

# MOTHER MELANIA'S MONTHLY MISSIVE - March 2024

A not entirely random mix of reflections on life, coloring pages, thoughts about kids' books & updates on Mother Melania's books

## Today's Reflection - There's no such thing as a free lunch!

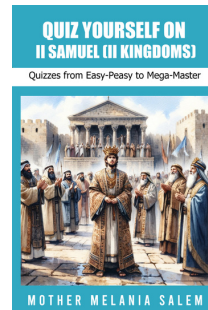
This month's Beatrix Potter book is 'The Tale of Ginger and Pickles.' Ginger (a yellow tabby) and Pickles (a terrier) co-own a general store. The store is very popular with the local community because Ginger and Pickles accept credit - and never get paid. Finally, their debts force them to close their store, and they end up 'making their living' by preying on their former customers. Not a good outcome for the customers!

The customers who bought on credit with no intention of paying were, of course, both foolish and at fault. However, the same can be said of Ginger and Pickles. Beatrix Potter never explains why Ginger and Pickles kept extending credit when they were hardly ever paid. However, I can easily explain why I would have behaved the way they did - unwillingness to hurt others' feelings. That sounds good as far as it goes, although even with the most altruistic motives, we do sometimes have to say things that people don't want to hear. All too often, though, beneath my unwillingness to hurt people lies my desire for people to consider me a more generous person than I am. To the extent that that is the case, I become upset with the people whom I THINK I'm being so generous towards. Sadly, that in a minor way (I hope!) is like Ginger and Pickles preying on their former customers.

In Ginger and Pickles' case, a couple of fairly simple solutions could work. The easiest - never give credit. A more nuanced solution - have clear expectations of when you will and won't give credit and hold to them. In daily life, though, it's usually not easy to tell when exactly to be generous and when to draw the line. A good starting rule is to err on the side of kindness. But another essential step is to pay attention to what's going on in my heart and talk it over with my confessor, who may well have a better idea than I do of which direction I'm likely to go wrong. There's no guarantee that I will always do the wisest thing. Still, if I'm willing to put love of God and neighbor first and the humility to listen to my confessor right up there, I should develop at least SOME discernment, and that is good news for everyone!

## Mother Melania's Book Update

*Quiz Yourself on the Book of II Samuel (II Kingdoms)* is available now until the end of March for \$0.99 as a Kindle book. It is also available as a printed booklet for \$2.99 at the monastery book store.



The parrot coloring book is still in process - no doubt because the birds have not been nearly as insistent about seeing themselves in print as the cats were!

## Classic Kids' Books: The Tale of Ginger and Pickles

Ginger and Pickles' store is the most popular shop in the village - because they extend unlimited credit. Unfortunately, when they can't pay their debts, they close the store and 'make their living' by preying on their former customers!



Is that the end of the story? Does anybody learn anything from this unfortunate experience? Join us and find out!

For a free copy of *The Tale of Ginger and Pickles*, click [here](#)

## What's in the Back Pages?

- *Tale of Ginger and Pickles* worksheets
- Scripture verse coloring page



## THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Discussion Questions

- Which characters have appeared in previous books? How are they the same or different?
  - Jane, Lucinda, Tabitha Twitchit, the Policeman, Samuel Whiskers, Anna Maria; many others are pictured but not named
  - Answers will vary
- Who are Ginger and Pickles, and what is their job?
  - Ginger, a cat, and Pickles, a dog, run a little shop where they sell many different kinds of items (this kind of shop is called a general store)
- How do Ginger and Pickles let their customers pay for things?
  - They let their customers buy things on credit
- What does 'credit' mean in this story?
  - Letting customers take items without paying right away, with a promise to pay later.
- Why are the rabbits (and probably rats) scared of Pickles and the mice scared of Ginger?
  - Pickles is a terrier, who likes to eat rabbits and rats; Ginger is a cat, who likes to eat mice
- Why DON'T Ginger and Pickles eat their customers?
  - Because then they won't have any customers
- Why do customers (even those who are scared) keep shopping at Ginger and Pickles' store?
  - They don't have to pay immediately for the things they buy
  - So, most of them never do pay
- What big problem do Ginger and Pickles have because of giving credit?
  - Many of their customers never do pay for the items they took on credit
  - So, there is no money in the till
- How is Tabitha Twitchit's shop different?
  - Tabitha doesn't give credit
  - Tabitha sells much less than Ginger & Pickles do, but she actually gets paid. So, her situation is better
- What happens to the things in Ginger & Pickles shop over time?
  - Since customers don't pay, Ginger and Pickles end up eating some of their own goods.
- What trouble does Pickles have about a dog license?
  - Pickles can't afford to buy a dog license because they don't have any money from sales.
- What do Ginger and Pickles do to try to get money to pay their bills? Does it work?
  - They send notices to their customers to pay their bills, but it doesn't work
- What happens when a policeman comes into the shop?
  - Pickles thinks the policeman is coming to give him a summons
  - But the policeman brought an envelope showing the taxes they owed
  - So, Ginger and Pickles end up closing the shop because they can't pay their taxes

## THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Discussion Questions (continued)

- What do Ginger and Pickles do after closing the shop? Why do some of their former customers wish that they had moved completely away?
  - Ginger starts living in the warren, and Pickles becomes a gamekeeper.
  - Ginger and Pickles are both eating the rabbits and probably some other small animals
- How do people in the village react to the shop closing?
  - The villagers are inconvenienced
  - Tabitha raises her prices a half-penny and still doesn't give credit
  - People would go to the trade carts, but the trade carts just had certain things, unlike Ginger & Pickles and Tabitha Twitchit's shops, which were general stores
  - John Dormouse and his daughter start selling peppermints and candles, but they aren't very good at it
  - Finally, Sally Henny Penny reopens Ginger & Pickles' old shop
- How is Sally Henny Penny's shopkeeping different from Ginger & Pickles'? Do you think that's wise or not?
  - She insists on cash, whereas they accepted credit
  - Answers will vary, but she was able to keep the shop going, whereas they weren't
- How could Ginger & Pickles have been better shopkeepers?
  - They could have decided not to give credit at all
  - They could have decided to give the animals just a little credit and wait to see if they paid their debts or not
- Do you think it's unkind of a shopkeeper not to give credit?
  - Answers will vary
  - But shopkeepers DO have to charge for their goods or they will go out of business like Ginger & Pickles did, and they won't be able to help people if they don't have any money
  - Maybe the good middle ground is to give a little credit and see if people pay their debts
- Were the other animals were fair to Ginger & Pickles?
  - No, most of them had no intention of paying their debts
- In the end, what happened to many of the animals that refused to pay their debts?
  - Ginger and Pickles ate them
- What lessons can we learn from Ginger & Pickles' experience?
  - You can't get something for nothing. In the end, it will cost you
  - Do not take advantage of others. In the end, that will cost you, too
  - People SHOULD be paid for their work, their goods, etc.

