

# The Bridgian Herald

21<sup>st</sup> October–17<sup>th</sup> November 2025

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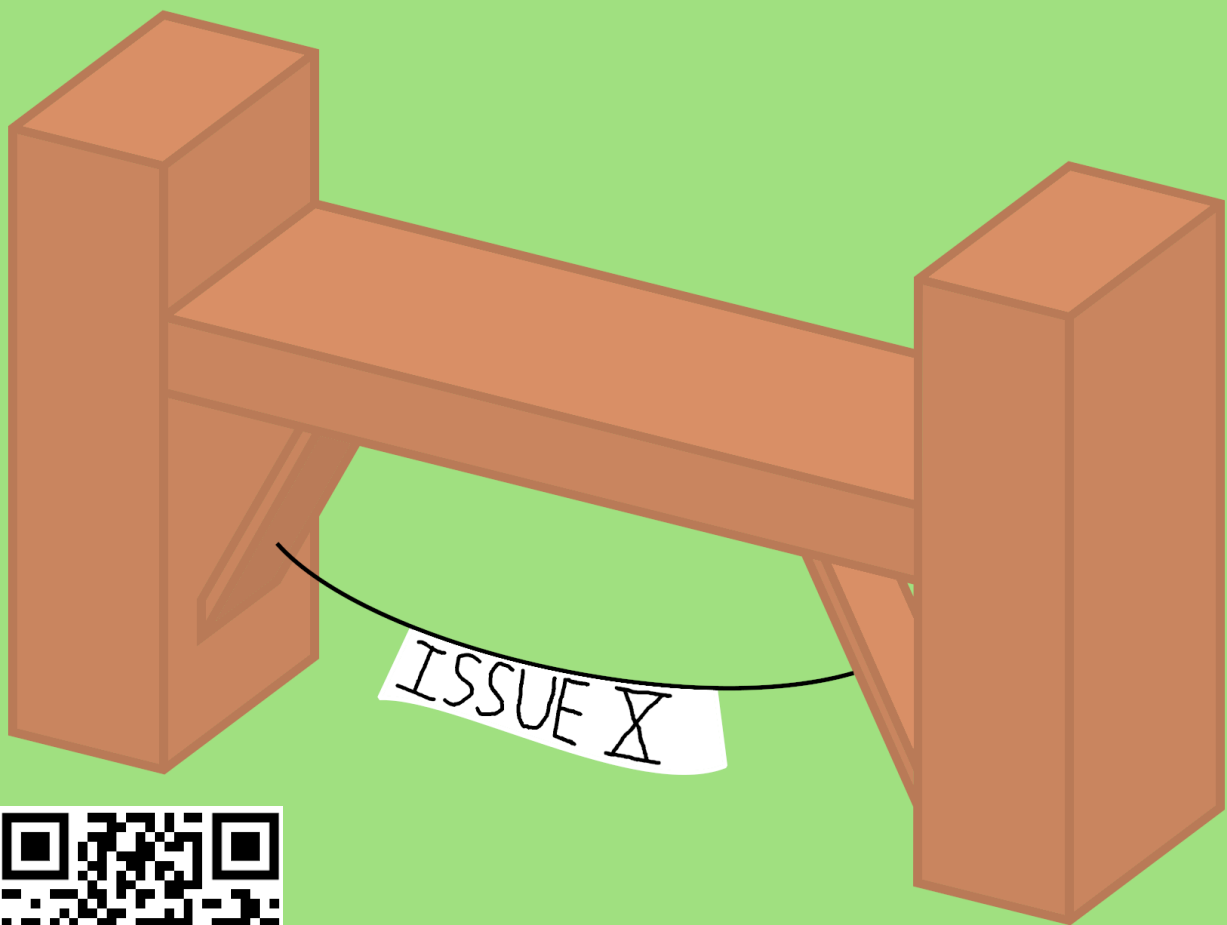
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## **Credits**

Activities: Zachery

Articles: Zachery

Design: Zachery

Editing: Zachery

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## ***The Bridgian Herald***

Initiated in November 2024 by the Bridge Base Foundation to ‘improve social cohesion and understanding in the School through the collectivisation of information.’ *Bíshbés taná!*

Whilst measures have been taken to ensure the accuracy of the content, it is possible that errors or omissions have been made. Feedback would be greatly appreciated to enhance the *Herald* for all.

