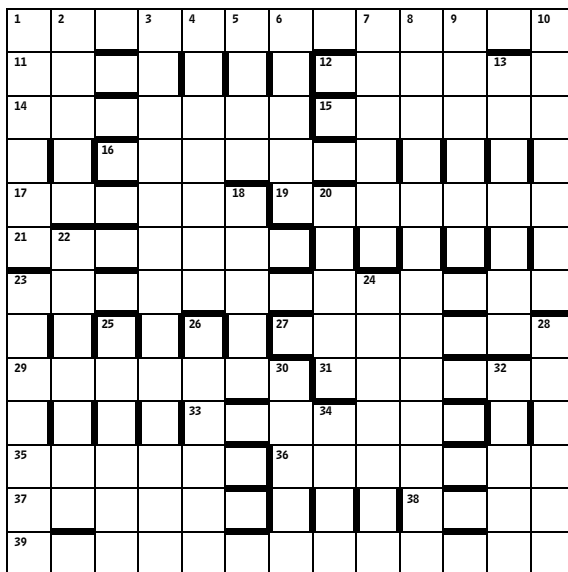


## Azed No. 2,532 'Presents Round the Tree'



### Christmas Competition Puzzle

This puzzle is based on the traditional practice of arranging wrapped Christmas presents around the foot of the Christmas tree before opening them, usually on Christmas Day. Each of ten thematic entries, including the unclued 1 Across, is a non-word formed by inserting a tree at some point within a word for 'present' (broadly interpreted). Clues to these entries are without definitions. All other clues are normal. Numbers in brackets indicate the length of grid entries throughout. All words used in the puzzle, including three proper names and the component parts of the thematic entries, are in Chambers. Competitors should submit with their entries a clue like all the other thematic clues to 1 Across, which must be deduced.

### Across

- 1 See preamble (13)
- 11 Some shrubs displaying no leaves, outer parts stripped (4)
- 12 Weed: a vineyard infested with it suffers reverse (6)
- 14 Notices belly having swallowed one (7)
- 15 Ecclesiastical garb to cast out (6)
- 16 Dodges game (7)
- 17 Fellows rolling in sea tossing purges (6)
- 19 Typical of artistic school that is found in fuzzy (not cloudy) scenes (7)
- 21 Absentees, not fully reliable workers (7)
- 23 Against being hugged by beloved on shortened engagement (13)
- 27 Life in judo get-up (7)
- 29 Wrongly value stinker in adjustment of old dispute (7)
- 31 US pest spreading abroad – arrangements needed (6)
- 33 Circus owner maybe introduced to rubber trampolines (7)
- 35 Name giving promise of payment involved in rowdy party in Perth? (6)
- 36 Eye liners always recalled when taking a Turner? (7)
- 37 Dreaded police before second arrest (6)
- 38 Streak? Sounds like showing off (4)
- 39 Tenser, quaking, about war god with clever, new (13)

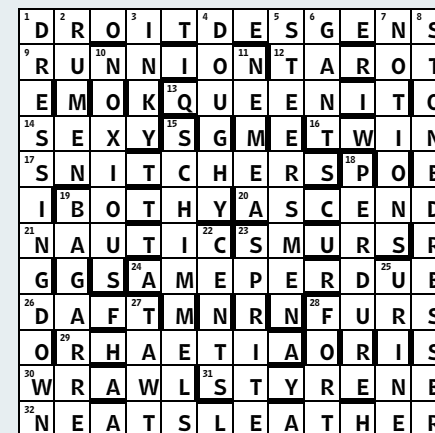
### Down

- 1 Shakespearean pouch over middle of costume (6)
- 2 Dead being interred, mostly smelly, rarely age (5)

- 3 A chap with promptings, entering privies (13)
- 4 Wine one's drunk clutching drinking-mug (7)
- 5 With no special attachment this is how anti-union Scot feels in his beat? (4)
- 6 Twins rarely like conjoined ones, i.e. separated (5)
- 7 Got up in coating of gilt I can be made a fool of (6)
- 8 Occupied with red wine reputed (French) one I have (13)
- 9 Like lords in headgear around closure of parliament (6)
- 10 Woman given run around (7)
- 13 Gelato was fitting in Italian house (7)
- 18 Shift cycling shades (5)
- 20 Elba? Italy's mostly arid island (5)
- 22 Replaced X-ray unit, Nigerian, on time (7)
- 23 Sea cast up sort of Irish sink, obsolete (7)
- 24 Ask too much of public chopper (7)
- 25 Feature of weather map noodle placed in Iran (6)
- 26 American ruminant ruined rabi in Connecticut (6)
- 28 Member of ascetic fraternity in reduced numbers, forsaking extremes (6)
- 30 Slip creating fright with top removed (5)
- 32 Not what *this* is, clearly (5)
- 34 Tangled tale? It suggests a number of lies (4)

**The Chambers Dictionary (2014) is recommended (see preamble).**

## Azed No. 2,529 solution & notes



**Across** 14, X in yes (rev.), & lit.; 17, anag. less a; 20, c in as end; 23, alternate letters; ref. various mixed drinks; 24, P in a meer + due; 28, 'furze'; 29, haet in ria; 32, neat + e in slather.  
**Down** 4, do + ugh + y; 8, stoned + esse in RR; 11, anag. incl. e; ref. first labour of Hercules; 15, sch. I'm me(a)ls; 22, 'sense'; 25, (fig)urine.

### Rules and requests

Send correct solution and clue as indicated (on separate sheet also bearing name and address, securely attached) to Azed No. 2,532, PO Box 518, Oxford OX2 6WX. Closing date Saturday 2 January 2021. Emailed entries from overseas will be accepted, addressed to jcrowther2000@hotmail.com. Please add a brief explanation of your clue (one entry only). The Azed Slip, containing details of successful competition entries and Azed's comments, is available on subscription at £16 a year for 13 issues. 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](http://www.andlit.org.uk).

**We regret that the prizes for our puzzles are temporarily suspended.**