## **THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES – Vocabulary**

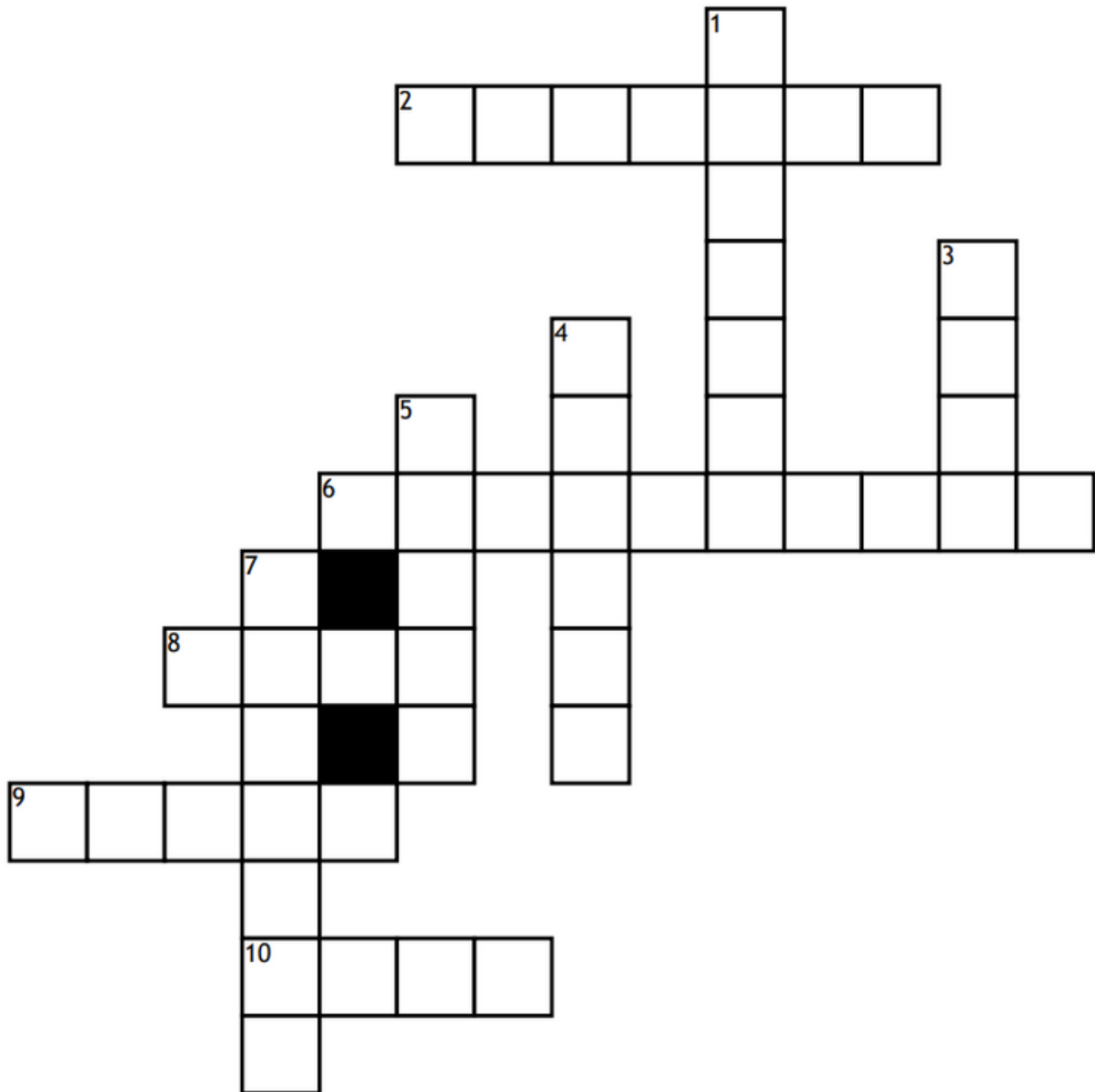
- 1. Assortment: Different types or varieties of things.**
- 2. Canister: A small container for storing items.**
- 3. Counter: A flat surface for serving customers in stores.**
- 4. Credit: Buying now, paying later.**
- 5. Enormous: Very large.**
- 6. Farthing: A small, old British coin.**
- 7. Flustered: Nervous or confused.**
- 8. Galoshes: Waterproof overshoes.**
- 9. Gamekeeper: A person who manages wild animals for hunting.**
- 10. Gloomy: Dark and sad.**
- 11. Haddock: A type of fish.**
- 12. Obligated: Required or forced to do something.**
- 13. Occupation: A job or profession.**
- 14. Parlour: A room for entertaining guests.**
- 15. Remarkable: Very special or unusual.**
- 16. Request: To politely ask for something.**
- 17. Retail: Selling goods directly to customers.**
- 18. Sealing Wax: Wax used to close envelopes.**
- 19. Shutters: Panels for covering windows.**
- 20. Stout: Thick and strong.**
- 21. Summons: Official order to appear in court.**
- 22. Till: A cash drawer in a store.**
- 23. Tradesman: Someone who sells or delivers goods.**
- 24. Treacle: Thick, sweet syrup.**
- 25. Warren: Underground tunnels where rabbits live.**



