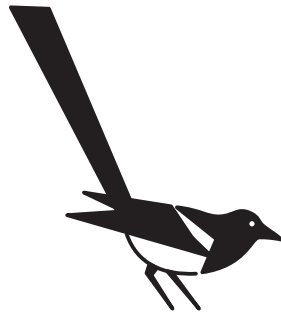


ΜΑΘΗΤΕΣ

1-60

Solutions (open with care)



**Solutions and notes
to the free sample puzzles**

Most Answers Get Put In Eventually

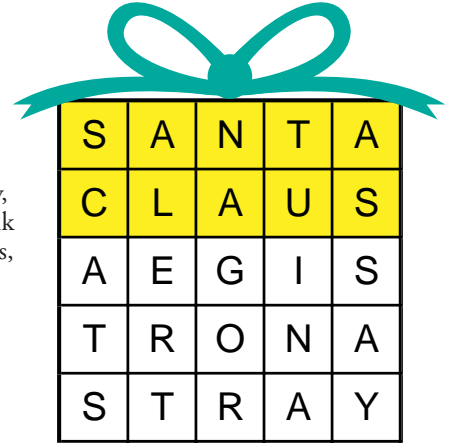
Advent Calendar

by Mr Magoo

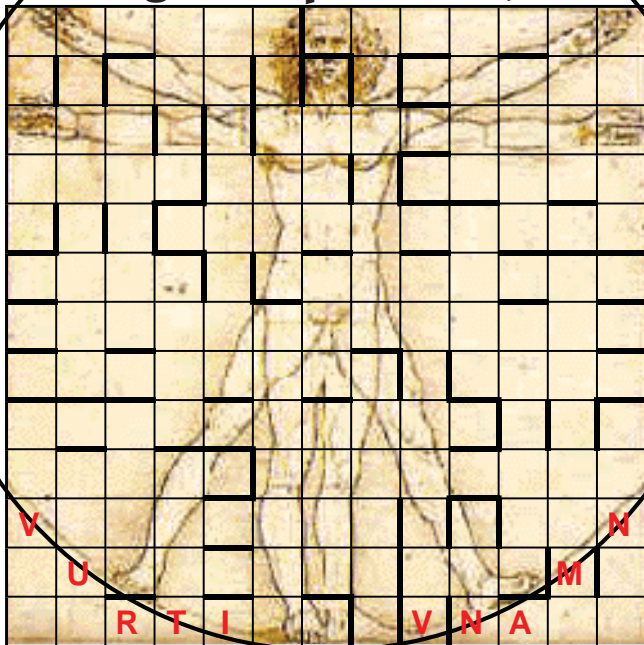
T	C	A	E	G	I	S	N	A	G	O	R
R	A	M	S	O	N	C	O	K	E	E	P
O	N	I	S	L	W	A	L	K	O	U	T
N	A	R	E	F	I	L	L	E	T	V	U
A	D	E	N	I	N	E	S	S	A	R	I
S	A	M	E	N	O	D	S	O	X	E	N
C	A	P	E	G	A	D	I	V	E	D	A
A	T	I	T	P	R	E	M	I	S	E	S
T	W	E	U	R	O	M	P	E	A	S	T
S	E	R	K	A	L	I	L	N	H	E	R
P	E	C	K	N	L	S	E	N	O	R	A
A	L	E	R	T	A	S	S	A	Y	T	Y

The Calendar's "doors", "labelled" A-X in alphabetic order, "revealed" the letters of TRANSPOSE ALL FIVE-LETTER WORDS. When the final grid's 5-letter words were "transposed" into the gift-box correctly (either orientation) they revealed SANTA CLAUS in the first two rows or columns.

The answers which provided "door" letters were: Rana, abolla, tronc, doll, demies, café, wing, scath, pick, jillet, sark, Leda, kemp, atween, promises, spray, quina, rast, Samson, talk out, gulfing, nave, nows, simplex.



Circling the Square by Pieman



The original grid (below) contained four HANDs, four FOOTs and one NAVEL formed from across and down entries, e.g. HANgings at 1ac and DaNDER at 1dn. These together with the puzzle's title pointed solvers to Leonardo da Vinci's picture (represented left), known as HOMO VITRUVIANOS, or VITRUVIAN MAN, the letters of which appeared along the line of the appropriate circle. The "missing" I and A were to be found in the printed title, and had to be appropriately highlighted there.

