

Are We on the Same Wavelength?

Eight of the across entries require a letter to be changed, which will create a new word before entry. These letters are all crossed, so the down entries will help you determine which letters to substitute. The exchange occurs in a particular way each time. Keep track of the letters you replace; they will spell out, in order, a hint to what's going on.

The long entries at 1 across and 41 across are phrases related to the theme and left unclued. There is one foreign word and five proper nouns (four and a half, if you consider that one of them is part of a double definition clue, where one answer is a proper noun and one isn't). Everything else is playable in Scrabble. Ignore punctuation, which is intended to deceive.

Thanks to Jerry Miccolis for test-solving and editorial suggestions.

Across clues

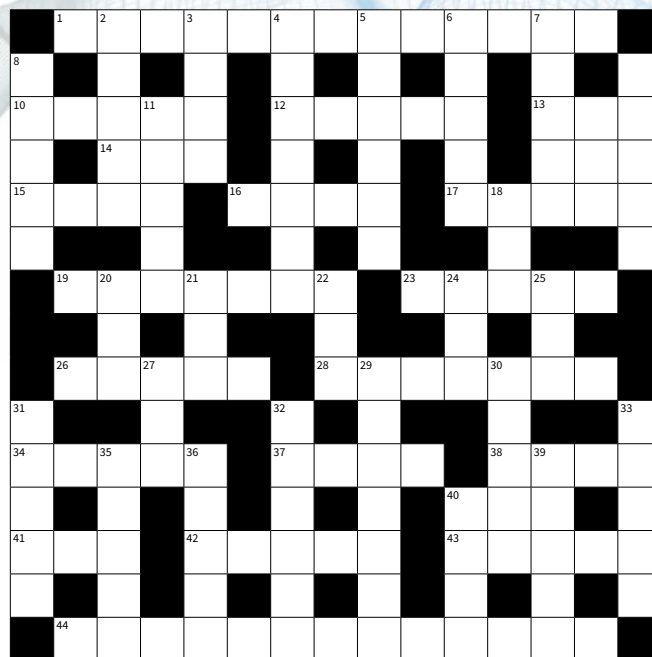
- 1) See instructions
- 10) Studied and streamed with headphones
- 12) What "decimal" might mean, frequently
- 13) Musical talent in improvisational era
- 14) Pronounced retreats from the majority party
- 15) Alternately, we may sit to the right
- 16) Look after two states
- 17) Roll with us, his degenerates
- 19) Describing a standard tattletale
- 23) Brave superstar sometime met in Hot Springs, for example, having left New Hampshire
- 26) Appropriate but noisy rally

- 28) Laugh self-consciously over what at first is one of Elon's brood
- 34) Am I reckless and crazy? To be or not to be, famously
- 37) Anxiety inside supersafe arboretum
- 38) Tired of Kerouac or Ginsberg
- 41) A little bit of cartilage from a stingray, years ago
- 42) Silk-like substance is pastel for the most part

- 43) Nag or she goes astray
- 41) See instructions

Down clues

- 2) Western Hemisphere assembly is offering asylum
- 3) Overstates some admiration in a postscript
- 4) Noontime frolicking with no new feeling
- 5) One or the other is there, I suspect
- 6) Gives money to Joy, Desdemona, and Siobhan, primarily
- 7) Bracelets of copper coming up against 43% tariffs
- 8) Dinner's starting a little late because of what goes on top of the sole
- 9) Frivolous pursuit marginally yields benefits
- 11) Two kinds of doctors inject
- 18) Hesitation in speaking to a well-known actress by her first name



- 20) Undertake cat adjustments
- 21) Gossip at an afternoon gathering
- 22) Punch may be served here while a tower is being erected
- 24) Bet on a short golf shot
- 25) Controversial federal agency on the rocks?
- 27) Cabaret lyricist at a low point
- 29) Want hot fritters? There's quite an assortment
- 30) Forbidden at upset to express displeasure
- 31) Throw out easy junk at first, then finally the music equipment
- 32) No good, you say? Japanese bank notes the family name of many Vietnamese people?
- 33) Who in Paris and in Marseilles can be unassuming?
- 35) Crime disrupted, thanks to the gendarmes
- 36) Scour in the first place and in the second, polish, then scour again
- 39) Make a mistake or another mistake
- 40) The essence of genteelness to you of the old school

Letter substitution according to:

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