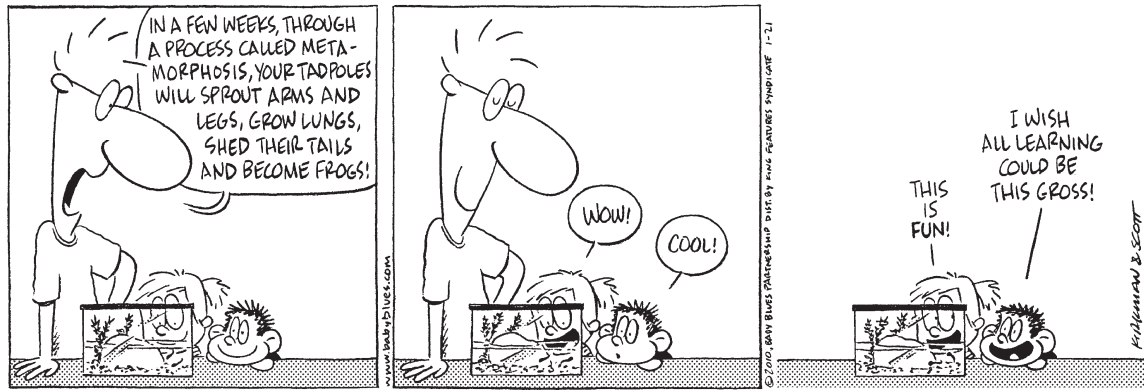
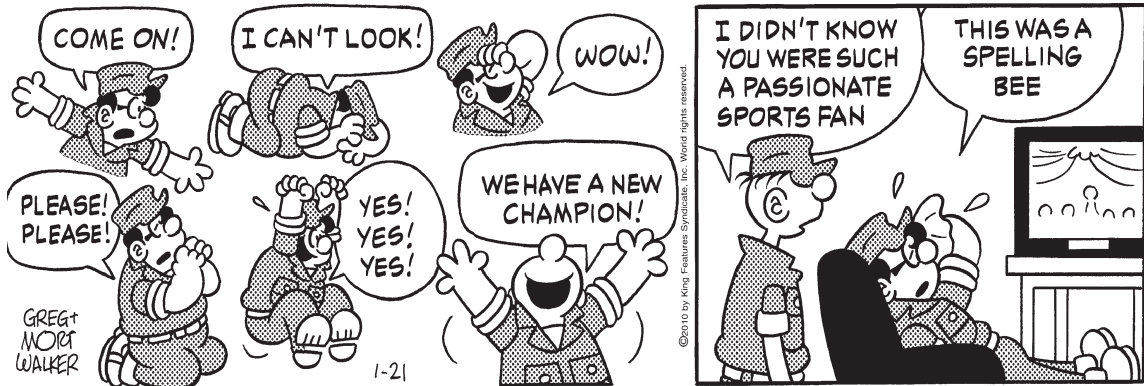


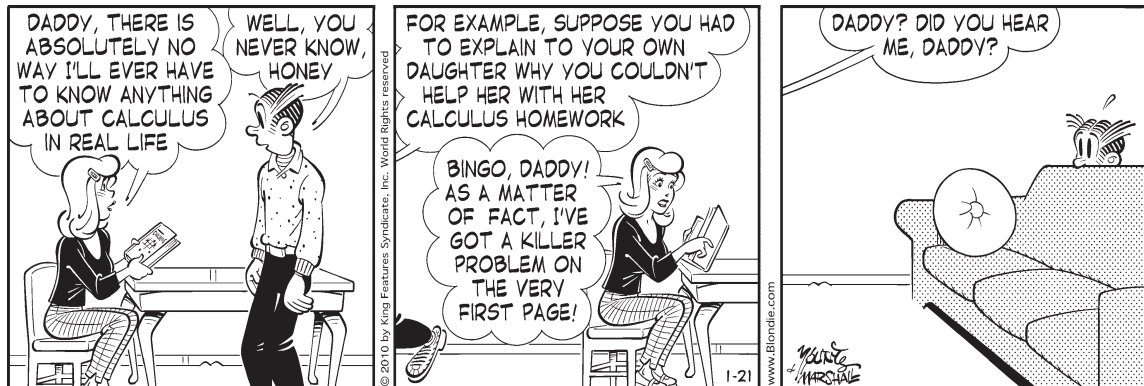
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



