

The  
**PUZZLE  
CABARET**

Unique  
Word, Math, and Logic  
Challenges

Vincent J. Matsko

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Published by Vincent J. Matsko  
vince.matsko@gmail.com

[www.vincematsko.com](http://www.vincematsko.com)

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## Introduction

I have loved working puzzles ever since I was in grade school. There would always be puzzle magazines lying around the house in various states of completion, depending on who got to them first and what puzzles they wanted to tackle.

Now, decades later, when I look at the puzzles in various different magazines, what strikes me is that there isn't really much that is *new*. It seems that the same types of puzzles get recycled over and over again. Yes, there are some classic types, and everyone has their favorites – but it's time for innovation!

That's why I put together *The Puzzle Cabaret*. You'll see some puzzles which appear familiar, but when you look a little closer – there's usually a twist.

Take the tried-and-true word search. Well, what if the grid was actually a cryptogram, which had to be decoded before you could circle any words? You'll find *CryptoGrid* on Page 32.

Many of the puzzles, to the best of my knowledge, haven't been seen in print before. Some involve coming up with words with particular features – such as the 11 different ways the vowels “EI” can be pronounced in English (see *E Before I* on Page 36).

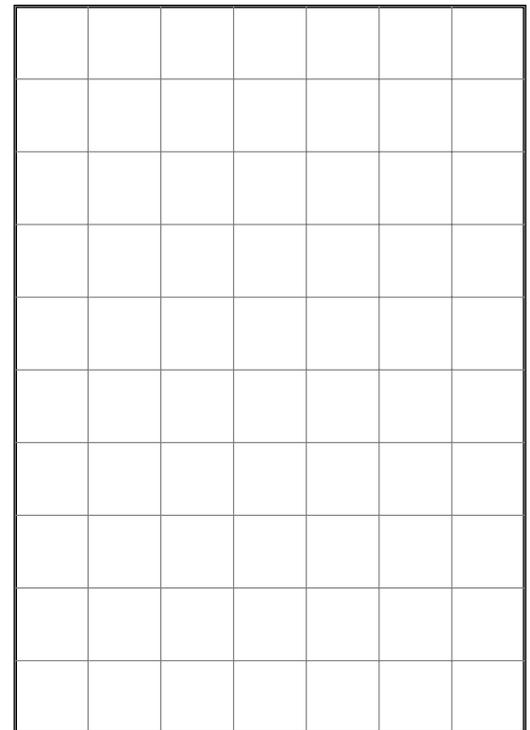
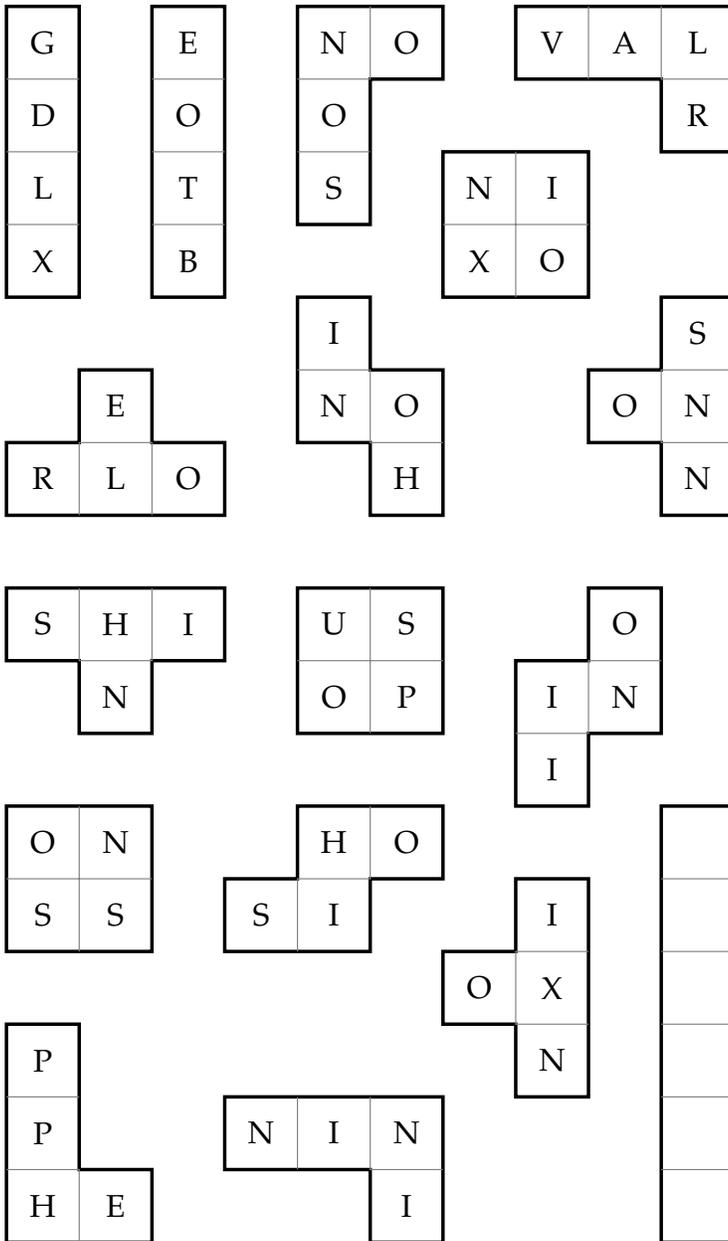
In addition to word puzzles, there are also math and logic puzzles. Some may look familiar, but many won't. The logic puzzles aren't the usual ones where you put a “yes” or “no” in boxes in a grid – they have interesting (and challenging!) features which make each one unique.

