

		C								
	C	R	O	S	S	W	O	R	D	S
		Y								T
		P								A
G	E	T	T	I	N	G				R
		I								T
		C								E
										D

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## A GUIDE TO READING AND SOLVING CRYPTIC CLUES

### 5 - More variations of wordplay

Apart from double definition and single definition type clues, your typical cryptic clue will divide into the two main parts of '**definition**' (what the solution actually means) and '**wordplay**' (different ways to interpret clue words to get new results).

The wordplay could be some kind of special manipulation - forming letters into a different order for an **anagram**, pulling out just certain letters for a **concealed word** clue, finding an alternative that sounds the same as what's in the clue for **homophones**. Or it can be finding several different elements - then getting alternative words for (= **synonyms**) or shorter forms of (= **abbreviations**) or specific types (= **examples**) of these - almost always before then sandwiching or chaining them together for charade type clues.

Occasionally you also get other wordplays that are similar to but not covered by the above - for example **subtractions** which are a bit like charade clues except that you take something away instead of joining bits together, or **modifications** where you change just the odd letter, or **reversals** where a word is simply written back to front.

For example:

#### **Nobleman ahead of schedule for the most part (4)**

Nobleman is the definition

'Ahead of schedule' can give you the synonym - EARLY

*For the most part* is an indicator to say that you only use part of what you have

Solution is a type of noble man, from truncating EARLY - so EARL

#### **Benefit from changing ending of book (4)**

Benefit is the definition, *changing ending* is the indicator

Get another word for benefit by changing BOOKU to BOONU

#### **Enthusiastic, prima donna making a come back (4)**

Enthusiastic is the definition

A synonym for prima donna is DIVA

*Making a come back* is the indicator to use word in reverse order

Solution is DIVA written backwards to give the solution AVID

These are just some of the possibilities of what you might need to do. Basically you just have to read the clue word by word, and decide if you think any parts of it could be an indicator to do a particular form of manipulation.

Subtractions are the most common. Do be aware though that what you subtract is often on the same lines as what you might need to add in to charade clues, i.e. phrases that lead you to just one or two letters - e.g. Last of the Mohicans (S), Outskirts of Torquay (TY), Heart to Heart (A), not one (remove I), not caught (remove C) - so all the same sneaky tricks as already encountered in charade clues, except taking letters out rather than adding them in.

**Exercise 5.1.** Subtraction Clues, losing abbreviations <sup>1</sup> Definition underlined

- Vehicle has creepy-crawlies - *not* good (3)
- Penny *extracted from* villain's fraud (4)
- Pressure *to abandon* agreement? It may be just a pose. (3)
- Slip and panic, *having wasted* time (5)

**Exercise 5.2.** More subtraction clues <sup>2</sup> - read the instructions !!

<u>Fine differences</u> one's <i>not seen in</i> pests (7)	NU(is)ANCES
<u>Composer</u> from group <i>losing heart</i> (4)	BA(t)CH
<u>Herb</u> , one about <i>to be cut from</i> church building (5) lose ica from basilica	BASIL
Meeting with Tory's too <i>utterly devoid of</i> love (5) lose all the o's	TRYST

Note: by this stage of how complicated clues can get, you may well not be spotting the wordplays in advance - but key thing is that when you see the answer you can hopefully see how it was arrived at. Remember these are easier to solve in a grid where you get some letters supplied by other answers !!! And if you can think of an answer that fits, you can do the word play just to confirm it.

<sup>1</sup> **Exercise 5.1**

Vehicle has creepy-crawlies - <i>not</i> good (3)	BU(g)S
Penny <i>extracted from</i> villain's fraud (4)	SCAM (p)
Pressure <i>to abandon</i> agreement? It may be just a pose. (3)	(p)ACT
<u>Slip</u> and panic, <i>having wasted</i> time (5)	(t) ERROR

<sup>2</sup> **Exercise 5.2.**

<u>Fine differences</u> one's <i>not seen in</i> pests (7) <i>lose I's from</i> NUISANCES	NUANCES
<u>Composer</u> from group <i>losing heart</i> (4) <i>lose middle letter from</i> BATCH	BACH
<u>Herb</u> , one about <i>to be cut from</i> church building (5) <i>lose ica from</i> basilica	BASIL
Meeting with Tory's too <i>utterly devoid of</i> love (5) <i>lose all the o's</i>	TRYST

**So is that it for the different types of clues ?**

That is probably all the different types of clues and wordplays that you see in a standard cryptic crossword. That's the good news. All you need to look out for now, additionally, is clues that have more than one type of wordplay in it - so maybe an anagram with letters subtracted, or a hidden word that you then have to reverse. As if the the basic clues were not hard enough!! So for example:-

**Edward worried about learner, one falling behind (7)**

This is an anagram with an added letter - EDWARD + L rearranged to DAWDLER

**Small drink brought up: time for larger one? (4)**

Small drink is NIP, *brought up* indicator to reverse this, Add in T for time, to get PINT

For this next set of sample clues, the answers in the footnotes are in two stages - so even if you don't get the answer, can you at least explain how the clue fits it?

**Exercise 5.3. What different things are going on here?<sup>3 4</sup>**

- Familiar feeling from Dave broadcast around July 1st and 2nd (4-2)
- One sober person in view to avoid action (3,5)
- Junior tearaway, ultimately having no urge to reform (7)
- Couple turning noisy, left out (3)
- America backed dodgy gaffer in vote (8)
- Praise quite regularly received by large group (7)
- Join in swimming finally in lake (5)
- Religion is assigned unlimited blame (5)

**<sup>3</sup> Exercise 5.3 - the solutions**

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| ● Familiar feeling from Dave broadcast around July 1st and 2nd (4-2) | DEJA-VU   |
| ● One sober person in view to avoid action (3,5)                     | SIT TIGHT |
| ● Junior tearaway, ultimately having no urge to reform               | YOUNGER   |
| ● Couple turning noisy, left out (3)                                 | DUO       |
| ● America backed dodgy gaffer in vote (8)                            | SUFFRAGE  |
| ● Praise quite regularly received by large group (7)                 | TRIBUTE   |
| ● Join in swimming finally in lake (5)                               | MERGE     |
| ● Religion is assigned unlimited blame (5)                           | ISLAM     |

**<sup>4</sup> Exercise 5.3 - the explanations**

- Anagram (made up from dave plus abbreviation first 2 letters of July)
- 1 t-totaller (ITT) inside SIGHT
- NO URGE anagram + Y (tearaway ultimately)
- LOUD turned to give DUOL, minus the L for left out
- US backed to give SU, then an anagram of gaffer
- 'Quite regularly' drops the odd letters to give UT, added into TRIBE
- G for swimming finally, added in to MERE as a synonym for lake
- Unlimited BLAME loses the first and last letters to give LAM, with IS before this