

# STAR RATS



THE 2022 MIT MYSTERY HUNT PROLOGUE

# STAR RATS!

## MUTANT RODENTS WITH UNIMAGINABLE POWERS!

Where did they come from? What do they want?! What has drawn them to the campus of MIT? Heaven knows the rats are genius-level smart, and that MIT has lots of attractive technology lying around—technology that can be put to all kinds of mischievous use, if it fell into the wrong pair of hands. Or, rather, the wrong set of scrabbly little claws.

Obviously, something needs to be done. We need to round up these Star Rats before they get themselves, and all of us, into a whole lot of trouble. So gather up some nets and some non-lethal mousetraps (we don't want to hurt them, after all, we just want them gone), and let's get in there and round those critters up!



Uh, where did they go? They were here a moment ago. Oh, heck. They must have sensed our counterassault and have taken cover somewhere on campus. Okay, new plan. Let's interview a few of our rodent buddies and see if they can't help us figure out where those mutant Star Rats are holing up. THEN we'll come at them with everything we've got!

- ! This puzzle set is an **OPTIONAL** prologue to the 2022 Mystery Hunt. Teams that solve it will have no advantage when the Hunt begins on January 14, and teams that choose not to solve it will suffer no disadvantage.

### RATS OF INTEREST

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- ! To check your answers, visit the Star Rats website at [starrats.org](http://starrats.org)

# ALGERNON

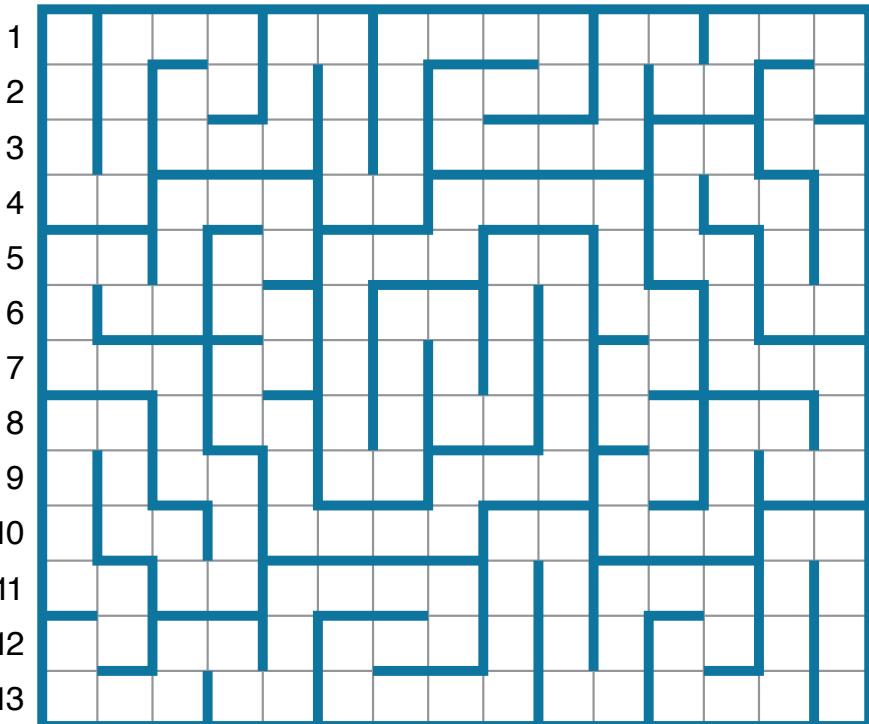
It's always work, work, work in the science lab, but Algernon, being brilliant (well, for now), has figured out a few shortcuts through the walls of the maze.

## ROWS

1. Illness in a Garcia Marquez novel
  - Eastern priest
  - Cathedral area
2. Battery end • "Fear Street" author • Restaurant bigwigs
3. Displays unhappiness • Population center • Like the gates to heaven, it is said
4. Wave generator • It's based at the Vatican • Chanukah treat
5. Three-time Pulitzer-winning dramatist • Do some high-tech surgery, perhaps • One who refuses to face facts
6. Venetian blind parts • Given to mental lapses, maybe • Part in a play
7. Twitter listing • Head of France • "Otherwise..." (2 words)
8. Eightsome • They might make finding an apartment difficult
  - Swear
9. Off-kilter • Some Latin dances
  - Hombre de la casa
10. Trunk • Hits repeatedly, as with a snowball • R.E.M.'s lead singer
11. Some nobles • Tree also known as the "weeping fig" • Cones' partners
12. Wedding participant • Word repeated after "que" • Potato type
13. Anatomical pouches • Bathroom fixture • Many Scottish fabric patterns

## PATHS

- Picture accompaniment, often
-  One who refuses to go along with the plan
- They know what's coming
- Most sentences have at least one
-  Little extra, in a hotel room
  - Nut used in a pie
  - Throws with difficulty



- Philadelphia hockey player
-  Assassin in the *Daredevil* comics

- Negative particle
- Playful river mammals
- Changes the words
- Ms. LaBelle
- Not by force

-  Cellist and composer Pablo

- Foam up, as a wave
- Convictions
- Even Steven
- Like many new cars, in terms of purchasing one
- Bode
- Put a tea bag in hot water, say

-  Stability enhancer, on the water

- Give it another go
- Despair
- Layer of paint

-  Tiny pointed bits

- Vinegar and so forth
- Actors Stiller and Schwartz

-  Around the hearth

- Diplomat's asset

- Leftover amount
-  One of the *Friends* friends
- Gave some help
- Gnats and mosquitoes

## SHORTCUTS

- Accessories for a Wild West costume (8)
- Art form in which you might employ palm fronds (8)
- Delta rival (8)
- Opening of many plays (8; two words)
- Percussion instruments that come in pairs (9)
- Politician's goal (8)
- Sister in a Grimm fairy tale (7; two words)
- Some Renaissance Fair tavern workers (8)

# FIEVEL

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As Fievel made his way west, he scrambled to keep his real locations hidden in each entry in his journal. He hoped the small similarities between the decoy locations and the real ones wouldn't be noticed.

So, we enjoyed the freedom of **Daytona**. A mouse that has land to itself is a proud mouse.

Today, the family made it to **DELAWARE**. We climbed the tallest peak to reach it.

All of us made it through *Fayette*. This place was so beautiful, that no one could speak. No one said a word.

Traveled all the way to **GRAND FORKS**. The advice our elders gave us provided encouragement.

Eventually our travels took us to *hiawatha*. I can almost picture no animals causing us harm ever again.

Started off towards *JUNEAU*. We avoided shady characters. If you give Mr. J. no lip you should be just fine.

I was happy to make it to **Nashville**. This place is top rank. We hope that other cities will be this nice.

Dangerous times in **Omaha**. Dad sparring with others made for some challenges.

Eating was challenging around **Pennsylvania**. Often food went rotten and made us ill. I love how we were able to handle this.

Rough times awaited us in **Quantico**. We waited for injuries to heal. Lives depended on it!

Many didn't think we would make it to *Salt Lake*. We were haunted by the phantoms of the past.

Arrived in **SEDONA**. The grandest domains of life await us.

Pursued constantly, we made it to **TUCSON**. Time to scope out new safe shelters.

