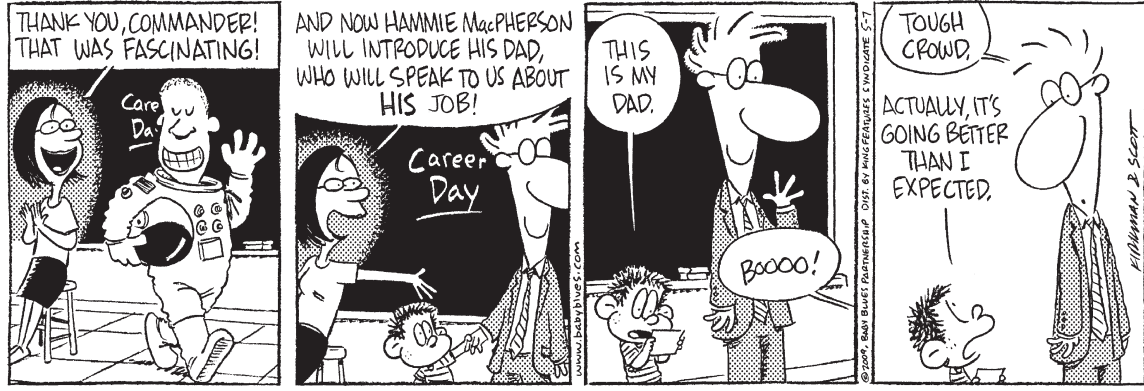
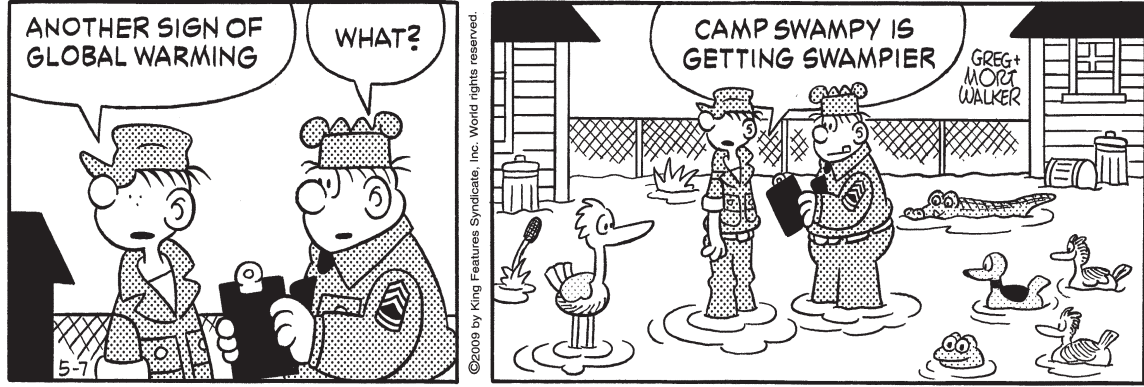


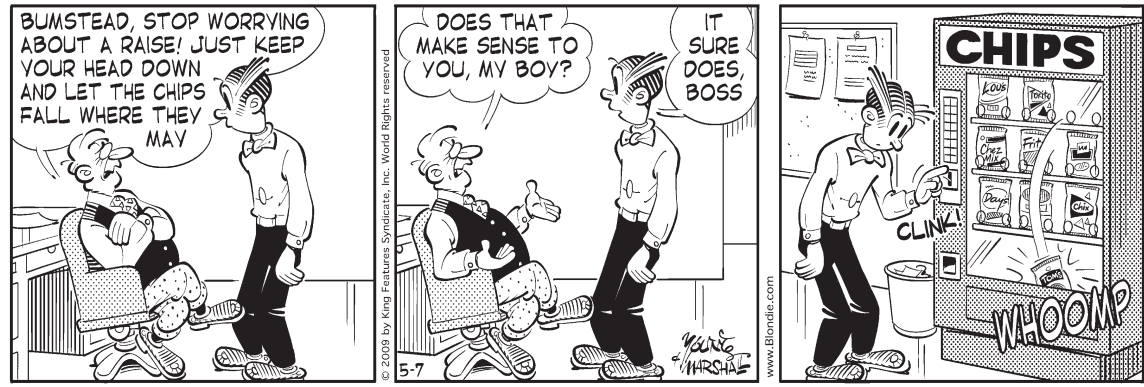
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