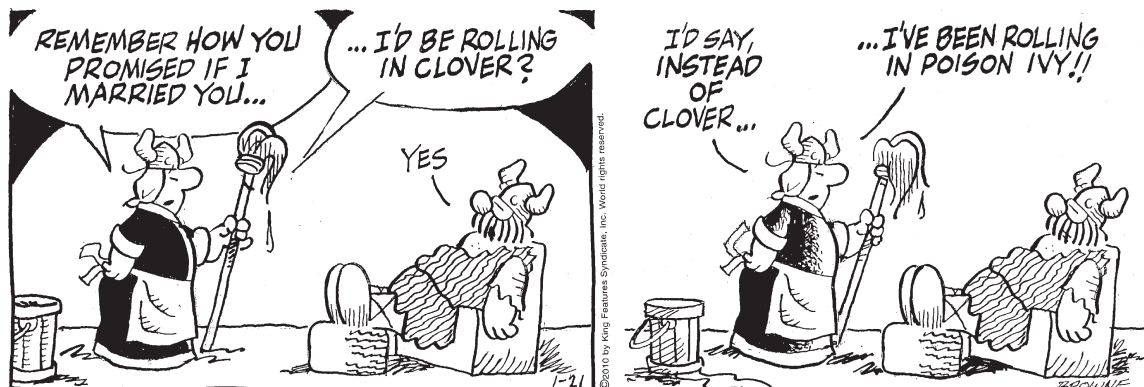
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



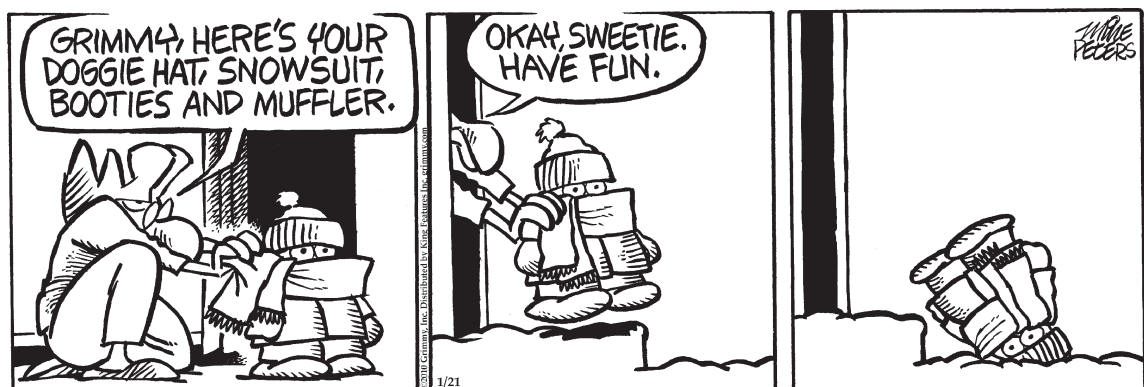
Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



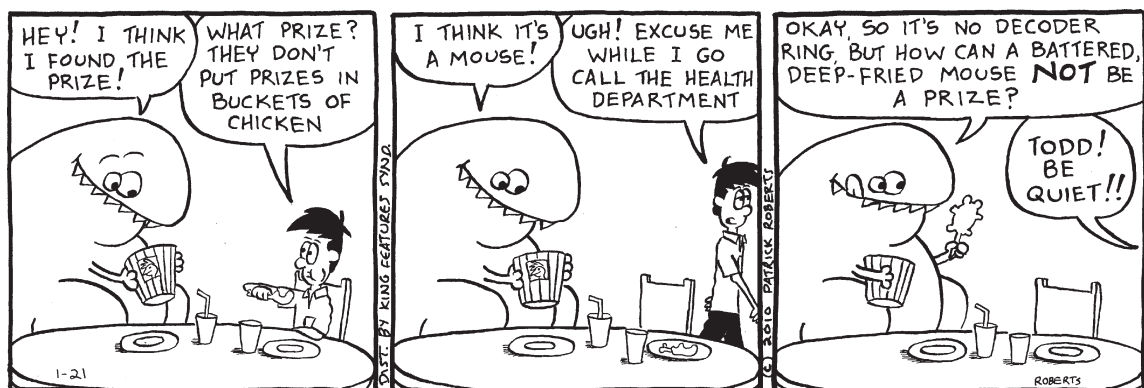
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



