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Level 6

Man sues New York City for \$2,000,000,000,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000,000,000

21st May, 2014

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>



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Please try Levels 4 and 5 (they are easier).

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THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>

There is a phrase in English when someone gets a big salary that they earn "telephone numbers". A man in New York is suing the city (and others) for so much that it is almost impossible to think of a comparison. Anton Purisima, 62, is suing for two undecillion. Over 99.99 per cent of English speakers would not know or have heard of the word for this amount. That astronomical figure is two undecillion dollars – a two followed by 36 zeros. The only people who are likely to need this word are probably astrophysicists and astronomers. Two undecillion dollars is, in fact, more than all the money in the whole world. Even more than all the wealth created throughout humankind's entire history.

So what did New York City do so wrong to be sued for such a mind-bogglingly gargantuan sum? Quite a lot, it seems. The New York Post reports that Mr Purisima is suing the city (as well as two local hospitals, LaGuardia Airport, the transportation system, a bakery and even a dog owner) for "civil-rights violations, personal injury, discrimination in national origin, retaliation, harassment, fraud, attempted murder, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and conspiracy to defraud". Why? Well, it's because last month a "rabies-infected" dog bit his finger on a city bus; then, a "Chinese couple" took photos of him without asking; and to add insult to injury, he is routinely overcharged for coffee at LaGuardia Airport.

Sources: <http://www.ibtimes.com/who-anton-purisima-meet-man-suing-nyc-two-undecillion-dollars-1585981>
<http://time.com/103826/anton-purisima-lawsuit-nyc/>
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/man-files-lawsuit-for-2000-decillion-thats-36-zeros-after-being-bitten-by-a-dog-and-having-his-photograph-taken-by-a-chinese-couple-9396725.html>

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WARM-UPS

1. LAWSUITS: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about lawsuits. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

phrase / big salary / impossible / comparison / amount / astronomical / wealth / hospitals / transportation / civil rights / harassment / emotional distress / overcharged

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. BIG NUMBERS: Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	How many zeros?	How / When is this word used?
Hundred		
Thousand		
Million		
Billion		
Trillion		
Gazillion		

4. SUE: Students A **strongly** believe suing someone is the best way to resolve wrongs; Students B **strongly** believe it isn't. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. NUMBERS: Rank these with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| • your bank account | • your salary |
| • your age | • your test scores |
| • your weight | • your waist size |
| • your phone number | • other _____ |

6. WEALTH: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "wealth". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

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BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE:

Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. If someone earns "telephone numbers" they get a low salary. T / F
- b. Most English speakers know what an undecillion is. T / F
- c. An undecillion is a 1 followed by 36 zeros. T / F
- d. All of the wealth in the world amounts to around \$3 undecillion. T / F
- e. The article said it appears New York did a lot of wrong things. T / F
- f. A man is suing an airport, a bakery and two hospitals. T / F
- g. The man suing New York was bitten by a rat. T / F
- h. The man is also suing because coffee at an airport is too expensive. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. phrase | a. appears |
| 2. comparison | b. number |
| 3. astronomical | c. whole |
| 4. figure | d. offense |
| 5. entire | e. similarity |
| 6. sum | f. expression |
| 7. seems | g. regularly |
| 8. retaliation | h. amount |
| 9. insult | i. revenge |
| 10. routinely | j. huge |

3. PHRASE MATCH:

(Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. impossible to think | a. hospitals |
| 2. the word for | b. by 36 zeros |
| 3. a two followed | c. entire history |
| 4. more than all the money | d. gargantuan sum |
| 5. the wealth created throughout humankind's | e. to injury |
| 6. mind-bogglingly | f. this amount |
| 7. two local | g. murder |
| 8. attempted | h. in the whole world |
| 9. a rabies-infected | i. of a comparison |
| 10. add insult | j. dog bit his finger |