# FRANKIE AND BENJY

Frankie and Benjy compliment themselves on their best-laid plans of mice. When Ford Prefect says "and men," they sneer at him, Arthur, and Zaphod. I guess that's what happens when you offer help to a mouse.

Danger: Hunted Olympians (HS)	14 11 5
Patiently Fitting Walls (ML'E)	17 7 6
Hook Allowed German (TW)	4 8, 5
Dent's Shingle (AC)	7 5
Thirteenth Design (FSF)	6 2 3 5
Unitarian Shines (LH)	16 2 3 3
Buy Unconstrained Urn (BB)	2 19 7
All Spartan Fight (CA)	6 4 5
Wide, When Tonight (MM)	4 4 3 4
Right-Wing Whiskey Absconded (MA)	1 4 3 3 5 4 5
Sup? Handstand's Delusion (KH)	18 8 4



3



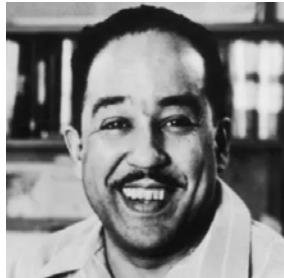
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6



5



2



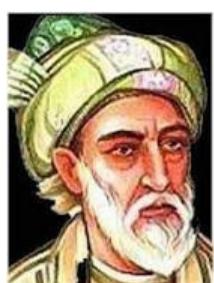
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6



6



5



15

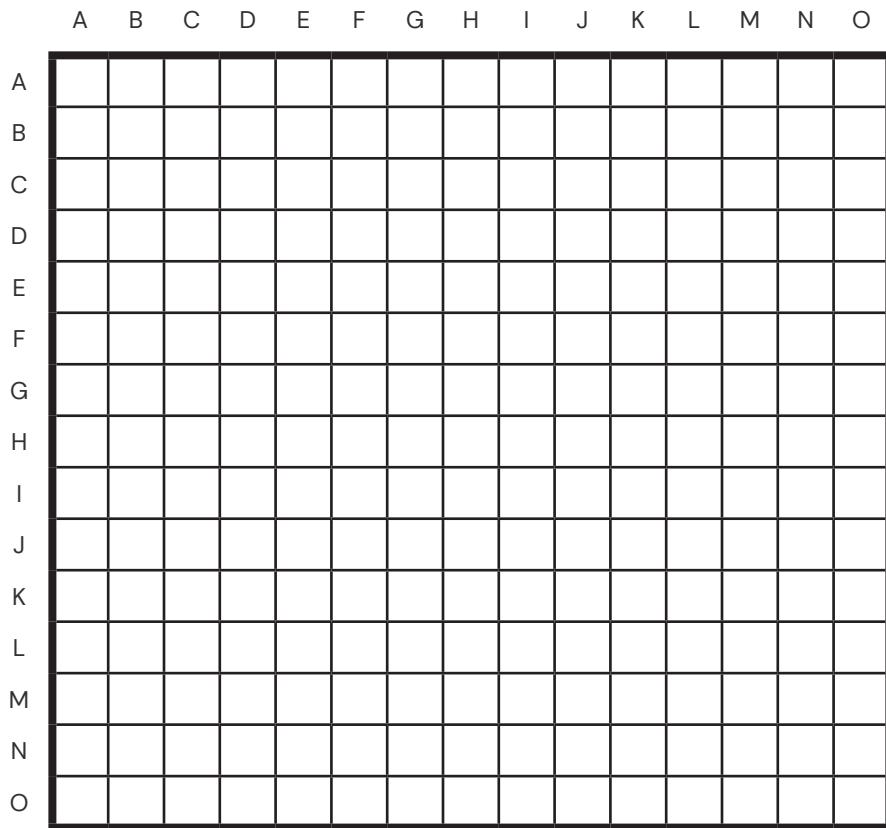


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# MATTHIAS

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Matthias searched Redwall Abbey in an effort to find weapons for the troops.



## ROWS

---

- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| A | Instructions, part 1: 3 wds.   | G | Each of the Os in SOH-CAH-TOA: Abbr.   |
| B | Sign outside a studio in use: 2 wds.<br>Zapotec's state                  |   | Teacher's request at the top of a poor assignment:<br>2 wds.                   |
|   | Princess of Alderaan   | H | Temporarily fix using available materials: Hyph.                               |
| C | Slow-cooked French stew<br>Room aesthetic                                |   | Common name of plants in the Antirrhinum genus                                 |
|   | Common name for when Operation Neptune<br>occurred: Hyph.                | E | Engrave using acid   |
| D | Monopoly space with a question mark<br>In for the night, perhaps: 2 wds. | I | "Is it possible for me?": 2 wds.   |
|   | Bodybuilder's six-pack   |   | Get on a horse<br>____ & Marty (short-lived variety show)                      |
| E | "Is it ____ so? then I defy you, stars!": Shakespeare                    | J | J  |
|   | Comedian Giedroyc  |   | Second VP under Grover   |
|   | "Grim" figure with a scythe  |   | Buzzed   |
|   | "Steal My Sunshine" band   |   | Drink slowly: 2 wds.   |
| F | Spiritual tradition that emphasizes wu wei<br>Large coffee server        | K | Large group of people, as of celebrities in a show<br>Central line of latitude |
|   | May, under one's own volition: 2 wds.                                    |   | Org. that named Kim Sei-young their 2020 Player<br>of the Year: Abbr.          |

(clues continue on the next page)

- L Masses of eggs  
Ironman participants, during the last leg of the event  
Onetime 9-3X manufacturer
- M Largest country by area that has never hosted the Olympics  
Course where you might learn about supply and demand: Abbr.  
Jenna Elfman role from 1997 to 2002
- N How cats ask for Meow Mix, according to the product's slogan: 2 wds.  
*Broad City* producer Aniello  
Bring up
- O Instructions, part 2: 3 wds.
- J Ice cream parlor serving amount  
Site whose first video was "The Landlord": 3 wds.
- K Like a welcoming reception  
Drops a pop fly, perhaps  
Game company purchased by Wizards of the Coast  
Rajiv \_\_\_\_, president of the Rockefeller Foundation
- L What you are now, relative to when you started solving this puzzle  
1990 Robyn Hitchcock album  
One thousandth of an inch  
Garment worn with a choli and a ghagra
- M Transformer who became a Lamborghini Countach  
LP500S: 2 wds.  
Clothing
- N Person requiring insulin shots  
Surface on which asanas are performed: 2 wds.
- O Refuses: 2 wds.  
Its national football team is the Black Stars  
What's missing?

