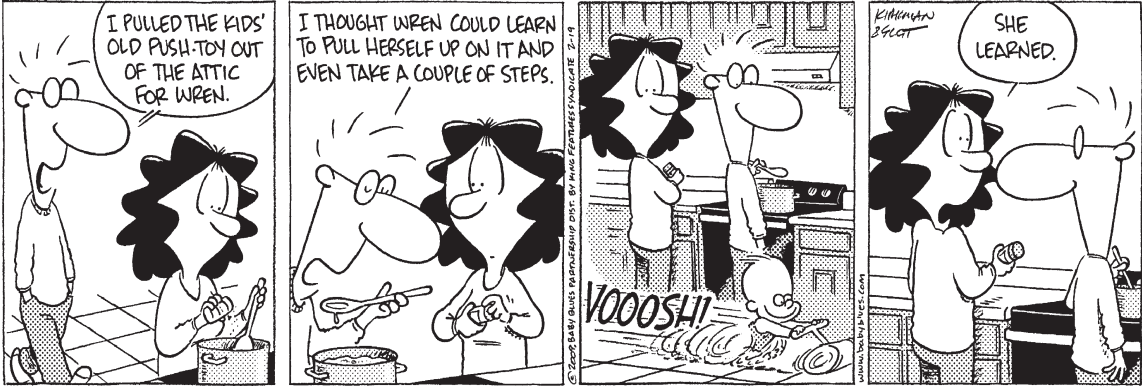
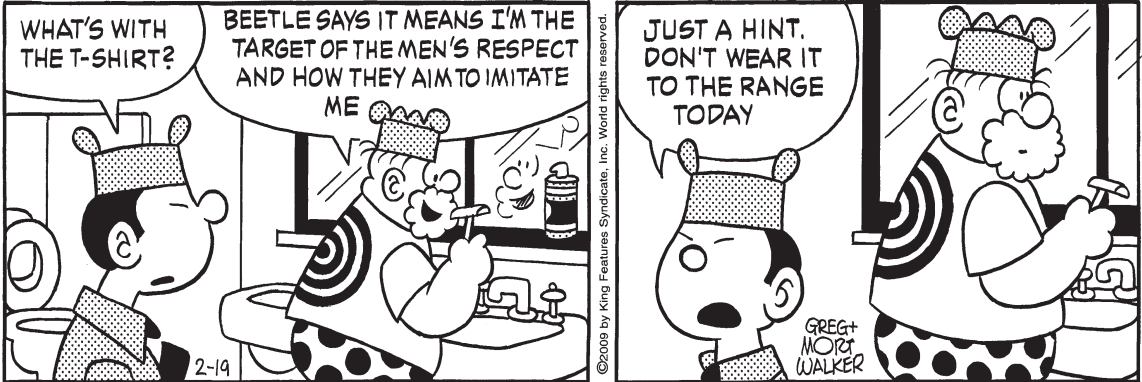


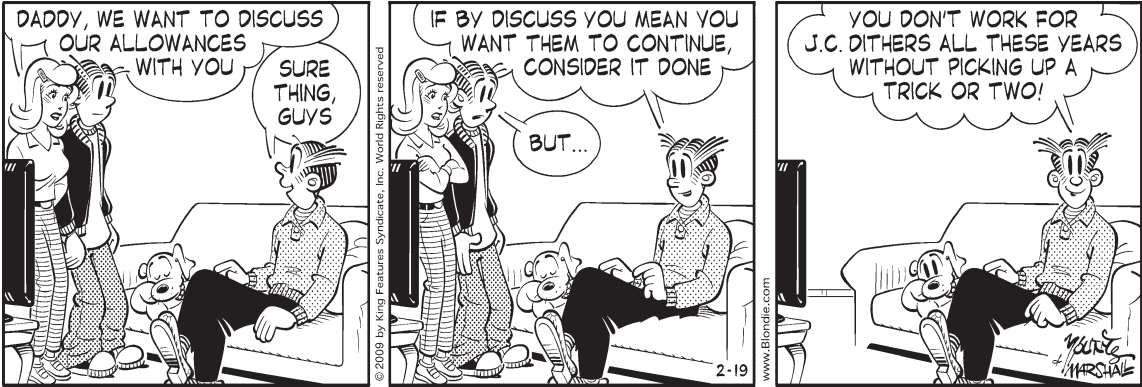
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