I've avoided assigning difficulty levels to the puzzles – different solvers find different puzzles challenging. I do give some hints as indicated, and if there is more than one puzzle on a page, an indication like Hint (2): Page 70 means that a hint to the second puzzle can be found on Page 70. Also, I've stayed away from obscure words to make the puzzles accessible and enjoyable.

I hope you have as much fun solving these puzzles as I had creating them! I'm already at work on the next book, so I'd love to hear from you – let me know what you want to see more (or less) of in Volume 2. You can find me at [vince.matsko@gmail.com](mailto:vince.matsko@gmail.com). Willkommen to *The Puzzle Cabaret*!

# Word Tetris

As in the game Tetris, you must drop these 17 pieces into the 10 × 7 grid so that they form 10 seven-letter words. Like in Tetris, some of the pieces need to be rotated before they are dropped: 10 of the pieces contain letters among H, I, N, O, S, and X. These may be rotated 180° and still have letters in the correct orientation; you need to decide which need to be rotated before they are dropped. No other pieces should be rotated. The six-square piece should be dropped vertically; it is up to you to decide which letters go in the squares. In addition, clues are given for the 10 seven-letter words (though *not* in order).



Clues:

- A. Beneficiary
- B. Boat with floats
- C. Body orifice
- D. Bright
- E. Meat cut
- F. Mythical bird
- G. Neverending
- H. Shut-in
- I. Tiny room
- J. Very unpleasant

# Stairs

In the first puzzle, the string "CAR" can appear in any location in 9-letter words. Answer the clues (given in alphabetical order and so *not* necessarily next to their answers) and write their answers on the appropriate blanks. In the second puzzle, "MEN" appears in 11-letter words.

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _               | 1. Coconutty cookies  |
| _ _ <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _           | 2. Corn field denizen |
| _ _ _ <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _         | 3. Ink _____          |
| _ _ _ _ <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _       | 4. Study aid          |
| _ _ _ _ _ <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _     | 5. Tossed out         |
| _ _ _ _ _ _ <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _   | 6. Tram               |
| _ _ _ _ _ _ _ <u>C</u> <u>A</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _ _ | 7. Vacation missives  |

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Agreeableness         | <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _                   |
| 2. Basic                 | _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _               |
| 3. Broadcaster           | _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _             |
| 4. Entrepreneurs         | _ _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _           |
| 5. Harmful               | _ _ _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _         |
| 6. Like some cough drops | _ _ _ _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _       |
| 7. Soon                  | _ _ _ _ _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _     |
| 8. Sustenance            | _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _   |
| 9. They accompany emails | _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ <u>M</u> <u>E</u> <u>N</u> _ _ _ _ _ |

Can you find a 10-letter word which contains both strings "CAR" and "MEN"? Note: Either string can come first.