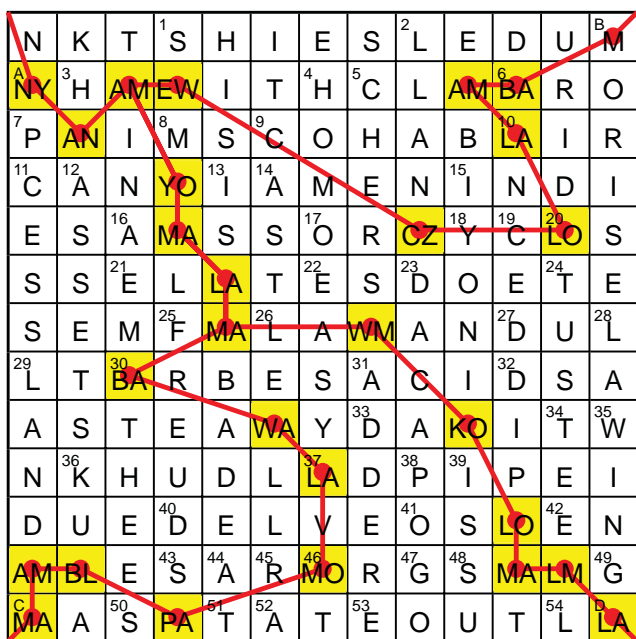
As it is questionable whether Leonardo's original was accompanied by his coded mirror-writing, a submitted version of the solution using reflected letters was also accepted.

H	G	I	N	G	S	O	B	E	R	L	A	H
A	R	C	U	E	U	A	O	B	A	S	I	C
H	U	L	R	N	P	L	O	U	G	H	L	H
E	M	I	R	D	E	E	T	T	A	R	S	I
R	P	M	C	A	R	N	L	I	T	I	E	S
S	H	E	D	R	B	R	E	T	H	R	E	N
D	I	S	A	M	B	I	G	U	A	T	E	D
B	E	Q	U	E	A	T	H	R	E	A	L	E
H	U	S	B	A	N	D	A	G	E	R	W	Y
A	M	A	S	S	D	I	R	E	C	T	O	R
V	O	M	I	T	I	V	E	N	W	U	R	N
O	U	F	F	A	C	E	S	E	Y	F	M	E
C	E	R	T	I	F	Y	F	V	N	A	S	H

The Four Bs

by Charybdis and 53 (Escher)

Extra letters in wordplay spelled out: ERASE LETTER PAIRS AND JOIN UP CELL CENTRES USING SIMPLE CARTESIAN CODE. Squares to be entered blank in the diagram originally contained the following letter pairs: NY, AM, EW, AM, BA, AN, LA, YO, MA, CZ, LO, LA, MA, WM, BA, WA, KO, LA, LO, AM, BL, MO, MA, LM, MA, PA, LA – these could be interpreted as directing a line to a cell removed by the number of squares Right and Up equivalent to the ‘code letters’. So from NY, the line went 14 cells right (effectively 1 cell Right, counting on from the 13 in the grid), and 25 cells Up (effectively 1 cell Down). The pattern thus created in the grid could be reflected to tessellate ad infinitum, and the shapes thus displayed resemble the outlines of a bee, a butterfly, a bird and a bat.



BEE, BUTTERFLY, BIRD, BAT

The Four B's was a real tour de force in the opinion of many, and produced mighty struggles at several stages: filling the grid initially, cracking the "simple Cartesian code", and comprehending the required tessellation and the four B's. In the end, "Tessellated" was accepted for "Tessellates" at 24.



For those who made all the mental steps, the reward was the elegant Escher diagram on the left. For some the light only finally dawned when they turned it upside down and identified the butterfly particularly (and BUG was acceptable instead of BEE).

