Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

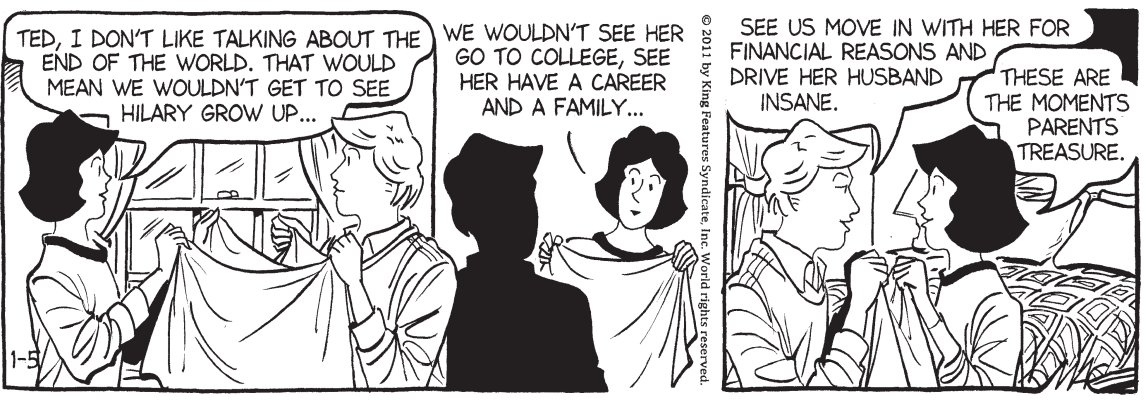
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker

Blondie • Chic Young

Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

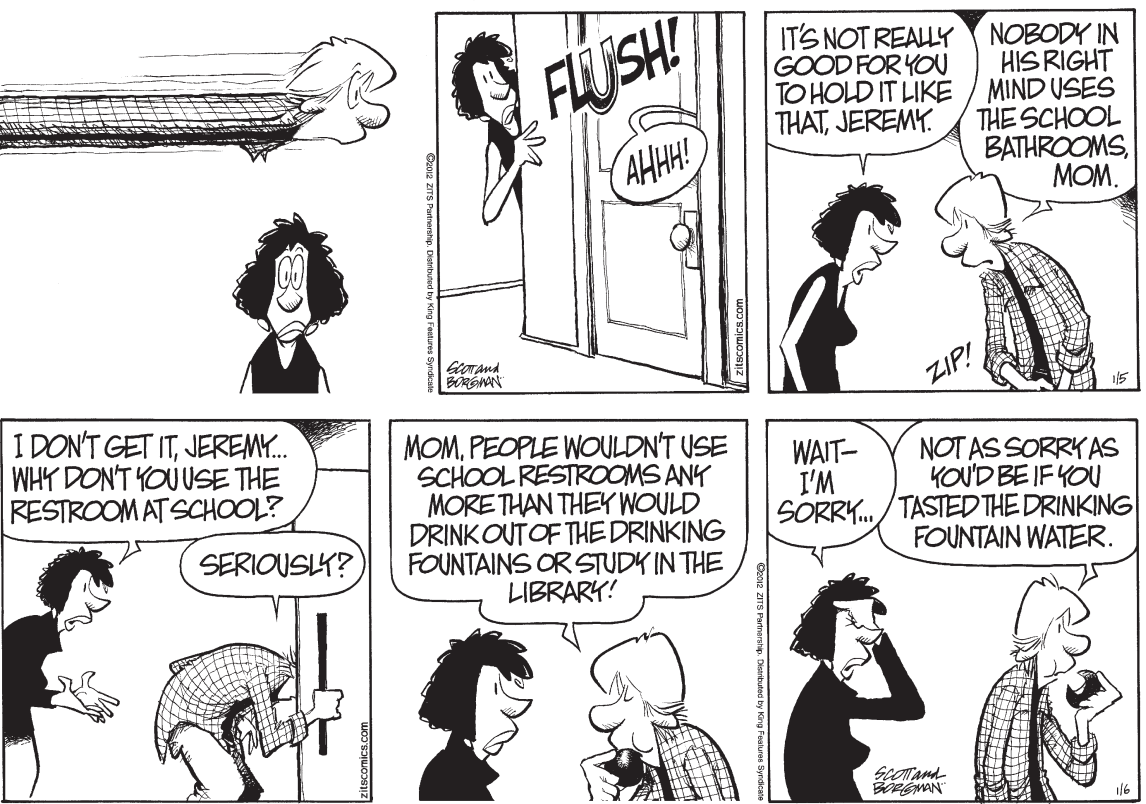
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts

Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Toddler takes tantrums too far

Dear Dr. Brothers: My toddler is going through a temper-tantrum phase. He's realized that by making a scene in public he can get his way, and now it's his favorite strategy. It's embarrassing, but it also makes it impossible for me to get anything done when I take him with me. I've tried ignoring his tantrums and reasoning with him, but nothing seems to work. How can I discipline my son when he has tantrums? – L.C.

Dear L.C.: This is not an uncommon phase for a child, so first realize you're not the only one in the grocery line who's had to deal with a screaming toddler. Tantrums are a normal part of being a child. There are ways you can try to prevent them, and a few things you can do to limit the damage. In fact, preventing tantrums before they start can be effective, and the key is knowing your child's triggers. If you can avoid situations in which your son typically has a tantrum, at least until he starts to grow out of the phase, this is a good idea. Being hungry or tired also can make kids more likely to throw fits of rage at the slightest provocation, so try your best not to take your son out in public without snack – and naptime.

Once a tantrum is in full swing, you have two options. The best is to leave right away. This lets your son know tantrums won't be tolerated and lessens the embarrassment for you. If leaving is not an option, try to ignore his behavior until he tires out or gives up. It can be awkward, but he will learn that a tantrum won't get him what he wants, whether it's candy or a ride home.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I've started letting my kids use my smartphone for educational things like flashcards and math drills, and even sometimes for games. To be honest, it helps me when I don't have time to entertain them – while running errands or making dinner, for example. I'm trying to only let them play things that won't be a bad influence, but I feel guilty. Is there anything wrong with kids using smartphones? – B.T.

Dear B.T.: This is a hot topic in child psychology as smartphones become more and more popular among parents. Opinions differ, especially since there haven't yet been any good studies showing effects of smartphone use by kids. Some of the traditional wisdom we have about letting kids use video games and television applies, particularly to games and smartphone apps that have little or no educational value. But there is something to be said for allowing your kids to learn flashcards on the iPhone, or to practice Spanish by speaking to an Android phone.

Like with more traditional media, a good rule is to monitor the amount of time your children spend with the device and what they have access to on it. If you think they're working on multiplication but they're playing Angry Birds, they're not gaining any benefit. That being said, judicious use of these devices can add to your arsenal of distractions for times when you need a moment to yourself. You may feel more comfortable with younger kids only having access to educational material, but a lot of the so-called benefits don't live up to the hype.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 7 6 3
♥ Q J 10 5 2
♦ A J 8
♣ K 8

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

EAST
♠ A 5 2
♥ 8 3
♦ Q 10 7 2
♣ A Q J 5

SOUTH
♠ K Q
♥ A K 9 6 4
♦ K 6 5 3
♣ 9 4

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥			

Opening lead — jack of spades.

The Vicissitudes of Fortune

It has been said that bridge has all the excitement of war, with only 10 percent of the danger. But in some hands, even the 10 percent can be reduced to zero, as witness this deal played in four hearts.

East won the spade lead with the ace and returned a spade to South's king. Declarer drew two rounds of trumps ending in his hand and then led a low diamond to the jack. East took the queen and returned a spade, ruffed by South.

Declarer now cashed the A-K of diamonds, hoping the suit would divide 3-3, in which case he would discard a club from dummy on his fourth diamond. But when the diamonds failed to break evenly and East later turned up with the ace of clubs, South had to go down one.