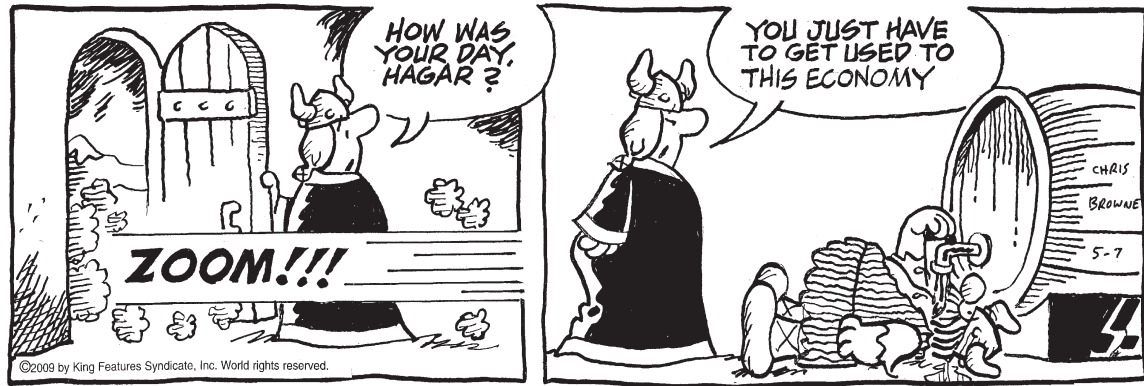
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



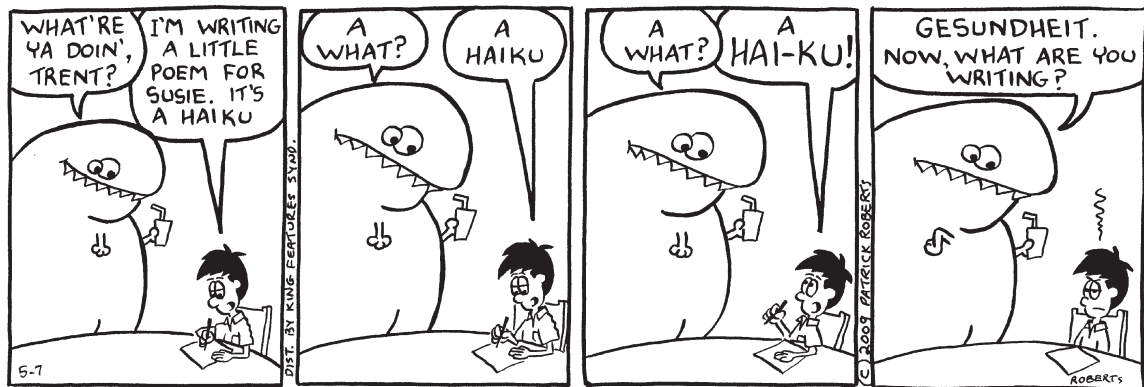
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



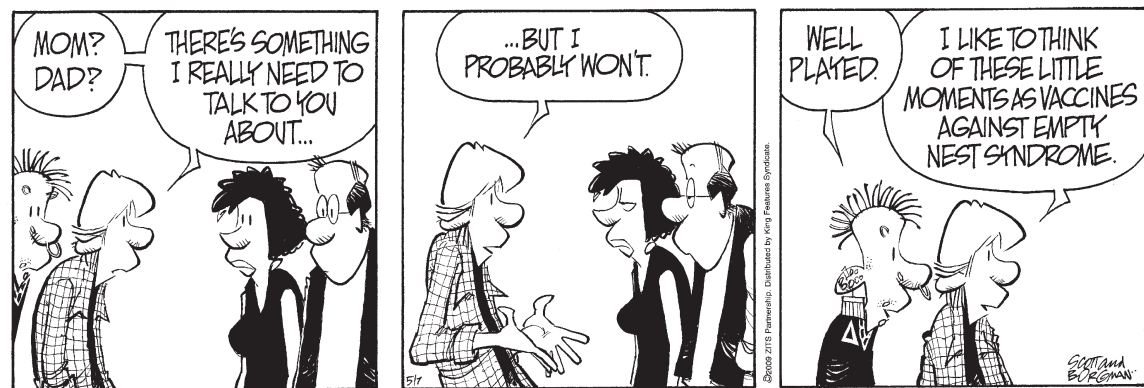
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Young teen tries to hide intellect