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GAP FILL

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>

There is a phrase in English when someone gets a big salary that they (1) _____ "telephone numbers". A man in New York is suing the city (and others) for so much that it is almost (2) _____ to think of a comparison. Anton Purisima, 62, is suing for two undecillion. Over 99.99 per cent of English (3) _____ would not know or have heard of the word for this (4) _____. That astronomical figure is two undecillion dollars – a two (5) _____ by 36 zeros. The only people who are (6) _____ to need this word are probably astrophysicists and astronomers. Two undecillion dollars is, in (7) _____, more than all the money in the whole world. Even more than all the wealth created throughout humankind's (8) _____ history.

fact
followed
speakers
earn
entire
impossible
likely
amount

So what did New York City do so wrong to be sued for such a mind-bogglingly gargantuan (9) _____? Quite a lot, it seems. The New York Post reports that Mr Purisima is suing the city (as well as two (10) _____ hospitals, LaGuardia Airport, the transportation (11) _____, a bakery and even a dog owner) for "civil-rights (12) _____, personal injury, discrimination in national origin, retaliation, harassment, fraud, (13) _____ murder, intentional infliction of emotional (14) _____, and conspiracy to defraud". Why? Well, it's because last month a "rabies-(15) _____ " dog bit his finger on a city bus; then, a "Chinese couple" took photos of him without asking; and to add (16) _____ to injury, he is routinely overcharged for coffee at LaGuardia Airport.

infected
attempted
system
insult
sum
distress
local
violations

Level 6

Man sues New York City for

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LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

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- 1) it is almost impossible to think _____
 - a. of a comparison
 - b. of the comparison
 - c. of a comparative
 - d. of the comparisons
- 2) English speakers would not know or have heard of the word _____
 - a. for these amount
 - b. for this amount
 - c. for that amount
 - d. for those amount
- 3) two undecillion dollars – a two _____
 - a. follow it by 36 zeros
 - b. follower by 36 zeros
 - c. followed by 36 zeros
 - d. follow by 36 zeros
- 4) The only people who are likely to need this word are probably _____
 - a. astrophysicists and astronomy
 - b. astrophysicists and astronomical
 - c. astrophysicists and astronomer
 - d. astrophysicists and astronomers
- 5) the wealth created throughout _____
 - a. humankind's entire history
 - b. human's kind entire history
 - c. humankind's entirety history
 - d. humankind's entire historical
- 6) be sued for such a mind-bogglingly _____
 - a. gargantuan sum
 - b. gargantuan some
 - c. gargantuan thumb
 - d. gargantuan soon
- 7) LaGuardia Airport, the transportation system, a bakery and _____
 - a. evenly a dog owner
 - b. even a dog owners
 - c. even the dog owner
 - d. evens a dog owner
- 8) attempted murder, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and _____
 - a. conspiracy too defraud
 - b. conspiracy to defraud
 - c. conspiracies to defraud
 - d. conspiracy tw defraud
- 9) it's because last month a "rabies-infected" _____
 - a. dog bid his finger
 - b. dog byte his finger
 - c. dog bite his finger
 - d. dog bit his finger
- 10) to add insult to injury, he is _____
 - a. routine overcharged
 - b. routinely overcharge
 - c. routine overcharge
 - d. routinely overcharged

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LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>

There is a phrase in English when someone (1) _____ that they earn "telephone numbers". A man in New York is suing the city (and others) for so much that it is almost impossible to (2) _____. Anton Purisima, 62, is suing for two undecillion. Over 99.99 per cent of English speakers (3) _____ have heard of the word (4) _____. That astronomical figure is two undecillion dollars – a two followed by 36 zeros. The only people who are (5) _____ word are probably astrophysicists and astronomers. Two undecillion dollars is, in fact, more than all the money in the whole world. Even more than (6) _____ throughout humankind's entire history.