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# Bridgian News

## The true BridgeCon

*The Bridgians can never be separated*

### Ascendant branches

*Bridgia's long-overlooked centre*

**A** NEW POWER erupts in Lenkaí. The first in years, since the collapse of Bridgehaven in “the Scramble”. If it proves as practical as expected, a new age of construction could be set into motion – greater than Domebush, lengthier than Gilnar, wider-reaching than the Haven. The supplies are already being appropriated, albeit at a slower rate than is optimal. For this is the overlooked *ghe Annebítsh sí*, the lone tree of Bridgia.

The Asentree, which may be recognisable as the purple-leaved tree by Gilnar’s car-park, has sat largely unused on the Foundation’s doorstep. The bare trunk at its base made its main branches seem challenging to reach. On the other hand, once that hurdle is overcome, extreme altitudes can be easily reached, like on the small tree south of Base  $\beta$ .

The tangle of thick branches in the upper part of the Asentree makes it ideal for plank-and-beam construction – the sort used by Bridgehaven and Domebush Treehouses, for instance. In fact, plans have already been developed for a lower floor area, although these are still in the provisional phase.

Compare this to the current headquarters of the Foundation, Base  $\mu$ . It has a system of mostly flat branches at one level, but fails to extend above Andol Point (the end of King’s Path). The only possibility for building is over the Scar or around King’s Seat, but both sites are limited and unable to be expanded. Base  $\phi$  is slightly better, even after the severing, but it is still centred around its trunk.

The Asentree has many more side-branches and a far less prominent trunk, making it possible for structures to take up their entire layer, not the near portion on one side of the trunk. That allows far bigger and more ambitious development than was seen before. The only mission remaining is to acquire the materials for availing the Treehouse. ▀

REDACTED

**S**UNDAY 12TH OCTOBER. Early morning. In a land far, far away. A shadowed figure is seen leaving a boxy, grey house – intently, for this mission had been planned weeks before. Sounds of screeching come from the south: a train, but not the fabled train, not yet. Half an hour must pass before that, whilst the figure walks ever closer.

07:16, the sign reads. Twenty minutes left to coordinate with the rest of the team. Success is the only option; nothing else can work now. The hand turns one hundred and twenty degrees, the chariot arrives, and the figure departs. An hour later, they emerge once again, waiting to be joined by a fellow adherent. Their cloak is compromised a little – this area must be hostile to such meetings. Best to leave here quickly, then, as the operation necessitates.

However, reality conspires in hampering their progress, ensuring a long pause before the party’s next journey. The clouds surround the town in their cold embrace. Arrival at the following destination needs some courage. What if their objective is uncovered? What if the others never received their message? What if the plan fails to execute? No, these are impossible. The quest shall prevail!

Eventually, though, the train approaches; the new member maintains their anxiety, but the pair depart the station on time. Four stops. Four stops until the end of the line. Four stops to join another traveller on the mission. “We need to leave, *now*,” says the second member upon reception of a telephone call. The first insists that continuing is right for their own benefit; going back can never help in this kind of scenario. Now waiting on platform 1.

It comes the 09:45, on its journey to the fourth busiest station in the country. Front door, front carriage. As expected, the third participant is present, greeting them excitedly before trying to sit down – but no good seats are available. Standing it is, then, a fine sacrifice for such an adventure. The Bridgians have assembled, in a way that has never been done in the Foundation’s history. The plan has worked, the team is back together, at last. →

*Le raison d'être*

This was the purpose of the mission: reunite the core Bridgians with those that have left the School. The Devious One, masterminding the occasion; the Griddlemaster, coming in from afar; and the original Member himself, collected along the way. This latter Member was not present in the initial plans, being added as a “devious surprise” for the Griddlemaster. (That ended up falling apart as he was sent messages to that effect beforehand.)

