

CHRISTMAS FRUIT & VEGETABLES - The solution!

Christmas day is the most important **date** in the calendar: a time for giving and receiving presents, feasting and celebration. **I only** have one criticism - you do not always get the gifts you so dearly desire. One year **was a bit** of a letdown when a **woman** got me a military **figurine**. It was painted a drab **khaki** **with** no bright colours. Whilst it was a majestic **ornament**, the **stark** truth was that it was not to my taste. I would have preferred a bar of chocolate or **a dish** of sweets. My wife would love to be given jewellery this Christmas. She has suggested a silver **charm** **and a ring** with a **plump** ruby, but I have little **money** so she will have to make do with a modest set of **pearl** ear rings.

On Christmas morning everyone **appearing** at our house must dress festively. Whilst the ladies always **look radiant**, the men often fail to look either **chic or** youthful in their strange choice of outfits. By contrast, all the grandchildren wear colourful sweaters but it will not necessarily make them well-behaved **or angelic**. To ensure the youngsters do not get bored and the day does not **drag on**, it is a family **custom** **at one o'clock** **to liven up** proceedings by opening all the parcels. The grandchildren **squash** tightly together between the settees in the lounge and loudly **cheer** as they **tug** like mad at the colourful wrapping paper. It is impossible to **stop each** gift from falling into a mixed-up pile on the carpet. I vainly try to record who sent what to whom, but in the **end I've** got to rely on the parents to take note for their own child's thank you letters. People are very generous. It is an eye-opener to see what presents our grandchildren are given these days: a new bicycle **pump**, **Kindle**, a James Bond ejector seat **car**, **Rottweiler** cuddly toy, a spooky set of **tarot** cards, a clown puppet called **Coco**, **Nutella** spread, revision books for **grammar**, **rows** of toy soldiers, a pocket **compass** - **I only** wish I was a child again!

The adults did not do badly either: bottles of **gin**, **German** wine, a Sony **amplifier**, a fluffy Orang **Utan**, **gel**, Oliver Reed films on dvd, an interesting book of W H Auden **prose**, **hipster** trousers, a watercolour painting of the river **Tamar**, **Indian** Cookery Recipe book, and Guardiola's biography "**Pep**" **personally** signed. Pets are not forgotten either: magic **hard** biscuits and chews dipped in **sugar** - **licked** clean in seconds!

After Christmas lunch **I've** several ideas to maintain the entertainment. We gather around the Christmas tree that has a fairy atop with a large **sequin** centrally placed on her wand to catch the light, ready for games. Every Christmas **we** develop fresh ideas to entertain our guests. However, after a sumptuous meal accompanied by fine wine and dark **ale**, it is not a time for strenuous activity that requires **vigour**, **demanding** brain-power or deep concentration. You can have a **pot at one** or two of the questions or tasks, **and I'll** always provide clues if everyone is struggling. I do not want to get anyone in a **spin**. **Aching** heads are not much fun.

After that it is usually time for a song. Typically, I am the first to take a **turn**. **I** perform festive songs that are not **long and** the words are familiar to all. Last year I remember my rascally grandson piping up "Grand**pa**, **pay at** the door and you can listen to me singing **rap**, even though I know you would prefer a carol." "**Eek!**" I thought. I had easily fallen into that trap. But listen to it I **shall**, otherwise he will be upset. Nevertheless, I must call his **bluff** and maybe just stump up a penny. He sang so beautifully with all his **heart**, **I choked** up and had to tell him he was a good **egg**, **planting** a kiss on his forehead and handing him a well-earned pound. Eventually, all our guests depart for **home** **long** before midnight. 25th December will always **be an** exciting day. I hope it is for you too.

Thank you for purchasing this puzzle sheet to solve for fun – and to raise valuable funds for
Wigton Choral Society!