

Times Cryptic Crossword Number: 22836

Guide to the solution of the free demonstration crossword (cryptic, not concise!) found at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/crossword>

For each clue as written, words in red indicate the actual thing that is being defined (the meaning of the answer). Yellow-highlighted words indicate what you have to do to derive the answer from the clue words (fodder). Underlined words indicate the fodder.

Across

1. **Play** shots in various directions – **that's what batsmen are into**
WHITES
The word 'play' tells you this is probably an anagram puzzle. Another word for 'shots' is 'hits.' 'various directions' indicates the letters W and E (west and east), probably. So, take 'shots' and 'we', mix them up, and you get something that batsmen wear: W + HIT + E + S. **HARD, but evident once you get it.**

5. Hint, **short** and dull, **where one across say is situated**
CLUBLAND
A 'hint' is a 'clue,' and if we shorten 'clue' we get 'clu-'. This doesn't help much, but the dull reference brought 'club' to my mind. Since the part of the clue remaining references where something in the previous clue might be found, and since the previous clue ended up having to do with some type of Brit sporting activity, I guessed at CLUBLAND and decided to see if it checked out ultimately. **VERY HARD – can't figure where 'dull' contributes, unless it refers to being blunt like a club. And the cricket/tennis references elude me.**

9. God formerly protected **round church**
PANTHEON
The 'theo' part is kind of obvious here, but the 'pan' isn't. The Pantheon in Rome is a round church, and after a few letters were filled in from the cross words, I started thinking of that as a possibility. I still can't figure out where the 'formerly' comes into play. **HARD – clue not transparent enough, even after you have the answer**

10. Line I followed, extremely **uniform**
LIVERY
This is a pretty straightforward hidden-word type of clue which incorporates the seemingly ubiquitous, but senseless convention of using a word like 'line' to mean the letter 'L'. So we have an 'l', followed by an 'i', followed by a word meaning extremely – 'very' – and we get the answer: L + I + VERY. **MEDIUM – the 'line' = 'l' convention makes this more difficult than it really is.**

11. Antony's success with broken hip shown by painter
 The word 'broken' preceding 'hip' makes it pretty clear that at least part of this puzzle involves an anagram. I figured it was either something Mark Antony did + the letters H-I-P in some order that meant a painter, or some painter + the letters H-I-P that meant something Mark Antony did. Since my classical knowledge is pretty limited, I waited until I had a few more cross letters, but eventually 'Lippi' as in Fra Lippi the Italian painter came to mind and I put the "broken" (i.e., anagrammed) HIP in front of it to get Philippi: PHI + LIPPI. Appears to be the place where Antony defeated some republican forces. **MEDIUM – both the ambiguity of the fodder/definition and the somewhat erudite classical and renaissance references make this more challenging, but it's perfectly easy to derive the answer from the clue.**
12. Be **about** to offer money for mineral
 BLEND
 The tough part about this one was the solution – I was expecting the name of a specific mineral. Otherwise, clue was pretty transparent – I figured it was B___E, with some word meaning 'to offer money' in between. 'Lend' crossed my mind: B + LEND + E, but the outcome 'blende' didn't ring any bells, so this one was left undone. **MEDIUM – conventions were easy, but resulting answer wasn't clear to me**
13. **Had second thoughts**, having given in one's **notice**
 REVIEWED
 Notice = view, but the clue isn't easy – even with the answer I have a hard time back-working this to figure out exactly how to derive the final answer. **HARD – clue doesn't make much sense**
15. **Feel the heat**, **engaging a battle**
 FRAY
 This was one of the first ones I got, because I already had the second letter 'R' from another answer. The word 'engaging' made it look as if there was a word meaning 'feel the heat' with an 'a' inserted in it – and that resulting word meant the final answer 'battle'. 'Feel the heat' = 'fry', if we "engage" an 'a' in 'fry', we get: FR + A + Y **EASY – the convention of 'engaging a' was pretty clear to me**
17. **Loudly stir up emotional exchanges**
 ROWS
 I spent oodles of time on this simple one, because it had two initial letters for other answers. Sigh. The convention word 'loudly' indicates a possible homonym type of clue, which means that there's a word meaning 'stir up' (rouse) that sounds like a word for 'emotional exchanges' (rows). **HARD – shouldn't have been this tough, but I missed the homonym convention and was looking for an anagram because of the 'stir up'.**