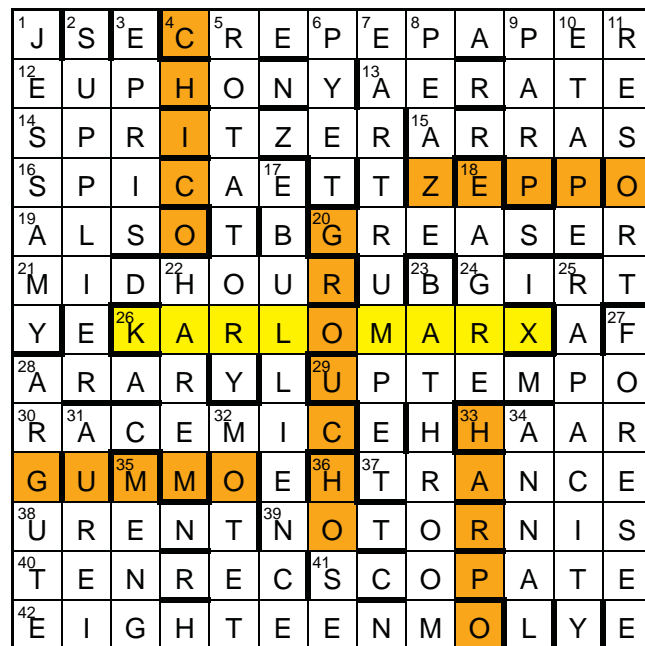
Charybdis was commended in the highest terms by successful solvers, some of whom noted that this sort of challenge was what the magazine is all about.

The Omen

by Mango

Corrections to misprints in clues 13a, 19a, 24a, 38a, 41a, 6d, 18d, 25d, 28d and 35d spelt DAS KAPITAL.

The preamble suggestion that 26a showed how its author might have chosen to augment his name – had he been a member of the Marx Brothers – precluded "Carlo Marx" as a possibility.



"The Omen was a lovely puzzle. Sound, witty clues with a theme and twist which caused a chuckle. I agree with the rating – just my cup of tea thank you."

This was a very typical view of a classy crossword with a touch of humour suitable for its subject matter. The title, in particular, drew more plaudits than any title has before – and a number of correspondents noted that the compiler's own name fitted the pattern.

Several clues were individually commended, the one causing the most approbation being that for 16a SPICAE ("Spurs have a cracking season"), though one person noted sadly that the "real-world" nature of this clue lay in the past.

One solver who found the whole thing falling into place quite readily noted that it helped that he had always thought Karl Marx was one of the famous brothers, whilst another dark comment noted a swastika resemblance in the required shading.

A B rating was universally agreed as correct, and the Magpie accolade was also deemed well-deserved. An erudite solver wondered if Mango was aware that Carlo Marx was the name of the character based on Allan Ginsberg in Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*.

Many correspondents commented most favourably on the grid construction with especial mention of the elegant symmetry, although one pointed out that "we can only regret that Gruoch spelled his own name wrong and messed up the beautiful symmetry".

Dark Secret

by Seth Mould

There was no clue or answer numbered 13, due to the triskaidekaphobia alluded to in the preamble. The unchecked letters of both 1a and 10d were those of DARK.

1	A	2	B	3	A	4	K	5	E	6	R	7	S	8	D	9	O	10	Z	11	E	12	N
10	T	E	N	11	O	N	S	A	W	R	O	C	U										
	R	A	A	K	V	12	A	R	C	A	N	U	M										
14	I	N	G	R	I	D	C	15	A	L	A	R	E										
16	S	O	L	A	R	17	C	O	U	L	18	O	I	R									
19	K	E	Y	W	O	R	D	20	W	Y	S	E	I										
	A	22	P	23	T	24	N	H	E	R	E	T	I	C									
25	I	N	H	U	M	A	N	26	I	27	B	I	Z	A									
	D	28	G	29	Y	R	O	B	30	S	T	U	N	31	S	L							
32	E	M	E	R	O	D	S	E	T	A	E	L											
	K	A	T	E	33	C	O	Q	U	E	T	R	Y										
34	A	R	I	T	H	M	O	P	H	O	B	E											

The puzzle was much enjoyed, and Seth Mould (on debut) congratulated. The cluing was variously described as “witty” or “innovative” – though not unanimously – and the conceits of INGRID and the missing 13 especially were applauded. Very few solvers spotted the missing 13 until the end, although many noticed, and forgave, the fact that ARITHMOPHOBE and TRISKAIDEKA were not present as entries in Chambers.

