

Confetti Catastrophe



Part 1

The following statement was made in a newspaper headline on January 1st, 2000:

35 Million Tons of Confetti Falls on Time Square

An alert mathematics teacher from a local middle school wrote the following letter:

Please advise your newspaper staff that 35 million tons of confetti could not have fallen on Times Square. One ton is 2000 pounds, so 35 million tons is 70,000,000,000 pounds. There were an estimated 2,000,000 people in Times Square at midnight. This results in 35,000 pounds of confetti per person. How come there were no reports of parties being crushed?

An editor from the newspaper responded:

You are absolutely correct; there were only 4 million tons of confetti, not 35 million.

1. What is your reaction to the newspaper editor's response? Are you satisfied with his/her response?
2. Write each number in the teacher's letter to the newspaper in scientific notation.

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Part 2

The following statements were published on the Internet:

Triumphant Giants Conquer New York

The Super Bowl champion New York Giants received a New York welcome at today's victory parade. Hundreds of thousands of fans and 50 tons of confetti filled the streets of Lower Manhattan. Players waved atop floats, many catching the action on camcorders as fans bellowed their support, and Michael Strahan showed off the Vince Lombardi trophy, the *New York Post* reports.

In regards to Josh Allen's win on So You Think You Can Dance Season 4

What an amazing moment!!!! It would have been great to see it. However the producers decided to unload 60 million tons of confetti on the stage.

Choose either the Super Bowl headline or the *So You Think You Can Dance* headline and write a letter similar to the math teacher's letter justifying whether their figures are correct.

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