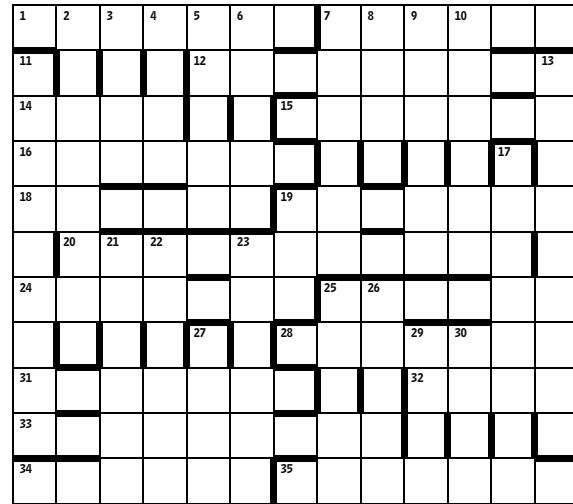


Azed No. 2,428 'Christmas Play-tent' Competition Puzzle



Name _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Down clues are normal. Across clues are of two types. The six-letter clues (printed in **bold type**) are normal, but their answers are to be Playfair encoded (see below) before entry in the diagram. From the answer to each of the remaining clues the solver must omit one letter wherever it occurs (often more than once) before entry in the diagram. Definitions in these clues refer to the full unmutated answers; subsidiary indications, such as anagrams etc, refer to the mutilated answers to be entered in the diagram. Numbers in brackets show the full lengths of unmutated answers. **The 13 letters omitted may be arranged to form the code phrase (see above).**

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

In a Playfair word square the code word or phrase (in which no letter recurs) is followed by the remaining letters of the alphabet, I doing double duty for I and J (see example left).

To encode a word it must first be split into pairs of letters, eg CR IT IC AL. Each pair is then to be seen as forming the diagonally opposite corners of a rectangle within the word square, the other two corners being the encoded form. Thus, in the example shown, CR gives SG (not GS, which RC would give). Where a pair of letters appears in the same row or column in the word square, its encoded form is produced from the letters immediately to the right of or below each respectively. For the last letter in a row or column the first letter in the same row or column becomes the encoded form. Thus IC becomes CE. When all the pairs are encoded the word is joined up again: thus CRITICAL is encoded as SGCICEOP. Answers to the

four clues in **bold type** must be encoded thus in the diagram. The code phrase must then be deduced so that the diagram may be completed. **It consists of three consecutive words from a familiar seasonal verse.**

Competitors should submit with their entries a normal cryptic clue to the 9-letter word coming three words before the code phrase in this verse.

Across

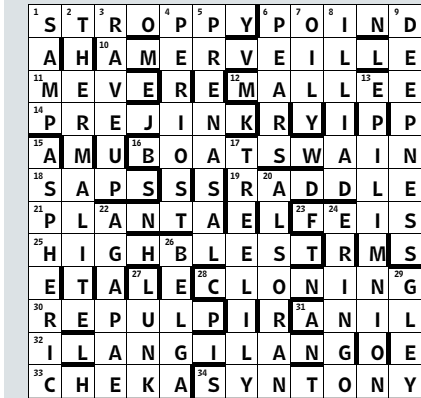
- To get moving, cart's given a shake in it (9)
- Oddly unruffled, led off in cheap boa? (6, 2 words)**
- Work late shifts, extra hour put in? Not him! (12)
- Former affliction of cows perhaps lost award (6)
- Pass self-rule to Irishman, with cost (8)
- Group of soldiers I catch behind bed (10)
- Flowering shrub's name in label I affix (6)**
- Bogged down, is trapped – failed in one's aim (8)
- Lacking Latin, A1 Latin class struggles making connections (13)
- Line got scrambled booking NY desk (8)
- Fish round river verge (6)**
- Terrestrial bear (old) nursing terrible harm (8)
- Harden at being confined, being bad-tempered (9, 2 words)
- Company row brought to an end by Director (5)
- What fossickers do, remain changing situation? (10)
- Rear moving forward sat composed (6)**
- Sand troubled cattle regularly having fused digits (9)

Down

- Duck in cereal consumed with capital adornment (8)
- Husband admitted to coterie once close (4)
- Little bird is avoiding sun in US shrub (4)
- A party with free eats? Put on new dress (5)
- Made progress facing to rear? Sounds like one of the ways (5)
- Was vagrant fool to bum around Oz? (6, 2 words)
- Vessels for liquids or oils (4)
- Stock put through sieve (6)
- King borne in coach, symbol representing the sun (6)
- Odd extracts from Zachariah dour imam scribbled in prayer-books (9)
- Thickets in the Broads? Deer wandering in margins (9)
- Wine cupboard: example of its contents including the Spanish (8)
- Periodical supplying gossip (3)
- Boatswain performed shanty maybe, crew's heart lifting inside (6)
- Like many roofs, (items viewed from below I omitted) (6)
- Get engrossed in informal discussion about women (6)
- Noblewoman of high rank embraced by husband at induction (5)
- Had a nose of various colours, including a bit of red (5)
- Food hauled up for walled town historically (4)
- Rambling holiday? Hat lost, seek exotic plant (4)
- Polo finishing early? Refuse (4)

Every word used in the puzzle is in the Chambers Dictionary (2014).

Azed No. 2,425 solution & notes



Rules and requests

Send correct solution and clue as indicated (on separate sheet also bearing name and address, securely attached) to **Azed No. 2,428**, PO Box 518, Oxford OX2 6WX. Closing date: Saturday 5 January 2019. Please add a brief explanation of your clue (one entry only). £100, £65, £40 prizes and Azed bookplates for the three clues judged best. Extra prizes for those judged very highly commended. The Azed Slip, containing details of successful competition entries and Azed's comments, is available on subscription at £13 a year for 13 issues (£16 for overseas subscribers). Cheques, payable to The Azed Slip, should be sent to The Azed Slip, Coombe Farm, Awbridge, Romsey SO51 0HN. To receive a sample slip, please send an sae to this address. For much more information on the Azed Slip, visit www.andlit.org.uk.

Azed No. 2,425 prizewinners

EPILIMNION

- D. F. Manley** (Oxford): Simon P is on Galilee's, faltering — with SOS, gale's gone (*anag. less SOS, gale's, & lit.; ref. Matthew 14, 29-32*).
- M. Barley** (Ower, Hampshire): Surface water is involved in pile-up on M1 (you can't see what's ahead) (*anag. less up*).
- P. McKenna** (Eastbourne, East Sussex): Possibly *this* warmer water on coast is changing opinions on climate (*comp. anag.*).