# Morse: Blue

Who knew there were so many different types of blues? Below, fifteen different blues are written in Morse code, with spaces between the letters omitted. Using the letter chart below, find these various colors. But there's a catch: while five of the colors are written as usual, five are written backwards, and five are anagrammed. Thus, TEAL may be written as  $\text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot$  (as usual),  $\cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---}$  (backwards; note that *only* the letters are written backwards, *not* the individual dots/dashes which make up the letters), or  $\cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---}$  (anagrammed).

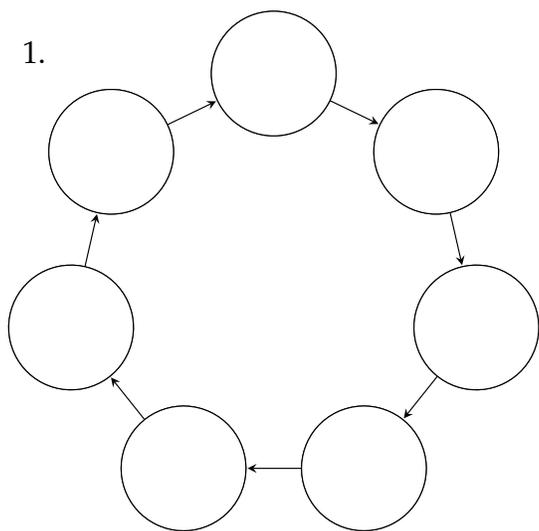
A	$\cdot \text{---}$	F	$\cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot$	K	$\text{---} \cdot \text{---}$	Q	$\text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---}$	V	$\cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---}$
B	$\text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot$	G	$\text{---} \text{---} \cdot$	L	$\cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot$	R	$\cdot \text{---} \cdot$	W	$\cdot \text{---} \text{---}$
C	$\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot$	H	$\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot$	M	$\text{---} \text{---}$	S	$\cdot \cdot \cdot$	X	$\text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---}$
D	$\text{---} \cdot \cdot$	I	$\cdot \cdot$	N	$\text{---} \cdot$	T	$\text{---}$	Y	$\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---}$
E	$\cdot$	J	$\cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$	O	$\text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$	U	$\cdot \cdot \text{---}$	Z	$\text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot$
		P	$\cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot$						

1.  $\text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---}$
2.  $\text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot$
3.  $\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot$
4.  $\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot$
5.  $\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---}$
6.  $\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot$
7.  $\text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot$
8.  $\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot$
9.  $\text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot$
10.  $\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot$
11.  $\cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot$
12.  $\text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot$
13.  $\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot$
14.  $\cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---}$
15.  $\text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \text{---} \text{---} \cdot \cdot \text{---} \cdot$