## **THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Matching**

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Assortment</b>   | <b>a. A room for entertaining guests.</b>                 |
| <b>2. Canister</b>     | <b>b. A small container for storing items.</b>            |
| <b>3. Counter</b>      | <b>c. Official order to appear in court.</b>              |
| <b>4. Credit</b>       | <b>d. Underground tunnels where rabbits live.</b>         |
| <b>5. Enormous</b>     | <b>e. To politely ask for something.</b>                  |
| <b>6. Farthing</b>     | <b>f. Very special or unusual.</b>                        |
| <b>7. Flustered</b>    | <b>g. Required or forced to do something.</b>             |
| <b>8. Galoshes</b>     | <b>h. Different types or varieties of things.</b>         |
| <b>9. Gamekeeper</b>   | <b>i. Buying now, paying later.</b>                       |
| <b>10. Gloomy</b>      | <b>j. Dark and sad.</b>                                   |
| <b>11. Haddock</b>     | <b>k. Thick and strong.</b>                               |
| <b>12. Obligated</b>   | <b>l. A type of fish.</b>                                 |
| <b>13. Occupation</b>  | <b>m. Selling goods directly to customers.</b>            |
| <b>14. Parlour</b>     | <b>n. Someone who sells or delivers goods.</b>            |
| <b>15. Remarkable</b>  | <b>o. A job or profession.</b>                            |
| <b>16. Request</b>     | <b>p. Very large.</b>                                     |
| <b>17. Retail</b>      | <b>q. A small, old British coin.</b>                      |
| <b>18. Sealing Wax</b> | <b>r. Nervous or confused.</b>                            |
| <b>19. Shutters</b>    | <b>s. Panels for covering windows.</b>                    |
| <b>20. Stout</b>       | <b>t. A flat surface for serving customers in stores.</b> |
| <b>21. Summons</b>     | <b>u. Thick, sweet syrup.</b>                             |
| <b>22. Till</b>        | <b>v. A person who manages wild animals for hunting.</b>  |
| <b>23. Tradesman</b>   | <b>w. Waterproof overshoes.</b>                           |
| <b>24. Treacle</b>     | <b>x. Wax used to close envelopes.</b>                    |
| <b>25. Warren</b>      | <b>y. A cash drawer in a store.</b>                       |

# THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Crossword



## Across

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ were always a little afraid of Pickles.
6. Pickles became a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Ginger and Pickles never had any money in the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Ginger and Pickles closed the shop because they could not pay their rates and \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Ginger and Pickles owned a \_\_\_\_\_.

## Down

1. Tabitha Twitchit kept the only other shop in the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ were afraid of Ginger.
4. Ginger and Pickles let their customers buy on \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Henny-Penny reopened Ginger and Pickles' shop
7. Pickles didn't have enough money to buy a \_\_\_\_\_.

## THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Word Search

Z E E Q D M V R W V J C U F R N J G V Y L M J Q  
M N E S F J A M U L E V P W G Z T D N J E H F U  
A L G O U B O P X R R F V N E Z F X R C P F V R  
B G E D B O E Z E P N E B B M K B C D F O K O Y  
M B F I R E M N J I E D G E Q V A N N K L T P D  
J F T Y P U C R A H R G T N Z M W M U O E E S Q  
E Z Y S O B E T O J R Q F E I V N K P B V R S T  
E S S D N W N C V D A N C Q O G V P R D N R J I  
R N S M Q D P S I X W N Y E P A Q U M U E I S L  
P O U X O E U H H M E X S E N H D V M S J E G L  
O M D C Y R B T D I W L P O M W N N H D Z R P F  
L M A P W X T S N L U P T A F E W Q I A Q M I Z  
I U D B T J A E G P E G H K M B E X K C J F O F  
C S L D B H V E C R S R W S V I Z D M E U X F S  
E C V Q T N I X M T F D E D Z N I E V P I L Y G  
M I H I O F C I K V V D R E H C T U B K D H M W  
A Q B C L N N R M S A X S H J I Z A U Y D G F O  
N A N W P T A T E R M V N I B O M R A U H S S B  
T I S Q S V S R T D X Q D U F N Q Y L K B L E T  
Q P I H X U U P E U I P A Q N I Y Z W Q B G L W  
A N S H U T T E R S O T O A T I F M J A M W K S  
C E S T G V I A C Z K R V T K L K V X H J Z C Q  
M E T T P V Q P U L S N T S M M X Y F Z S R I S  
B E X N W E Q W G D R B F O O X R F H B T D P D

