

Answers to Letter puzzles:

1. 24 hours in a day
2. 26 letters of the alphabet
3. 7 days of the week
4. 7 wonders of the world
5. 12 signs of the zodiac
6. 66 books of the Bible
7. 52 cards in a pack (without jokers)
8. 88 keys on a piano
9. 18 holes on a golf course
10. 39 books of the Old Testament.

7 letter palindromes

Reviver and rotator both work. Does anyone know some others? If you are prepared to consider contrived words you could have even longer ones such as
detartrated
retrosorter
and (longest word in English, coined by James Joyce in *Ulysses*, and meaning a knock on the door)
tattarrattat.

If you allow foreign English words then a language spoken in Kerala, India is Malayalam.

Had enough?

News Letter

Taieri Bridge Club

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Club News

Our charity tournament in aid of the hospice raised around \$600. First places were taken by Joan and Wayne Petch, and Jean Young and Marion Dent. Judy Robertson had a busy time as director but ran a smooth operation despite this.

Our beginners' class has got off to a good start with 7 enthusiastic members.

Letter puzzles

Try your hand at these: what do the letters stand for in each case?

1. 24 H in a D
2. 26 L of the A
3. 7 D of the W
4. 7 W of the W
5. 12 S of the Z
6. 66 B of the B
7. 52 C in a P (without J)
8. 88 K on a P
9. 18 H on a G C
10. 39 B of the OT

Brilliant trump control

I came across a beautiful example of trump control recently. It was reported in the London Times bridge column and features the Norwegian expert Terje Aa. Aa was in 4♠ as South receiving the Q♦ lead:

	♠ 5 2	
	♥ A 8 7	
	♦ 8 6 2	
	♣ Q J T 9 8	
♠ Q 3		♠ 8 6 7 4
♥ K J 9		♥ Q T 5
♦ Q T 7 5 3		♦ A K J 9 4
♣ 7 6 3		♣ 5
	♠ A K J T 9	
	♥ 6 4 3 2	
	♦ void	
	♣ A K 4 2	

This is how Andrew Robson described the hand: "West leads a diamond to East's king. And you? The idea of discarding (to retain trump control) occurs to you, but you can hardly discard three times (dummy's diamond length). So you elect to ruff. What next? You toy with the idea of banging down the Ace-King of trumps and, if (as expected) no queen has fallen, start running clubs. The trouble is that the

Words again

The words kayak, deified, and level read the same forwards and backwards: they are palindromes. There are some other 7 letter palindromes in English besides deified (can you think of any?) along with longer but contrived words. In other languages Saippukauppia, Finnish for "soap vendor", is in everyday use in Finland.

There are also some remarkable palindromic phrases. Famous ones are
Some men interpret nine memos
Campus Motto: Bottoms up, Mac
A man, a plan, a canal, Panama!
Madam, in Eden I'm Adam
Able was I ere I saw Elba (as Napoleon might have said)

Can anyone think of a palindromic phrase that applies to bridge? The best I could do was

"Diamond? No, maid"

This useful phrase would be uttered when your partner, a comely young lady, has asked "No diamonds. partner?" when you failed to follow suit to a diamond lead.

Can anyone think of a scenario where this phrase might be uttered?

"Slam in a part deed: trap animals"

Lightner doubles

Imagine that you have sat silently as the opponents have bid confidently to a slam. It's all rather depressing as you stare at your collection of tram-tickets. You perk up a bit though when your partner doubles the final bid. What's this? Has partner got two certain tricks? Well, that may be the case, but in expert circles it is far more likely to be a Lightner double, requesting that you lead something unusual.

Lightner doubles were named after the bridge player Theodore Lightner in 1929, and they are made when partner has an unusual holding that may have to be exploited at trick 1.

If your partner makes such a double you have to put on your thinking cap. Could partner be ruffing a suit? Normally your own holding in each suit, together with the bidding, will tell you if that is likely (and what the operative suit is). Another possibility is that partner has a strong holding in dummy's first bid suit and wants it led immediately. It definitely excludes that you lead trumps or your own partnership's suits.

So for example if the opponents have bid 1H-6NT and then partner doubles you *must* lead a heart. Or after 1H-6H and then partner doubles you, holding ♠xx; ♥xx; ♦xxxxxx; ♣xxx, should deduce that partner is void in diamonds - lead one!

defence will ruff with their remaining low trump, and switch to a heart. That is sure to spell defeat, with at least two defensive heart winners ready to be cashed when they ruff the next club (with ♠Q).

You toy with simply playing for the ♠Q to drop in two rounds by playing A, K and a third trump. But one opponent holding ♠Qxxx would defeat you, able to win the third trump and force you in diamonds. Ironically, both these lines work in practice because the ♠Q drops doubleton but Aa found a far superior approach. He led ♠J at trick 2. If ♠J won, Aa planned to cash the ♠A, ♠K then, assuming an opponent held ♠Qxxx, leaving the ♠Q outstanding and run clubs. The defence would be powerless.

At the table, West grabbed his ♠Q and led a second diamond. The beauty of losing the first trump trick was now seen. Aa discards (hearts) on the second and third round of diamonds. With dummy still holding a trump to ruff the fourth round, the defence then switched to a heart. Declarer was now in full control, able to win dummy's ace, draw trumps in three further rounds, then run clubs for 10 tricks."

Voluptua in defence

"Anyone can be a good declarer". Gordon was pontificating as Frieda, Randy, and Voluptua listened respectfully. "Take the following hand where I was South; nothing to it. The lead was ♠J won by East who returned a spade; I won, knocked out the king of trumps, and had no trouble taking 10 tricks"

	♠ T 3 2	
	♥ Q J T 9	
	♦ 2	
	♣ A K Q J T 9	
♠ J 4		♠ A 9 6 5
♥ K 6 4		♥ 2
♦ A 8 5		♦ J T 9 7 4
♣ 9 8 6 3 2		♣ 7 5 4
	♠ K Q 8 7	
	♥ A 8 7 5 3	
	♦ K Q 6 3	
	♣ void	

The bidding had been

South	West	North	East
1♥	pass	3♣	pass
3♦	pass	3♥	pass
4♥	all pass		

Not wishing to be too rude of Gordon's analysis,

Randy coughed in embarrassment. "Actually, Gordon, Voluptua and I were sitting East-West at another table and defeated the contract". Gordon glared in surprise. "Never" he muttered "lay-down contract".

Voluptua took up the tale. "Randy led ♠J and I had to decide whether he was leading a singleton or doubleton. If it had been a singleton, declarer would have had 5 spades and that didn't make sense on the bidding, so it had to be a doubleton. So I prayed that Randy had a trump trick, and the Ace of diamonds; and then I ducked the first trick.

Later, Randy scored his ♠K and led another spade to my Ace. I returned a spade for him to ruff, and with the ace of diamonds we took 4 tricks". "By Jove" exclaimed Gordon, "that was smart thinking young lady".

Editor's note. Voluptua could tell South's shape on trick 1. South had bid hearts before diamonds, and had 4 spades; so must be 4-5-4-0. Playing match-point pairs there is a case for her winning the first spade because if Randy did not have a trump trick then South would make an important overtrick. But at teams scoring her defence was perfect.