Dear Dr. Brothers: I'm concerned about the way my 13-year-old daughter is acting lately. She's an intelligent girl who has always excelled in school. As a younger child, she was always the first to participate in science fairs, spelling bees, etc. But now that she is starting to hang around with a group who are less interested in academics — and more interested in each other, from what I can tell — she has started acting "dumb." How can I persuade her to be her smart self? — C.S.

Dear C.S.: Your daughter is at an age when it is perfectly natural that she turn her attention to the opposite sex and develop some new friendships. This is also a crucial time in developing her identity and finding a path that is comfortable. She has already mastered the "smart girl" role, and she may be experimenting with the "fun girl," or other less-serious role. Even in this day and age, some girls are not proud of their intellect, and will hide or deny it. "Acting dumb" may be part of this effort to leave behind the childhood image and try on a more popular one.

I can see why you are worried — a "dumb" pose can carry over into schoolwork, grades, attitudes toward higher education, and choice of friends and values. What you don't want to happen is to have her actually become dumb and accept lower standards in all these areas of her life. Unfortunately, she's also at an age when passively accepting your ideas probably is not likely. Perhaps you can help her channel her talents and intellect into some activities outside of school, and ease up a bit on her image problem until you see if it really is going to be a problem for her. She may tire of this crowd sooner than you can imagine. If she persists and becomes "dumb and dumber," some intelligent conversation might fit the bill.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My little boy has developed a bad habit. He is a liar! Hardly a day goes by that he doesn't tell a little white lie, or a big one. Of course, since he is only 8 years old, it is pretty easy to see through his fabrications. He expects his father and me to play along with what he is saying. We have punished him. But he then tells an even bigger fib. What now? — A.A.

Dear A.A.: Your child may be trying to find some boundaries, and testing you to see just how far he can go. But my suspicion is that he may be testing your ability to pay attention and respond to him. Sometimes when children don't have the parental focus they need, they will up the ante by becoming more "attention-worthy." In his case, and at his age, this means telling a fib. When he is older, he could become a daredevil, a rebel or a substance abuser. So, giving him some more attention now might be the best thing you can do.

You might want to have a chat with his teacher to see if this bad habit is interfering with his schoolwork in any way. Is he the class clown? Or does he use tall tales in order to make excuses? But you also might want to consider what harm is done by calling your son a liar. It sounds as though, perhaps, he may just have a great imagination. Today's tall-tale teller could be tomorrow's comedian, novelist, playwright or other creative person. In any case, encouragement and direction — not punishment — should be the order of the day. Your son may feel less of a need to entertain you with falsehoods if he senses more acceptance of who he is.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 8 5 3
♥ K
♦ A Q J 10 5
♣ 10 7 6 2

WEST
♠ K J 6 2
♥ A 7 4
♦ 8 7 3
♣ J 9 3

EAST
♠ Q 10 9
♥ 9 6 5 3 2
♦ K 9
♣ 8 5 4

SOUTH
♠ A 7 4
♥ Q J 10 8
♦ 6 4 2
♣ A K Q

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass 1 NT Pass 3 NT
Opening lead — two of spades.

Steppingstone to Good Defense

Good players hate guessing situations and do everything they can to avoid them. Whenever possible, they choose a method of play that eliminates guesswork while at the same time assuring the best result.

For example, take this deal where West leads his fourth-best spade against three notrump. Declarer ducks East's queen as well as the ten continuation. East then leads the nine, on which South plays the ace and West the king.

Declarer now leads a diamond to the ten, losing to the king, and East at this point must choose whether to return a heart or a club. If he guesses wrong, South makes the contract, scoring four clubs, four diamonds and a spade to finish with nine tricks. But if East returns a heart, South goes down one, losing three spades, a diamond and the ace of hearts.