But where on Earth did they go? Onlookers have formed many theories – some closer to home, some further away – but the truth is far stranger. It took three, four, or, for the Devious One, seven trains in travelling to the destination, chosen for two Bridgian “recruits” residing in the vague area. A large part of the socialisation was in the journeys, anyway, so distance was largely irrelevant.

What mattered more was the activities at the location. After alighting the train, the Bridgians were greeted by the recruits and walked over to a local shopping-centre. They browsed its wares for approximately an hour, but bought only a bottle of water and a television-inspired poster. Most of the time was spent sitting on benches, expectably so for bench-stealing-obsessed Bridge Base.

Food (as much as the Devious One despises calling it that) was acquired from a fast-food chain requested by the Griddlemaster, who paid for this aspect of the endeavour. Due to the more Bridgian language and activities used, an attendant warned the party by calling the venue a “family-friendly restaurant”: a term that will be forever engraved in the collective memory of the Foundation. It meant nothing, really, because others there were acting in similar ways and not being told off at all. Maybe this is just another example of anti-Bridgianism.

A return to the main shopping-centre was in need here, although this was brief before they sat down again – this time at a table by the arcade area of a bowling alley. This was when the Devious One was able to double-check the times for the train back, identifying one in approximately an hour. The Bridgians, with their recruits, travelled back through the shopping centre to the station. And thence, before five hours had elapsed from their meeting, they boarded the train to start the return trip, leaving their recruits to catch the bus home.

Nonetheless, the day was not over yet. The Devious One, the First Member, and the Griddlemaster (or, in Bridgian, *Anghame*, *Rbossash*, and *Aúnpay* respectively) continued to talk amongst themselves, making such jokes as would be heard in Base  $\beta$  or  $\kappa$ . They were already recounting their sequence of events to each other, such as *Aúnpay* restraining himself from making jokes about random members of the public, or *Anghame* being peer-pressured into embracing one of the recruits.

Whilst, on an objective level, the mission was going well, *Rbossash* was beginning to feel anxious again, being as he was allowed to leave his house for “around half an hour” – it was now four hours *post meridiem*, so he was slightly overstaying his leave. He hypothesised that envoys of the *Group* usually reserved for highly out-of-control raids may be probing for him in his locale. Little chance of that working when he was over thirty kilometres away.

The first train became delayed before entering its terminal station; the Bridgians began to express concern over whether they would make the third train. (The second train ran every three minutes, so was of little worry to timing.) This was perfectly valid: the 17:00 train would indeed be missed by two minutes, forcing them to board the 17:10 – a slow train! – for the final leg home. The Devious One consoled the First Member by explaining that they were going to change at a smaller station, so a potential search would be less likely to trap him.

The first to leave the party was the Griddlemaster, who stayed on the train whilst the original pair changed as before. The Devious One dropped off the First Member, then ran over the footbridge to catch the train back. He would change onto two more trains before reaching his home station. The time: 19:06. This was eleven hours, fifty minutes in the making. Call that a Bridgian adventure.

Meanwhile, the First Member, with his hood up, managed to evade the captors who were ‘on the platform’ at the station, and walked home successfully. The search had, evidently, given up in the nearest vicinity. About two hours later, one would show up at his door and ask him basic questions, but they were evidently unbothered by the incident. After all, what is so bad about meeting your friends? Let us hope that this unites the members of the Foundation, past, present, or future. ■

# School News

## Student Council

*Three days, two meetings, one object*

LINTAE

THE PURPOSE was clear, for once. The object was known, for once. The questions were probing, for once. Yet another morning of discussion without decision, this was not. Sideline was the *Group*, for the boss this time was a group of inspectors. On the south side sat they; on the north side sat the Council, in *Unsted v. Ofsted*.

The representatives should have expected this, having caught wind of an inspection by the agency occupying the 23rd to the 25th of September. This was unexpected for some, as they usually take place every four years and the previous one was in 2023. (Reportedly, schools with the “requires improvement” label will be having more frequent inspections, starting last month.) Near the start of the week, form tutors disseminated slideshows about this, ambitioning to upgrade the School’s rating.