## COLUMNS

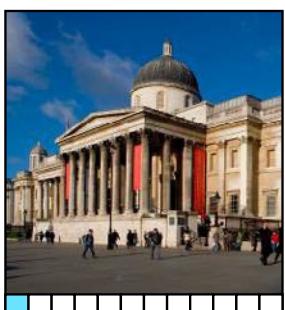
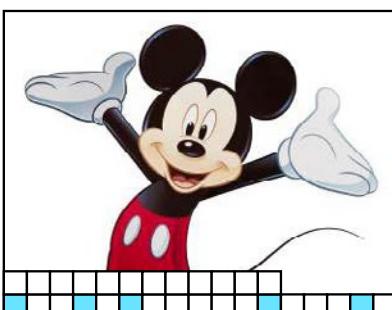
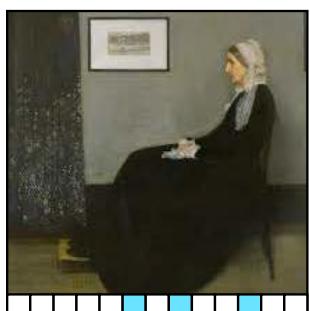
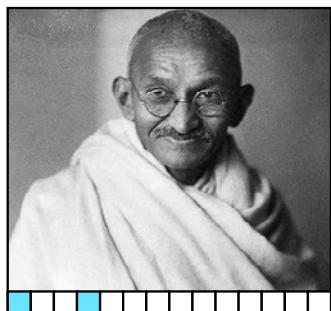
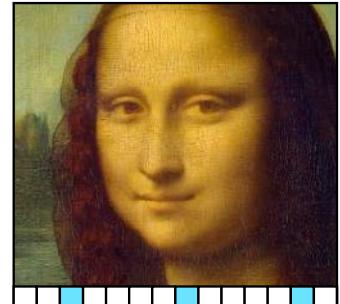
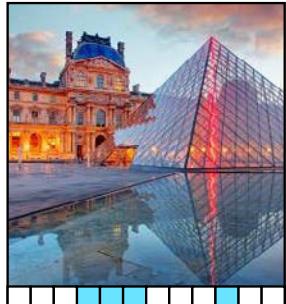
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- A Magic technique to control a choice made during a trick  
Operatic character who sings "Vissi d'arte"  
Persuasive payment
- B Like a load of dirty laundry, often: 3 wds.  
Vertex on a graph  
Banded chalcedony
- C Host city for the 1998 Paralympics  
Pope born Camillo Borghese: 2 wds.  
Housemother to Tootie, Natalie, Blair, and Jo
- D "The Wanderer" singer  
Discard the wrong card, for example  
Where the king is the king of, in *The King and I*
- E Temporary agreements to stop fighting  
"Frasier" character played by Moose  
He plays Elliot on *Mr. Robot*
- F Word after Marigold or Budapest in movie titles  
Be deserving of  
Beatrix, in the Netherlands, from 1980 to 2013
- G Big Bird's teddy bear  
"Savory" basic taste  
"I give! I give! Stop tickling me!"
- H Phillips \_\_\_\_ Academy (New Hampshire school)  
Concept called "Ich" in the title of a 1923 book by Sigmund Freud  
Transpire as planned: 2 wds.
- I Individually  
Pear variety  
Foul odor

# MICKEY MOUSE

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"Oh boy! Yes, I am!"



# THE MOUSE AND THE MOTORCYCLE

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*When Ralph decided to do a stunt show, he needed great perseverance—and many strings—to attach safety equipment to his motorcycle.*

Predecessor of polyamide 66 and F-111 (4)

Rolling Stones song (5)

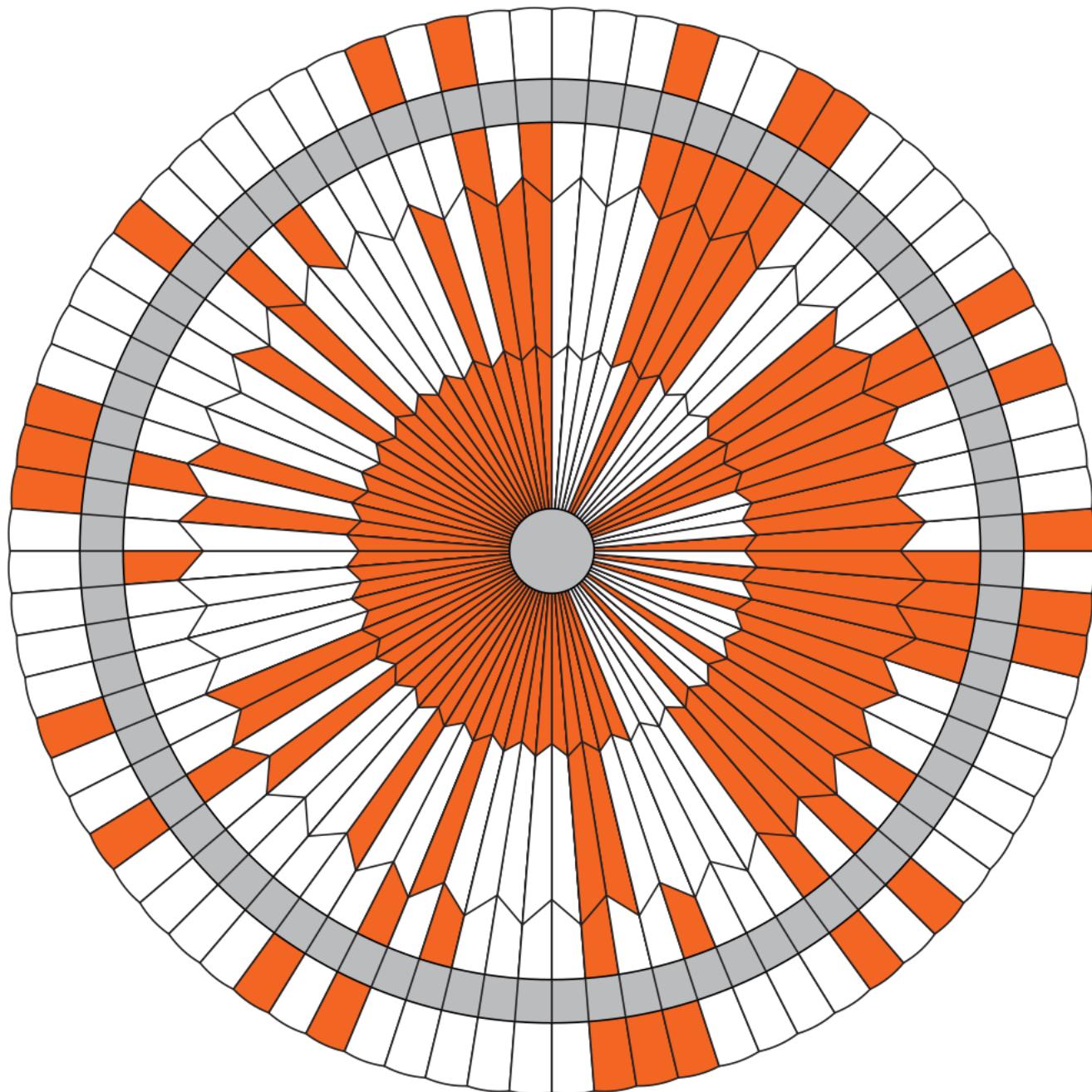
Bonus money (6)

1980s fashion trend (5)

Self-help book (15)

The fighting 506th (8)

Carpetbagger (9)



# MRS. FRISBY

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*An abbreviated recap of the story: the needs of Mrs. Frisby and some lab rats overlap. That's useful!*

