

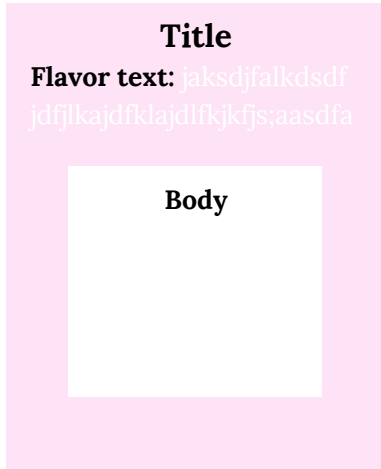


# The inteGIRLS Guide to Puzzle Solving



## Getting Started

### Puzzle Anatomy



### Reading the Puzzle

#### Title

- Name of the puzzle
- Can be a clue

#### Flavor text

- Full of cryptic clues
- Read and review carefully

#### Body

- Substance of the puzzle
- With the internet, this is everything you need

## Strategies

While you're reading the flavor text of the body text of the puzzle, look out for

- **Weird words**
- **Awkward phrasing**
- **Things that seem out of place**

These are almost always part of the solution.

Look for **patterns**. **Count** items and try to match the number to other puzzle elements.

Think about **multiple approaches**, including the obvious ones

Use the **internet** to your advantage.

If you get stuck on a puzzle, **ask a teammate** to look over the puzzle, or **take a break**.

**Collaborate!**

## Finishing a Puzzle

### Direct Answer Methods

- Index into words (look at Mechanics for more info)
- Change from a cipher to letters
- Look for missing letters, extra letters, or changed letters
- Letters are images drawn in the puzzle
- Eliminate letters that are not part of the puzzle or isolate indicated letters

### Cryptic phrase

Sometimes, puzzles end with a phrase. This can be...

- A clue or riddle to the final answer
- Instructions on how to use elements in the puzzle to find the final answer

## Solution

Every puzzle answer is a **word or phrase** in English

**Every element** of the puzzle is involved in getting the answer

### Examples

- Kermit the Frog
- Zimbabwe
- Hydrogen



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## Some Mechanics

- Anagramming
- Common Alphabets
  - Braille
  - Morse code
  - Pigpen
  - Semaphore
- Construction
  - Solutions involve making something
- Common Ciphers
  - Caesar cipher
  - Substitution cipher
- Cryptic crossword clues
- Extra letters
- Groupings
- Hidden words
- Indexing
  - A number next to an answer will correspond to a letter in that word
  - Strawberry (4) -> A
- Order
  - Rainbow, number, alphabetical
- Other Puzzles
  - Sudokus, nonograms, and Nikoli
- Rebus
  - Pictures that indicate words
- Pop Culture references
- Word play
  - puns, similes, and common idioms

## Tools

### Wordplay

- Anagram Solver
- RhymeZone
  - Phrases with certain words, homophones, rhymes, and more
- Nutrimatic
  - fills in blanks
- Word Finder

### Codes + Ciphers

- Code Breakers
  - Ultimate list of ciphers, alphabets, math, and encodings
- dCode
  - Cipher solver
- Crossword clues
- Reverse Image Search

## Resources

- MIT's Have You Tried?
  - This is a great source if you get stuck!
- Identifying Common Puzzle elements
- Mission Street Beginner's Guide
- Princeton Puzzle Tips

## More Puzzles

- Harvard CS50X Puzzle Hunt
  - This is the puzzle hunt inteGIRLS was inspired by!
- Shinteki
- Mission Street Puzzles
- Stanford University Math Organization (SUMO) Puzzle Hunt
- MIT Mystery Hunt
- The Puzzle Boat