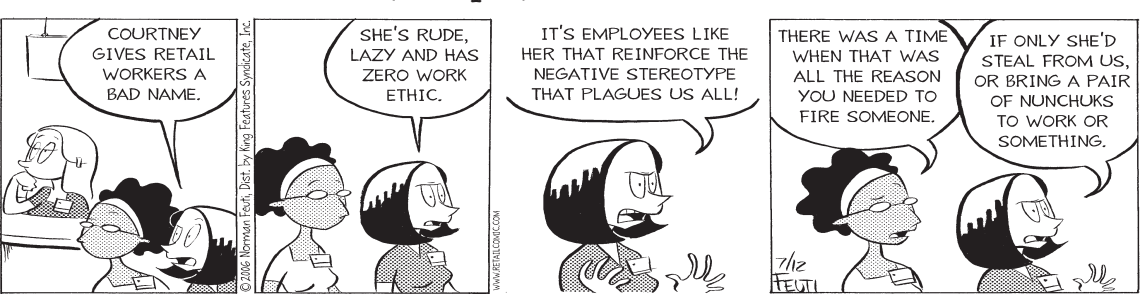
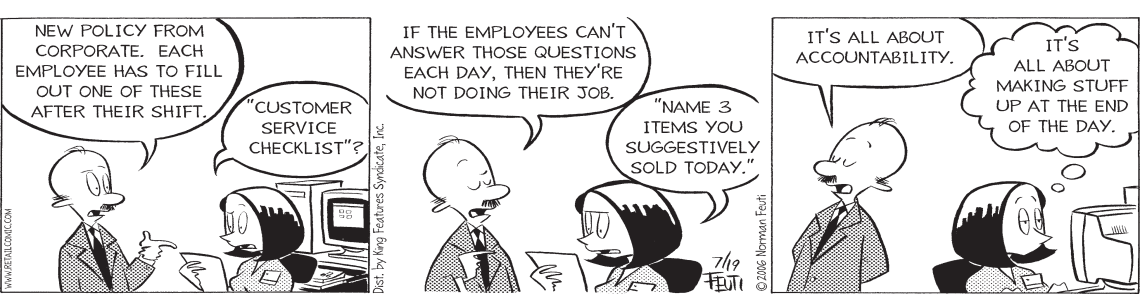


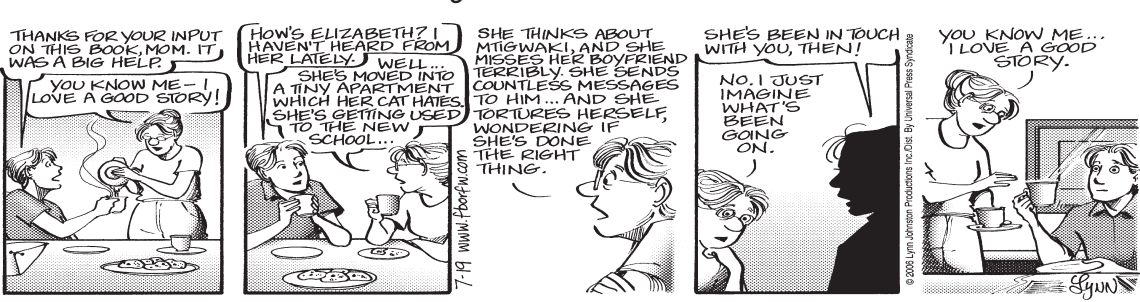
Retail • Norm Feuti (Sample)



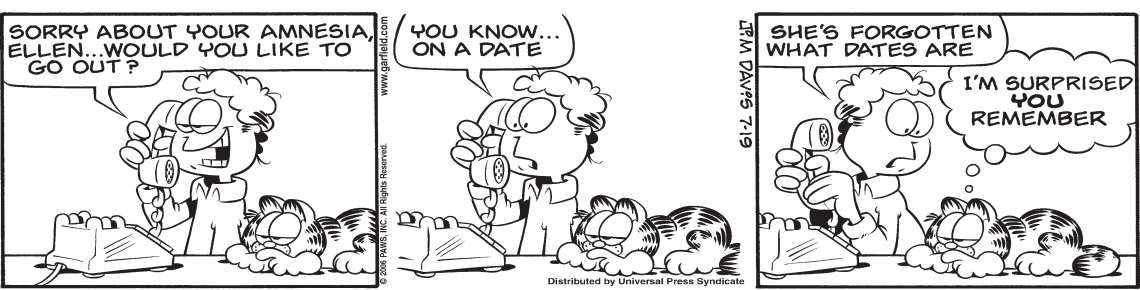
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott (Sample)