## CLUES...

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MIT test that allows you to get credit outside the classroom  
It takes place in January  
Some ports left in the barrel  
HIMYM actor  
Common sandwich with three ingredients  
Labor union whose members are known as "Wobblies"  
Their HQ is E18-219.  
Thasunda Brown Duckett's role, starting May 1, 2021  
Popular YouTube genre involving sounds  
Geneva-based organization that the Village People sing about  
With Schwarz, toy retailer  
Representative for New York's 14th Congressional District  
Mrs. Frisby is aided by rats who escaped this laboratory  
They produce at Studio 24  
A broadcast sent out to numerous law enforcement agencies  
Modern means of distributing food stamps  
Paramedic  
Popular arcade game that expects you to put your best foot forward  
Printer resolution  
Architectural degree at MIT  
Betamax competitor  
It may be skins, levels, modes, or expansions

## ...CLUES

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Amount of heat required to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit  
"Here's what I think..."  
How one piece of software talks to another piece of software  
In gaming, how much ground an attack covers  
In trucking, it's an amount carried that's not at capacity

*(clues continue on the next page)*

## ...CLUES (CONTINUED)

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It can make a picture worth a thousand words, or at least as many words as are in the picture

It originated as Project MAC in 1963, and merged with the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory in 2003

The JEOL 5910 General Purpose is one (as opposed to the FEI/Philips XL30 or FEI Tecnai)

Katie Hammer became this February 2021

Men's underwear brand

QVC competitor

*Real World* channel

Ship with a built-in movie theater and robots made from the parts that control it

Shirley Ann Jackson earned one from MIT in 1973

Technology that controls the use or modification of everything from software to tractors

Their first logo had a blue character named "Everyman" which was later changed to be an "Everyone"

Theorized common ancestor of numerous languages that looks like a tasty dessert

They can get you from the Changi Airport to Pasir Ris

They'll help you go to Harvard if you're in the red?

Those who want to be health practitioners take it

Videogame in which a woman's soul is placed inside a weapon called Legacy

Vince McMahon's organization (as of 2002)

# PINKY AND THE BRAIN

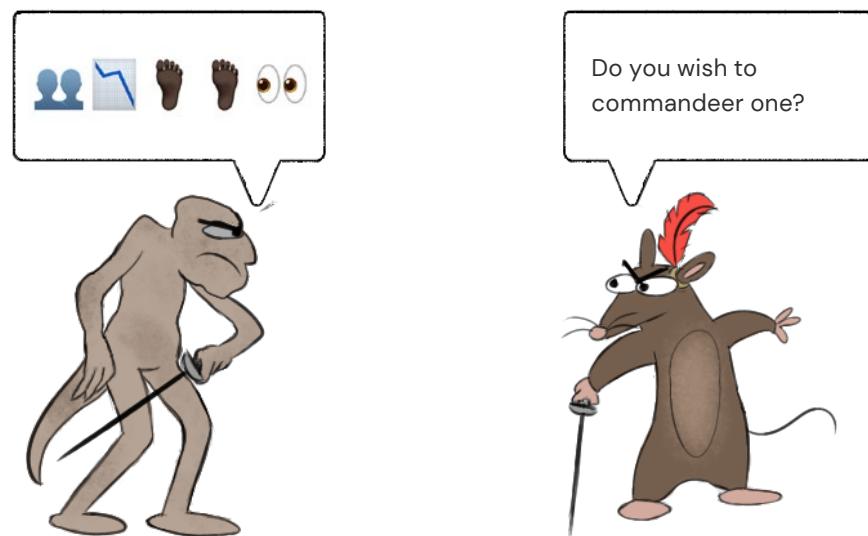
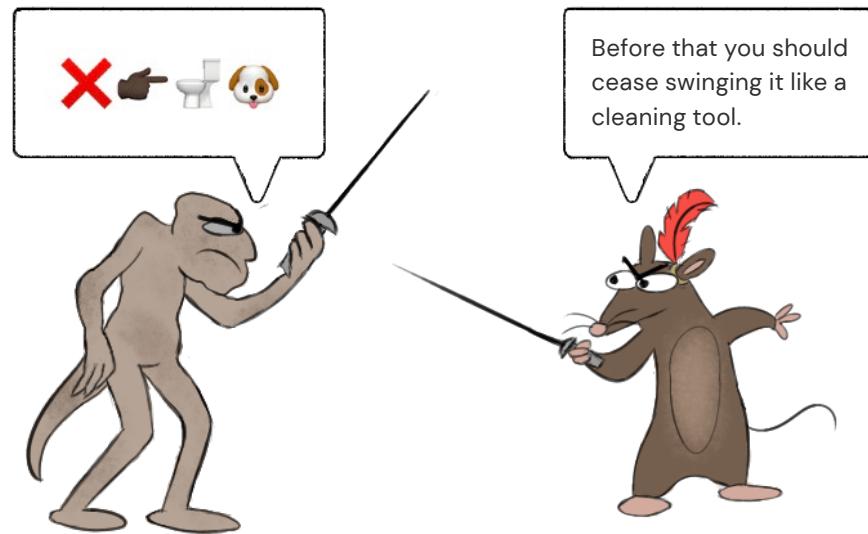
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*They're Laboratory Mice ...*



# REEPICHEEP

Reepicheep faced the goblin with his rapier, but it wasn't really a fair fight. The goblin spent too much time monkeying around to fight effectively.



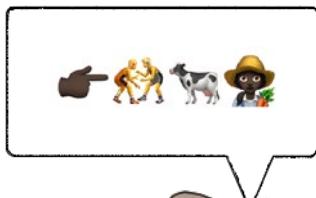
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He must have supplied you with your entire education.