So what did New York City (7) _____ sued for such a mind-bogglingly gargantuan sum? Quite a lot, it seems. The New York Post reports that Mr Purisima (8) _____ (as well as two local hospitals, LaGuardia Airport, the transportation system, a bakery and even a dog owner) for "(9) _____, personal injury, discrimination in national origin, retaliation, harassment, (10) _____, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and conspiracy to defraud". Why? Well, it's because last month a "rabies-infected" (11) _____ a city bus; then, a "Chinese couple" took photos of him without asking; and to add insult to injury, he (12) _____ for coffee at LaGuardia Airport.

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LAWSUITS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'lawsuit'?
- c) What do you think of this story?
- d) What do you think of people suing each other?
- e) Have you ever been involved in a lawsuit?
- f) Why do you think the man is suing for such a large amount?
- g) What are his chances of winning this case?
- h) Have you ever wanted compensation for something?
- i) If he won, how could the city pay him?
- j) How would life be different if you earned "telephone numbers"?

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LAWSUITS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
- b) Do you think New York City is at fault for anything in this case?
- c) What do you think the city's lawyers will say in court?
- d) What do you think of the list of things the man is suing for?
- e) What advice would you give to Mr Purisima?
- f) What advice would you give to New York City's lawyers?
- g) Should people be able to sue for being photographed without permission?
- h) What three adjectives best describe this article, and why?
- i) Is it becoming too easy to sue other people?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Mr Purisima?

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>

There is a *phrase / phrasal* in English when someone gets a big salary that they earn "telephone numbers". A man in New York is *sued / suing* the city (and others) for so much that it is almost *impossibility / impossible* to think of a *comparison / compare*. Anton Purisima, 62, is suing for two undecillion. Over 99.99 per cent of English speakers would not know or have *hearing / heard* of the word for this amount. That *astronomical / astronomy* figure is two undecillion dollars – a two *follows / followed* by 36 zeros. The only people who are likely to *needy / need* this word are probably astrophysicists and astronomers. Two undecillion dollars is, in *fact / act*, more than all the money in the whole world. Even more than all the wealth created throughout humankind's *entire / entirely* history.

So what did New York City do so wrong to be *suing / sued* for such a mind-bogglingly gargantuan *some / sum*? Quite a lot, it seems. The New York Post reports that Mr Purisima is suing the city (as well *has / as* two local hospitals, LaGuardia Airport, the *transportation / transporting* system, a bakery and even a dog owner) for "civil-rights violations, *private / personal* injury, discrimination in national *original / origin*, retaliation, harassment, fraud, *attempted / tried* murder, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and conspiracy to defraud". Why? Well, it's because last month a "rabies-infected" dog *bite / bit* his finger on a city bus; then, a "Chinese couple" took photos of him *within / without* asking; and to add insult to *injury / injured*, he is routinely overcharged for coffee at LaGuardia Airport.

Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct.

PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1405/140521-lawsuit.html>

there is a phrase in english when someone gets a big salary that they earn "telephone numbers" a man in new york is suing the city (and others) for so much that it is almost impossible to think of a comparison anton purisima 62 is suing for two undecillion over 9999 per cent of english speakers would not know or have heard of the word for this amount that astronomical figure is two undecillion dollars – a two followed by 36 zeros the only people who are likely to need this word are probably astrophysicists and astronomers two undecillion dollars is in fact more than all the money in the whole world even more than all the wealth created throughout humankind's entire history

so what did new york city do so wrong to be sued for such a mind-bogglingly gargantuan sum quite a lot it seems the new york post reports that mr purisima is suing the city (as well as two local hospitals laguardia airport the transportation system a bakery and even a dog owner) for "civil-rights violations personal injury discrimination in national origin retaliation harassment fraud attempted murder intentional infliction of emotional distress and conspiracy to defraud" why well it's because last month a "rabies-infected" dog bit his finger on a city bus then a "chinese couple" took photos of him without asking and to add insult to injury he is routinely overcharged for coffee at laguardia airport