Petals

by Elap

The grid entries summed to 1,235,813, a number which can be arranged to read 1 2 3 5 8 13, six successive terms in the Fibonacci series. The line drawn passes through successive terms in the Fibonacci series from its beginning, and consequently the central cell had to be 0. The Fibonacci series is regularly found in petal arrangements in flowers, e.g., certain daisies have 34, 55 or 89 petals.

Aa	b	c	d	Be	f	g	h	
5	2	0	5	7	8	6	3	6
C		j			D			
1	8	1	4	4	8	5	2	4
E			F				k	
2	1	2	4	4	1	9	7	7
G				H	m			
1	6	3	8	5	3	8	9	5
Jn	p			K				
3	7	3	1	0	2	5	5	6
L		q	r	Ms			t	
9	6	3	3	1	1	5	1	8
N		u			P	v		
3	5	7	2	1	3	4	7	2
Qw				R				
1	1	7	6	1	0	9	8	1
S				T				
9	0	9	4	6	1	7	7	1

Solvers were awed by Elap’s achievement in barring a pattern to achieve the appropriate sum with such fixed cell positions. Solvers were grateful for an easy way in, and not in any doubt of the central digit – if they discovered the Fibonacci series. The only common error came from those who didn’t assume that 1235813 was a sequence to begin the line drawn.

Snakes & Ladders

by Child's Play

The first eleven primes (2-31) were represented in order in the clues by the letters NEDISROLAMP. The die-throws thus given by the clues were 3, 1 or 4, 5, 1 or 4, 5, 4, 5, 5, 1, 6, 5, 2, 5, 1, 5, 1, 5, 5, 1 or 4, 3, 4, 5, 1, 2, 1 or 4, 1, 6, 1, 3, 1. The realisation that these summed to 100 proved that the number of squares gained on ladders had to equal the number of squares lost on snakes, and the only possible arrangement that obeyed the preamble – which allowed the game to be played – was as shown. This resolved that the ambiguous die-throws were, respectively, 1, 4, 1, 4.

1	3	2	0	1	0	2	3	1	1
1	1	1	4	3	0	4	0	3	4
1	4	1	4	1	4	1	1	4	4
1	1	4	4	0	4	1	1	4	1
1	3	0	1	4	4	1	0	3	1
1	2	0	4	4	4	4	0	2	1
4	1	4	0	1	0	1	1	4	4
1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	4
1	2	1	1	1	2	1	0	4	1
4	1	2	3	0	1	0	3	2	1

One solver wrote a very effective synopsis of the good press this puzzle received: "S&L was one of The Magpie's very best. Particularly enjoyable were: its having no answers over 1900, so that it needed no calculator or factor tables; the unusually early (and crucial) determination of the longest entries, the four intersecting 10-digitals; the settling of the orientation by the fact that the last throw is 1, so that cell 99 cannot have a snake-head; the hint, from the fact that the throws add to 100, that there is only one player (as is readily verified); the deduction that he must be able to gain as many cells from the ladders as he loses to the snakes. Please however assure Child's Play that he need not play the game on his own. I remember it as very sociable."

There were those who were daunted by the lengthy preamble, and the E grade (generally felt to be correct). Though the errors originally published caused confusion early on, it appeared there was some clarity that something must be wrong, especially given that only one 9-digit grid entry was listed, so the prompt arrival of the erratum slip was welcome to many.

"I enjoyed all the logical sub-puzzles" read one comment, though for a few people those included interpreting the preamble – which did not specify that 1 should not be considered a prime, for example.

We were intrigued and unnerved by an overseas subscriber's comment: "My snakes are copperheads after the ones I encountered in my yard the day after I finished the puzzle."

Major Star

by Mr Magoo

The grid perimeter spells "Speak softly and carry a big stick", a possible motto for Tiger Woods, to whom many of the clues appeared to refer.

	1	S		2	P		3	E		4	A		5	K		6	S		7	O	
8	K	A	Y	A	K	S				9	D	Y	E	S	T	U	F	F			
		V		L		P					H		R		I		L				
10	C	A	T	A	L	Y	S	E			11	B	I	G	C	A	T				
		N		T							R		S		M		T				
12	I	N	T	E	R	N	M	E	N	T					14	A	B	E	L		
		A				A		D		O					T						
15	T	H	E	S	A	M	E				17	I	N	F	A	N	C	Y			
				E		B					19	I	E								
20	S	A	W	N				22	Y	U	G	O	S	L	23	A	V	I	A		
		P		O		P									Z		M				
24	G	L	O	R	I	A				25	I	N	D	I	A	M	A	N			
		O		I		M									T		O		L		T
27	I	M	I	T	A	B	L	E							28	E	Y	E	L	I	D
		B		A		Y		R							R		A		C		

"An exercise in restrained elegance. Spot on for what I hope for at the easier end of the Magpie spectrum. Tricky cluing in places made this a bit more than an A for me."