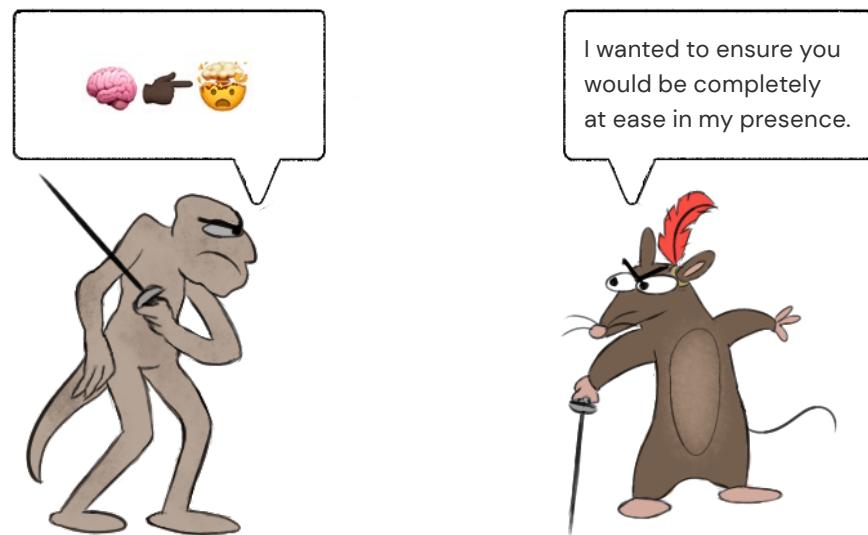
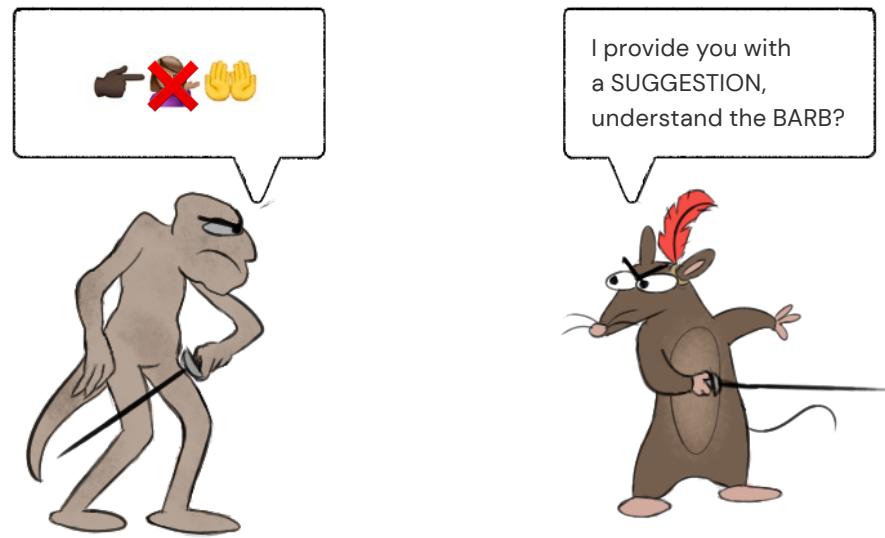
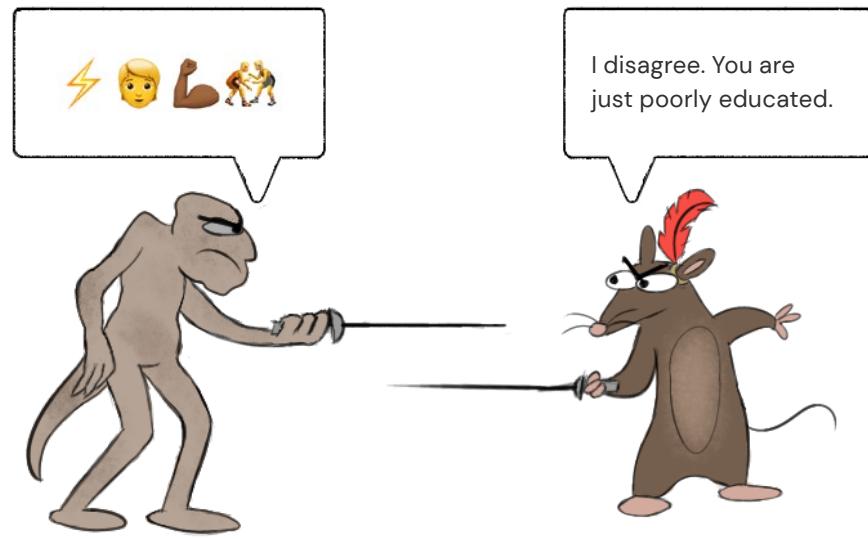
Hopefully you have learned not to mine for green gold.



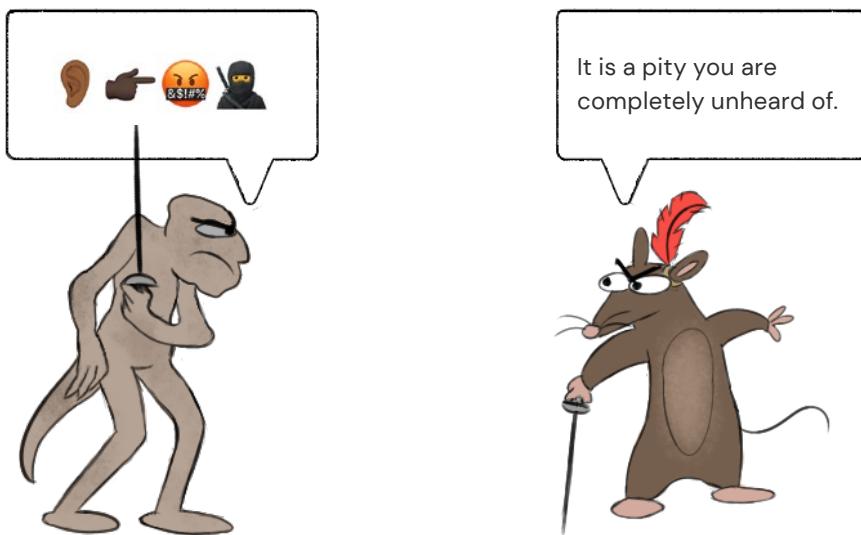
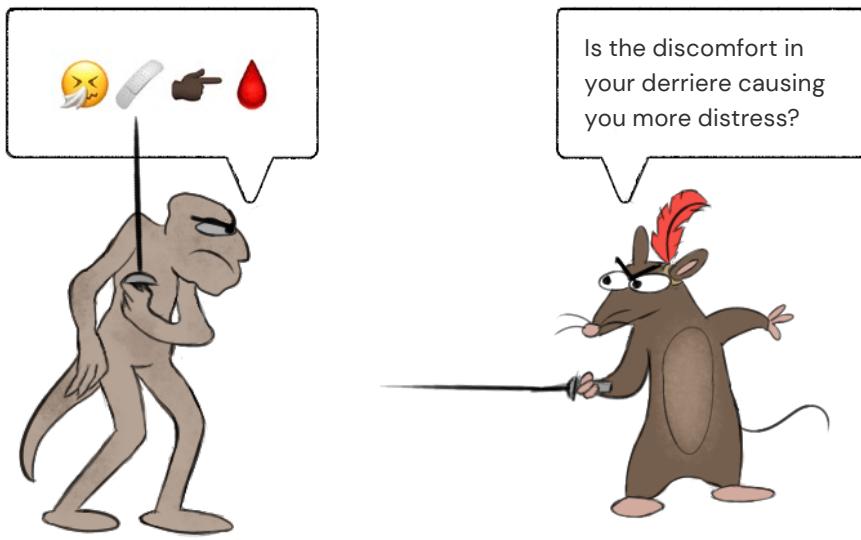
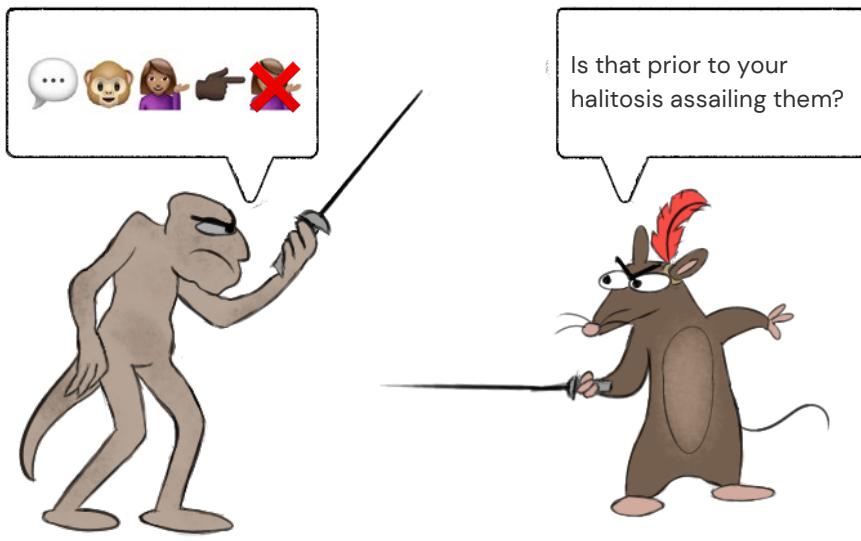
I am pleased you participated in the gathering of your kin.



