

CrossTalk

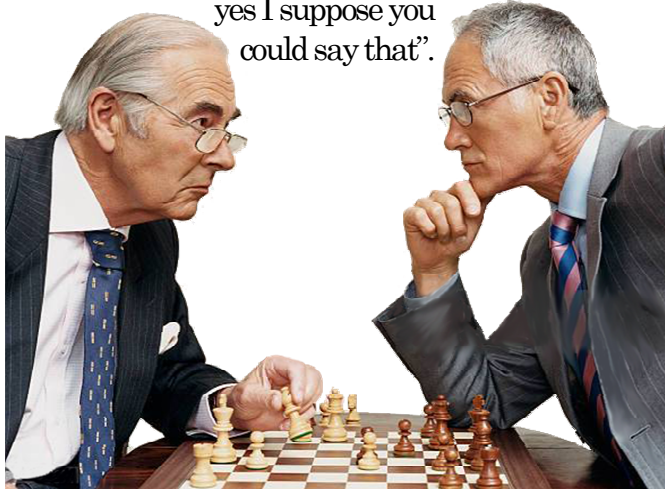
CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter May, 2025

A Game for Gentlemen

It was on a visit to London back in 1993 that a friend of mine, by chance, happened to find himself inside one of London's most exclusive "Gentlemen's Clubs". This particular club had a "games room" that was equipped with draft boards, backgammon sets and the like. There was a bar off to the side and two or three newspaper racks with all the main London and International papers available for the members to enjoy. My friend was clearly out of place there, but he had an appointment with one of the members who insisted that my friend wait in the games room while he attended to some other matters.

The room was almost empty, as is usually the case, but over towards a corner a solitary member was sitting at a table with a chess board placed in front of him. He had a newspaper in one hand and seemed, to my friend, to be rather intensely studying both the board and the paper, his eyes passing from one to the other in quick succession. My friend, being the inquisitive type, quietly edged himself over, step by step, to this gentleman's side until he was standing right over him watching every flurried movement of eye, hand, chess piece and newspaper. When the gentleman finally noticed my friend, he glanced up and politely inquired if he was interested in chess. My friend, wishing to seem as equally polite, answered, "Well,

yes I suppose you
could say that".



The gentleman lifted the paper up so my friend could inspect it more closely and referring to the small corner devoted to "The Games of the Masters", remarked, "beautiful opening, don't you agree?"



Now, if you haven't guessed already, my friend knows absolutely nothing about chess, but not to appear rude, he answered, "Well, yes! And, it's drawn well too!"

"Oh, no" replied the gentleman, "can't you see, white wins!?"

"Of course", replied my friend, not wishing to seem foolish. "How silly of me! White must be a very talented fellow."

"I beg you pardon", replied the gentleman. You do mean, Fisher, don't you?" "It was Fisher who was playing White".

"I see," replied my friend. "Fisher played White and lost."

"No, no!" contradicted the gentleman, growing somewhat impatient "you see", pointing at the paper, "it was Spassky who played black and lost."

My friend was about to point out that if Fisher played White and White won, then surely Fisher lost!! And was also about to inquire just how did Black and Spassky get into the game (even my friend knows that chess has a maximum of only two players per game; was there such a thing as "tag chess"...?), when my friend's acquaintance returned to save the day and, with some polite but embarrassed introductions, whisked my friend off just in the nick of time. Thus ended the saga of my friend's one and only game of chess..... ever!

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

If you are interested in London's "gentlemen's "clubs:

<https://theweek.com/history/history-gentlemens-clubs-london>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua: Hey! It's almost swimming season again. OK, OK, it's true I haven't been near the beach or a pool in, what? 20, 30 years, but don't let my apathy influence you. Get those trunks out of the closet, stock up of ultraviolet protection, buy some new sunglasses and be ready. Summer's just around the corner and every year it gets hotter and longer. We don't have a choice, short of going to Alaska every summer, so we're going to have to learn to get along with the sun. Could be worse...

Junko Says: April and May are the starting months of a new cycle for many things. A lot of people may feel refreshed and free with the soft warm sunlight and the bright flowers of May in full bloom. Some may feel like restarting once again. If you feel a little stagnated in your English training progress, or feel you need to reaffirm your rate of progress, feel free to come in and talk to us and ask our advice on how to move forward.



Marek Says: Since the beginning of this month I am, once again, trying to kick the habit of regularly eating sweet foods. Needless to say, overeating sweets leads to mood swings, poor mental concentration and weight gain. After 2 weeks of "detox", my brain keeps telling me "It's weekend, let's have a treat!" or "I need quick energy shot now!" or "I had a rubbish day, I deserve something sweet to feel better" and on and on... sugar withdrawal at its best!

Mandcy dit: Du 15 au 25 mai, le septième art est à l'honneur. C'est le festival de Cannes. Du glamour et des paillettes. Les starlettes se baladent sur la croisette et marchent sur le tapis rouge. Je regarde chaque année le film qui gagne la palme d'or. C'est souvent un film de haute qualité et intéressant. Mais.... un peu étrange. Et aussi, récemment chaque festival a révélé son lot de scandale. Quel sera celui de cette année !



