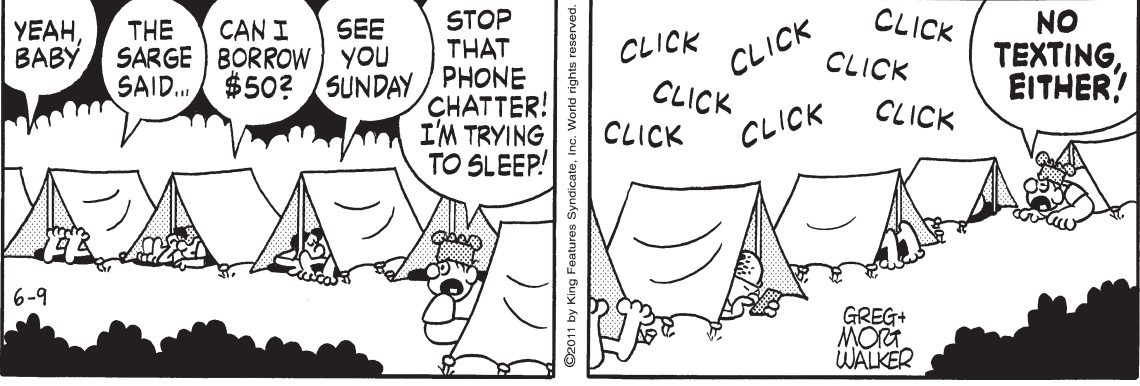


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



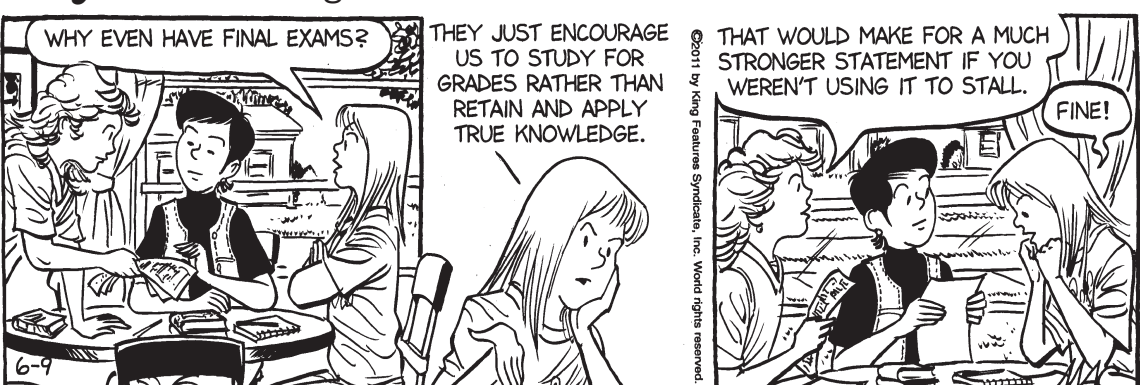
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



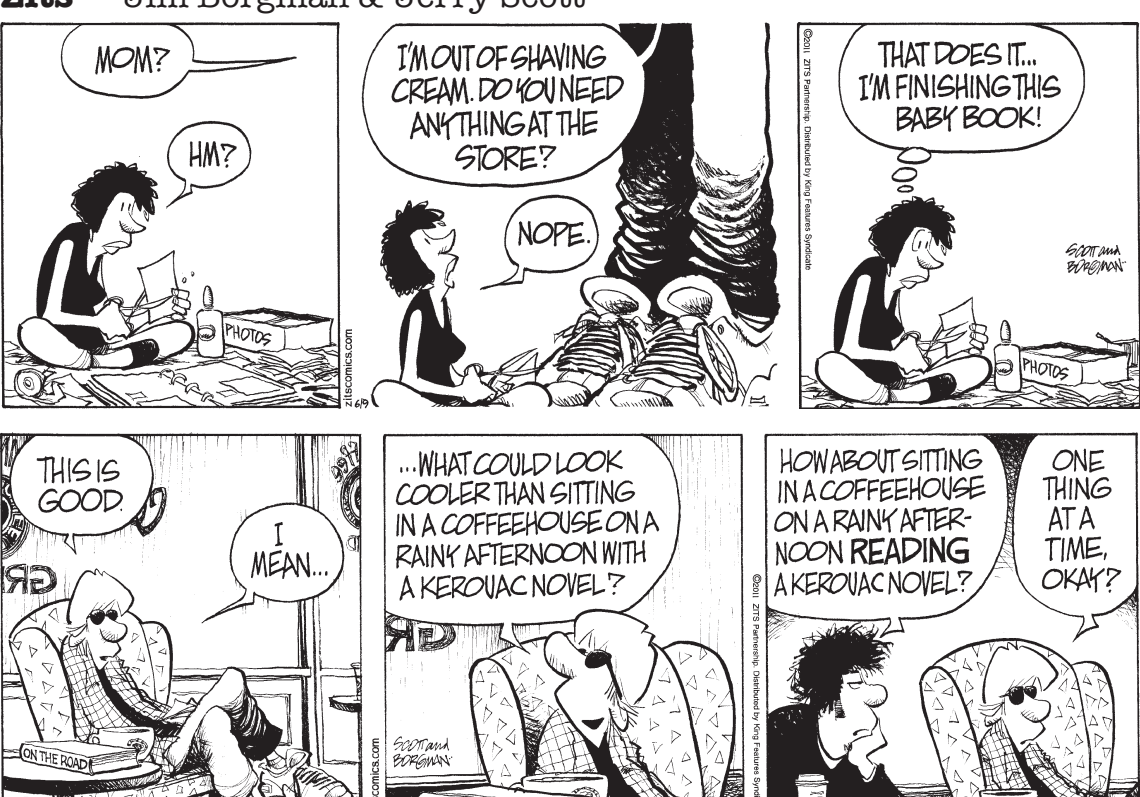
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