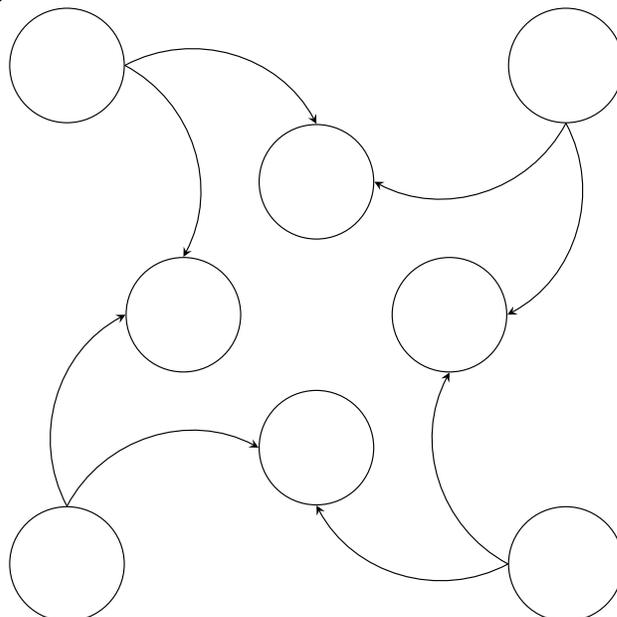
# Putt Hem To Get Her

In this puzzle, answers are six- or twelve-letter words which can be created by putting three-letter words together, like FORBID or LITHOGRAPHER. In Puzzle 1, a circle of seven six-letter words is such that the last three letters of one word are the first three letters of the next. Put a three-letter word in each of the circles to create these words which are formed by following the arrows. In Puzzle 2, eight six-letter words are formed by following the arrows; each of the outer three-letter words is the beginning of two six-letter words, and each of the inner three-letter words is the end of two six-letter words. In Puzzle 3, three twelve-letter words are formed using four three-letter words each. Clues are given on the facing page for all 18 words, though not in order. All three-letter words are found in the Word Bank. Now it's time for you to put them together!

1.



2.



3.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Three-Letter Word Bank

ACE	AGE	ATE	BED	CON	DAM	DEN	ERA	HAM
HIS	HOT	ION	LAY	LET	MEN	OUT	PAL	PAN
PER	REF	RIG	SAT	SOP	TED	TIC	TRY	UPS

---

## Putt Hem To Get Her Clues

- |                     |                            |                                |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A. Audition         | G. Dry goods are kept here | M. Member of the fashion elite |
| B. Basketball shots | H. Expenditure             | N. Piano pedal                 |
| C. Breeding ground  | I. Forklift target         | O. Royal residence             |
| D. Chilled          | J. Harm                    | P. Small village               |
| E. Consequence      | K. Household               | Q. Threat                      |
| F. Dew              | L. Impede                  | R. Toilet substitute           |
- 
- 

## Adjacent Letters

In each sentence below, two words are missing. They are related by having corresponding letters be adjacent in the alphabet. For example, the missing words might be FOBS and GNAT, since F is adjacent to G in the alphabet, O is adjacent to N, B is adjacent to A, and S is adjacent to T. In this puzzle, Z is not adjacent to A. One word is an acronym, and one is an abbreviation.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ was crammed full; there was no way Albert could fit \_\_\_\_\_ more in it.
2. While Walter leisurely \_\_\_\_\_ his bicycle, the motorcycle \_\_\_\_\_ by him, almost knocking him over.
3. Laura's \_\_\_\_\_ was graciously accepted; while Neil's \_\_\_\_\_ were not extravagant, he still had difficulty meeting them.
4. The science fiction movie was particularly gruesome, especially the scene where the evil \_\_\_\_\_ the neck of the unsuspecting spaceship captain.
5. The television drama was particularly moving, especially the scene where the struggling student \_\_\_\_\_ her \_\_\_\_\_ by scoring 100% on her spelling test.
6. As Millicent sat \_\_\_\_\_ her horse, galloping through the forest, her brocade coat \_\_\_\_\_ against the leaves of the trees as she rushed by them.
7. Edgar could hardly believe his eyes as he peered out of his \_\_\_\_\_ on the moor and saw three \_\_\_\_\_ zipping across the night sky.
8. "No, ' \_\_\_\_\_ ' is not a \_\_\_\_\_, it's a preposition!" admonished the exasperated English teacher.
9. The jazz pianist ignored the \_\_\_\_\_ music on the rack as he dazzled the audience with his improvised \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Cy was rather fit, and could easily \_\_\_\_\_ at ten \_\_\_\_\_.

# ClueHopper: Food and Drink

In this crossword, all answers have to do with food and drink. However, each Across and Down clue has a word missing – this word is the answer to a Hopper Clue. Your task is to find the answers to the Hopper Clues, have them jump to the appropriate Across and Down clues, and then enter the answers to these clues into the grid on the facing page. Happy Hopping!

