

A PUZZLING CONCLUSION

BY KEN WEBER

Who Can Finish First?

The following vocabulary challenge is not very difficult but can be made more interesting as a competition between two or more people – or as a race against the clock.

Turn each of the 10 words below into new (common) words by adding the same letter to the beginning and end. For example, the word LIT with an E at the beginning and end becomes ELITE. The word PACE with an S at each end becomes SPACES.

All letters of the alphabet may be used, but to make the challenge more interesting, the letter S may be used only **once** to create a new common word from the 10 below.

__ODE__	__ABLE__
__CARVE__	__ROD__
__ATE__	__EAT__
__ELUDE__	__ON__
__EVE__	__EAST__

A Melancthon Potato Challenge

When the members of a Headwaters tour group arrived at a Melancthon potato farm on National French Fry Day (July 13), there was a challenge waiting for them. In the farm kitchen, 16 plates and 10 potatoes were arranged on a table in the pattern shown below.



The challenge: Move **one** potato (any potato) to an empty plate (any plate). Then by jumping, as in checkers, remove **nine** potatoes from the pattern, one at a time in each jump.

Had you been on the tour would you have met the challenge?

At the Alton Spring Fair

When Cally and Ted saw the “Alphabet Math Game” sign on a booth in the show building, they went over to it immediately. They each paid a penny to play the game. For their pennies, Mr. Holten, the CVR station agent who was running the booth, gave them each a list containing four “first” names.

“To get your penny back, and win another,” Mr. Holten said, “you must tell me what name on your list matches your own name in a special way. You can help each other if you want, because your lists are different. By the way, there’s a really important clue. Don’t ignore it!”

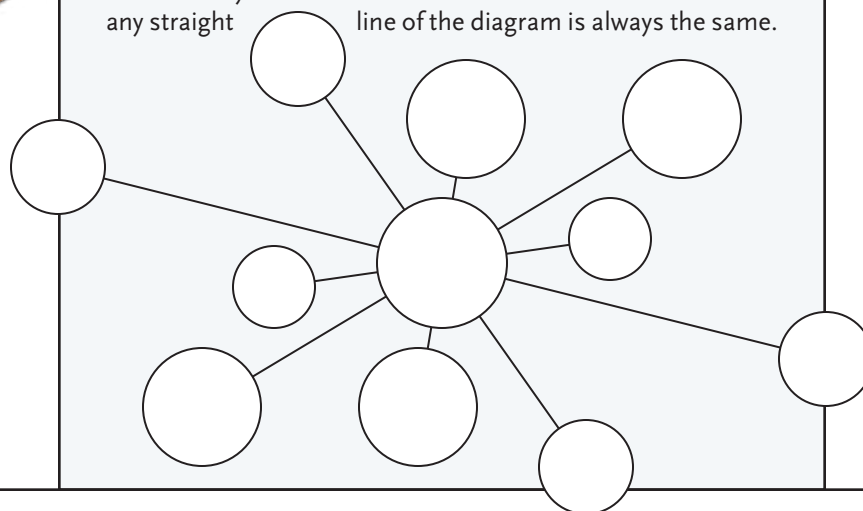
Cally got two pennies because she picked the name Vince from the list she was given (even though she liked the other names on the list – Holly, Ben and Antonio – much better). Ted lost because after eliminating the names Emily, Ann and Max from his list, he picked Maria. The right choice for him was Ann.

Why did Cally win and Ted lose?

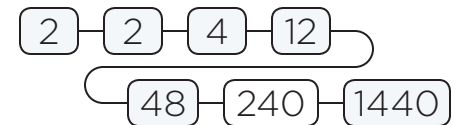


The Middle Circle is the Key

Enter the numbers 1 to 11 in the eleven circles of this diagram, entering each **once** only. The challenge is to enter the numbers in such a way that the sum of the numbers in the three circles of any straight line of the diagram is always the same.



Why 240?



Why is the sixth number in this series 240?

The Homework Assignment That Grew

A homework assignment in Ms O’Connell’s class began as an exercise in social geography. Students were given the names of six former communities in the hills and were tasked with using online archives to learn if each community had ever had a post office.

All her students completed the homework successfully, so Ms O’Connell added a synonym-anagram exercise. This task required the students to choose five different letters in

CROMBIE

(one of the six former communities) and anagram them to make a synonym for “lawbreaking.” They were also to choose five different letters in

SHELDON

(another of the six communities), and anagram them to produce a synonym for “glowed.”

Further, anagramming five letters each time, Ms O’Connell asked that students find a synonym for:

“lid” in CONOVER,
 “incline” in READING,
 “violet” in CAMILLA,
 and “confection” in TARBERT.

(Several students had to look up “confection.”)

When the students discussed the results of this synonym-anagram exercise, the teacher pointed out that in each of the six community names, once five letters were used to anagram synonyms, two letters remained. Her next assignment then was to use all the leftover letters and anagram them to make four-letter synonyms for “principal,” “daring” and “begun.”

What are the five-letter synonyms made from letters in the six community names?

What are the four-letter synonyms made from the leftover letters?