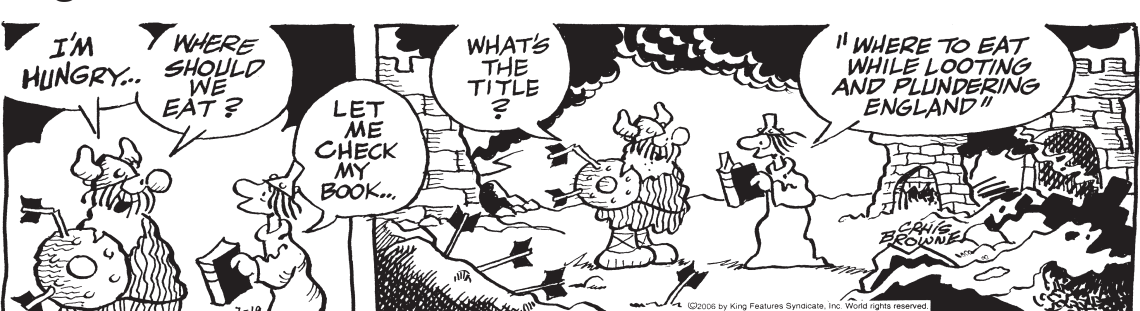
For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Garfield • Jim Davis



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Blondie • Chic Young



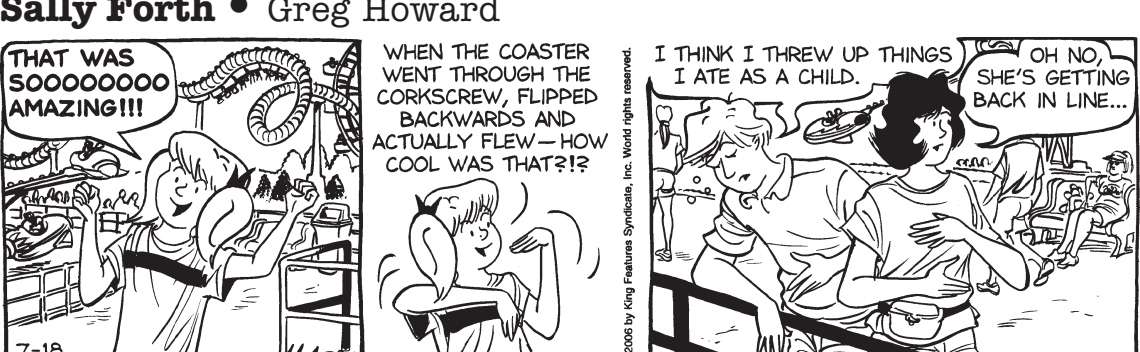
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Cryptoquip

AHBLNJ WLNJ SRJQ B | VMKO ZYJ'XK XKRCCZ NJON-
 NJHMBZL NWZL BR NSHHJLNE, MY WY BKK RGWYX ERSYO
 SLMZI MKJE JYJLMSBII E YX EHCCYO, H'E BRZ
 KBQ IZYHJ ABZISHJ. WMKZ'XK VKCGYSK SRWWB.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF POLITICIAN PEROT ALLUDES TO SOMETHING, I GUESS YOU MIGHT SAY IT'S ROSS-REFERENCED.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals A

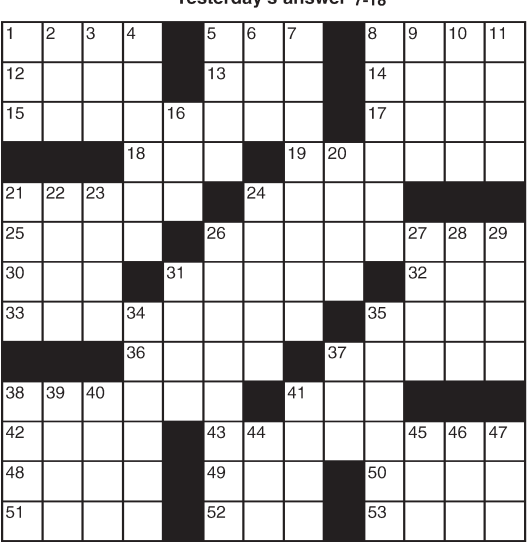
Crossword

ACROSS
 1 Bamako's country
 5 Greek X
 8 Feed the hogs
 12 Paradise
 13 Buddhist sect
 14 Body of water
 15 Was in on
 17 Hibernia
 18 Jostle
 19 Re some poetry
 21 Windshield attachment
 24 Ad-advanced math
 25 Mine entrance
 26 Percentage illustration
 30 Trawler's requirement
 31 Sanctify
 32 Born