ACROSS

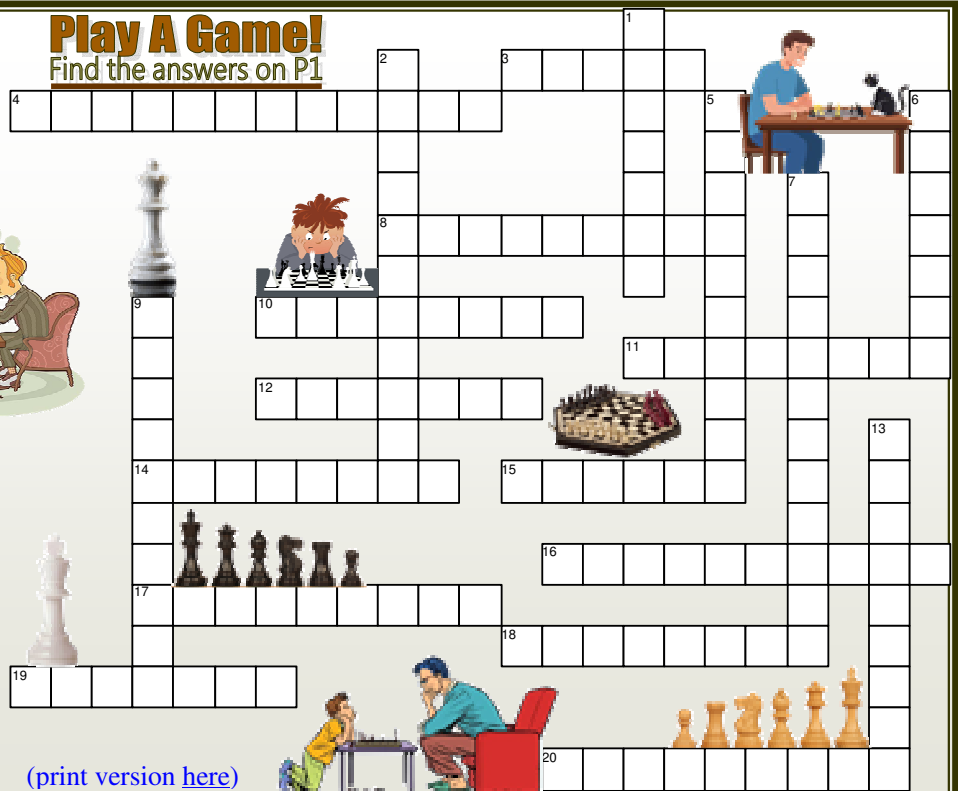
- 3 foolish
- 4 relationship less than a friendship
- 8 annoyed, irritated
- 10 being alone
- 11 move in an agitated or confused manner
- 12 greatest, largest
- 14 provided with
- 15 seem to be so
- 16 completely
- 17 to a great degree
- 18 made a comment on
- 19 the first move in a chess game
- 20 obtainable or accessible

DOWN

- 1 take a quick look
- 2 curious, asking questions
- 5 unique, special
- 6 dedicated exclusively to
- 7 being against
- 9 follow on thing after another
- 13 not shared with or open to others

Play A Game!

Find the answers on P1



(print version [here](#))

When we compare two different things that express a common quality, we use a simile, usually "like" or "as". The examples below use "like". Finish the similes by selecting the correct missing word:

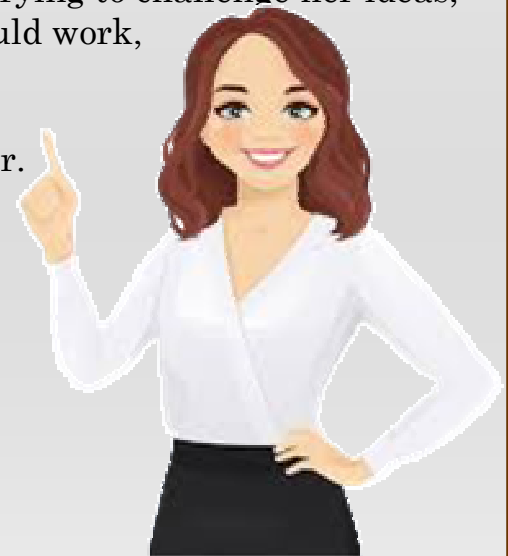
Emma tiptoed through the office **as quiet as a -- 1 --**. She didn't want to bring attention to herself just yet.

She had been **as busy as a -- 2 --** working late hours for weeks. Her final proposal sat in her bag, **as light as a -- 3 --**, but heavy with importance. She was nervous, but deep down, she knew she had prepared well.

When the time came, she stood before the boardroom, **as fierce as a -- 4 --**, her voice steady and confident. Every word she spoke was **as clear as -- 5 --**, and every answer she gave was **as sharp as a -- 6 --**.

Her colleague, Mark, was **as stubborn as a -- 7 --** trying to challenge her ideas, but Emma held her ground. She knew her plan would work, And she wasn't going to back down.

Later, when the dust settled, the boss smiled at her. "Emma," he said, "you are usually **as gentle as a -- 8 --**, but today you were **as bold as -- 9 --**, and you won the day.... Congratulations!



- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. whisper, sleeping cat, mouse | 6. tack, sword, razor |
| 2. beaver, city roads worker, bee | 7. ox, rock, mule |
| 3. tissue, feather, flee | 8. baby, kitten, lamb |
| 4. tornado, rhino, tiger | 9. a soldier, brass, the sun |
| 5. water, glass, crystal | |



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 7 preservation of the environment
- 8 usually refers to a dog (or tooth)
- 11 a small part that remains
- 14 brought about or caused
- 16 complete, not damaged or missing
- 17 distinguishing features
- 18 branch of biology in science
- 19 segment of DNA
- 20 great in size

DOWN

- 1 reduce in worth, level
- 2 make changes to
- 3 lengthen or extend in duration
- 4 broken up, divided
- 5 made imperfect
- 6 illegal hunting
- 9 cause something to become
- 10 invading without permission
- 12 reproduce or make an exact copy
- 13 following in time or order
- 15 an event resulting in great loss



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Ask Junko in our office, for the details.