The Proof Angel Summary of

Bits and bobs: September 2015

Keeping track of your to do list

Are you a fan of to do lists? I am, particularly if I need to do a lot of small tasks. On those occasions, not only does it stop you forgetting one of the tasks, but it also gives a sense of achievement when you cross them all off. Instead of feeling you've messed around doing nothing all morning, you can see the long list of useful things you have done.

For longer tasks, it can be more complicated. You need to mark off some kind of progress, but you can't cross it off the list, because it isn't finished yet.

If that is your problem, then try this circles system. It lets you mark off the level of progress on stages of a project in a really simple way.

When Google needs help

Many of us automatically turn to Google searches when we need to know something. But sometimes it isn't enough. What do you try next? Here is a list of possible search engines.

Can we trust a Google search?

Most of us assume that a Google search can find the best sites to match our information needs. As this post explains, the order we get may not be as unbiased and helpful as we think.

Make yourself happier with writing

Have you noticed how often writing makes you feel better? Here is some research into that phenomenon.

Have you heard about undo send in Gmail?

Now this could be a handy trick. The ability for Gmail users to set a cancellation period so you can change your mind immediately after you click on send.

But they do mean immediately, as the maximum is 30 seconds.

I must say, I'm not sure there is much point in being able to change your mind in the minimum period of 5 seconds.

10 ways to look after your eyes

These days, computer screens are a major part of work and play for many of us. Our eyes aren't designed for that sort of use, so it makes sense to look after them.

Here are some ways to relieve computer relate eye strain.

The benefits of being bilingual

This is a fascinating piece about the advantages of being bilingual. Not only does it exercise your brain, but it can change your perspective.

Languages of the world in maps and charts

It is reckoned that half the world's languages will disappear by the end of the century. The position is very complex, but this post does an excellent job of simplifying it into a few maps and charts.

So how hard can translation be?

The answer is very. If you think that translation is just a matter of finding the right page in Google, you may find this list of top 10 misconceptions about translation enlightening.

Another take on the book against ebook battle

It has long been said that the paper book is on its way out.

I suspect mainly by people who don't need to compare two books very often.

Now it seems that sales of paper books are taking off again.

Does writing by hand make you more mobile?

According to this author, writing everything by hand, in a note book, is more efficient and makes the writing process more mobile. I'm not sure I want to go back to that modus operandi.

More reasons why we should read

We often hear that reading is good for us. Here is a rather unconventional reasons why we should all be reading regularly.

The origins of the footnote

If you thought that the footnote is a modern invention, you have a shock coming when you read about the medieval origins of the modern footnote.

Upgrading to Windows 10

If you are thinking about upgrading, this post is interesting.

The Agatha Christie formula

Researchers have unlocked the formula for Agatha Christie's mysteries. I find this fascinating, but somehow strangely incomprehensible at the same time.

Find your personality type from your use of words

Here is a bit of fun. This post claims to establish your personality type by looking at how you use words.

I can't help thinking that a lot of the differences are down to age!

Names in Oceania

There is some interesting information here about the origin of some country names in Oceania, the area encompassing the islands of the Pacific Ocean and adjacent seas.

Now get out that atlas and look up the ones you can't point out.

When U doesn't follow Q

Stuck with a Q and no U? Here is a list of the words you need to know to get round that Scrabble problem.

12 most popular books of all time

Go on. I dare you to write down your own list before you check the 12 most popular books. I'm surprised about several of these…

Optical illusions in typefaces

A bit of trivia for you. Optical illusions in fonts. I like the cartoon at the end of this one.

The history of the pencil

The pencil is such an ordinary old fashioned thing that we tend to think it has been with us for ever. In reality, it is quite a modern invention. Find out more with this history of the pencil.

Was Shakespeare high when he wrote?

Now some people might think that this explains a lot. But the evidence is quite circumstantial.

This post suggests a link between William Shakespeare and cannabis.

So what do you think?

A bookshop for self publishers

This is an interesting way of doing business. I wonder how this bookshop for self publishers will develop?

Best linguistic jokes of the 2015 fringe

For those of us who didn't get round to going to the Edinburgh Festival (again) here is a round up of the best linguistic jokes of the year.

I like number 2 the best.

An experiment into judging a book by the cover

We all know that it isn't sensible to judge a book by the cover. But at some level, we all do it. It may only be when we go straight past a dull grey effort because our eye is caught by something snazzier, but that is still a judgement.

This post is about an experiment to see how our assessment of the cover matches the average assessment of people who have read the book.

Of course, they don't allow for taste in a sample like this. Several of the books in my batch had dull titles.

How to use Twitter to build your brand

If you are trying to build up your web presence, Twitter can be a very useful tool.

Working out how to use it effectively can be hard. Try this post about building your brand with Twitter. One of these days, I really will get to grips with hashtags.

How to pick a password

Here is some good guidance on one of modern life's biggest niggles. How to pick a password.

Crowd funding for literary launches

Literary magazines are joining in with the crowd funding trend. Read all about it here.

Why some people are left-handed?

Here is an insight into why some people are left-handed.

Technology opens your book

Is this technology gone mad? This book only opens if it detects your [face has a neutral expression.](#) The question in my mind is why? Although I'm sure something really useful will develop from this idea. Eventually.

If you are planning a trip…

If you are doing some armchair travel, or perhaps something more far flung, these links could be useful:

- Places with a connection with [Alice in Wonderland](#)
- An [interactive map](#) of American literature's greatest road trips.
- If you are really planning to go no further than the armchair have a look at this [book of literary maps.](#)

An insight into designing a font

Here is a post for fans of font design. Don't try this one on a small screen.

A [typeface designer's illustrated tour](#) of how to create a font has some very distracting illustrations. They need a big screen to appreciate them properly.

A glossary of typographic terms

Following on from yesterday's theme, here is an illustrated [glossary of typographic terms](#).