Certainly South was unlucky. He would have made the contract if West had held the queen of diamonds, if the diamonds had divided 3-3, or if West had held the ace of clubs. Nevertheless, declarer should have made the contract despite his bad luck.

He should have started by drawing trumps ending in dummy, ruffed dummy's last spade and then led a low diamond to dummy's eight! East would win with the ten but would be endplayed. Whatever he returned -- whether a diamond, a club or a spade (if he had one) -- would cost his side a trick, as well as the contract.

Nor could West alter the outcome by putting up the nine on the first diamond lead toward dummy. Declarer would simply cover the nine with the jack, and East would again find himself endplayed.

Indeed, regardless of the actual lie of the opposing cards, the deep diamond finesse reduces declarer's chances of losing the contract to zero.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane

"I think the elevator is stuck downstairs."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/05

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/04

Cryptoquip

RYLFOEY GVY ESBITY RSTT'E EOXQFLY QFUYU ASGV GSJY, PNO JSIVG EFP SG'E BNA F UOTTYX UNTTFX.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I FIND GROOMING MY HAIR TO BE VERY SOOTHING. IT REALLY DOES HAVE A COMBING EFFECT ON ME.

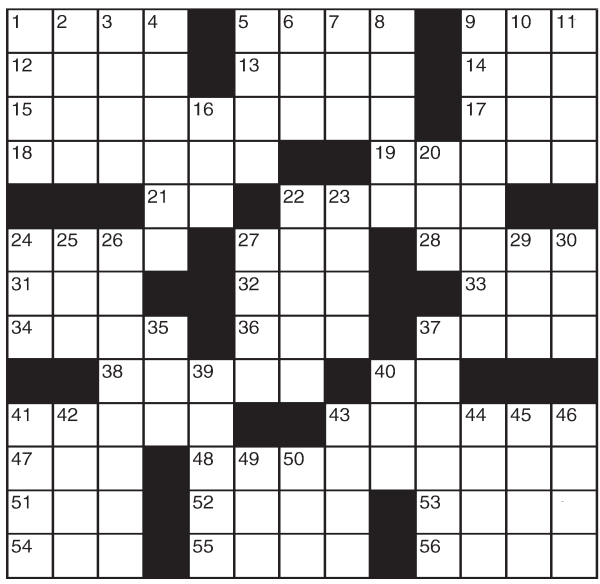
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals Y

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Employer
5 Tulip, at first
9 Pair
12 Pulitzer winner James
13 Sandwich treat
14 Disencumber
15 Ornamentations
17 Fuss
18 Soap opera, e.g.
19 Bank job, e.g.
21 Lumberjack's need
22 India's first prime minister
24 Picnic invaders
27 "30 Rock" star
28 Recognize
31 Round Table address
32 Director Spike —
33 Dead heat
34 Thick chunk
36 Toss in
37 Snitched
38 High heels, often
40 Battery size
41 Void
43 Big step
47 Evening hour, in a way
48 Dulcimer's shape
51 Egos' counterparts
52 Medal earner
53 Unsigned (Abbr.)
54 Ignited
55 Cushiony
56 Singer Mouskouri

DOWN
1 Crazy
2 Shrek, e.g.
3 Burn some
4 Brownish photo hues
5 Reach 212 degrees F.
6 Grecian vessel
7 Journey segment
8 "The Garden of Earthly Delights" painter
9 Decorative quilt design
10 Broad
11 Smell
16 Peace (Lat.)
20 Noah's craft
22 Has to have
23 Watched
24 Ninny
25 Zilch
26 Member of a silent religious order
27 Envelope part
29 OPEC export
30 Tie the knot
35 However
37 Burroughs hero
39 Legends
40 Noshed
41 Satanic
42 Calf-length
43 Name for a Dalmatian
44 New Rochelle school
45 "My Heart Will Go On" singer
46 Writer Ferber
49 — Speedwagon
50 Remark from 43-Down

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 1-5