On the last day of the inspection occurred the meeting, spread across period 2 and break. This, of course, consisted of an inspector making a set of queries to the Council, based around the School’s success in certain disciplines. The previous Ofsted report highlighted Key Stage 2 curricula, consideration of students’ weaknesses, and the quality of education as points for improvement. Therefore, the first topic of the day was bullying – not mentioned at all in the report, besides a single sentence: “The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.”

Your correspondent was bemused when it was *Onhame* taking the charge and explaining that bullying is limited and tackled well at the School. To be honest, most cases are dealt with far better than the aforementioned – this may well be their true opinion. The point, though, was not to give an exact picture of reality, but to emphasise the parts of the School’s function that need to be upgraded.

One complaint was the lack of languages, excepting English, being taught at the School. When the Devious One started, there were teachers for Spanish and German, but they left about five years ago. A replacement for these is... let us say, a little overdue. Also requested were GCSE drama lessons, extending from but not replacing the present club. This would provide a useful pathway for those who enjoy the club at KS3 and want to go further.

Otherwise, the Council’s replies were largely positive, with regard to mental health, provision of clubs, and satisfaction in lessons. PSHE lessons had more mixed reception, though, with many thinking that the content is almost patronising towards them. (Cue back to the Ofsted statement on not differentiating enough.) The representatives were chosen specifically for a wide range of year groups – 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12 – to reduce any biases that may result from a bad teacher or scheme of work.

All this came after an ordinary meeting on the 23rd, where representatives were arguing over the usual subjects in front of the *Group* ambassador of choice. The site, in the Assembly Hall, is a change from the Pearl Room of yesteryear, but the same as was used for last month’s meeting of parties. Analysts believe that this will remain used for Council, student leader, and Rights Respecting School steering group meetings for the rest of the year.

Meanwhile, the new management scheme, set up in the summer, has borne real fruit for the first time. The long-running campaign for a budget in drama club has succeeded, helping to pull the next production (of J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*) up to the standards that it deserves. The Maths Challenge Champion, as he has been termed by the *Group* to avoid his more Devious moniker, has set up a new mathematics club for Friday mornings, using the puzzles from Simon Singh’s *Parallel* website. And there are doubtless more successful projects which your correspondent has missed in this article.

This is a boon for both the *Group* and the core student body. For the *Group* because they have essentially outsourced their market research to the users of the School. For the students because they can align the School’s activities far more closely with their needs. Lintae and Rintae can work as one – their efforts can be unified – Bishkaí can be reformed – if the *Group* sticks to their plan. ■

## *Rhossà Aíngane*

*The Group identifies a deficiency of the School*

THE ALARM-BELLS rang at the *Herald*. For a millisecond, maybe less, that is. Entékaí – known as such for the two large buildings (*entae*) at its centre – have provided an additional news-source in direct competition with this one.

At this point, you have likely intuited the subject of this article, in all its boxy, rectangular form. Astute readers may also recognise this opening from Issue 3’s article on *Nexus News*, a Beryllian newspaper that was announced at the end of last year, but did not generate a single publication. These two aspects are not entirely unrelated.

Around the start of October, the *Group* – this being the term the Bridgians use for the School’s management – set up a digital television-screen to display “notices” around special events and policy decisions. Its location, in Rintae’s Stair Quarter, confers the greatest student footfall and therefore viewership, so information can be disseminated rapidly across the School. For it is aimed at the entire student body, a tough audience to cater for.

To justify this point, consider the Assembly Hall. Originally used as a site for news broadcasts (and, before that, a swimming pool), it is now host only to VotesforSchools’s “lessons” on global-level topics. Most of its time is spent as an examination room or, recently, a performance space for drama productions. Anyway, the Hall was not especially utile for simple, brief, but nonetheless important announcements, because it required all students to be notified and convene in a single location.

