

By Paul Belleflamme, 17 November 2010

## An 'uncommon' riddle

Here is just a riddle, which I ask you to solve.

**What do the following stories have in common?**



Pfalz Castle, once a  
toll booth on the  
Rhine river  
([knate.blogspot.com](http://knate.blogspot.com))

**1.** During the Middle Ages, it became impossible to carry on commercial trade on the Rhine River because of the toll booths built by all sorts of barons.



Augustin  
Cournot  
(1801-1877)

**2.** Augustin Cournot explained in 1838 that the price of brass would fall if a monopoly zinc producer and a monopoly copper producer could merge.



Biplane  
([www.airlandseaweapons.com](http://www.airlandseaweapons.com))

**3.** In the second decade of the twentieth century, it was almost impossible to build an airplane in the United States.



(Credit: Warner Brothers)

**4.** Filmmakers must often make significant changes in their work because of the costs or complications of rights clearances.

**Use you brain (and/or your favorite search engine).**