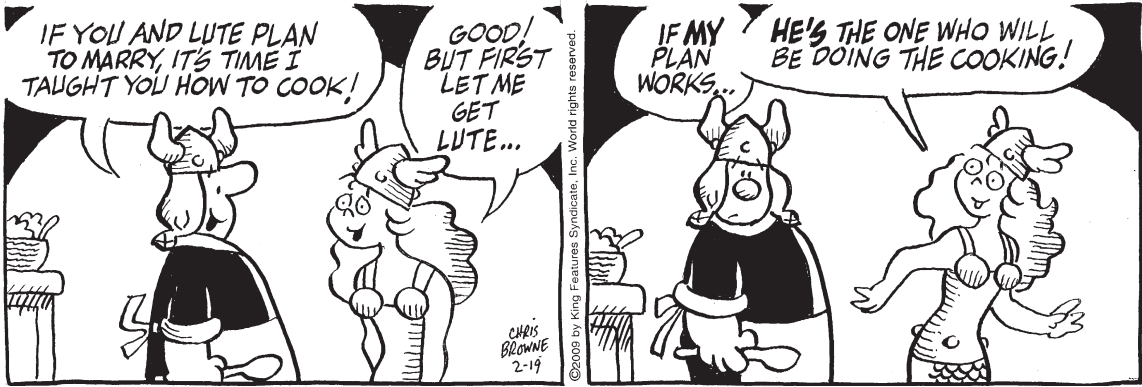
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



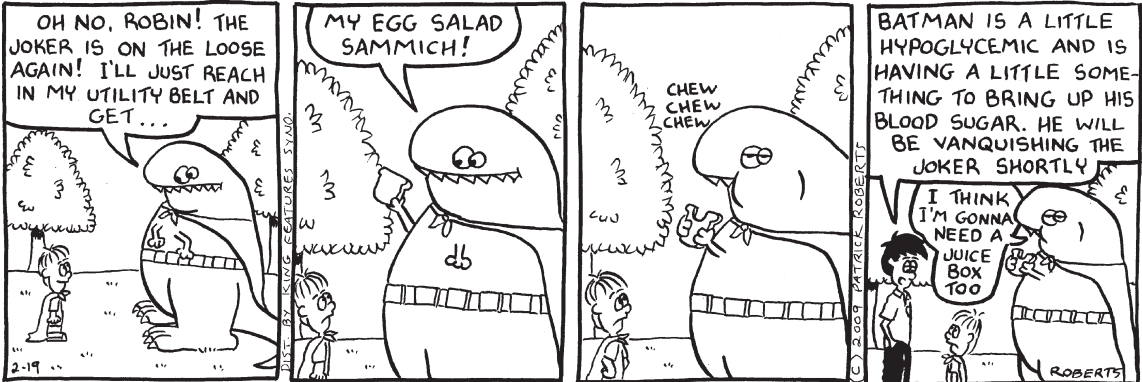
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers  
• Ask Dr. Brothers

Grandchildren need limits

Dear Dr. Brothers: What would you think of a grandmother who wants to run and hide when her young grandkids come for a visit? Well, that unfriendly grandmother is me, and I remember the first time I realized I don't like this new role. It was when two little toddlers knocked over my china cabinet! I proceeded to yell at them. Now the family doesn't want to come and visit me anymore, even though I have tried to be tolerant since then. How can I end this mess? – C.L.

Dear C.L.: Your sense of frustration is coming through loud and clear, and if it makes you feel any better, you certainly are not alone.

Your main concern should be to not let the little ones feel they are anything less than welcome and to talk over with their parents any of the problems you are having with being around the little ones. Let the family know how much you love them, but structure visits so that you can enjoy the children in small doses and without risk to your belongings. Sometimes our children do or don't want to realize that their parents are getting older and have some restrictions on what they can handle. Reassure them that you enjoy being a grandparent and want the kids to enjoy themselves as much as possible. It should be smoother sailing after that.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I feel so sorry for my son, who is 12. He's in middle school, and all his friends have developed a lot faster than he has. He still looks like a little kid, and his friends are all "young men" now. He doesn't have the confidence to go out for sports, and now his friends are leaving him behind. What can I do to help him feel better about himself? – D.W.

Dear D.W.: Middle school is such a difficult time for children. During elementary school, there's some competition developing around athletic prowess, but mostly kids are still in the playing stage, and it is then that they can start to show leadership and/or physical skills. But when they get to middle school, it can be a whole new ball game – due largely to their changing bodies. If your child is lacking in body size, that still could come – but there's no reason he couldn't start going to a gym and, with supervision, start working on his fitness and strength. A personal trainer who specializes in young teens might be a good investment – a mentor could help give his self-esteem a jump-start.

In the meantime, he's got to try to get through the hard times with his peers. A study in The Journal of Sport Behavior studied elementary-school children or their attitudes about their peers, and the ones who were perceived as less athletic were more likely to feel lonely. That kind of feeling can have long-lasting implications, so now is the time to work on those issues that are threatening your son's happiness.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♦ K 4  
♥ A 7 2  
♠ K 8 3  
♣ K 10 5 3

**WEST**  
♥ ♠ J 9 8 5  
♦ J 9 5 2  
♣ Q 9 7 6

**EAST**  
♥ J 10 9 7  
♦ K 10 4 3  
♠ Q 10 6  
♣ J 4

**SOUTH**  
♦ A Q 8 6 5 3 2  
♥ —  
♠ A 7 4  
♣ A 8 2

The bidding:  
North 1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣ Pass  
East 2 NT Pass 3 ♣ Pass  
South 4 ♣ Pass 6 ♣ Pass

Opening lead — queen of hearts.

Never Relax

There are many hands where, at the outset, the contract seems very easy to make. But one of the marks of a top-notch declarer is that he asks himself, even in apparently "cut-and-dried" cases, whether anything can possibly go wrong.