She questions advice on babies

Dear Dr. Brothers: I'm having my first baby in a few months, and I feel unprepared in one regard. I'll be a single mom, and my grandmother is helping me out, which is great. She's old-school, though, and she tells me that when the baby cries, I should let him keep crying so I don't spoil him. To me, this seems cruel. Will responding to my crying baby really make him spoiled? — C.K.

Dear C.K.: Even as an expectant mother, your intuition is leading you in the right direction. There are plenty of people out there who still adhere to the "let them cry it out" school of thought. Unfortunately, this method may end up creating unnatural distance between you and your child. A newborn who is crying is attempting to communicate with you. When you ignore him, you essentially tell him his communication strategy doesn't work and his needs will not be fulfilled.

The fact is, babies have neither the ability nor the desire to cry just to spite you. If your baby wakes up in the middle of the night hungry, he can't understand why you don't respond the same way you did in the middle of the afternoon. If instead you respond to your baby's cries, you enhance your ability to communicate. You'll eventually be able to anticipate his needs, and may even preclude crying by feeding him just as he's getting hungry or picking him up when he's ready to move. This creates a secure bond between you and your baby, and increases his trust in you. Simply attending to your child's needs will not make him spoiled or clingy, but will allow him to develop to his natural potential.

Dear Dr. Brothers: A friend of mine invited me and my two kids over for a play date, and about 10 minutes after we got there, she started telling me her kids had been sick — throwing up and feverish — just two days ago. I felt guilty leaving early, but I also felt bad about putting my kids' health at risk. How can I avoid exposing my kids without offending my friends? — L.R.

Dear L.R.: This sounds like a classic case of lacking assertiveness. You knew what you were doing was wrong, but you didn't want to offend your friend by taking your kids home — and ended up putting your own kids' health in jeopardy. While this might not have been life-threatening, you don't want to reinforce passivity, especially when your kids are involved. The longer you fail to act, the more entrenched this pattern will become. What it comes down to is learning to say "no" graciously.

Assertiveness comes with learning how to state your needs, and the needs of your family, clearly, and even repeatedly. While you might think of this as rude, by laying your cards on the table, you're making it easier for people to react well. If you couch statements in terms of your needs, you take the blame off others. So the next time a friend with sick kids invites you over, tell her you're worried about your kids' health and don't want to risk them getting sick, because you can't handle it. You can decline the invitation and place the blame on yourself, leaving your friend feeling as though she did you a favor by your canceling.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ 3 2
 ♥ Q 9 6 2
 ♦ A J 5
 ♣ A Q 10

WEST
 ♠ K 9 4
 ♥ 10 8 4 3
 ♦ 7 2
 ♣ K 9 7 6

EAST
 ♠ Q 5
 ♥ A K 7
 ♦ 6 4 3
 ♣ J 8 5 3 2

SOUTH
 ♠ A J 10 8 7
 ♥ J 5
 ♦ K Q 10 9 8
 ♣ 4

The bidding:
 South West North East
 1 ♠ Pass 2 NT Pass
 3 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass

Opening lead — three of hearts.

An Unusual Defense

The fundamental approach for the defense is to assume that every contract can be defeated. To this end, both defenders shape their play to meet whatever conditions are necessary for a successful resolution.

Take this case where South was in four spades and West led a heart. East knew from West's lead of the three — fourth-best — that declarer had at least two hearts, so he could count on scoring two tricks in that suit. The question was where the defense could score two more.

