FLEXBOX

FLEXBOX WAS THE FIRST REAL LAYOUT TOOL WE HAD IN CSS. IT OPENED UP DOORS, AND IS MORE WIDELY USED THAN GRID*

*100% ANECDOTAL

BUT IT IS A LITTEL QUIRKY AND CAN THROW SOME CURVE BALLS AT YOU

BEFORE WE GET TO THE CURVEBALLS, LET'S EXPLORE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE USE FLEXBOX

CODEPEN LINK

https://codepen.io/kevinpowell/pen/zYBLybz

LAYOUTS WITH FLEXBOX

To make layouts flexible, flexbox changes how the size of flex items are calculated.

There are three properties at play here:

- `flex-basis`
- `flex-shrink`
- `flex-grow`

FLEX BASIS

`flex-basis` is the "main size" of a flex item. We say "main size" and not width, because the `flex-direction` changes the direction `flex-basis` works in.

But to simplify matters, let's think of it as the `width` of the element.

ENTER FLEX-SHRINK

So while the default of `flex-basis` is `auto`, we also have `flex-shrink`, which defaults to `1`.

By being a number bigger than `0` it means that the element is allowed to shrink smaller than it's actual size if there isn't enough room.

ENTER FLEX-SHRINK

This is a good thing, because without `flex-shrink`, elements would overflow out the side and this whole flexbox thing would be useless.

CODEPEN LINK

https://codepen.io/kevinpowell/pen/zYBLybz

AS MUCH AS THIS HELPS US MAKE COLUMNS, IT DOES PRESENT US WITH A NEW PROBLEM...

CODEPEN LINK

https://codepen.io/kevinpowell/pen/jOrpdOW

CONSISTENCY

This happens because if we do not set a `flex-basis` on an element, the default behavior is to set the `flex-basis` to the `width` of our elements.

Our elements do not have a `width`, so that default's to `auto`.

ALL OF THAT MEANS THAT THE WIDTH OF THE COLUMNS IS BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF CONTENT THAT IS INSIDE OF THEM

IF THE CONTENT IS THE SAME THEN THE WIDTHS ARE EQUAL

BUT MOST OF THE TIME THE CONTENT IS NOT PERFECTLY EVEN

LUCKILY THERE IS A VERY EASY FIX TO THIS INCONSISTENCY

CODEPEN LINK

https://codepen.io/kevinpowell/pen/jOrpdOW

MOST OF THE TIME, THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT FROM FLEXBOX

BUT OFTEN WE NEED MORE COMPLICATED SOLUTIONS THAT EITHER WRAP OR WHICH HAVE COLUMNS OF DIFFERENT WIDTHS

WE'LL GET THERE SOON EHOUGH, BUT THIS IS ENOUGH TO GET US STARTED