Butcher

Credit

Dormouse

Envelope

Ginger

Inconvenience

Jane

Lucinda

Mice

Peppermints

Pickles

Policeman

Rabbit

Shutters

Summons

Tabitha

Terrier

Till

Tradesmen

Warren

## THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Scramble

1. GNGERI \_\_\_\_\_

2. TATBIHA \_\_\_\_\_

3. RIECDT \_\_\_\_\_

4. CMPIONAEL \_\_\_\_\_

5. ETFEO \_\_\_\_\_

6. LSAEUM WKIERHSS \_\_\_\_\_

7. EXTAS \_\_\_\_\_

8. GOSDO \_\_\_\_\_

9. HRNYNOWTEP \_\_\_\_\_

10. NANA AARIM \_\_\_\_\_

11. MILNCOAPE \_\_\_\_\_

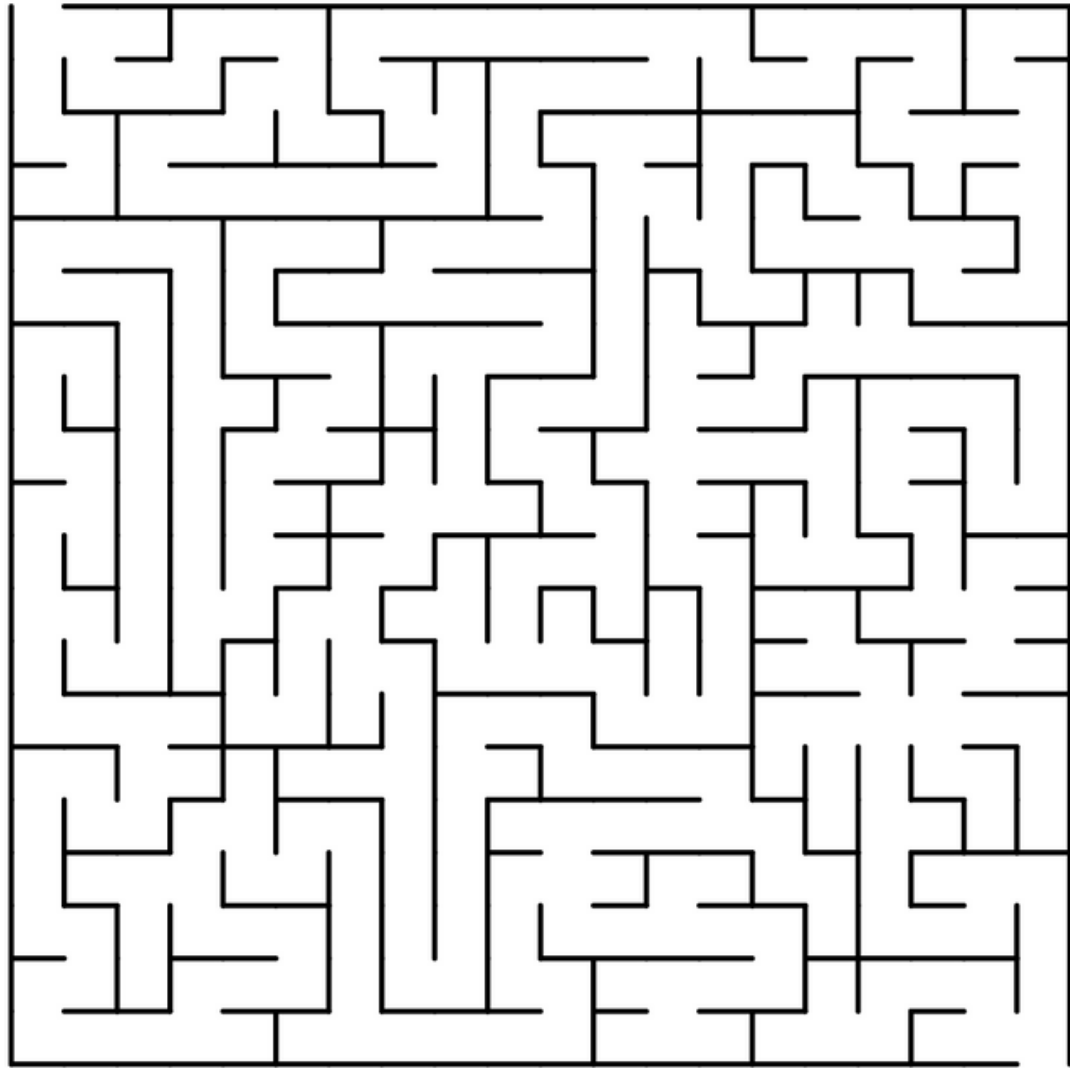
12. SOREMCTU \_\_\_\_\_



# THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES - Maze



**Help Ginger and Pickles  
serve their customers**



# THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES

## - Coloring Page



# THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES

## - Coloring Page



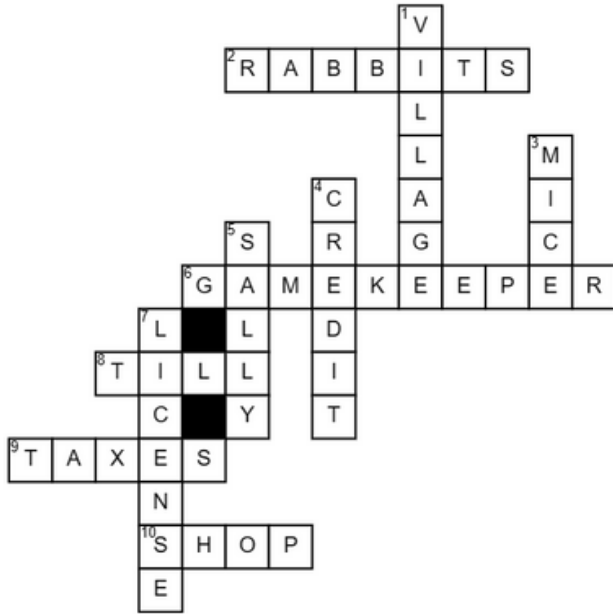