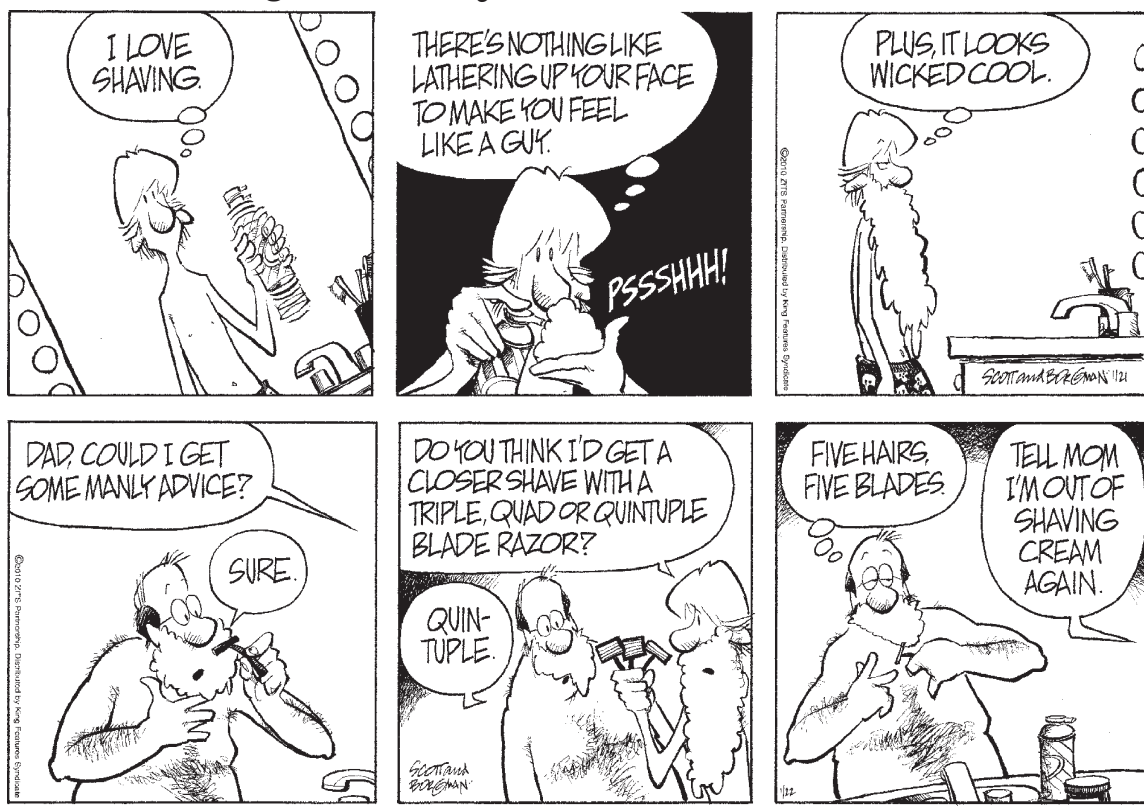
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers
• Ask Dr. Brothers
Grandson is too far away

Dear Dr. Brothers: My wife and I just became grandparents! We're excited to meet our daughter's son and experience grandparenting. My wife is worried we'll miss out on a lot because we live across the country, and has been talking about moving. We've lived in our town for a long time, though, and neither of us wants to leave. Is it possible to be involved across the country? – W.F.