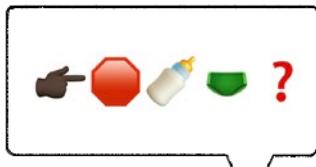
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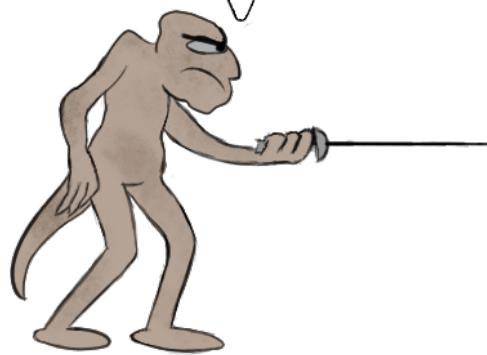
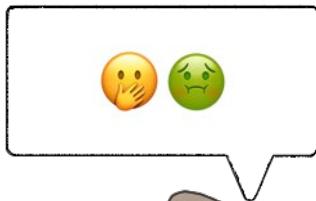
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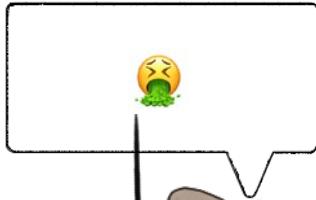
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It would cause me significant difficulties if you utilized them.

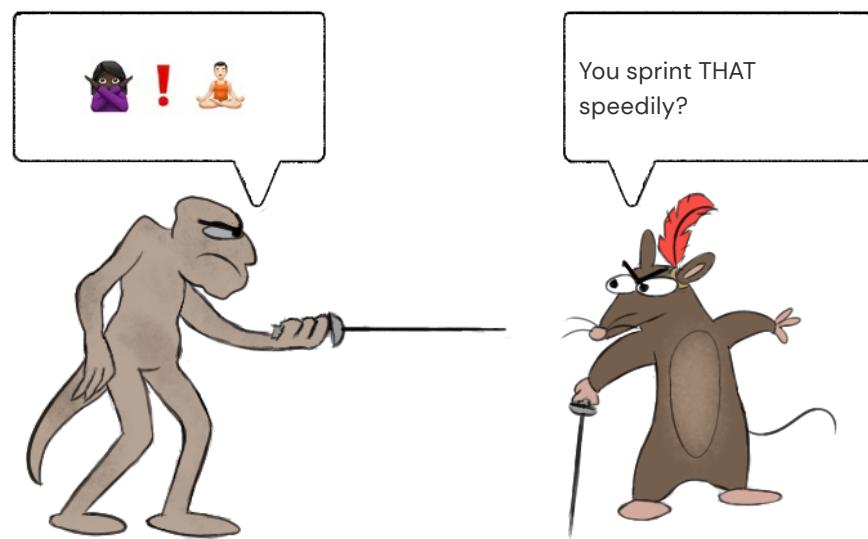
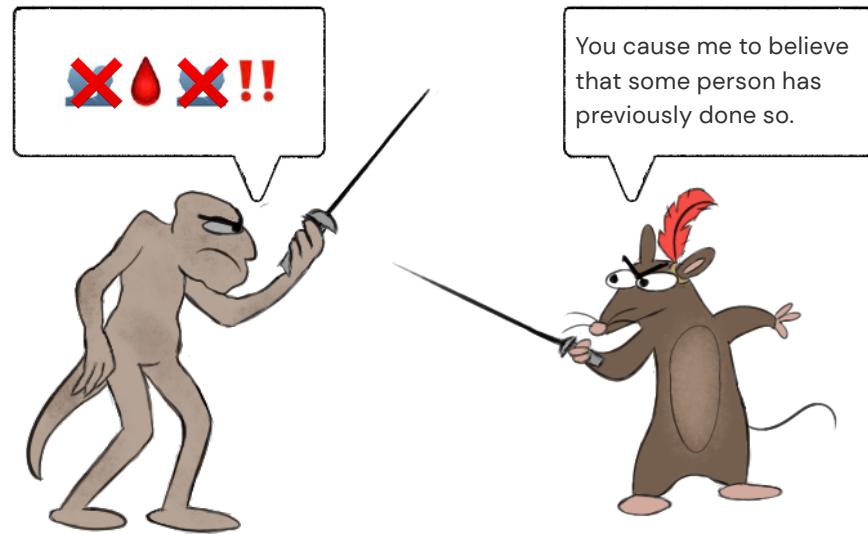


So you finally commenced employment in a caretaker role.



That's perfectly fitting since you brawl like a bovine!





**REMY**

*Remy is trying to help Linguini talk to Colette, but something gets lost in translation.*

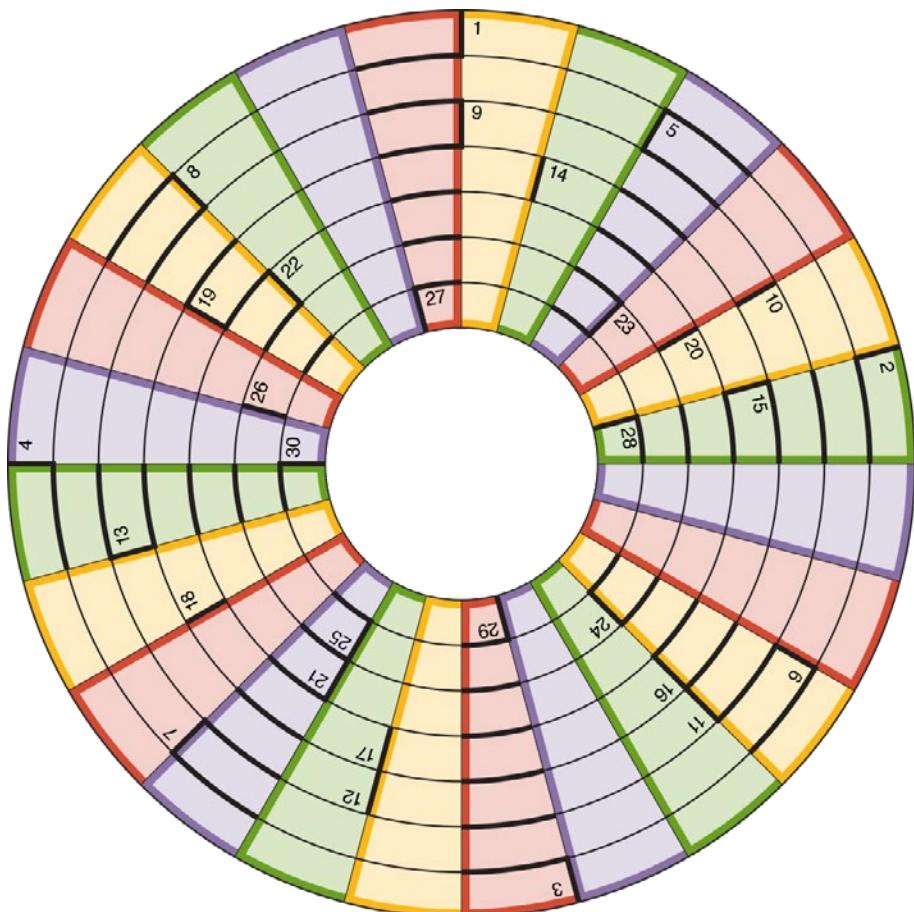
Colors are for visual effect only, and are not part of the puzzle.

