

Cryptic Crossword Records 2021

Week 88, Thursday 16th December 2021 via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

The last meeting of the year! Six members joined up this morning, working our way through Crosswords 52 & 53 and even finding time to complete 54! And that was after the festive coffee break!

Anagram indicators today included: unwelcome, involved, like, rather weak, sort letters out, confused, mixed, somehow.

For the second time running, there were no words that aroused any special discussion. Perhaps our vocabulary is increasing?

Season's Greetings for Christmas and the New Year to all.

Homework: Try to complete crosswords 55, 56 & 57.

Next meeting: Thursday 6th January 2022 at 10am via Zoom

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Week 87: Thursday 2nd December 2021 at 10am by Zoom, hosted by Sue B

Today we worked our way through crosswords 49, 50 and 51 with most, if not all of us finding some challenging clues.

Anagram indicators today included: medley, out of hand, one way, badly, disruption, of this sort, out of shape, properly and with.

Unusually, we did not come across any words that stimulated any further discussion.

Homework: SUN crosswords 52 and 53.

Next meeting: Thursday 16th December at 10am via Zoom. You are welcome to bring a Christmas drink of your choice and a mince pie or other dainty dish to our meeting since this is the last one of the year!! Fancy dress is optional!

Thursday January 6th will be our first meeting of 2022.

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Week 86: Thursday 18th November 2021 at 10am, hosted by Sue B via Zoom

We had a 'full house' today! After the usual greetings, we launched straight into our SUN crossword homework. As usual, we came across numerous anagram indicators, some listed here: broken down, unusual, outright, sort of, built this way, skirmish, scramble, organised, special, in need of.

Just one word caught our attention today: aileron. The clue: 'balancing aid in need of an oiler'. The answer is an anagram of 'an oiler'. It appears that an 'aileron' is a hinged surface in the trailing edge of an aircraft wing, used to control roll around a longitudinal axis. It's from French meaning 'little wing'.

Homework: SUN crosswords 49, 50 and 51.

Next meeting: Thursday 2nd December at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 85: Thursday 4th November 2021 via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Numbers attending were somewhat down this week for a variety of reasons. Even so, the remaining members worked hard on crosswords 45 and 46. Two answers were especially interesting.

'Dutch' as in 'going Dutch' and 'writ' which uses 'card' in the old-fashioned sense of 'a wit' and then adds in the initial letter of reminder'.

Homework: SUN crosswords 46, 47 and 48.

Next meeting: Thursday 18th November 2021 at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 84: Thursday 21st October at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Seven members attended this morning, keen to work through their 'homework', Sun crosswords 42 and 43.

Anagram indicators: today's indicators included: possibly, display, unusually, madcap, kind, extraction and perhaps. As always, several words caught our attention.

Paucity. The clue 'Shortage in first of pure gold to reach town'. The answer 'paucity', meaning the presence of something only available in small amounts.

Scuba. The clue? 'It helps breathing in southern island'. The answer 'Scuba' derives from the acronym 'Self-Contained Underwater Breathing

Apparatus' and the term was first coined by Dr Christian Lambertsen in 1954.

Arrant. The clue? 'Out-and-out article on car worker'. According to [https://www.merriam-](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/arrant)

[webster.com/dictionary/arrant](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/arrant) 'arrant' means 'being notoriously without moderation'. As an adjective it means 'complete', 'utter', 'downright'. 'unmitigated'.

Next meeting: Thursday 4th November at 10am via Zoom.

Homework: SUN crosswords 44, 45 and 46

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Week 83: Thursday 14th October 2021 at 10am via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

Another interesting meeting attended by 7 members via Zoom. We worked steadily our way through crosswords 39, 40 and 41.

There were a number of interesting anagram indicators today and some of these were : upsets, frenzy, covertly, basis, new, performed, disturbedly, make-up, strange, wandering, confusion, conceal, moving and need.

A number of words were considered by the group to be worthy of further elucidation. However, I have restricted these to 6 to keep the blog a reasonable size and to spare me even more work!

'Noisome': we all thought this word was connected to some aspect of noise. But No! It is an adjective used to describe offensive, unpleasant, disagreeable smells! The clue was 'Racket involving respected order is disgusting'.

'Oversees': An overseer is a person who supervises, oversees others, such as a foreman, forewoman or chargehand. The clue was 'Superintends abroad, we hear'. This word appeared again in the next crossword. This time the clue was "About to observe and manage".