South's bidding indicated at least nine cards in spades and diamonds, leaving him with at most two clubs. Given dummy's strong holdings in both minors, it was unlikely that the defense could collect any tricks in either of those suits.

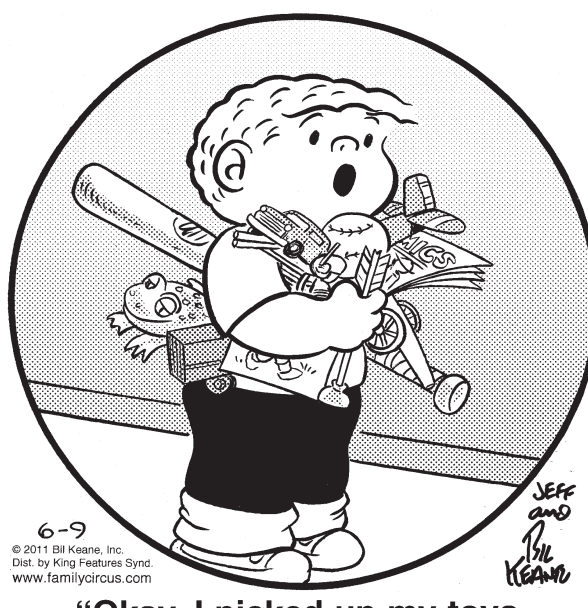
The only realistic hope, therefore, was that the defenders could score two trump tricks. This would happen naturally if West had any two spade honors, but another possibility existed that required some assistance from East.

Accordingly, after winning the opening trick with the king of hearts, East cashed the ace, even though this established dummy's queen. He then continued with a third heart into dummy's Q-9, handing declarer yet another heart trick.

The upshot of this unusual sequence of plays was that South could no longer make the contract. After taking the heart in dummy, he had no choice but to lead a spade to the jack, losing to the king. Following his partner's defense, West then returned his last heart, which East ruffed with the queen.

Declarer overruffed with the ace and cashed the ten, hoping the nine would fall. When it didn't, all he could do was to congratulate East-West on a well-conceived and well-executed defense.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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. The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

Cryptoquip

RQMT KYC'JM GORGKD XYBHTN
 CF RHSQ XJKDSGO-XOMGJ
 BMGHTND YA RYJVD, HD
 SQGS VMAHTM HTDFHJGSHYT?
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SOMEBODY TREATS FIRE-STARTING MATERIAL VERY AFFECTIONATELY, MAYBE IT'S TINDER-LOVING CARE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals U

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 36 Farmer's place | DOWN | 22 Met melody |
| 1 Vacationing | 37 Art supporter? | 1 Lubricate | 23 Roulette bet |
| 4 Information | 39 Space furniture | 2 Winter ailment | 27 Perule |
| 8 Barracks | 41 Aries | 3 Zealots | 29 Dogma |
| 12 Dockworkers' org. | 42 Shrill bark | 4 Responsibilities | dis-senters |
| 13 One Hawaiian island | 44 Stirs | 5 Blackbird | 30 Ques de vivre |
| 14 Wackos | 46 Anti-mob chemical | 6 Watch noise | 31 Shade providers |
| 15 Teeny bit | 50 Cam-bridge sch. | 7 Bewil-dered | 8 Worked together |
| 17 "— was saying, ..." | 51 Needle case | 9 Inauguration | 33 It dangles and jangles |
| 18 "— was saying, ..." | 52 Disbelievers | 10 Grand recitation | 35 Manhandle |
| 19 Burger topping | 56 Deserve | 11 Water pit | 38 Trail behind |
| 21 Vader, to Sky-walker | 57 Withered | 16 Blond shade | 40 Molly-coddle |
| 24 Pismire | 58 Snip | 20 Potent stick | 43 Old hat |
| 25 Spoonbender Geller | 59 Dross | 21 Do a slow burn | 45 DIY buy |
| 26 Wield a needle | 60 Still-life pitcher, maybe | 61 Agent | 46 Fairway props |
| 28 Giggly sound | 61 Agent | | 47 And others (Lat.) |
| 32 Head Stone? | | | 48 Emanation |
| 34 Party bowlful | | | 49 Twist the facts |
| | | | 53 Prior to |
| | | | 54 Recipe measure |
| | | | 55 Pigpen |

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 6-9

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13					14		
15		16						17		
		18			19		20			
21	22		23		24					
25			26		27		28		29	30
32		33		34		35		36		
37			38		39		40		41	
			42		43		44		45	
46	47	48		49		50				
51				52		53			54	55
56				57				58		
59				60				61		