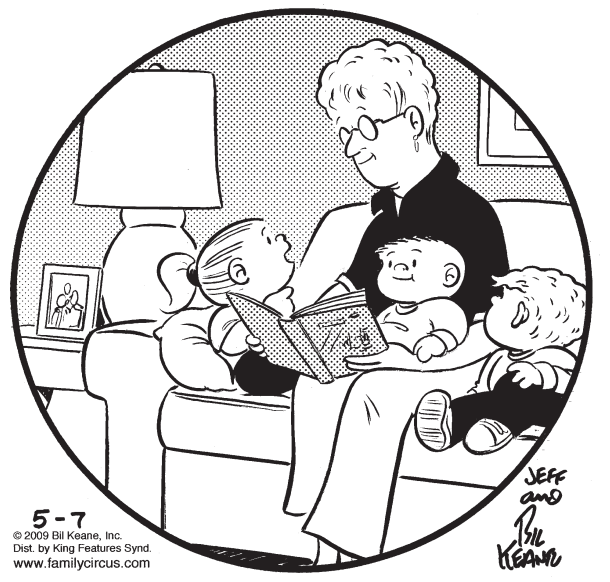
East's problem is not really a matter of guesswork; he should automatically return a heart. He goes back to the play at trick three when West, holding the K-J of spades, played the king on declarer's ace, rather than the jack.

The king play is a form of suit-preference signal. Since the K-J are equal in value at that point, West signals with the higher card to show that his entry card lies in the higher-ranking side suit (as between hearts and clubs).

Had West held either the ace or king of clubs instead of the ace of hearts, he would have played his lower spade, the jack, at trick three to indicate a preference for clubs.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"I gotta give your reading of that story a rave review, Grandma."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/07

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

Cryptoquip

EGZZNEHLJ ENFV KNHLMV
FNLVU OWE SVKNFHLJ TVWXXU
DQTVWDVLM, ONGXM DQWD
SV VLMWLJVTVM EZVKHV?

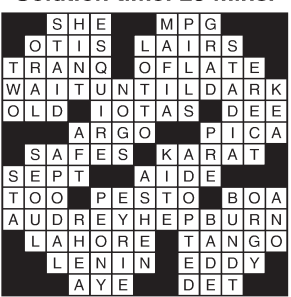
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF PEOPLE WERE TO VOTE FAVORABLY IN FAST SUCCESSION, I SUPPOSE IT WOULD BE RAPID AYE MOVEMENT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals W

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Dogfight participants
 - 5 Energy
 - 8 In the neighborhood
 - 12 Ancient mariner
 - 13 Courtroom pseudonym
 - 14 Wheelbase terminus
 - 15 Houston acronym
 - 16 Joined at the hip
 - 17 Couple, in a gossip column
 - 18 Crowd scene actors
 - 20 Sport
 - 22 Pseudoclimants to the throne
 - 26 Diamond side
 - 29 Scarlet
 - 30 Wrestling surface
 - 31 Black, to Brown-ing?
- DOWN**
- 1 Hathaway or Heche
 - 2 Wheedle
 - 3 Right on the map?
 - 4 Hone
 - 5 Everyday writing
 - 6 A billion years
 - 7 Diminutive ones
 - 8 Water nymph
 - 9 Maximums
 - 10 Pub order
 - 11 Sleep phenom
 - 19 Illustrations
 - 21 Remnant
 - 23 Aligned
 - 24 Huck's transport
 - 25 Eyelid woe
 - 26 Govt. workers
 - 27 "— ben Adhem"
 - 28 Clear soup
 - 32 Politicos' trips
 - 33 Treacherous one
 - 35 Lair
 - 36 Support of a sort
 - 38 They're calling Danny Boy
 - 39 Strong adhesive
 - 42 Birthright barter
 - 43 Shaving mishap
 - 44 Snatch
 - 45 Retriever type
 - 46 Lemieux milieux
 - 48 Diastema

Solution time: 25 mins.



Yesterday's answer 5-7

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18				19			20	21		
				22			23			24
26	27	28				29				30
31				32			33			
34				35			36			
37				38			39			
				40			41		42	43
45	46			47	48		49			
50				51			52			
53				54			55			