The theme was generally considered acceptable, though one or two felt golf was a bit inappropriately specialist, though "even I knew that Tiger had won a recent competition."

The quotation was normally thought reasonably apt, though mostly by those with some interest in the sport – very few took the compilation time quoted in the editorial ("rustled up in 5 minutes flat") literally, though some clearly refused to believe that the puzzle was compiled after the Open golf championship ("prescient").

The clue that caused the most trouble was for KAYAKS (In a way, is sporting classic all right to begin with, though not the first two rounds?), which had wordplay of (O)KAY + (O)AKS.

The only common error was a failure to highlight, which could be due to forgetfulness, failure or fat-finger syndrome.

DIY

by Lucan

The completed diagram represented a (British) plug needing to be connected. Present in the diagram were a CABLE and FUSE together with wires of the following appropriate colours: BLUE, BROWN and YELLOW/GREEN.

The suitable terminals had to be changed to the appropriate letters N(eutral), L(ive) and E(arth).

1	S	2	R	3	A	4	N	5	O	6	N	7	A	8	T	9	E	10	C	11	O
12	T	E	N	O	N	W	E	T	A	P	R	O	N								
14	A	F	T	E	R	L	O	T	W	E	E	N	Y								
	G	L	E	L	S	E	L	A	N	E	W	F	X								
19	R	E	S	E	T	T	O	R	D	O	N	U	T								
	O	C	H	L	R	E	G	A	R	D	E	S	E								
30	S	T	O	L	E	M	Y	B	S	E	W	E	R								
	A	N	E	U	L	B	E	E	T	S	S	L	A								
39	C	A	U	S	A	R	L	Y	E	C	L	A	T								
41	E	S	A	U	T	A	B	A	R	O	N	T	O								
	A	T	Y	R	E	C	A	N	E	P	I	C	M								
47	E	Y	R	Y	R	E	C	T	O	E	P	H	A								

Difficulty with the last step of DIY was universal. Any number of correspondents confessed to staring at the final grid for a long time (“I hate to think how many hours I spent looking at that silly plug. The children haven’t been fed this week!”), and some had unsurprisingly given up the struggle.

Quite a number had had to get there by identifying likely sites and possibilities for letter changes in the completed grid. Some correct solvers had still not quite appreciated the alternating Yellow/Green wire, and many were unaware of the CABLE “helpfully supplied “ by Lucan. Those that had not attempted any changes in the grid were discounted as non-entries by our marker, who has asked us to discourage such submissions as pointless.

But many solvers were enchanted once they puzzled out (normally by finding BROWN and/or BLUE): “...beautifully presented pictorially in the grid. Nice touch with the three amended entries. The entwining of the yellow/green wire was well handled...” and “DIY I thought a minor triumph”. Such solvers tended to applaud the accessibility of the unusual left-to-right symmetry.

There were many who felt, given the last hurdle, that the B grade was inappropriate, with one suggestion that “?” was the only suitable grade. But for some it was the last stage that elevated the puzzle to B “or B+”.

Hide and Seek

by Jaques

1	S	2	I	3	R	4	P	5	E	6	R	7	C	8	Y	9	B	10	L	11	A	12	K	13	E	14	N	15	E	16	Y
17	M	O	I	L	I	N	H	A	Y	A	C	O	Y	O	T	E															
18	I	N	L	A	N	D	A	R	K	T	E	N	E	S	C	A															
21	S	A	L	N	E	A	D	D	E	E	M	S	L	E	H	R															
25	D	I	C	E	R	S	S	P	D	W	M	A	I	D	A	N															
30	E	C	H	T	D	B	E	R	T	H	A	W	M	F	B	I															
	A	H	A	P	O	O	T	I	H	E	G	O	B	I	O	N															
41	L	O	R	I	O	T	A	M	A	L	G	R	E	N	W	G															
	S	C	A	R	L	E	T	P	I	M	P	E	R	N	E	L															

Clashes in the original grid (row 1: A/Y, N/S, row 2: A/Y, row 3: G/T, row 4: R/L, A/H, row 5: M/C, T/D, row 6: W/C, row 7: O/A, row 8: R/O, O/A, row 9: W/P, S/I) were resolved by entering the latter letter. Omitted letters then spelt ANAGRAM TWO ROWS.

