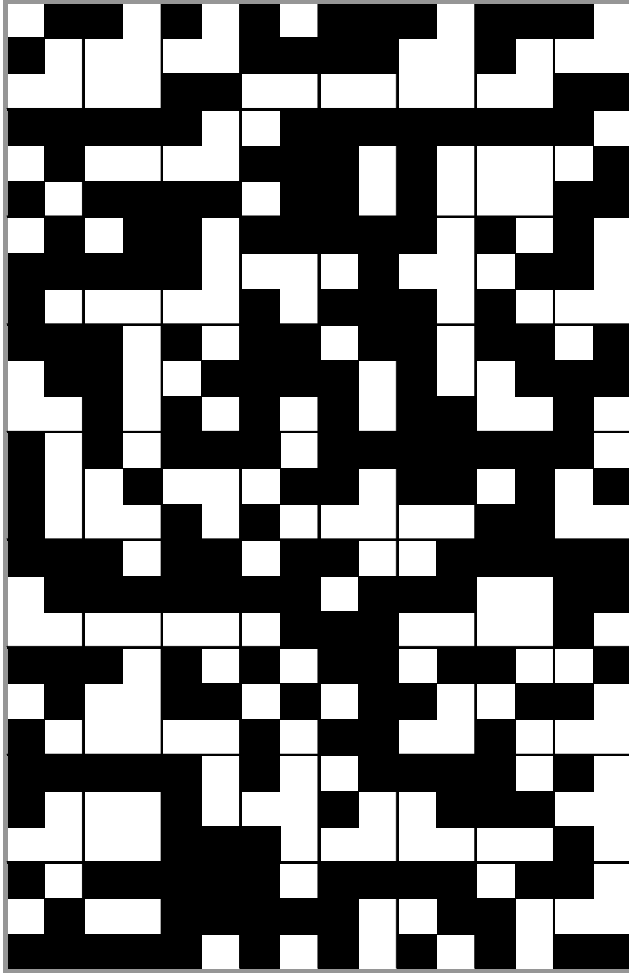


Louis' Letters

Everett Yip
Difficult



Nine words are entangled in the grid -- six letters long each. Adjacent characters connect horizontally or vertically but not diagonally, and can wrap around the edges. These words may not be the ones you're looking for but that is where they lead.

You are presented a postcard with a 16×27 grid containing black and white cells and some instruction text suggesting that words are twisted therein. On closer inspection, black gridlines (visible clearly between adjacent white cells) sub-divide the entire grid into 2×3 sections.

This puzzle is essentially a word search with a twist. The black and white grid provided is actually an array of Braille symbols as clued by the gridlines and the fact that the grid width is a multiple of 2 and the height is a multiple of 3.

Converting these Braille symbols into normal letters yields the following grid (the letters are actually lowercase but case is not important here):

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

This is the word search portion of the puzzle. The instruction text indicates that the words are “tangled” – i.e. not necessarily in a straight line – and are six letters long each. As well, it mentions that they can wrap around the edges – referring to the edges of the grid. This last detail may be handled more easily by partially tiling the grid with letters before searching for words, as shown below:

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

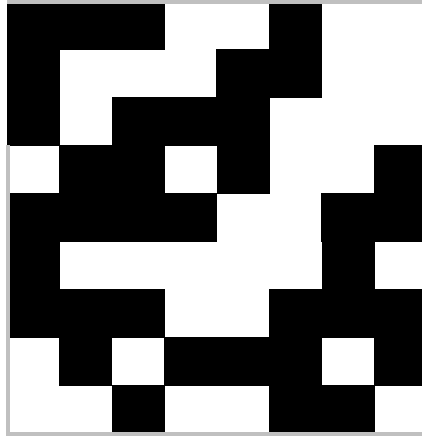
The six-letter words are listed and shown highlighted in the grid below:

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

SYMBOL
 OMELET
 HANDLE
 CANDLE
 IDIOCY
 KIDNAP
 KINDLE
 SNAPPY
 QUIANT

The instruction text mentioning nine snakes serves as a midpoint check to verify that 1) the method employed so far has been correct and 2) none of the words have been missed.

Having found these words doesn't leave much in terms of useful remaining letters as is sometimes the case; instead, progress is made by continuing with the theme and reconsidering the letter-filled grid once again as an array of Braille letters. In this case, the words that have been found serve to demarcate which cells are dark. This new black-and-white grid is shown below:



Converting each 2×3 section to Braille yields the following message:

P u t
t h a t
d o w n

The answer is “Put that down”.

Hints:

- there's a grid in the grid
- considering the grid in chunks of six
- some people can just feel their way around the grid
- hide the words you find