Some may spot a fix for this: ordinary, paper-based noticeboards. Rintae has contained these for years now, most notably by the end of Entegár Bridge, displaying college openings, a calendar with “international — days”, *Group* PSAs, Student Council dates, *et cetera*. Nowadays, though, they often contain outdated information – at the time this issue goes to print, the September calendar is still attached. The difficulty is that updating any notice requires trimming the new notice to size, unlocking and opening the cover, then acquiring a staple gun to stick the paper onto the board.

Digital noticeboards promise cleaner, easier, more responsive updates, not to mention the use of attention-grabbing video content. The one in Rintae is already used to display news from the leadership groups, interspersed by advertisement posters for approaching events. This utility, the *Group* expects, will be crucial to making students aware of School policy decisions and significant changes to their learning experience. Just one small problem remains with executing that plan...

### **The bind of Cringus**

Did you notice the word ‘digital’ above? This is the issue that only strengthens in pertinence as time passes: maintenance. Students bemoan the system of faulty hard drives and firewalls that comprise “Cringus I.T.”, as the Foundation’s lead petitioner terms it. If anything, this nature of the television screens will make it harder for the *Group* to update its content. Inconsistencies in the style are already visible; imagine the havoc that would be wreaked by a faulty Internet connection or cracked screen.

Entékaí has, at least, considered the possibility of failure. Vandalism on the physical noticeboards was a prominent issue, until plastic covers were installed to discourage such tampering. The screen is also covered in that way, delaying the inevitable shattering which it would receive from a frustrated student. (We will report back if this fails to work.)

So what is the risk to the *Herald* posed by the new rival? To be honest, almost none. Firstly, most of the slides are not about “news” in the traditional sense. The School’s key values – “Respect, Believe, Succeed” – are one example, a slide that will never need updating. Since most students will pass the screen many times per day, having more slides is well worth it, ensuring a balance of wide delivery and stimulating content. On the other hand, lots of slides means that one must wait a long time to reach the slide that they are interested in reading.

Secondly, the audience of the *Herald* amongst students is limited, to say the least. Anyone who reads this publication will not take the *Noticeboard* as a good substitute – puzzles, for instance, remain the sole purview of this paper. But the noticeboard is nonetheless useful, for the practical goal of knowing what is coming. It would be truly sorry if it was to go the same way as *Nexus News*. ■

# Guides

## Athesis

Or, “how not to run a base”

**B**RIDGEBASE only elected a leader once, over two years ago. They were kicked out of the School six months later by the *Group*. The replacement leader was negotiated out in May this year. This is, sadly, typical in Bridgian politics. Leaders naturally gain notoriety, leading Entêkaí to investigate their behaviour more closely, causing a positive feedback cycle for worse behaviour.

At its inception, Bridge Base had no rules. A group of soon-to-be Bridgians simply descended on the Logs and started cutting back the nettles on top. They simply knew that construction was the goal and they would do anything for it. The Office, the Deep Chasm Bridge, the East Bridge – all these are products of the conditions of the times.

The first regulations to be imposed in Base  $\tau$  were the “Bridge Base Passes”, a form of entry card with a map of the local area. These, though, ceased to be used after a few days, as their redundancy was evident. (Why ask someone for a pass when you could identify them by their face?) Anyway, membership would plummet a few weeks later in the Great October Collapse, making the passes void.

Management after this point began with self-rule from the Devious One, before the joining of the following leader. The Aggregator, as they shall be known for the purposes of this article, came in with very clear plans (‘1. Make rope from dry grass. 2. Obtain a way to cut wood. 3. Set up electricity.’), but no real way to achieve them. Rope would be acquired, but the main result was a return from Bridgehaven to the Logs. Little progress would be made on the journey to greatness, except for the Bunker. After discontent with the Aggregator’s promise now, never deliver policies grew enough, the First Member led a revolt to put the Base back in the hands of the Bridgians who created it.

However, the Foundation went on with little coordination between its members – one had the task of *Seldeth-iníral*, one had finding valuable artefacts, one had constructing the Base’s interior. The Bridgehaven Treehouse was the epitome of this structure, being started by one member who gave up after a week, then replaced by the Devious One and his compatriots. If you want to get something done in Bridge Base, he quipped, the only way is to do it yourself. This is the simple truth.