'Cohere': The clue was 'Officer and he, meeting again, stick together'. The answer – 'cohere', meaning to stick or hang together. None of us could remember using this word recently!

'Exigent': The clue was 'Requiring attention, information found in way out'. The word generally means 'pressing, demanding'.

'Ambit': the clue was "Within which range a doctor has to get over it". According to <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ambit> the word ambit means a) a circuit or compass b) the bounds or limits of a place or district c) a sphere of action, expression or influence, scope.

'Disturbedly': this word was used as an anagram indicator. It is an adverb and means 'in a disturbed manner' <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disturbedly>

Next meeting: Thursday 21st October at 10am via Zoom.

Homework: Crosswords 42 & 43 only to reflect that we are meeting again in a week.

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Week 82: Thursday 16th September at 10am via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Today the group of eight finished off crossword 36 and then worked through 37 and 38.

As always there were numerous anagram indicators, and today these included: alternative, unusual, concealed, damaged, actually, loosened, like this, may be, sometimes, misplaced, attended to and reunite.

Just one word, 'ovine', seemed worthy of further investigation. The clue: 'Sheepish'? The answer: 'ovine'.

According to <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ovine>:

'Sheep belong to the same family of mammals as goats, antelope, bison, buffalo, and cows. The genus *Ovis* includes at least five species, including the domestic sheep. Some 12,000 years ago, in the area now known as Iraq, sheep became one of the first animals to be domesticated; only the dog is known to have been tamed earlier. At first, they were valued for their milk, skin, and meat (mutton and lamb); not until about 1500 B.C. did the weaving of wool begin. Today a billion sheep are being farmed worldwide.

The term *ovine* (which is a noun as well as an adjective) is mostly used in scientific and medical writing—which means you could impress your friends by dropping it into a casual conversation'. Perhaps we should try to do that!

Homework: Crosswords 39, 40 and 41

Next meeting: Thursday 7th October 2021 via Zoom

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Week 81: Thursday 2nd September 2021 at 10am hosted by Sue B via Zoom

A busy morning with seven members meeting via Zoom.

We worked through crosswords 33 and 34 with just enough time to make a start on crossword 35.

This week's anagrams, and there were many, included variety, of this sort, equivalent, seen to be, could be, perhaps, unusual, badly, out, new, almost, somehow and clumsily.

Two words were identified for further expansion in the blog.

The first was 'Leopard'. The clue: 'It could be black but spotted, avoid it!' Answer: leopard'. The leopard *panthera pardus* is one of 5 extant species in the genera 'Panthera', a member of the cat family Filidae. It is astoundingly strong and there are believed to be about 84 leopards still living in the wild. A quick internet search for leopard will produce a number of scary videos! <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leopard>

The second was 'Bower'. The clue: 'sheltered spot – for person applauded'. According to Miriam Webber internet dictionary, 'bower', as a noun means a) an attractive dwelling or retreat b) a lady's private apartment in a medieval hall or castle and c) a shelter (as in a garden) made with tree boughs or vines twined together. However, it also has a

nautical meaning: 'an anchor carried at the front of a ship'. As a verb, it can be used 'to embower or to enclose'. The first known use is around the 12C. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bower>

Next meeting via Zoom: Thursday 16th September 2021

Homework: Try to complete SUN crosswords 35, 36 and 37.

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Week 80: Thursday 19th August 2021 via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

Today was the 80th CC meeting!

Another busy session with 8 members on Zoom. We were delighted to welcome Rosemary C as a new member to the group.

We found some of the clues in crosswords 30, 31 and 32 quite a challenge and of course this stimulated plenty of discussion.

Anagram indicators today included: dismantled, about, bizarrely, destroy, upset, is used, arrangement, tackled, perhaps, noisier and camouflage.

One word today was the obvious choice for further examination. Well, maybe two words. Glare / glair. The clue was 'part of egg one avoids looking at, so it's said'. The answer was "glair".

It appears that glair is a preparation made from egg white, especially as an adhesive for bookbinding and gilding and is often confused with glare which can be used as a verb or noun.

To glare is to stare in an angry or fierce way and a glare might refer to the brightness of, say, the sun or be a glare of contempt. Interesting.

Word of the Week: I have been asked to include a new section to the blog – 'Word of the Week'!

