The dole queue is the welfare office in England, which means that a highly intelligent and educated person often cannot find a proper job.

**17. Why does Trillian have trouble sleeping?**

Trillian is disturbed by her reaction, or lack of reaction, to the news of Earth's destruction. She spends a while watching her pet mice, which are the only link she still has to the Earth. Trillian is also bothered by things she is unaware of, as are all the characters.

**18. Why does Ford have trouble sleeping?**

Ford is excited about traveling again after spending so much time trapped on the Earth. He is looking forward to having some adventures with Zaphod, but his semicousin has something decidedly odd about him and Ford can never understand what motivates him.

**19. What was life like in the former Galactic Empire?**

Life sounded really cliched and exciting in the former Galactic Empire. It was a time of adventure, risk-taking, and fantastic wealth for almost everyone. However, after achieving staggering amounts of riches, most people became rather bored. Custom-made luxury planets became the new and exciting diversion for the successful citizens of the Empire, though it would also be their downfall.

**20. What effect did Magrathea have on the former Galactic Empire?**

Since custom-made, luxury planets are ridiculously expensive, Magrathea eventually came to possess the vast majority of wealth in the galaxy and reduced the rest of its inhabitants to utter poverty. The system collapsed, and scholars wrote many smug papers on the necessity of planning and forethought in a political economy.

**21. How do the characters react to seeing the planet Magrathea? What do they think of its legend?**

Zaphod is completely convinced that he has found the legendary planet of Magrathea, which is justifiable since he is indeed correct. Ford is skeptical, and does not understand why people always have to add some sort of mystique to something that is beautiful on its own.Trillian does not know the planet Magrathea from a cold rock in space, so she is indifferent.