

Solution to **STRANGE RECORDS** :

Clue words in the title and flavortext point to parodies by Weird ("strange") Al Yankovic, which a web search of the song list quickly confirms. The relevant data is clued by the phrase "start of something revolutionary" -- each parody is the first track on a particular studio album.

For instance, "American Pie" is parodied in "The Saga Begins," the first track of *Running with Scissors*.

Taking the first letter of the referenced albums ("records") then gives the final 5 letter answer, **REDUB** (which is also thematic, cf. "new sounds"). Congratulations to Sachaki, our first reader to submit the correct answer on our website.

This puzzle illustrates a corollary to rule 2 -- keep in mind the theme of the puzzle. It may be another clue.

The previous puzzle involved taking the first letters of elements in a list. But life is not always so straightforward. To add a layer of complexity to a puzzle, you may need to extract a specified letter from each word -- determining which letter to take is also part of the puzzle.

Taking a particular letter of a word is known as indexing, and is a very common element in game puzzles. This gives us **Rule 3: If you ever have numbers and text, index.** And if you only have a list of words but can't extract anything sensible from them, try to find associated numbers so that you can index.

As always, if you think you have the answer, submit it on our website below.

Also, are you interested in taking part in the Berkeley Mystery Hunt, our annual puzzle competition? Find out more information on our website.

ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS MAN!

Never ever settle. It's not black and white -- even a million men can find a weakness.

Guts beats ?

Heat beats ?

Dust beats ?

Tomahawk beats ?

Magnet beats ?

Napalm beats ?

Drill beats ?