This week it is '*derision*' - meaning 'the situation in which someone or something is laughed at and considered stupid or of no value. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/derision>

Group members are charged with trying to find opportunities to use this word in the forthcoming week. It will be interesting to find out how we compare when we meet again!

Homework: SUN crosswords 33 & 34

Next meeting: Thursday 2nd September 2021 at 10am via Zoom

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Week 79: Thursday 5th August 2021, hosted by Sue B via Zoom.

The group was rather depleted today, with several members on holiday.

There were no matters of special interest.

Homework: Try to complete crosswords 30, 31 and 32.

Next meeting: Thursday 19th August at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 78: Thursday 29th July 2021 at 10am, hosted by Sue B via Zoom

Eight of us were able to meet up this morning. We were delighted to see Pearl B, if only for a short time and we look forward to seeing her again at our next meeting.

We worked hard this morning and actually completed the three crosswords we set ourselves as homework.

As usual we came across a number of anagram indicators. Today these included: prepared, needing attention, exploited, special, arranged, smart, gather, out and quite different.

Today, only one clue really stood out for further consideration. The cryptic clue was 'You might not see what he does'. The coffee time version of the clue was 'Blue pencil'. The answer was 'censor'. Well, as often happens, not all of us knew that the 'blue pencil' was a reference to the work of a censor. At first the online search produced references to several companies before arriving at dictionary definitions. According to the online Cambridge Dictionary, 'when a person goes over a piece of writing with a 'blue pencil', they remove or change some of the words to improve it or to make it respectable'. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/blue-pencil>
Examples of 'Blue-pencil' in a sentence.

'But a 'blue pencil' is as strong as a sword, and more cut and thrust would have made this book sharper'. Laura Jacobs, New York Times, 11th April 2018.'

'Stalin's 'blue pencil' unlike that of other editors, glided across not just poetry chapbooks and literary journals, but life itself'. Aaron Lake Smith, Harper's Magazine, 24th June 2019.' <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/blue-pencil>

The following definition was found in Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bluepencildoctrine>. 'The blue pencil doctrine is a legal concept in common law countries, where a court finds that portions of a contract are void or unenforceable, but other portions of the contract are enforceable. The Blue Pencil Rule allows the legally valid, enforceable provisions of the contract to stand despite the nullification of the legally void, unenforceable provisions. However, the revised version must represent the original meaning; the rule may not be invoked, for example, to delete the word "not" and thereby change a negative to a positive'.

So now we know a little more!

Next meeting: Thursday 5th August 2021 at 10am via Zoom.

Homework: SUN Crosswords 30 & 31.

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Week 77: Thursday 15th July 2021, hosted by Sue B

It was nice to be able to meet up again after a month's break. Six members attended with apologies received from others.

After a short discussion we started by working through Crosswords 25 & 26.

As usual, a number of anagram indicators were quickly spotted. These included: perhaps, all over, confused, unusually, stir up, secretly, somehow, firmly held, strangely.

Two clue answers are worthy of note.

1 Convent: The clue was 'Caught performing before opening very good place'. The answer was 'convent'. We thought this one was rather 'neat'! The 'C' was an abbreviation of 'caught'. 'On' replaced 'performing' whilst another word for 'opening' is 'vent'. Simple!

2 We had an interesting discussion about the word 'tonsure', the answer to the clue 'Top attention to men in order to show they're members'.

2.1: Noun: a part of a monk's or priest's head left bare on top by shaving off the hair.

"his hair is thinning up there—soon he'll have a tonsure like a monk's"

2.2: Verb: shave the hair on top of (a monk's or priest's head); give a tonsure to.

"Louis's half-brothers were tonsured and sent away to monasteries"

The act of shaving one's hair on the scalp is known as tonsure and it has been associated with a multitude of religions through history. Sometimes referred to as the 'monastic crown', the haircut has come to symbolise religious devotion and the rejection of worldly possessions. <https://www.historyanswers.co.uk/medieval-renaissance/why-do-monks-have-shaved-heads/>

First known use in the 14C and originated from Anglo-French, from the Medieval Latin 'tonsura', the act of shearing, from 'tonsus', past participle of tondère, to shear. I'm not sure we needed to know this!! <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tonsure>

Homework: SUN crosswords 27, 28 & 29.

Next meeting: Thursday 29th July, by Zoom at 10am.