The top row of the grid read B Y K ERASER Y PENCIL and the bottom row T P M ERASER PENCIL L before rearrangement. The final grid contained only real words.

Doctor, Doctor

by Samuel

Joke ‘punchlines’ (to follow e.g., “I think I’m a ...”) were: (a) bridge, (b) (pack of) cards, (c) dustbin, (d) mince pie, (e) bell, (f) liar, (g) clock, (h) déjà vu. Superfluous letters in across clues spelt out “... a crossword addict”.

1	S	2	T	3	I	4	C	5	K	L	6	E	7	B	8	A	9	C	K	10	T
11	D	O	M	L	A	12	F	L	E	S	H	L	Y								
13	U	N	P	O	S	E	D	14	L	I	A	R									
15	S	E	I	C	H	E	I	16	L	E	P	E	R								
17	T	A	C	K	18	M	I	N	19	C	E	P	I	20	E						
21	B	R	22	E	W	I	N	G	A	P	E	23	T	R							
	I	M	A	24	B	R	25	D	I	S	H	R	A	G							
26	N	U	T	R	I	E	N	T	27	C	O	M	A								
28	O	B	I	I	29	T	J	30	C	R	A	31	V	A	T						
32	B	A	N	D	A	33	A	C	A	R	I	N	E								
34	O	U	T	G	I	V	E	T	D	S	D	S									
E	35	C	O	E	L	U	R	O	S	A	U	R									

Doctor, Doctor was generally enjoyed for the entertaining A-grader it set out to be, with several solvers bemoaning a lack of inspiration in their own creativity, though many also hoped to get a chance to taste the fruits of others’ pens.

Two solvers who failed to submit a punchline at all in defiance of the “must” in the preamble were marked wrong, in an appropriately ‘humourless’ spirit.

A fairly typical comment was: “A witty, gentle, puzzle presenting no solving gotchas. Clues had a comfortable, old-fashioned feel,” a remark that may be well-received by quite a recent addition to the compilers’ ranks.

“Another entertaining A from Samuel” offered one correspondent, and indeed the overriding tone of the feedback was to commend the puzzle that put solvers very much at their ease. We did not feel that Samuel’s source material 1000 More Jokes for Kids needed to be mentioned in the preamble, but apologise to its authors if they should take offence at this omission.

The requirement to complete a punchline to “Doctor, Doctor, I think I’m a crossword addict!” in Samuel’s puzzle led to a variety of entries. The most popular line overall was a variant of “I’m a good Listener (so fill me in)”, but there were plenty of puns based on other standard crossword terms. “You won’t put one across on me!”, “Try not to get two down” etc. Some sent very basic solutions: “How puzzling!”, “There’s no need to be so cryptic”; “There’s no quick solution”; “I see a light at the end of the tunnel” etc.

There were a few ostensibly peculiar suggestions: “Try these two extracts of tropical picamar”; “Take some numbers”; “I’ll refer you to a St Alban’s specialist, but he won’t be able to discover the solution until next Saturday at the earliest”; “say “Aah” without thinking “Belt””; “Just keep taking the medicine as a greed”; “Ah! A face of clue (Spooners)”; “Take a zed six times a week. Listen ‘ere if it gets worse, you’ll need a Magpie every month”; “I’m a GP. I expect you can find relief here”; “You want to try a diet of Magpies”.

One or two ‘doctors’ gave some pretty bleak advice: “I’m afraid there is no cure”; “then divorce your wife”; “Get out! I barred you yesterday!”, “Confined to Chamber!”

Our favourites, however, had some neat double meanings: “You’ll get no Sympathy from me!”, “Keep taking the tabloids”; “Compose yourself, then you’ll know the solution”, but overall we thought the best might be the simple variant on another very popular theme – this version carrying a sympathetic extra meaning: “I’m sorry I haven’t a clue”.