DOWN
 1 Bumped into
 2 Hurly-burly
 3 Zodiac cat
 4 Printer type
 5 Despot
 6 That lady
 7 Usurer's fee
 8 Christ-mas transport
 9 Secular
 10 Gumbo ingredient
 11 Rid of rind
 16 Standard
 20 Snapshots
 21 Couturier Vera
 22 Notion
 23 Compassion
 24 Layers
 26 Odd-looking critter
 27 In due time
 28 Tear in two
 29 Driving props
 31 Nose
 34 Pick on the comic
 35 Gem material
 37 Scrooge's cry
 38 Skewer
 39 Well—
 40 Press
 41 Catch sight of
 44 Ms. Thurman
 45 Gorilla
 46 Mardi Gras VIP
 47 Stick with a kick

Solution time: 21 mins.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | S | K | O | T | A | N | A | M | I | L |
| I | K | E | U | N | D | E | R | I | C | Y |
| M | I | N | N | E | S | O | T | A | N | O |
| A | B | U | T | R | I | U | N | E | | |
| S | O | M | B | E | R | Y | A | M | S | |
| A | L | I | C | E | Y | T | A | C | O | S |
| N | I | N | E | D | E | S | M | U | T | E |
| G | O | T | T | A | A | P | P | L | I | P |
| J | A | R | S | R | E | J | E | C | T | |
| S | E | E | S | A | W | U | T | A | | |
| A | L | L | M | I | N | C | E | M | E | A |
| G | A | L | I | N | N | E | R | A | | |
| A | N | Y | S | E | E | D | S | K | E | G |

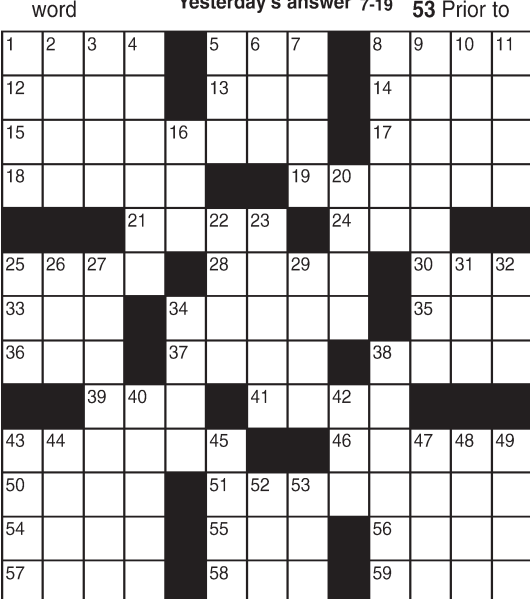


ACROSS
 1 Young woman
 5 Support-ing
 8 Couples
 12 Car
 13 Mound stat
 14 Incite
 15 Demolition crew
 17 Gull's cousin
 18 Composer Erik
 19 Stroked soothingly
 21 From square one
 24 Karaoke need, for short
 25 Sailing vessel
 28 Not pizzicato
 30 Weeding tool
 33 Mess up
 34 Cause, as havoc
 35 "Night-mare" street
 36 Society page word

DOWN
 1 Capitol output
 2 Emanation
 3 Undo a dele
 4 Gregari-ous
 5 Retainer
 6 Hockey legend
 7 Bobby on
 8 Half an ice-cream flavor
 9 Miserable one
 10 Shrek is one
 11 Fax
 16 Under-standing

Solution time: 21 mins.

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



Bridge

West dealer.
 Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A 6
 ♥ K 7
 ♦ A 9 8 4 3
 ♣ A 10 9 7

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

EAST
 ♠ K Q 10 9 7 5 2
 ♥ A J 8 2
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 6

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

The bidding:
 West Pass
 North 1♦
 East 3♠
 South 4♣
 Opening lead — three of spades.

The Rabbit-in-the-Hat Trick

One does not have to do something brilliant in every deal to acquire a reputation as a good player. On the contrary, the best players achieve their high standing primarily because they play right down the middle and make very few errors.

It is true that what might seem like a simple play to an expert may appear to be brilliant to a lesser player. But most of the good plays made, when examined closely, turn out to be only well-reasoned actions necessitated by the circumstances of that particular deal.