When the Griddlemaster joined the Base, in September, he began expanding and stabilising the Treehouse to the standard needed, with some coordination but little plan beyond that. He went on to destroy the Treehouse in early October, so a bigger, better, third iteration could be constructed. It worked, briefly, but then the Beryllians struck: the Foundation was too demoralised to keep maintaining a five-month-old building, so they moved all their items and activities to Gilnar’s Base  $\beta$ .

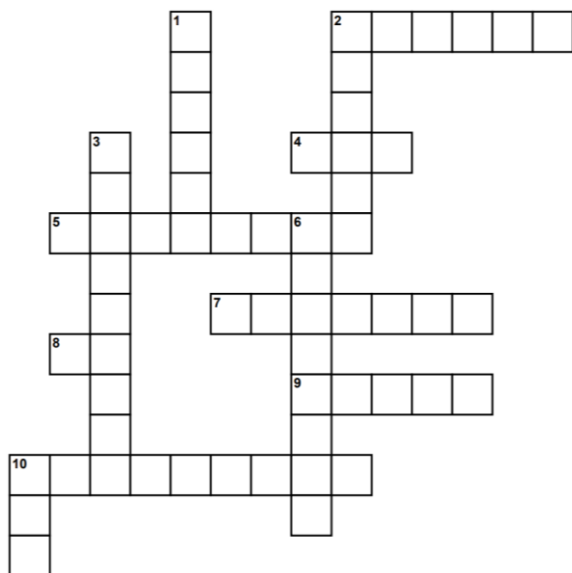
The chaos of Gilnar Base. Your correspondent remembers it well. It began as soon as the members moved in; arguments over where to store materials, careless breaking of large branches, hindering anyone who might be trying to build, for instance, a roof of tarpaulin over the Front Entrance. Initially, the struggle was about moving assets into the Base from Bridgehaven – the *Group* had found its last point of retreat in simply stating that they could not bring anything up. That was not listened to in the slightest, because Bridge Base must grow.

Later in the Beta Era, the Foundation started to field expeditions to far-off lands, known by the Bridgians as “xenotopes”, but they were largely unplanned, causing high rates of failure. A month later, *Bridge Base Rules & Appendices* was put into action, a bureaucratic constitution that led to the change in leadership at this article’s start – which was almost entirely forgotten after a week of usage.

Since then, there have been no attempts to impose rules on the Bridgian people, as these would invariably fail. The Foundation stays as anarchic as before, with no guidelines on how to operate in the Base. Planning is an irrelevance, at least in the Construction division, for it is far simpler to work more quickly. The Media division is somewhat better-planned, but only because each project is managed by a single member: the Devious One. ■

# Activities

## Crossword



### Across

2. To multiply a number by itself (6)
4. Stick structure in Bridge Base (3)
5. First word of BridgeCon (8)
7. Term for inactive period, ang. (2-5)
8. Greek letter of current main base (2)
9. Number of meetings this month (5)
10. Areas on the edge of BÍshkaí (9)

### Down

1. Southernmost sector of Senkaí (6)
2. Medium for new noticeboard (6)
3. Main Bridgian roofing material (9)
6. Proposed site for the Treehouse (8)
10. Roman numerals to represent 12 (3)

### Instructions

Identify each word above by filling each square in the grid with a letter, as given by the clues. Words are spelled either left-to-right or top-to-bottom. Each row or column has a clue-index in its leftmost or topmost square, respectively. The puzzle is considered complete when all squares have a letter in them, and the words formed fit the clues below.

## Maths Challenge

Consider the following two function machines. Each operation is performed on the input number in turn to produce a new number.

INPUT	$\times 12$	$+24$	$\div 2$	$-3$	OUTPUT
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INPUT	$+2$	SQUARE	$\times 1^{\text{st}}$ OUTPUT	$-75$	OUTPUT
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### Level 1 (easy)

Compute the output of the top machine when the input is  $-3$ .