19. **Team of doctors** in **attempt at perfection**

PRACTICE

This is probably the easiest type of clue – the double-definition. No homonyms, hidden words, anagrams, puzzles – just a word that means both ‘a team of doctors’ and ‘attempt at perfection’. Unfortunately, once you get going with these, every time you see the word ‘doctor’ you automatically think the answer must be an anagram (convention words for anagrams are words like ‘doctor’ ‘sick’ ‘strange’ ‘wrong’ ‘bad’ ‘mad’ etc – all words that tell you that some word is messed up somehow to derive the answer (or part of it). The other thing that threw me off was the word ‘in’ – I thought perhaps there might be a hidden word, as ‘in’ is often used to indicate that. Turns out it was easier than it looked – a team of doctors is a practice, and in order to be perfect one has to practice. **EASY – as long as you don’t work too hard and take it for what it is.**

20. **Finally** select pope’s **headdress**

TURBAN

You need to know that there was a Pope Urban. Take the final letter from “select”, which is a T and then the name of the pope: T + URBAN.

REALLY HARD – no apparent conventions or fodder in the clue itself – unless there was a Pope Urban.

21. Sea flowing past **bridge gap**

TIDEOVER

Sea flowing = tide; past means over. **EASY, if you think of “bridging a gap” as opposed to a gap in a bridge.**

22. **Dish** witch offered to soldiers

HAGGIS

Another word for a witch is a “hag.” and an often-used synonym for soldier is “GI.” Plural of GI is GIS, hence the answer: HAG + GIS. **EASY, especially once you get used to the fact that GI is a normal stand-in for “soldier” in a cryptic clue.**

23. Left city **in** hands of fool, in **a manner of speaking**

IDIOLECT

Fool = idiot and very often the word “city” is used to indicate the letters “EC” (the postal code for the City of London). The capital L in left is also to be used – again, here we see a convention of using the first letter in a small word like “left” as part of the fodder. So we add the letters “LEC” to somewhere inside the word “IDIOT” and get something that means a manner of speaking: IDIO + LEC + T. **MEDIUM – the EC/city convention just has to be known. This clue also throws one off because the word “speaking” could have indicated a homophone-type clue.**

24. Right to have cried out, breaking fine **Spode**
 RODERICK
 Even with the answer in front of me, I can't quite figure this one out. I suspect it's a type of anagram of R-C-R-I-E-D-O, but I still don't know where the K comes from. **REALLY HARD – I was stuck on “china” because of the Spode reference, but the answer refers to Roderick Spode, a fictional character in P.G. Wodehouse novels. Lost on this Yank.**
25. Go and fetch **device**
 GADGET
 Sort of a hidden-word and synonym type of clue that doesn't tell you how to extract the right letters from the fodder. Use the G from “get,” and the A and D from “and,” add this to a synonym for “fetch,” which is GET, and get the answer: G + AD + GET. Sigh. **REALLY HARD – no apparent conventions in the clue itself.**

Down

2. **Responses to roll-call shouted out? That's right**
 HEAR HEAR
 Just a literal double-definition. Believe it or not, this was one of the first I filled in. **MEDIUM – the “shouted out” part of the clue tricks one into thinking it's a homophone clue.**
3. Express disapproval **over** early **edition** of **Guardian**
 TUTELARY
 This is one of those great clues that gives you everything you need right in front of your eyes. “Express disapproval” = TUT; an edition of “early” means to anagramize the word “early.” The word “over” means that the TUT should come before the anagram of EARLY, and we get something that means a guardian: TUT + ELARY. **MEDIUM – you need to be pretty used to the conventions of “over” and “edition.” Also, the capitalized “Guardian” throws one off because it's the name of a newspaper here.**
4. **Naturally woken up**, presumably, by **all-night party**
 SLEEPOVER
 Just another simple (!) double definition – the answer means both “woken up” and “all-night party.” **MEDIUM – the “naturally” threw me off as well as the fact that one tends to make the clues more complicated than they often are.**