Dear W.F.: First, congratulations on the arrival of your grandson! Grandparenting is an entirely different experience from parenting, and you are sure to enjoy it. Grandparents often are able to give kids experiences their parents can't, and this is one of the rewards. Although it is sad to live far away from family, your role is still quite important in your grandson's life. You can indeed foster a close relationship without moving. If you were looking for a reason to move, this might be a good motivation, but since you seem invested in your town, there is no reason to uproot your lives. In fact, sharing your personal history, including the town you've lived in, with your grandson is important in nurturing the relationship.

You can bridge the distance, especially with e-mail. It's become easier to share videos and photos via the Internet. Sharing hobbies and being a good listener are also important. Don't worry if your grandson's interest waxes and wanes – he will be busy, but appreciate consistency on your part. It's safe to say your grandson probably enjoys letters, e-mails, photos and gifts, even if you don't hear back right away.

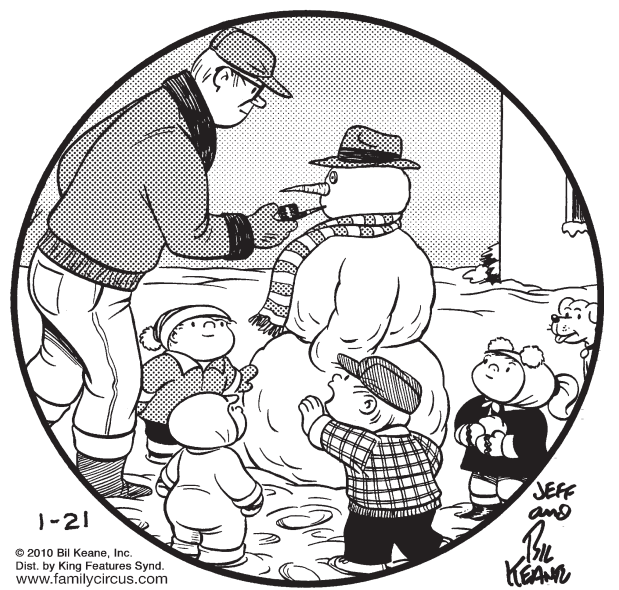
Dear Dr. Brothers: I'm a first-time dad, and my son is scared of bedtime. He won't let me leave the room when he's falling asleep or turn out the light without checking for monsters in the closet, behind the curtains – you get the idea. He's particularly afraid of monsters and creatures like dragons. I'm worried this isn't normal, and I have no idea how far to go with playing along. How do I help him get over these fears? – V.N.

Dear V.N.: Being afraid is a normal part of childhood development, and many parents go through similar struggles. A recent study in the journal *Child Development* looked at responses to fear in kids age 4 through 7. The researchers found that around age 4, children don't understand thoughts can reduce their fears, but by age 7 are able to understand this idea. This means that when confronted with a scary idea, younger kids benefit from positive thoughts – such as pretending the dragon is friendly – while older children should be reminded about reality, by stressing that the dragon is imaginary and can't hurt them.

Regardless of your son's age, respect his fears. Helping him talk through what is scaring him and how you can fix it together is more important than easing the fear itself. Allow your son to face his fears in a supportive environment. There's nothing wrong with "playing along" by checking under the bed, for instance – as long as you're not patronizing but are empowering your son.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

		5						6
			2	7				
3		1			4			
	5	6	8			4		
			3	1	9			
	7			5		2	9	
		9			1			3
			5		4			
8						7		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/21

This is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral.

2	1	4	5	7	8	3	9	6
9	3	6	4	2	1	8	5	7
5	8	7	3	9	6	1	2	4
1	5	8	2	6	9	4	7	3
7	9	2	8	3	4	5	6	1
4	6	3	1	5	7	9	8	2
8	2	5	7	1	3	6	4	9
6	7	1	9	4	5	2	3	8
3	4	9	6	8	2	7	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★★

Cryptoquip

GPGU AWMJG LRVAG ECXWGA
ZGL VM C JGULCWM ALCLG
TMWPGUAWLO JCZDTA, LRGO'PG
UGZCWMGX DGMM DCEA.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DESIRING TO HIDE THE PRECIOUS PIECES OF FRUIT IT HAS FOUND, A GROUNDHOG OFTEN BURIES BERRIES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals V

Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ Q 10 9 5 4
♥ K 8 3
♦ 10 2
♣ Q J 3

EAST
♠ 6 3
♥ A Q 7 2
♦ A J 9 6
♣ K 9 7

SOUTH
♠ A K J 8 2
♥ 10 6 4
♦ K 8 4
♣ A 10

The bidding:
East 1♦ South 1♠ West Pass North 2♣
Opening lead — three of diamonds.

