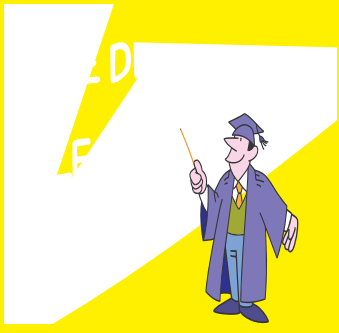
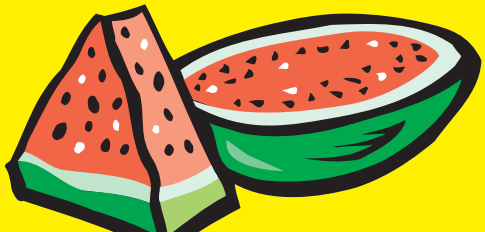
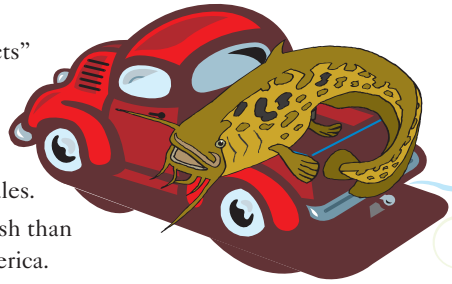






National Catfish Month

For people who have spent any time at all around the Tennessee River, tall tales of "catfish as big as Volkswagens" are as common as fleas on a dog. The oft-told legend has it that man-eating catfish the size of small cars have been sighted near the base of area dams by maintenance divers (whose hair reportedly turned white from the shock of the sighting).



Below are a few "fun facts" about catfish:

- The catfish has over 27,000 taste buds.
- Catfish don't have scales.
- Texans eat more catfish than any other state in America.
- The catfish is the official fish of Missouri.
- It is illegal to lasso a catfish in Tennessee.
- The electric catfish, native to Africa, is capable of generating up to 350 volts.
- The "whiskers" that make catfish look like cats are really barbels (barbulls), which are covered with tastebuds that allow the fish to find food in the murkiest of water.
- Belzoni, MS, claims to be the catfish capital of the world.



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Soapbox

Supreme Wisdom: Technically, green peppers, zucchini, cucumbers, and tomatoes are all fruits. But don't try telling that to the U.S. Supreme Court. Per the 1893 case *Nix v. Hedden*, the court decided tomatoes were veggies and therefore subject to the vegetable tariff. What was the Supreme Court's reasoning? Tomatoes have to be vegetables because they're usually served with dinner, not dessert.

Grammar: Other than paragraph indentations the Dead Sea Scrolls have no punctuation, absolutely none which, as you can imagine, makes for difficult reading.

Astrology: Mark Twain was born in 1835, a year when Halley's Comet was visible from Earth. In 1909, he wrote, "I came in with Halley's Comet…and I expect to go out with it." Indeed he did. When he died on April 21, 1910, the comet was visible in the night sky.

Failure: Galileo was a college dropout, briefly attending the University of Pisa before financial considerations forced him to leave. But, just a few years later, he returned to school – as a professor.

New York City: The Dutch colony of New Amsterdam (a.k.a. New York) was traded to the British in exchange for Pulo Run, a tiny South Pacific Island. This might seem like a bad trade today, but Pulo Run was prime growing territory for nutmeg – a more valuable commodity than anything made in New York at the time.

Inch: One of the first definitions for an inch was the breadth of a man's thumb at the base of the nail. Then scientists refined it to measure the breadth of three men's thumbs (one small, one medium, one large) divided by three. Later, it became the length of three grains of barley. But you might prefer this competing definition: One inch equals the length of 12 poppy seeds. Almost makes you want to adopt the metric system, huh?