

Cryptic Logic Untangled – #10 Puns and Rebuses

So far, all the clue types you've encountered have two parts: definition and word-play. However, most rules are made to be broken. Pun clues have only one part but a certain duality does come from a double meaning somewhere in the clue. Pure Rebus clues also have only one part but you need to be able to read them laterally to come up with a valid meaning. Having said that, some rebus clues do also have a second part which is a more literal definition... often done when the answer is harder to guess.

PUN CLUES – like a cross between Dad jokes and riddles:

One letting off steam in kitchen? (6) => KETTLE
Youth called Robin? (7) => BOYHOOD
PISCES? (8) => STARFISH
Form a line spontaneously? (2,3) => AD LIB
Dead boxer? (6) => COFFIN
How hairstylist copes? (5,2) => MAKES DO
Old saw that's lost its edge? (6) => CLICHE [*saw = a saying*]
School seeking to abolish classes? (7) => MARXISM
Titanic crew's sense of dread? (7,7) => SINKING FEELING

PURE REBUS CLUES – Latin for “*by means of objects*”. The clue illustrates a common object or expression which you need to describe in proper words. As such, they are like a quiz where you're given the answers and have to work out what the questions were:

TRY STAND / 2 (3,2,10) => TRY TO UNDERSTAND
POT OOOOOOOO (8) => POTATOES
UPUU (2,2,3) => UP TO YOU
HOROBOD (5,4) => ROBIN HOOD
(8) => CLUELESS
X QQ ME (6,2) => EXCUSE ME
M1Y L111F1E (3,4,2,2,4) => FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE [*4 ones*]
π PPP (3,3,4) => PIE AND PEAS
LADEP (9) => BACKPEDAL

REBUS CLUES with DEFINITION PARTS – This is often done where the illustration is too open-ended to reasonably expect a solver to get it without an extra hint:

S happens just before closing time (4,6) => LAST DRINKS [*S is the last letter of drinkS*]
EL_C_RIC Sleep on it. (8,7) => ELECTRIC BLANKET [*ET is blank*]

Notes:

- Pun clues often end with a question mark, to indicate that something unusual is going on, but not always.
- Pure rebus clues are usually written in all-caps... but not always.
- Both types can be very loose and homophonic with spelling.

Crossword #10 – Puns and Rebuses

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
8								9				
			10					11				
12		13										
14							15					
						16						
17												
									18		19	
20				21		22						
23								24				

ACROSS

1. LIB + LIB (2,3)
4. Roger's X4 (3,4)
8. Cartoon with a heart of glass? (7)
9. Rehearsal costume? (5)
10. ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ (7,3)
14. Small hooters? (6)
15. Settle on the rise? (4,2)
17. MAY / AAA (10)
20. Where masons sleep? (5)
22. _ET (7)
23. Posit S ESOP (7)
24. S / GS (5)

NB: Most rebuses here are pure but two have definitions as well.

DOWN

1. Swedish backing band? (4)
2. Mendacious cat? (4)
3. TOBADMN (9)
4. Itsy-bitsy adolescent? (6)
5. Biblical land of slumber? (3)
6. I X I (3,2,3)
7. Refigure in 3D? (8)
11. Darker and more combative than blue dolphins? (4,5)
12. MULA MULA MULA MULA (8)
13. DEYALP (6,2)
16. | B (6)
18. Human superficiality? (4)
19. Uplifting pug? (4)
21. Not a "she-stay" mentality? (3)

Cryptic Club

This is an ongoing course that was founded by members in 2021. We share cryptic crosswords from various sources via email on a weekly basis. We also meet informally once a month to chat and solve a crossword interactively.

If you wish to join the Cryptic Club, please contact John McKinnon at jmc33466@gmail.com

Answers - #10 Puns and Rebuses

If you have any questions, or would like to receive more detailed notes on this topic, please contact John McKinnon at jmc33466@gmail.com

S	G	N	O	S		E	S	O	P	P	U	S
I		I		L		I		G		U		A
T	E	K	E	T		B	L	A	N	K	E	T
O		S		E		R				E		U
			E	S	E	N	A	I	S	E		M
T		E		Y		B		O		A		R
P		N		E		V		E		S		O
L		O		A		Y		N		P		F
U		O		Y		G		I		S		
C		B				N		M		N		A
S		S		D		R		E		S		B
E		N		O		E		A		I		B
R		O		F		N		T		E		A