

To Be the Very Best: Solution

As hinted by the mention of “beasts,” the presence of the number 150, and Types such as Normal, Flying, Poison, and Ice, this puzzle is all about the “monster” fad of the 90’s: Pokemon!

Solvers are first tasked with identifying the 32 Pokemon Eva lists on the second page. These are listed in alphabetical order, and have their Pokedex number next to them; their types are also provided, while “stage” refers to where in that Pokemon’s evolutionary tree they sit, with “0” meaning no evolutions.. In order, the Pokemon are:

#113 Normal; Stage 0--CHANSEY
#006 Fire/Flying; Stage 3--CHARIZARD
#087 Water/Ice; Stage 2--DEWGONG
#149 Dragon/Flying; Stage 3--DRAGONITE
#083 Normal/Flying; Stage 0--FARFETCH'D
#042 Poison/Flying; Stage 2--GOLBAT
#130 Water/Flying; Stage 2--GYARADOS
#107 Fighting; Stage 0--HITMONCHAN
\$106 Fighting; Stage 0--HITMONLEE
#115 Normal; Stage 0--KANGASKHAN
#099 Water; Stage 2--KINGLER
#131 Water/Ice; Stage 0--LAPRAS
#108 Normal; Stage 0--LICKITUNG
#105 Ground; Stage 2--MAROWAK
#011 Bug; Stage 2--METAPOD
#150 Psychic; Stage 0--MEWTWO
#146 Fire/Flying; Stage 0--MOLTRES
#095 Rock/Ground; Stage 0--ONIX
#047 Bug/Grass; Stage 2--PARASECT
#018 Normal/Flying; Stage 3--PIDGEOT
#017 Normal/Flying; Stage 2--PIDGEOTTO
#123 Bug/Flying; Stage 0--SCYTHER
#117 Water; Stage 2--SEADRA
#090 Water; Stage 1--SHELLDER
#080 Water/Psychic; Stage 2--STARMIE
#114 Grass; Stage 0--TANGELA
#072 Water/Poison; Stage 1--TENTACOOL
#134 Water; Stage 2--VAPOREON
#008 Water; Stage 2--WARTORTLE
#040 Normal; Stage 2--WIGGLYTUFF
#145 Electric/Flying; Stage 0--ZAPDOS
#041 Poison/Flying; Stage 1--ZUBAT

With this task complete, solvers must organize the 32 Pokemon into four groups of eight, using the answers from the round puzzles as clues to the rule that sorts them. While some Pokemon may fit into more than one category, there is only one arrangement that enables all 32 to be placed properly. Her terms for the divisions reveal which subject's answer goes with which quadrant of the bracket. In order, they are:

Upper Left--MATHEMAGIC: Mathematics Puzzle

- Answer is CARTESIAN PLANE.
- Choose eight FLYING-type Pokemon.

- CHARIZARD
- PIDGEOTTO
- PIDGEOT
- ZUBAT
- GOLBAT
- GYARADOS
- ZAPDOS
- DRAGONITE

Upper Right--CYBERDEMON: Computing Puzzle

- Answer is POSTAL CODE.
- Choose eight Pokemon whose names begin with a state abbreviation, or postal code:

- WARTORTLE (WA)
- METAPOD (ME)
- WIGGLYTUFF (WI)
- PARASECT (PA)
- MAROWAK (MA)
- SCYTHER (SC)
- MOLTRES (MO)
- MEWTWO (ME)

Fun Fact! There are exactly eight Pokemon in the original 150 who begin with the letters "MA," and we REALLY wanted to use them for this division. But alas, there was no way to place them that would allow for the extraction to work. Ah, the best laid plans! :p

Lower-Left--UNTAMEABLE BEAST: Zoology Puzzle

- Answer is LONE WOLF.
- Choose eight Pokemon who do not evolve at all ("Stage 0").

- FARFETCH'D
- ONIX
- HITMONLEE
- HITMONCHAN
- LICKITUNG
- CHANSEY
- TANGELA
- KANGASKHAN

Lower-Right--NUCLEAR MELTDOWN: Chemistry Puzzle

-Answer is SOLVENT.

-Choose eight WATER-type Pokemon.

- TENTACOOL
- SLOWBRO
- DEWGONG
- SHELLDER
- KINGLER
- SEADRA
- LAPRAS
- VAPOREON

With these tasks complete, all that remains is extracting letters. Solvers should use the odds assigned to the winner of each match (which Eva gives outright) as the index into that Pokemon's name; a "tie" simply means that both Pokemon's names contain the needed letter, so it does not matter which set of odds you use (although both Pokemon having the letters does not necessarily mean there was a tie). In order, reading from top to bottom, the winners are:

Mathemagic:

Charizard vs. Pidgeotto (2-6): O

Pidgeot vs. **Zubat** (8-2): U

Golbat vs. **Gyarados** (12-4): R

Zapdos vs. Dragonite (6-1): S

Untameable Beast:

Farfetch'd vs. Onix (5-9): E

Hitmonlee vs. Hitmonchan (tie, 6-6): N

Lickitung vs. **Chansey** (1-5): S

Tangela vs. Kangaskhan (5-4): E

Cyberdemon:

Wartortle vs. Metapod (tie, 5-6): O

Wigglytuff vs. Parasect (10-1): F

Marowak vs. Scyther (5-6): W

Moltres vs. Mewtwo (tie, 2-6): O

Nuclear Meltdown:

Tentacool vs. Slowbro (3-2): N

Dewgong vs. Shellder (1-7): D

Kingler vs. Seadra (tie, 6-2): E

Lapras vs. **Vaporeon** (12-5): R

Reading the extracted letters reveals that Eva stole **OUR SENSE OF WONDER!**