## **VEGETABLES (INWARD)**

- British queen adopting lion, getting year with queen (7)
  - Cost once authors train without first of book (7)
  - Crazy week for bullies (7)
  - Discover one painting (Wyeth's last) (7)
  - Except dear, it's the person with all the meat (7)
  - German article coming in terrible review initially thanks ennui (7)
  - Insect head featuring broken rim (7)
  - Life before 10:00 a.m. missing everything at first in country (7)
  - Mix water, air, bit of sand for large landmass (7)
  - "Mostly snow," he had said naggingly? (7)
  - Provide relief as wise person grabs tail of bird (7)
  - Refuse to leave? Yes, mostly, with tasty nuts (7)
  - State in one film (7)
  - Summoned again to read second half quietly with a degree (7)
  - Things that help me forget mother naked and topless... these will help fix my eyes (7)
  - Whines about twice starting to damn things like this (7)

## RINGS (CLOCKWISE)

1. Naked, holding blue scarf (5)
  2. Lawmaking group mostly seated embracing no (6)
  3. Suspects concealing laughter, maybe? (7)
  4. Um... love dirty book (6)
  5. Force part of creator questions (6)
  6. Conveyed one variable for another made less difficult (7)



7. Briefly cut one in strange element (6)
  8. Link northeast crossing with United States (5)
  9. It's a ruler, essentially! (4)
  10. One of twelve is a baseless danger? (5)
  11. Cut note with a pencil, primarily (4)
  12. Biden and Republican eating candy? Just the opposite (4)
  13. Read about three in Rome... this seems familiar (7)
  14. Employs our group with endless test (4)
  15. Crazy joke article (4)
  16. It can be difficult to navigate stunned, ignoring the walls (4)
  17. Fit and flat? (3)
  18. Trouble on the surface? Sleep on it (4)
  19. Movie about a scare (5)
  20. Worshipping her sinning (how evil) (10)
  21. Touches most of Tall Trees? (7)
  22. Pick orange from trees hiding one man (7)
  23. Ogre is spoiling adult parties (6)
  24. Heraldic band in decrepit store (5)
  25. Stone Williams' character losing half her lines (5)
  26. Change a *Ratatouille* character with a different identity? (5 3)
  27. Imagines steel core in weights (6)
  28. Steps more like Cheryl of "*Charlie's Angels*"? (6)
  29. Sacred destinations... home to the most embarrassed (7)
  30. My high school includes last of stupidest legends (5)

# THE RESCUERS

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*Bernard & Miss Bianca are trying to decide which movie to go see. Bernard wants to see the one where Brie Larson says hello to her newborn son on the floor of a shed, while Miss Bianca wants to see the one where Tommy Wiseau says hello to his friend Mark on a roof. After reading some synopses, what do they decide to see?*

Action flick set in a Campbell's factory; the hapless protagonists must stay low to avoid projectiles

Adaptation of a Zola novel which aims to be more bizarre than the BBC series set in a North East England department store

Animated feature about an adorable family of herbs where the youngest is a spiky-leaved aromatic perennial

Behind-the-scenes look at why the American remake of *Le Jouet* flopped so horribly, despite a creditable performance by Richard Pryor in the title role

Biopic about a ballplayer who regularly dined on ham, bacon, and pork chops in downtown Manhattan

Comedy with Dwayne Johnson as a H.S. principal

Documentary on congressional gridlock, focusing on the first steps of preventing enactment of a law

Dreams of a young boy who aspires to replace U2's lead guitarist in the near future

Heart-breaking saga of a female person unable to get out of debt

In-depth analysis of the rituals celebrated on December 31

In this film based on the TV show, the Mandalorian moves from retrieving The Child to chauffeuring an even younger creature

Interviews with all the actors that played the title role in a 2000's sitcom, culminating in the ninth one after Frankie Muniz

Mystical adventure where Australia and England battle over a trophy containing the spirit of the German Chancellor

Parody where Walter from *The Big Lebowski* can't remember where he parked

Post-apocalyptic drama where the area next to the Boston Public Garden becomes a barren void

Rom-com where the leads learn that being healthy leads to being attractive

Technicolor fantasy with Gandalf turning a variety of hues before becoming The White

Wacky escapades of a jam band in the Mile High City

(puzzle continues on the next page)

- - - - 57 - - 98 - - 75 - - 61 - - - - 30 - - 83  
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 - - - - 36 - - - - 25 - - 11 - - 40 - - - - 81 - - - - - - 96 - - 70 - - - - 65 - -  
 - - - - - - - - 19 - - 90 - - - - - - - - - - 42 - - - - 31 - - - - - - - - 14 - - 22 - - - - - - - - 10 - -  
 - - - - - - - - 87 7 - - - - 54 - - 66 - - - -  
 - - - - - - - - 24 51 - - - - - - 94 - - - - - - 26 - - - -  
  
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 - - - - - - - - 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 62 63 64 65 - - 66 67 - -  
  
 - - - - - - - - 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 - - 75 76 - - 77 78 79 - - 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 - - 88 89 90 91 - - 92 93 94 95 - - 96 97 98 99 100 101 - -

# SPLINTER

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*Splinter, an adoptive father, helps his foursome come together. Solving problems is their strong suit – see if you can help them find an answer!*