In this hand, for example, declarer made a somewhat unusual play that enabled him to make five clubs. West led a spade, on which declarer, holding a singleton jack opposite the ace, played low from dummy, losing to East's queen!

Of course, South could have avoided the loss of a spade trick by playing the ace, but he had a very good reason for ducking. It did not matter to him that he lost a spade trick unnecessarily because he knew he could later discard a diamond loser on the ace of spades. He merely swapped a nonexistent spade loser for an otherwise certain diamond loser.

The difference, however, was that as a result of this play, South was able to make the contract. East returned a spade at trick two, declarer discarding a diamond.

After leading a trump to the king, South cashed the K-A of diamonds and ruffed a diamond. A trump to the nine allowed South to ruff another diamond, establishing dummy's fifth diamond as a trick. One of declarer's heart losers was later discarded on the nine of diamonds, and South finished with 11 tricks.

Observe that if declarer had won the opening lead with the ace of spades, he would inevitably have gone down, losing two hearts and a diamond. By substituting one loser for another, he found a virtually foolproof way of preventing West from gaining the lead and returning a heart through dummy's king.

North dealer.
 East-West vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ 10 7 4
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ A K Q 10 3
 ♣ A 2

WEST
 ♠ A 8 3
 ♥ 10 8 6 4 3
 ♦ 9 5
 ♣ J 7 6

EAST
 ♠ K J 9 2
 ♥ A 5
 ♦ J 6 2
 ♣ 10 9 5 4

SOUTH
 ♠ Q 6 5
 ♥ 9 7 2
 ♦ 8 7 4
 ♣ K Q 8 3

The bidding:
 North 1♦
 East Pass
 South 3 NT
 West Pass
 Opening lead — four of hearts.

Step-by-Step Reasoning

A defender should assume, as a matter of course, that the contract he's defending against can be defeated. If he does not cultivate this attitude as a regular habit, many opportunities to defeat opposing contracts will pass him by.

Let's say you're East on this deal and partner leads the heart four against three notrump. Should you take the ace or withhold it? If you do take the ace, is it better to return a heart, or should you shift to another suit? If you do shift, should it be to a spade or a club?

To find the answers to these questions, you must start by assuming that the contract can be defeated. The next step is to count the number of tricks declarer is sure to make. A quick survey reveals that there are eight of them in dummy consisting of five diamonds, a club and two hearts whether you take the heart ace now or later.

This, in turn, leads you to conclude that if declarer has the ace of spades, he cannot be defeated. You therefore credit partner with the ace. Once you've reached this point, it becomes much easier to answer the questions posed above.

First, you must win the heart at trick one, because if declarer has the K-Q of clubs, he can score a heart, five diamonds and three clubs before your side regains the lead. Second, you should not return a heart for the same reason.

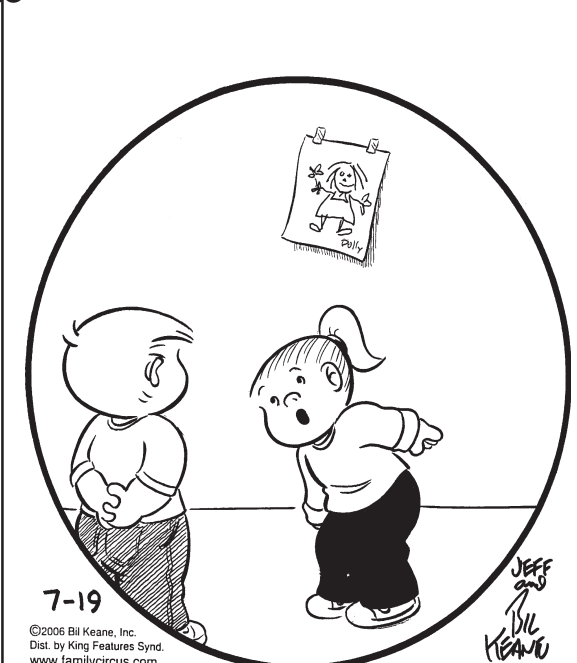
Third, since partner needs to have the spade ace for the contract to be defeated, you must shift to a spade. But you cannot lead just any spade. If you return a low spade and South has Q-x-x, as in the actual deal, he can make the contract by playing low from his hand.

To cater to this possibility, you must return the spade jack to trap South's queen. Regardless of how declarer chooses to proceed, he cannot stop you from collecting four spade tricks, and the contract is defeated.

Family Circus • Bill Keane



"Do all kittens have to turn into cats?"



"It's not crooked if you do this."