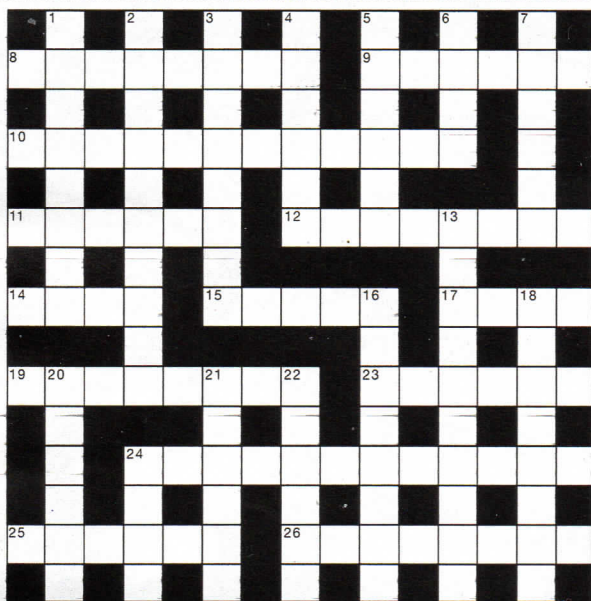


TO ENTER Complete the crossword and count how many times the letter 'A' appears in the grid. Text YOU followed by a space, your answer (the number of 'A's) and name to 65700, eg, YOU 9 Sue Smith. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network rate. Or telephone 0905 652 2141 and leave your answer and details. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Or post your entry to YOU Crossword

No 1,729, PO Box 3451, Norwich NR7 7NR. Entries will be accepted until 11.59pm on Tuesday 29 December. One random winner from all correct entries will win £250 and five runners-up will win £50 each. If you enter after the closing date you will not be included but may still be charged. Phone and text helpline: 0330 100 0601. Winners will be notified by phone within 14 days. Solution in two weeks.



NUMBER 1,729

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....
TEL.....
YOUR ANSWER.....

ACROSS

- 8** Hypothetical, ideal, abstract (8)
9 Ribbon-like strip of pasta (6)
10 Shakespeare play in which **23**, **24** across played Viola in the theatre (7,5)
11 Verse (6)
12 2016 TV series starring **23**, **24** across (8)
14 Genuine, accurate (4)
15 One of the four cardinal points of the compass (5)
17 Animals kept in the home (4)
19 Levels (8)
23 (and **24** across) Actress and writer who first found fame with *Fleabag* (6,6-6)

24 See 23 across

- 25** London borough associated with a number of 1950s films (6)
26 Cheese grated and sprinkled on pasta dishes (8)

DOWN

- 1** Deep trouble in a bath? (3,5)
2 TV series – which started in 2018 – created and written by **23**, **24** across (7,3)
3 Wodehouse, Eliot and Lewis all used these instead of names (8)
4 Place where people go to receive medical care (6)
5 Conundrum (6)
6 Electrical unit (4)

- 7** Name by which Britain or England is poetically known (6)
13 Mesmerised (10)
16 European royal house (8)
18 Sledge (8)
20 The _____ Islands:

- autonomous British overseas territory in the Caribbean Sea (6)
21 Require, compel, force (6)
22 Somnolent, drowsy (6)
24 Eg, Lords Melbourne, Russell or Palmerston (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1,727