So Near and Yet So Far
The most embarrassing mistakes are those where a blind spot causes a declarer or defender to overlook what is essentially an easy play. Consider this deal where a thoroughly experienced declarer went astray.
East won the diamond lead with the ace and returned the jack to declarer's king. Faced with the prospect of possibly losing three heart tricks, South decided to try to arrange a potential endplay against East. Accordingly, he cashed the A-Q of trumps and led a low club from dummy to his ten. When the finesse succeeded, South cashed the ace of clubs, ruffed a diamond and ruffed the queen of clubs.

With diamonds and clubs now eliminated from both hands, declarer led a low heart toward dummy, planning to insert the eight and thus endplay East. But West unobliquely played the nine of hearts, after which South had to lose three heart tricks and go down one regardless of how he proceeded.

Declarer would have made his game had he not missed a very simple play. The ingredients for a successful endplay were all there, especially because South knew from the bidding that East almost surely had the ace of hearts and king of clubs.

All the early plays were correct. After two rounds of diamonds, two rounds of trumps and two rounds of clubs, including the finesse, it was right to ruff a diamond in dummy.

But when declarer next led the queen of clubs, covered by East with the king, South should have discarded a heart instead of ruffing. East, on lead, would then have found it impossible to defeat the contract.

If he returned a heart, dummy's king would become a trick; if he returned a diamond, declarer would discard another heart as he ruffed in dummy. Either way, South would finish with 10 tricks.

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Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 — jongg
4 Visibility hindrance
8 Be a model
12 Sch. org.
13 Ugandan despot
14 Easter emblem
15 Sharp turns
17 Shaving cream add-in
18 Knock
19 Surmised
21 Nicklaus contemporary
24 Corrode
25 Foreman rival
26 Pinch
28 Incenses
32 Equivoques
34 Tie up the phone
36 Manage somehow
37 Modify
39 Knight's address
41 Once called
42 Scull need

DOWN

44 Big Mac or Whopper
46 Fame
50 Doo follower
51 Diner employee
52 Terrier type
56 Heche or Hathaway
57 List-ending abbr.
58 401(k) alternative
59 Stagger
60 Say it ain't so
61 Roulette bet
62 —
63 standstill
64 Tiny, as a fracture
65 Occur
66 Parisian
67 Pizzazz
68 Follow as a result
8 Credit cards
9 Rembrandt creations
10 With 11-Down, having dark peepers
11 See 10-Down
16 Aries
20 Corn spike
22 Astrigent
23 Horse and buggy, e.g.
27 — de deux
29 Classical-lover
30 Foil's cousin
31 Crystal gazer
33 Diver's aid
35 Chest protector
38 Pop
40 Without courtesy
43 Used 42-Across
45 "Go, team!"
46 Cicatrix
47 Sound quality
48 Top-notch
49 Wee parasite
53 Scooted
54 Anger
55 "Way cool!"

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	C	T	P	O	S	E	A	B	E	D		
T	O	O	I	R	O	N	C	I	A	O		
O	A	F	C	A	N	D	I	C	O	R	N	
P	L	U	C	K	S	E	E					
A	L	E	S	T	S	A	R	S				
C	A	N	D	E	L	A	S	S	U	E	T	
A	P	E	D	E	L	I	A	L	E	A		
M	E	A	D	C	A	N	D	I	D	L	I	D
E	X	T	R	A	D	O	J	O				
E	L	F	U	N	Z	I	P					
C	A	N	D	L	E	M	A	S	E	R	E	
A	G	O	G	E	A	S	T	S	A	N		
R	O	D	E	T	O	S	S	T	I	N	T	

Yesterday's answer 1-21

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13				14			
15			16				17			
18							19			
20							21			
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60							61			