Consider this deal where declarer won the opening heart lead with the ace, discarding a club. He then cashed the king of spades, discovering that he had to lose a trump trick.

South still had a chance to avoid a diamond loser if the opposing clubs were divided 3-3, in which case he could eventually discard a diamond on dummy's fourth club. So after drawing two more rounds of trumps, he cashed the A-K of clubs and ruffed a club. But when the suit failed to divide evenly, he could not avoid losing a diamond and a spade for down one.

However, declarer should have made the slam. The fault lay in his play to the very first trick, when he failed to make provision for a 4-0 trump split.

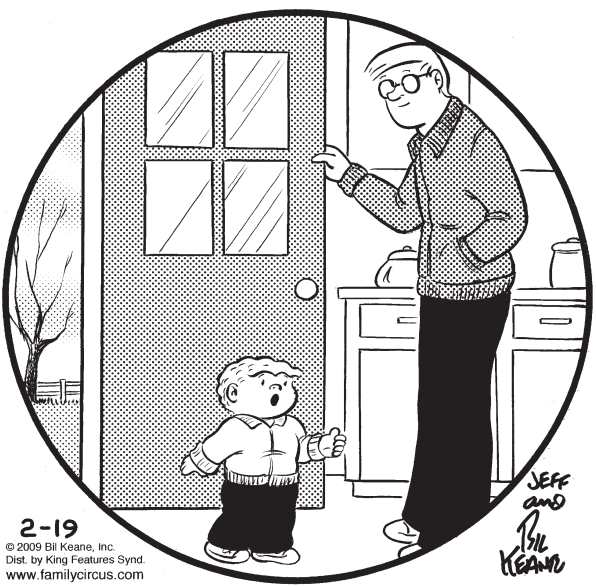
As a safety measure, he should have ruffed the opening heart lead in his hand, since there was no need to take the ace before testing the trump situation. When a spade to the king then reveals the bad trump break, South can embark on a plan to try to score all of the trumps in his hand.

He begins by cashing the ace of hearts, discarding a club, then ruffs a heart. Next the A-K of clubs are taken and dummy's last heart is ruffed. Finally, the A-K of diamonds are played and a club is led from dummy.

At this point, East has the J-10-9 of trumps and queen of diamonds, while South has the A-Q-8 of spades and seven of diamonds. If East discards his diamond, South ruffs low and loses only a diamond. If East trumps the club instead, declarer sheds his losing diamond. Either way, the slam is made as one of East's two "sure" tricks simply vanishes.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



2-19  
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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/19

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

Cryptoquip

HK FNQ VIXDDF BIDHARW HM

VIXBHMA WRI MNEIDZ NK

PVHWIV PXQAR, H ZQYYNZI

FNQ VIEID HM IEIDFM.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THOSE TWO STUBBORN OLD GOATS LOVE TO ARGUE OVER EVERYTHING. THEY ARE ALWAYS BUTTING HEADS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals I

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Ain't no more  
4 Hand warmer  
8 Super-market supply  
12 Request  
13 Taj Mahal city  
14 Send forth  
15 Easy field goal  
17 Compete  
18 Sajak or Summerrall  
19 Middle kid, in a sitcom  
21 Pen VIP  
24 Author Buscaglia  
25 "I" strain?  
26 Wish otherwise  
28 Further down the page  
32 99 of the 101 Dalmatians  
34 Play-ground game  
36 Rebuff a masher

**DOWN**

1 Service-woman  
2 Blond shade  
3 Do some pre-bout exercise  
4 Get down  
5 "Blech!"  
6 Gift-tag word  
7 Deadly  
8 Signal lights  
9 Early pulpit  
10 Under-water breathing apparatus?  
11 Goblet part  
16 Cushion  
20 Main-lander's memento  
21 Sobbed  
22 Malaria symptom  
23 Enthusiast  
27 Corn spike  
29 Opposite result  
30 "The Amazing —"  
31 Unoriginal one  
33 "The Daily Show" host  
35 Petrol  
38 Meccan pilgrimage  
40 Snuffle-upagus, e.g.  
43 Tribe emblem  
45 Man-handle  
46 Hosiery woe  
47 Protuberance  
48 Elliptical  
49 Soft cheese  
53 Rage  
54 Comedian Romano  
55 Flock member

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

ABA	DOLE	FOAM
GUN	OVIO	EURO
EST	LAZARETTO	
STEAL	MOB	
	NABS	BLUSH
NAZARETH	ESAU	
IVE	STRAP	EVE
SETS	HAZARDED	
IRAQI	WEND	
	UTE	OASIS
GAZASTRIP	OBI	
AGAR	NULL	FIT
DOPE	ABLY	ASS

Yesterday's answer 2-19

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15			16					17		
		18				19		20		
21	22			23		24				
25			26		27		28		29	30
32		33		34		35		36		
37			38		39		40		41	
		42		43		44		45		
46	47	48			49		50			
51				52		53			54	55
56				57				58		
59				60				61		