

# Cryptic Classroom #6: Containers

By Arkansas invading Puerto Rico

If you've been following this column since its inception, you may find yourself able to solve an increasing number of clues in cryptic crosswords. As you continue your journey toward cryptic domination, I encourage you to check the answers for the clues you can't solve. It took me years before I was able to fully complete a puzzle without peeking at the answers, but the answers helped me understand the wordplay in the particularly difficult clues. If you have missed any of the previous lessons, don't despair. All of those articles are posted for free on the GAMES WORLD OF PUZZLES website, [www.gamesmagazine-online.com](http://www.gamesmagazine-online.com), and in our Facebook group, Games Magazine Enthusiasts.

Here is a quick recap of what we've learned so far:

1. A well-written cryptic clue has surface meaning, but a savvy solver knows not to be misled by the clue as a whole. Every cryptic clue can be separated into two parts: a literal definition and some kind of wordplay.
2. The literal part is a genuine clue to the answer, like a standard crossword clue. The wordplay part of the clue will also lead the solver to the answer, but first, the solver must determine what type of wordplay is involved.
3. The best way to determine the type of wordplay is by looking for indicator words. These trigger words suggest a particular type of wordplay. Homophones, anagrams, and hidden word clues have indicator words; charades and double definition clues do not.
4. The literal portion of the clue could come at the beginning or the end of the clue.
5. The literal and wordplay parts always appear separate and intact. To put it another way, the literal part is never split by the wordplay part, or vice versa.
6. Punctuation and capitalization can usually be ignored.
7. The length of the answer (shown in parentheses) is often a useful hint.

Now, you will conquer the container clue. Not to be confused with a hidden word clue (in which the vAN SWERved is hidden in plain sight), the container clue puts a word inside another word to create a new word. For example, "Sting adopts cat" could be wordplay for the answer SCATTING. Notice how this style of wordplay needs an indicator word ("adopts"). Not only does the indicator word suggest that this is a container clue, it also tells you that the first word (Sting) is containing ("adopting") the second word (cat). Now let's add a literal clue for SCATTING. "Singing like Tormé" works. Putting it all together, we get, "Singing like Tormé, Sting adopts cat (8)." Simple, right? In reality, a puzzle creator is unlikely to use the words "Sting" and "cat" in the clue, but rather, a charade (see January 2022 issue) or synonym of those words. A more likely clue would be, "Singing like Tormé, head of Police nabs alley prowler (8)."

Try to solve this container clue:

Mock gold found in dynamite (5)

In this clue, the indicator suggests that the first word (gold) will be contained in ("found in") the second word (dynamite). Did you know that chemical symbols are fair game in cryptic clues? Well, now you do! Abbreviations are common too. By putting the chemical symbol for gold, Au, inside the abbreviation for trinitrotoluene, TNT, you'll get a word that means "mock." The answer is TAUNT.

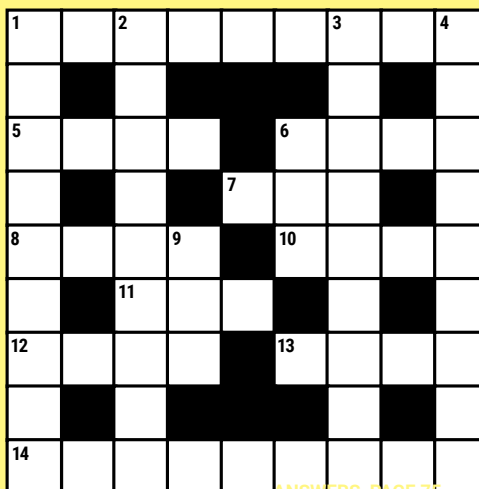
Try to complete this cryptic crossword, where every clue is a container. Container clues are tricky, so consider every correct answer as progress!

## ACROSS

1. Art isn't slang in computer speed tests (9)
5. San Francisco in Northwest is risqué, briefly (4)
6. Affleck film before taking adult rating (4)
7. Senior accepts one term of address (3)
8. Leave eleven in alien (4)
10. Senator Paul put nitrogen in engine's cooling system (4)
11. No one in New York (3)
12. Remorseless villain found moon of Jupiter filled with silver (4)
13. Iodine in Kilmer bottle (4)
14. Tropical tree planted in short garden wall (9)

## DOWN

1. Biden, for one, in fits over global outbreaks (9)
2. Trespasser to deduce owner of phone (9)
3. Local presented arranger's story (9)
4. Fencing spread, gaining urban acknowledgement (9)
6. State (Arkansas) is home to me (3)
9. Toronto gets top grade in Eastern Philosophy (3)



ANSWERS, PAGE 75

ANSWERS, PAGE 75