

Introduction to Cryptic Crossword Clues

handout to accompany Wei-Hwa Huang's talk for Silicon Valley Puzzle Fest 2010

Example Clues used in the Presentation (all written by yours truly)

Cryptic Definition

Soldiers often get them cut short (6)

Double Definition

Saucy structure in St. Louis (4)

Having a ball (7)

River blossom (6)

Holder for writing implement (3)

Hidden Word

Callous engineer has bug (5)

Car in immense danger (5)

Salesman: "I sell hides, spice" (5)

Reversal

Brag about clothing (4)

Bundle up components (5)

High-powered vehicle upended garbage truck (7)

Reversal Hidden Word

Priestess always holds back blessings (6)

Charade

Declare delay can be avoided (8)

Around start of lunchtime, love soft
sound of horse's hoof (4)

Morning in Oregon is key (1,5)

Plaster the French fortress (6)

Happy boy follows gram (4)

Container

Russian money in tome is inconvenient (11)

Head of pig found in excellent meal (6)

"Two From Virginia Holding Back Attack,"
editor confirmed (8)

Homophone

Sounds like oil country (6)

My lizard is said to be small (6)

Vocally communicate moment of
force to the audience (4)

Anagram

Alas, I'm crazy for Italian sausage (6)

After faculty holds out insane aunt, we go
back for a soft drink (8,3)

Deletion

Actual kingdom is detailed (4)

After commencement, waste time for stew (6)

Bemoans heartless commandments (6)

Take in penalty every second (6)

Other Clues

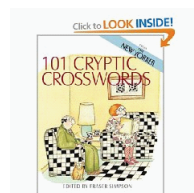
Artistic lithography involving Van Eyck
starts to be active (5)

Traitor's chief purpose! (7)

Where to Find Easy Cryptics



- Easiest: Lovatts Cryptic Crossword Magazine
 - <http://www.lovatts.com.au/>
 - Australian (has slightly different style than American or British cryptics)
 - Excellent tutorial on their website



- Easy: "101 Cryptic Crosswords" edited by Fraser Simpson
 - Originally appeared in *The New Yorker* from 1997-1999
 - American