5. Secret fear, finally being caught in credit **fraud**
 CONFIDENCE TRICK
 A “secret” means a confidence, and a confidence trick (con game) is a type of fraud. **MEDIUM – I couldn’t figure out anything to do with the “fear, finally being caught in credit” part of the clue, but the length of the clue and the fact that there were two words and the first was probably “confidence” made it a bit easier.**
6. Clear bishop **ahead**, took initiative and **gave check**
 BRIDLED
 To “clear” is to rid (something of something else). Put the B from “bishop” ahead of RID, add LED, which means “took initiative” and there’s the answer: B + RID + LED. **MEDIUM – this is another of those cases where you have to use the initial letter of a word without knowing exactly why.**
7. **Fiery man** having retired has gone **mad**
 ABEDNEGO
 Have fun with this obscure biblical reference. Answer is ABED (“having retired”) plus an anagram of GONE: ABED + NEGO. **REALLY HARD – because I didn’t get the reference. Otherwise, a pretty straightforward clue.**
8. Translated widely, as poet
 DAY LEWIS
 Cecil, not Daniel. Just an anagram of WIDELY AS cued by the word “translated.” **MEDIUM – not everyone, apparently, realizes there was actually a poet named Cecil Day-Lewis (father of Daniel, I think). But the real problem is that blasted comma between “widely” and “as” in the clue – makes you think of anagramming “widely” by itself, which of course doesn’t give you the right amount of letters.**
14. Good to be upset about murder: **it’s wrong**
 EVILDOING
 The “upset,” “about,” and “wrong” cues all indicate a possible anagram, but it’s not. I think that this is simply an &Lit (and literally true) type of clue – no tricks, no cues, no fodder, just a weird definition of the answer. **REALLY HARD – another clue where even with the answer, I just can’t figure out how to derive it, save for classifying it as &Lit.**
15. **Playwright’s** line **saved by** collector
 FLETCHER
 A “collector” is a fetcher, and if we insert the L from “line” (again, one of those stupid conventions), we get a playwright’s name F + L + ETCHER (John Fletcher). **HARD – I just didn’t have the reference in my stores of trivial knowledge. Otherwise, the clue is pretty straightforward except for the L < line convention.**

16. Old woman stayed in, having got mean

AVERAGED

“Old” means aged, and a woman’s name is Vera. Put VERA inside AGED and you get something that means the answer: A + VERA + GED. **HARD – Any clue that indicates a proper name by the use of “girl”, “woman”, “boy,” or “man” is pretty damn opaque in my book. For those of you who really care, some cryptic crossword guides actually supply lists of popular names that are often used by setters. I just think it’s a mean trick. That said, the answer is either going to be something that means old (woman) or something that relates to getting the mean – with a few cross clues filled in, “averaged” is the only thing that works.**

17. Irritated about English business having shrunk

RECOILED

This is a lovely clue in my opinion, because everything in it has a purpose. Another word for “irritated” is riled. The proper noun “English” usually cues the letter E. “Business” could be lots of things, but here it cues CO. Now put RILED “about” (meaning around) the sequence ECO: R + ECO + ILED **REALLY HARD – no apparent conventions or fodder in the clue itself – unless there was a Pope Urban.**

18. A know-all on the water, I take new crew out

WISEACRE

“Water” = sea. Then it starts getting hard. “New” indicates that “crew” needs to be anagramized, and “out” seems to indicate that the letters from “crew” will be external to the word “sea.” And then there’s that annoying single letter I. W + I + SEA + CRE means a know-all. **HARD – multiple conventions and lots of ambiguous fodder in this one, but with a few cross-clues, and the likelihood that the definition is “know-all” rather than “out” (common sense), it can be done. Not my idea of a good clue, however.**

19. In worse physical condition, being comparatively mountainous

PEAKIER

Classic double-definition. The “worse” and “comparatively” in each of the phrases clues the type of clue. But “peaky” for sick doesn’t really chime with me, so this was a bit off-putting. **MEDIUM – pretty clear that it was a double-definition, but the vocabulary got me stuck.**