# SOLUTIONS - THE TALE OF GINGER & PICKLES

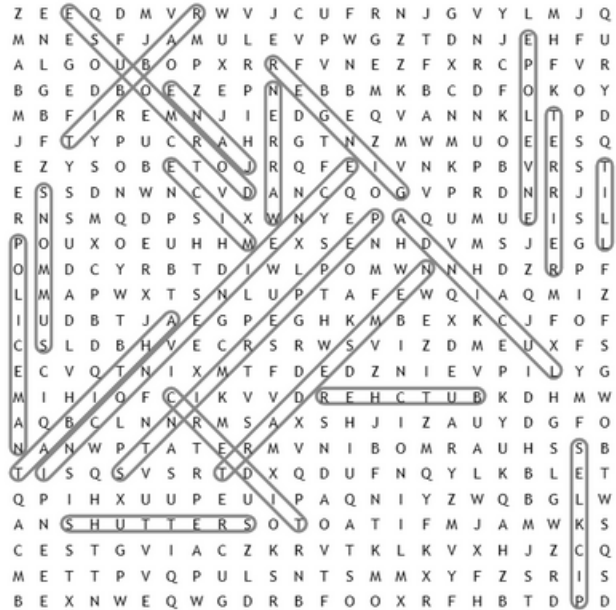
## Matching

1-h, 2-b, 3-t, 4-i, 5-p, 6-q, 7-r, 8-w, 9-v, 10-j, 11-l, 12-g, 13-o, 14-a, 15-f, 16-e, 17-m, 18-x, 19-s, 20-k, 21-c, 22-y, 23-n, 24-u, 25-d

## Crossword



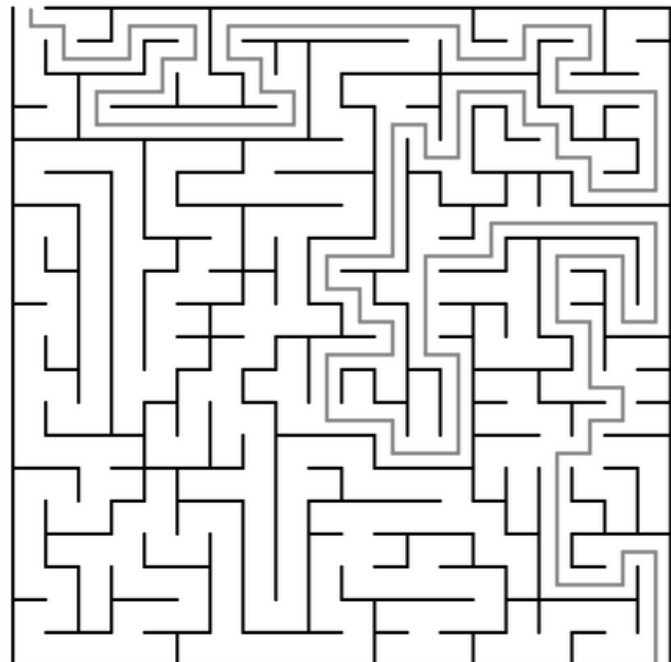
## Word Search



## Scramble

1. GNGERI Ginger
2. TATBIHA Tabitha
3. RIECDT Credit
4. CMPIONAEL Policeman
5. ETFEO Tofee
6. LSAEUM WKIERHSS Samuel Whiskers
7. EXTAS Taxes
8. GOSDO Goods
9. HRNYNOWTEP Pennyworth
10. NANA AARIM Anna Maria
11. MILNCOAPE Policeman
12. SOREMCTU Customer

## Maze



The wicked borroweth and payeth not again;  
but the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth

**Psalm 37:21**



**Have you ever borrowed something and not paid it back?**

**Talk to your parents about paying it back and doing an extra kindness for the person you borrowed from**