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WEEK 76: Thursday 10th June at 10am hosted by Sue B via Zoom

The group met a week early as Sue B will be away for the rest of the month and so unable to host Zoom meetings. Sue B kindly took the notes of the meeting and Frances G (who was away on holiday) has written them up on her return.

Six members were able to join the meeting.

We did not come across many new words, but were surprised to find that 'napping' can mean 'forecasting'. Sue B had seen it in connection with horse racing when the odds are shown.

We came across an alternative spelling of amend in emend. Chambers Dictionary doesn't indicate any difference in meaning.

Finally, we came across a further meaning of 'char'. We have encountered it so far meaning tea, a cleaner, and to burn or scorch. This time it was used to mean a species of fish.

Homework: Try to complete SUN crosswords 25, 26 & 27

Date of next meeting: Thursday 1st July at 10am via Zoom

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Week 75, Thursday 3rd June 2021, hosted by Sue Butler.

We had a 'full house' today and had a busy time.

Today's anagram indicators included: all in, variation, warned, disgruntled, able to give, silly way, about, perhaps, type, changing.

Two words generated further discussion.

'Erasure'. The clue was 'It can leave an acceptable emptiness'. Erasure can mean 'the removal of writing, recorded material or data'. Or, the act of causing a feeling, memory, or period of time to be completely forgotten'. Or, the act of removing or destroying something, especially something that shows that a person or thing ever existed or happened. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/erasure>

'Lei'. The clue was "Pretty when worn, some go pale in sunlight". Some of us didn't know that a lei is 'a circle of flowers that is worn as a garland around the neck in Polynesia'. Interesting.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lei>

Homework: Try to complete crosswords 23 & 24

Next meeting: Thursday 10th June 2021 at 10am via Zoom (this meeting is out of our usual sequence), **followed by a meeting on Thursday 1st July via Zoom.**

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Week 74: Thursday 20th May 2021 via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

We had three apologies this morning. After settling down and the usual greetings / updates, we started work on crosswords 18 & 19.

As always, we came across a variety of anagram indicators. Today these included put out, use of, hotch-potch, bogus, one sort of, breakdown, variation, collapsing.....

Several words started a fuller discussion. One of these was 'Sapphire'. The clue was 'colourfully attractive piper has breakdown in it'. The answer was an anagram of 'piper has'. All of us thought the answer was spelt 'sapphire', and of course, this didn't fit the crossword grid! We now know better!

Another answer was 'dilates'. The clue was ' speaks at length using hotch-potch of details', and of course it was an anagram of 'details'. This word is usually used in the 3rd person and usually means make or become wide, larger or more open. For example, 'her eyes dilated with horror'. However, it can also mean 'to comment at length', 'discourse'. For example, 'dilate upon themes of love and death'. www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dilate (Copy and paste that into your web browser.)

Homework: Complete SUN Crossword 20 (which we started in the session) and try to complete Crosswords 21 & 22 – no panic!

Next Meeting: Thursday 3rd June 2021 at 10am via Zoom.

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Thursday 6th May 2021 via zoom hosted by Sue B.

We had 6 members today with 3 apologies. We had worked on our homework of Sun crosswords number 16 and 17, and we had some words which generated some interesting discussions.

Anathema, was the first, the clue was 'Anathema to women but a big help to to workmen'. The answer was Ladders. The meaning of which varies from abhorrent, repellent, aversion and bug bear. Memories of ladders in stockings generated a definite bugbear !

Another word which some of our group hadn't come across before was the word 'ings'. One of our group, comes from Yorkshire, remembered using the word as open ground. Sure enough, Ings is a old word of Norse origin, referring to water and meadows, including those that were part of the Humber flood plain. There is also an Ings road in Hull.

Another clue 'Suggest I get married, and make regular journeys.'The 5 letter answer was Imply. One of the meanings of the word Ply is to traverse a route or course regularly.

We found today really interesting and all of us learnt interesting facts, and it is always fun.

Our homework is 18/19 from Sun Crosswords.

Next meeting is 20th May 2021.

Kath Kings

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Week 72: Thursday 15th April 2021 via Zoom hosted by Sue B

We had 6 members at our meeting today, with 3 apologies. We worked hard on our homework, SUN crosswords 13, 14 and 15, but for some reason there were fewer interesting words and phrases to stimulate discussion than usual.

