

Cryptic Lever's Universal Explanation Session (CLUES)

These clues illustrate all the main clue types used in cryptic crosswords.

To keep it simple, they all have the same answer – LEVER.

Jemmy to wield political pressure (5) – **Double Definition**

a jemmy is a lever,
and to wield political pressure also means to lever

R.V. Lee dances for manual control (5) – **Anagram**

The letters RVLEE *dance* or shuffle around to make lever
and a manual control can be a lever

Throttle left always (5) – **Charade**

The game of charades breaks a word into chunks: lever = L + EVER = Left + always
and a throttle can be a lever

Large drug takes on ex-queen, wrecking bar (5) – **Charade**

L + E + V + ER = Large + Ecstasy (drug) + V (versus or takes on) + Elizabeth Regina
and a wrecking bar is a lever

Handle dropout verbally (5) – **Homophone**

dropout = leaver which, *verbally*, sounds like lever
and a handle is a lever

How cockney could divorce his wife to exert influence (5) – **Cockney Homophone**

Cockneys drop their Hs, so to divorce his wife would be to leave 'er
and to exert influence is to lever

Revel reflected in joystick (5) – **Reversal**

If we *reflect* revel, i.e. spell it backwards, we get lever
and a joystick is a lever

Not entirely simple vertical fulcrum (5) – **Hidden**

Lever is hidden, in order, within simple vertical, i.e. *not entirely* all the letters are used
and a fulcrum is a lever

Perversely central to adore velvet prize (5) – **Reversed Hidden**

Central to the letters of adore velvet, if we read backwards (*perversely*), lever is hidden
and to prize something open is to lever it open

Gearstick lets each van engine rev initially (5) – **Code Selection**

Initially acts as a code to select the first letters of the words Lets Each Van Engine Rev
and a gearstick is a lever

Alternately, all envy errs to raise (5) – **Code Selection**

Alternately acts as a code to select every second letter of aLl EnVy ErRs
and to raise something is to lever it

Young hare loses tail in crowbar (5) – **Code Deletion**

Loses tail acts as a code to delete letter(s) off the end of leveret (a young hare)
and a crowbar is a lever

Prise first lady in between left and right (5) – **Container Insertion (entering)**

Left and Right (LR) are the container *in between* which we insert Eve (the first lady) L/eve\R and to prise is to lever

Drool covers five in pinch bar (5) – **Container Insertion (wrapping)**

Drool (LEER) is the container which *covers* or wraps V (the Roman Numeral for 5) le/V\er and a pinch bar is a lever

Smart loses 100 to gain advantage (5) – **Container Deletion**

Smart (cLEVER) is the container which *loses* or deletes the letter C (Roman Numeral for 100) and to gain advantage is to lever

Pariah trades pressure for volume control (5) – **Swap (Manipulation)**

Pariah (LEPER) *trades* or swaps its p (Pressure) for v (Volume) to get leVer and a lever is a control

Baby eel's head slides down handle (5) – **Cycle (Manipulation)**

Baby eel = ELVER – it's *head slides down* (1st letter cycles to 2nd position) for LEVer and a handle is a lever

Hoist Spooner's neckline birch trumpet (5) – **Spoonerism (Manipulation)**

Spooner swapped words' 1st letters: Vee (neckline) Le ("the" in French) = LeeVer (sound-alike) and to hoist is to lever

The Spanish cutback exposed every maneuver (5) – **Hybrid (charade: reversal + code deletion)**

EL (the in Spanish) is *cutback* (reversed) + eVERY (*exposed* or skinned) => LE + VER and to maneuver is to lever

As they say, abandon first rule for lift (5) – **Hybrid (charade: homophone + code selection)**

LEAVE (abandon) sounds like (*as they say*) LEVE + *first* letter of Rule = LEVE + R and to lift is to lever

Muppets chanted 50 ways to love your _____? (5) – **Pun/Riddle**

Puns and riddles are less structured than other clues and work by innuendo or implication. Paul Simon sang "50 ways to leave your lover", the Muppets sang "50 ways to love your lever"

LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL... (5) – **Rebus**

Rebus = "by means of objects", a visual puzzle where you interpret letters by thinking laterally. These never-ending Ls suggest L forever or L EVER (not brilliant but the best I could do).

Notes

- Apart from Pun/Riddle and Rebus, all other clue types have a straight definition (synonym or example) at the beginning or end of the clue (never in the middle). My explanations above put this definition on the bottom line.
- The italicized words in my explanations above are *SignPosts* which tell you what kind of word-play has been used. There are thousands of possibilities... anything which vaguely implies the kind of action required. Signposts are used for all clue types **except** Double Definition, Charade, Pun/Riddle and Rebus.
- Hybrids have 2 or more word-play types in a single clue.