- 1970s (16)
  - Game (4)
  - 2001 (20)
  - 1993 (10)
  - 1994 (15)
  - Repetitively-named character (2)
  - 1951 (22)
  - 1954 (3)
  - Principle (13)
  - Institution (12)
  - Fast-food (9)
  - Dancing (8)
  - 2000 (5)
  - Complex (11)
  - 1975 (21)
  - First words (1)
  - Territorial units (18)
  - 1992 (14)
  - Disneyland (24)
  - West Coast (23)
  - British (6)
  - Recently-founded (9)
  - Title character (7)
  - Sports (17)
- a 2007 single (3)
  - a housewife (-4)
  - a military rank (12)
  - a missing dolphin (7)
  - a movie franchise (-16)
  - about a man named (9)
  - about the search for (-3)
  - academic division (9)
  - an American (-7)
  - an object (4)
  - Ang Lee film (3)
  - at one end of (12)
  - attraction (11)
  - barn-raising sequence (6)
  - based on connections (-7)
  - Catch-22* (14)
  - city (-11)
  - Daft Punk song (1)
  - describing the rate of change (7)
  - "Everybody Hurts" (-6)
  - featured in (8)
  - featuring dialogue in (-2)
  - featuring drawings by (5)
  - featuring the song (6)
  - Footloose* (9)
  - franchise (-1)
  - for his gourd-based diet (-3)
  - honoring the author of (4)
  - host city (0)
  - in Act IV of (14)
  - in Richmond (2)
  - in the 1970 film (2)
  - Jim Carrey movie (-4)
  - Klatovy, Svitavy, and (1)
  - located on (10)
  - Macbeth* (15)
- magnate (6)
  - Majuro Atoll (2)
  - Mandarin (8)
  - MIT Course 6 (0)
  - musical (8)
  - of a nursery rhyme (4)
  - of higher education (-3)
  - of momentum of (-8)
  - of the first (12)
  - pair (-2)
  - Pan American Games (-15)
  - Paul Simon song (-10)
  - played by Bob Newhart (-8)
  - previously known as (-14)
  - R.E.M. album (5)
  - sampled by Kanye West in (-5)
  - satirical soap opera (-5)
  - sketch series (10)
  - spoken in unison (-9)
  - Stan and Gus (-11)
  - starring Louise Lasser as (3)
  - Super Sentai* (5)
  - that co-houses (-13)
  - that include (-12)
  - that inspired (0)
  - that re-used footage from (7)
  - the Golden Gate Bridge (-9)
  - The Raven* (-2)
  - the Seattle SuperSonics (11)
  - to the star of (11)
  - Top Hat* (1)
  - TV series (-6)
  - whose nickname is (-1)
  - with a famous (-4)
  - with lyrics about (13)
  - Znojmo (10)

# THREE BLIND MICE

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*The mice wanted to show you their favorite things ... but then someone came along and ruined their clues and answers. Here are some new clues that will be more helpful.*

- Hamilton frenemy (4)
- Numbered cube (3)
- Cheap bar (4)
- Strongest of Thorin's companions (4)
- On fire (7)
- Water and lava do this (4)
- Cheesy potato recipe (6)
- Basic time interval (4)
- Bury (5)
- Bigger than mediums (6)
- Outdoor rug (3)
- Not glossy (5)
- Sumatran swinger, informally (5)
- Sprinted faster than (6)
- Extremely minimal cover (7)
- Asiatic Centella (9)
- Purple fruit (4)
- Prior to 1914 (6)
- Bon mot (4)
- Searches by digging (7)
- Sight, which we lack, is one (5)
- Singer Amos (4)
- Setting for Gavin & Stacey (5)
- Exclamation on a roller coaster (4)

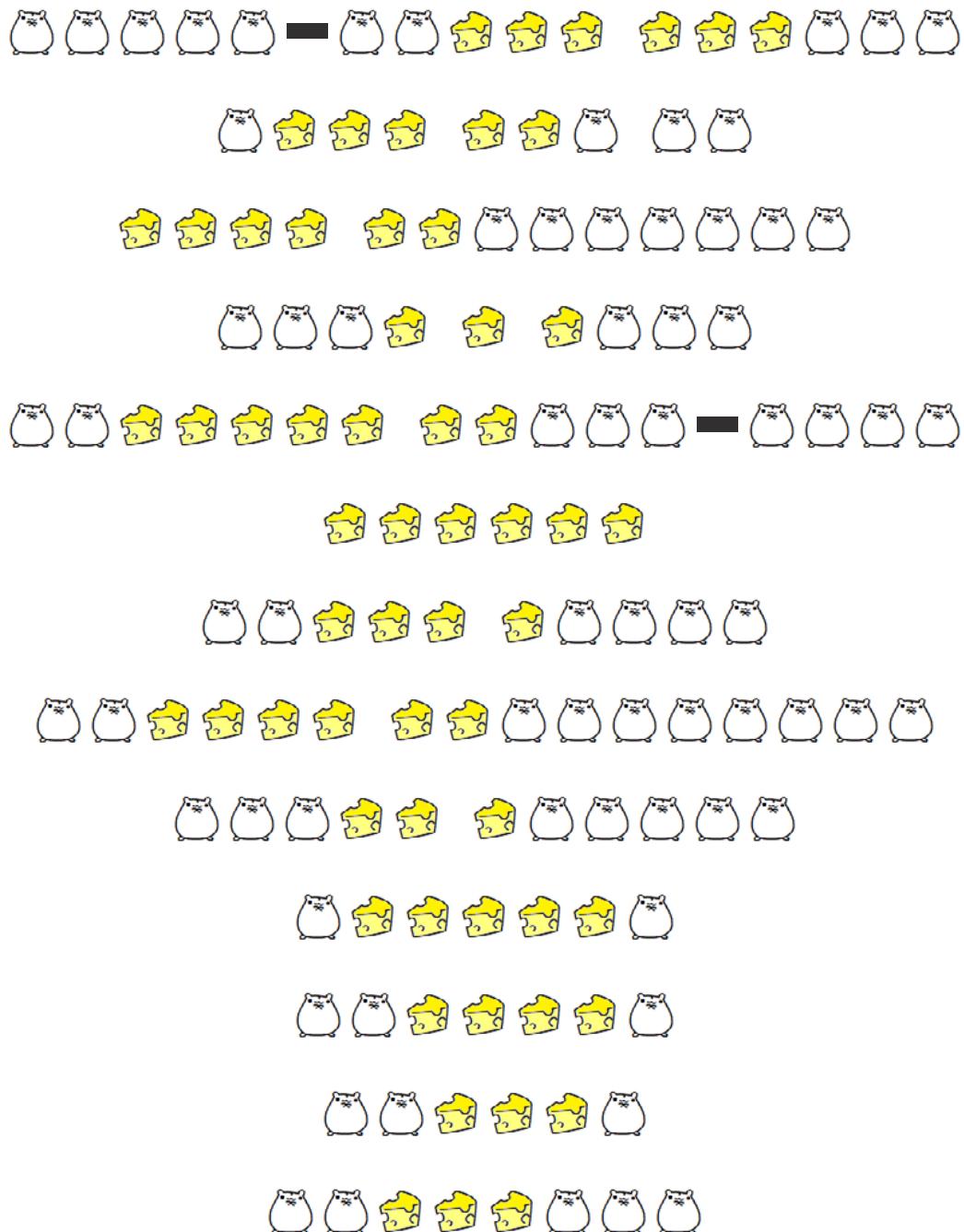
## OLD CLUES

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\* Most white rappers \* He attends the house of Wayne Ellington \* A general usually does this assignment \* Hitchcockian costar of Jimmy Durante \* One of 72 that orbit Jupiter \* Generosity has this benefit \* Counting everyone \* Awful quality of sound cancelling headphones \* Jean-Paul Sartre's "God has abandoned us" \* Knotty record of a thorny problem \* Having no home phone \* Regional name for a donkey punch \* Pink bird egg \* Karate teacher dress code \* Something birds have done on my windshield \* Like a doughnut fryer \* Liquid or gas fuel \* Simple machine learning algorithms \* Polish President Eisenhower's medals \* Feather, to Yankee Doodle \* Heat a little bit early to qualify for the race \* William's House election predictions \* Employee who works for free rides \* He's in the deep South

# STAR RATS

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- STAR RATS -

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# TO BE CONTINUED...

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12:00 PM TIMEMIT (Eastern)  
January 14-17, 2022

Register your team at  
[mitmh2022.com](http://mitmh2022.com)