The clue 'Soothes expert involved in silly loss' produced the answer 'solaces'. According to <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/solacing> , solace can be used as a noun and (probably less commonly) as a verb, and stems from the Latin 'solatium' meaning comfort.

The clue 'Brisk punishment' produced the answer 'spanking'! Well! This required further investigation!

According to <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/spanking> and others, the term 'spanking may be used in various ways:

As a noun: 'The act of slapping, especially on the buttocks, as a punishment for children', or in a sexual way for pleasure.

As an adjective: lively, brisk, especially relating to a horse or its gait eg. 'a spanking trot'.

Informally: 'very good'. E.g. 'we had a spanking time'.

As an adverb: 'spanking new' – meaning very new.

Today's anagram indicators included: available, sacrifice, change, special, prepared, move and adjustment.

Homework: SUN crosswords 16 and 17.

Next meeting: Thursday 6th May 2021 at 10am via Zoom. FG, PB and SW have already given their apologies. Special thanks to KK who has volunteered to write up the blog.

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Week 71: Thursday 1st April 2021, via Zoom and hosted by Sue B

Yet another busy morning for the full group! Thanks Sue B.

After trying to put 'the world to rights' we settled down to examine crosswords 11 & 12. We soon found some interesting words to discuss in more depth. Here are a few of them.

One of these was 'arch'. The clue? 'Rather coy – holding things up'. According to wikipedia.org an 'arch' is 'a vertical curved structure that spans an elevated space and may or may not support the weight above it, or in case of a horizontal arch like an arch dam, the hydrostatic pressure against it'.

Interestingly, in the 17th century, as the 'extreme' sense of arch came to be used frequently to describe rogues, knaves, and other clever or mischievous sorts, 'arch' eventually settled into use as an adjective to describe one with impish or playful qualities (wikipedia.com). In other words, 'coy' - which was today's use of 'arch'. Very few of us knew that!

Of course, 'arch' also is used to refer to a rank, such as 'Archbishop'.

'Game' also came in for some discussion. The clue? 'Plucky – but handicapped'. As a noun, it can refer to an activity that one engages into for fun, or a complete episode or period of play ending with a result. It can refer to an animal being hunted for sport. As an adjective it can mean being keen or eager to do something or as a verb 'to game'. It can refer to something not treated seriously, or used in the context of a prostitute being 'on the game'.

However, for the purpose of our clue, the word referred to a 'damaged' body part, such as a game (gummy) leg.

'Carol'. The clue? 'Song she won't necessarily like'. According to wikipedia.com the word 'carol' is derived from the Old French word 'carole', a circle dance

accompanied by singers (in turn derived from the Latin choraula – sacred music). 'To carol sing' also means to sing in a happy or religious manner, usually at Christmas.

And finally, 'destine'. The clue? 'What clan needs to be secret?'. It seems it is derived from Old French (and Latin 'destinare'). It means to set apart or appoint / ordain.

Of course we have a list of anagram indicators. Today these included : turbulent, suitable, thus, odd, breakdown, confused and new use.

Homework : to finish SUN crossword 13 and try to complete crosswords 14 & 15.

Next meeting: Thursday 15th April at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 70: Thursday 18th March 2021 via Zoom and hosted by Sue B.

This was our 70th CC meeting. Sorry everyone, I said 60 this morning. A busy session this morning and we were all kept on our toes!

To start with we came across an interesting list of anagram indicators: cultivate, turning out, could be, may be, for, breaking and reassessment.

As always we came across words or phrases that stimulated a lively discussion.

Cat'spaw: we have come across this word before but it restimulated discussion. The clue was 'Only a tool but it can add severity to a scratch'. There are numerous diverse meanings: <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/catspaw>
Light air that ruffles the surface of water in irregular patches during a calm. Apparently used in this sense first in 1769.

One used by another as a tool. Idiom: the dupe of another – derived from La Fontaine's Fable 'The Monkey and the Cat'.

A hitch knot formed with 2 eyes for attaching a line to a hook. See 'You Tube' video.

The Cat's-Paw plant. Anigozanthos Humilis, from the Family Haemodoraceae. A flowering perennial endemic in S W Australia.

A tool used as a crowbar or nail puller.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Cat%27s-Paw. Yes, there is even a film 'Cat's Paw (1934). A comedy – satire about corrupt politicians.