### Level 2 (medium)

Work out the result of the bottom machine when both have an input of a variable  $x$ . Write your answer in its simplest form without brackets.

### Level 3 (hard)

Given that  $(2x - 1)$  is a factor of the polynomial, work out the other two values of  $x$  where the result equals 0, in the form  $a \pm b\sqrt{c}$  where  $a$ ,  $b$ , and  $c$  are integers. (Hint: use algebraic division – like long division, but replacing place values with powers of  $x$ .)

### Level 4 (extreme)

A student notes that, since no value on the number line has a negative square, the answer to Level 3 is not a “real” number. Drawing the “imaginary”  $\sqrt{-1}$  axis at right angles to the number line, calculate the distance between the origin and the squares of the roots.

Solutions to all previous Maths Challenges can be read on the Foundation’s website, accessible via the QR-code opposite.



## Hypogram

A	E	L	L	P	T
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### Last issue's answers

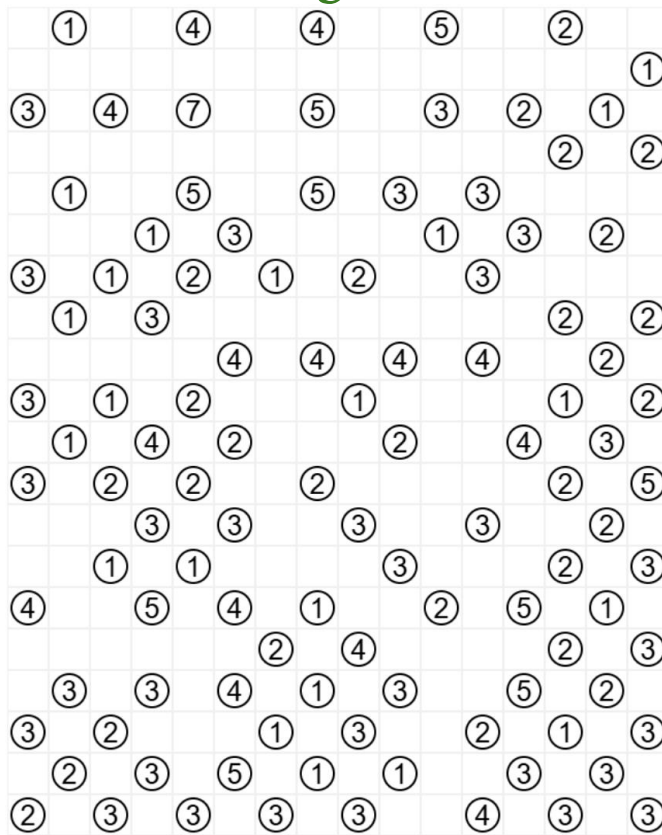
Of, or, re, so, to, eft, foe, for, fro, ore, erst, fest, fore, fort, fret, froe, orfe, rest, fetor, forte, frost, roset, store, torse, forest, foster, softer.

### Instructions

Find as many words as possible using some or all the letters above in any order, excluding proper nouns, plurals, and adverbs ending in '-ly'. Letters may not be repeated unless they appear multiple times above.

Scores for this puzzle: moderate = 9, good = 18, excellent = 27, mastering = 36 words found.

## Hashi ("Bridges")



### Instructions

Connect the ringed cells by bridges such that each cell has the indicated number of bridges connected to it. Bridges may only be horizontal or vertical, and cannot bend, cross another bridge, or pass over ringed cells. Cells can also be linked by double bridges (drawn as parallel lines), which count as 2 for the cells they connect.

The puzzle is considered complete when all cells have their requisite quantities of bridges connected (but no more), and the cells are linked by a single network of bridges – no disconnected islands allowed.

## Word Ladder

P	O	R	T
P	A	T	H

### Instructions

Fill the grid so one letter changes between adjacent rows, and each row is a four-letter English word. Letters may not be swapped around, only replaced in the same position with another letter that generates a word.

Finding the correct sequence of words can be extremely difficult for longer chains, so a systematic approach is advised for a maximal chance of success.