## Hopper Clues

- |                      |                                      |                     |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| A. _____ au gratin   | J. Fuji _____                        | S. Soft-shell _____ |
| B. _____ beans       | K. _____ in (at home)                | T. Spoken in the UK |
| C. Cashew _____      | L. _____ julep                       | U. _____ tea        |
| D. _____ chowder     | M. Lychee _____                      | V. _____ tea garden |
| E. Crab _____        | N. Oatmeal _____                     | W. Thai _____       |
| F. _____ custard     | O. _____ pudding                     | X. Tomato _____     |
| G. Food and _____    | P. _____ scallops                    | Y. Wheat kernel     |
| H. _____ for thought | Q. Snow _____                        | Z. _____ wine       |
| I. French _____      | R. Beaten egg whites: culinary _____ |                     |

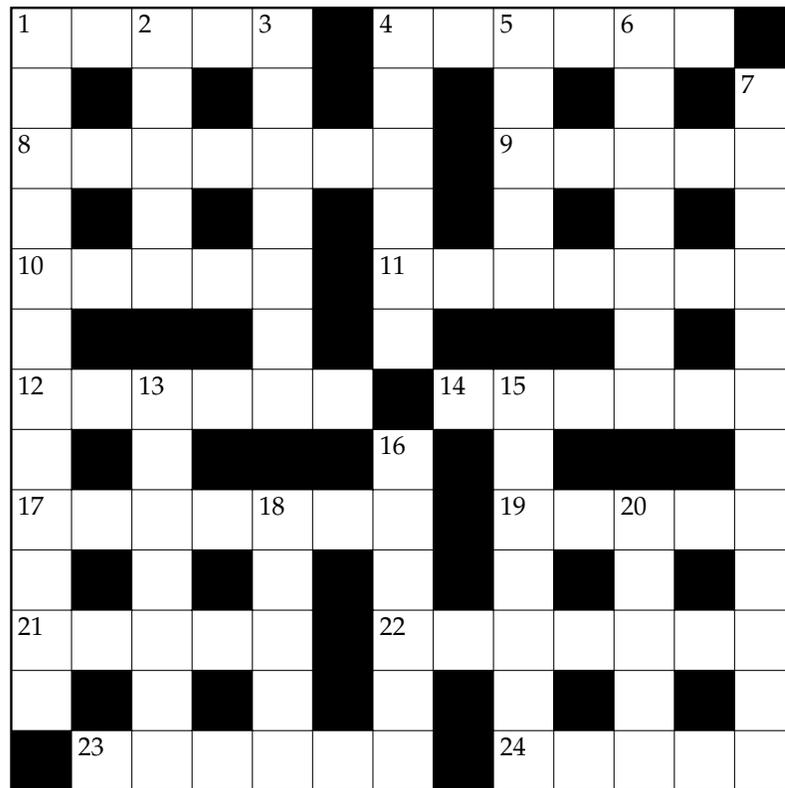
## Across Clues

1. Pink, black, and \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_ companion
8. Paste used in \_\_\_\_\_ cuisine
9. Espresso \_\_\_\_\_
10. Variety of \_\_\_\_\_
11. Cold, creamy \_\_\_\_\_
12. Seasonal type of \_\_\_\_\_
14. Crunchy \_\_\_\_\_
17. \_\_\_\_\_ dish
19. Mexican \_\_\_\_\_
21. Type of \_\_\_\_\_
22. Ethnic wedding \_\_\_\_\_
23. \_\_\_\_\_ on these
24. Brand of \_\_\_\_\_ (with After)

## Down Clues

1. Dessert, with \_\_\_\_\_
2. Used for serving \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ citrus fruit
4. Savory finger \_\_\_\_\_
5. Strains \_\_\_\_\_
6. Companion spice to \_\_\_\_\_
7. Precedes \_\_\_\_\_ cookie
13. Pastry filled with \_\_\_\_\_
15. Cool summer \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_ are served this way
18. Overdone \_\_\_\_\_
20. \_\_\_\_\_ topper

# ClueHopper Grid



## Word Strips

In Word Strips, most of a word is obscured, with only a strip of the actual word remaining. For example, the first word is PICKLE. Can you reconstruct the original words? In this puzzle, all words are related to food and drink, and the alphabet used is:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

PICKLE	ICE	JELLY
OLIVE	COFFEE	MILK
DESSERT	TRIFLE	SMILE