Infer / imply: according to www.Enhancemywriting.com : the clue was 'Conclude – no great fire'. The answer was 'inferno'.

'Infer' and 'imply' are both related to indirect information but approach this meaning from two different angles.

'Infer' relates to the use of reasoning rather than being told directly, whereas 'imply' means to suggest or hint without actually stating the information.

www.SallyTownsendEditorial.com : 'Survival Skills for Freelancers' states that 'imply and infer are easy to confuse' and she states that they are actually opposites! Quite simply she states that to imply means to hint at something whereas to infer means to make an educated guess from the information available.

I'm sure that I have made this quite clear (!!!!), but if in doubt, please look it up for yourself!

The clue, 'sort of ant facing a choice' produced the answer 'opt'. This started another interesting discussion including, thanks to Brenda the words 'optant' and 'opter'.

According to www.yourdictionary.com an optant is a person who opts into / out of or for something. A person who chooses or has chosen. Or, a person who lives in a region undergoing a change of sovereignty and may choose between retaining their old citizenship or opting for citizenship of the new sovereignty.

Another clue, 'Fabric only available with linen end' produced the answer 'Nylon'. Well, well! I refer you to the following reference since an account of how Nylon came to be called 'Nylon' is quite lengthy:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nylon>

What is clear is that the name Nylon was NOT derived from NY (New York) and LON (London). It is considered a persistent urban legend!

And yes, we did discuss many other interesting words, including the word 'goon' but I have written more than enough!

Homework: SUN Book 2, crosswords 11 & 12.

Next meeting: Thursday 1st April 2021 via Zoom

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Week 69: Thursday 4th March 2021, hosted via Zoom by Sue B

Today we welcomed a new member, Christine, to the group.

We had a 'full house' and were kept busy working through the three crosswords which we had set ourselves for 'homework'.

Today, few words caused us much anguish or excitement and there were no new exciting anagram indicators to speak of. However one clue 'Bribes, needing work on board' produced the answer 'sops', and this word resulted in an interesting discussion.

'Sop': Noun.

A thing of no great importance. A conciliatory gesture. A concession to appease someone.

A piece of bread dipped in gravy, soup or sauce.

'Sop': Verb: to soak up. To be sopping wet.

Homework: SUN Two-Speed Crosswords (Book 2) 9 & 10

Next meeting: Thursday 18th March at 10am via Zoom.

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Week 68: Thursday 18th February 2021 via Zoom, hosted by Sue B

Another busy meeting with a full group. Normally we get 'stuck in' so to speak, but today the first comments related to one of our members new backdrop, a sort of screen save – trying to identify the property in question! Then we were soon working through last week's 'homework' and as always interesting anagram indicators and words started conversations.

For me, the most interesting word was 'stet'. The clue? 'Instruction to relative not to alter headwear' (7). Answer: Stetson. It appears that:

Stet is an obelism, used by proof-readers and editors to instruct the typesetter or writer to disregard a change the editor or proof-reader had previously marked. It basically means 'let it stand'. It is a form of the Latin verb sto, stare, steti, statum.

Of course, I then needed to find out the meaning of 'obelism'!

Obelism is the practice of annotating manuscripts with marks set in the margins. Modern obelisms are used by editors when blue-penciling a manuscript or typescript. Examples are "stet" and "dele". The obelos symbol gets its name from the spit, or sharp end of a lance in ancient Greek. An obelos was placed by editors on the margins of manuscripts, especially in Homer, to indicate lines that were doubtfully Homer's. The system was developed by Aristarchus and notably used later by Origen in his Hexapla. (Educalingo)

Well.....! Now you know!

Glair proved to be another interesting word.

It relates to the white of egg and may be used as size, glaze, or adhesive usually in book binding. It can also relate to any substance resembling this. As a verb, it means to apply glair to something.

Homework: to complete SUN Two Speed Crossword Collection 2, crosswords 6, 7 and 8.

Next meeting: Thursday 4th March at 10am via Zoom

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Week 67: Tuesday 4th February 2021 via ZOOM

Unfortunately Sue B, our Facilitator was unwell today but John B was kind enough to facilitate the Zoom meeting and I did my best to keep it together.

We had a good turnout and busied ourselves with looking back at our 'homework', SUN crosswords 1 & 2.

Numerous anagram word indicators turned up today. So far we must have come across hundreds of them. Today's selection included : some sort, advise, in a way, deviously, possibly, use of, careless, damaged, can be, as required, somehow, excursion, adrift'.

As always, several words caused us some interest and 'Interest' was one of them! The clue? 'Curiosity it can be well worth having'.

'Troll'. The clue? 'It's not real fish'. We were well aware of its meaning in relation to:

A person who intentionally antagonises, often online, by posting inflammatory or offensive comments.

An imaginary creature, with magical powers, in traditional Scandinavian stories.

However, we were not aware that to troll (verb) is to try to catch fish by pulling a baited line through the water behind a boat. Thanks, John B.

We also found the word 'slug' quite interesting. The clue? 'Plant killer (or worse!)'. We knew that it can refer to a 'tough skinned terrestrial mollusc' or a 'bullet', or even as a verb, 'to hit hard with a fist'. However, it also can refer to a 'slow moving, lazy person'.

Homework: Complete SUN Book 2 crosswords 3, 4 and 5.

Next meetings: Thursday 18th February at 10am via Zoom. Then, Thursday 4th March at 10am via Zoom

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Week 66: Thursday 21st January 2021 hosted by Sue Butler via Zoom

We had a particularly good time this morning and were pleased to welcome a new member, Maria G.

As usual, we worked our way through our homework, Sun Book 3 crosswords 146 and 147. An interesting number of anagram indicators were evident today, including: crooked, badly, decayed, flustered, abuse, could be, comes up, of this sort, upset, perhaps..... We have met most of them before, but it is worth highlighting them again.

Again, as usual, several interesting words stimulated group discussion.

Legatee: A person who receives Personal Property through a will. The term legatee is often used to denote those who inherit under a will without any distinction between real property and personal property, but technically a devisee inherits real property under a will.

Uncle: We came across this word fairly recently, but most of us had forgotten one of its other meanings!

Pawnbroking first became commonplace in Britain in the 13C when Franciscan friars set up pawn shops to help the poor. In the East End, 'Uncle' – the Cockney nickname for pawnbroker – has for many years been a familiar member of the community.

Fiddle: There are many meanings to this word. The clue (a double definition) was 'Not easy to play it – nor locate where used'. In our case, the meaning to the first half related to a stringed instrument, fiddle, and the second to detecting a swindle (or fiddle).

Realise. This word was used in a double definition clue 'Come to see and make a profit'. The answer to both parts was 'realise'. Neat!

Homework: We have now virtually completed SUN Book 3 (and our books are almost worn out!) so we will now be starting on SUN Book 2, crosswords 1 & 2.

Next meetings: Thursday 4th and Thursday 18th February 2021 at 10am via Zoom

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Week 65: Thursday 7th January 2021 hosted by Sue Butler via Zoom

The first meeting of the new year. Another cheerful, sparkly and interesting morning with a full house. We worked through our homework (SUN 144) and then went on to complete 145.

Today's interesting anagram indicators – 'disturbing', 'totally different' and 'awkwardly'. The list seems endless, but then, 'endless' is another CC indicator! It refers to the deletion of the first and last letters of the word or only the last letter of the word.

It seems that we cannot always remember the meaning of new words or phrases! Today, most members could not remember the meanings of 'cat's paw' which we came across some weeks ago. We must try harder! Please refer back to Week 61's blog for details.

As always we came across several interesting words / phrases:

'Adepts' was the plural noun answer to the clue 'users of skill, as seen round business section'.

'Dyed in the wool'. If someone is dyed-in-the-wool, or has dyed-in-the-wool opinions, they hold those opinions strongly and will not change them: He's a dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist where cooking is concerned - he doesn't allow any modern gadgets in the kitchen.

'Swell' can be used as a verb, noun, adjective and adverb. 'Swell' was the answer to our clue today 'Get more noticeable? Great!'

We are familiar with the meaning of 'fatigue' but what about 'fatigues'? Army fatigues are donned by soldiers when performing menial, nonmilitary tasks. These tasks themselves were once referred to as fatigues, which is where the G.I. garb got its name (originally: fatigue dress, "outfit worn when performing fatigues"). The chores (and thus the clothing) were so-called for being tiresome and laborious.

Next meeting: Thursday 21st January 2021 via Zoom at 10 am

Homework: SUN crosswords 146 & 147. We are now coming to the end of Sun Two-Speed Crossword Collection 3 and will be starting on Collection 2 shortly.