SHEESH! A YIDDISH QUIZ!

LEONARD ASHLEY
Brooklyn, New York

Done-shmone already! So the redoubtable Leo Rosten has published two books on Yiddish (The Joys of Yiddish and Hooray for Yiddish), and lots of other people have written on the subject, too. So why, for us goys especially, wouldn’t someone do a little piece on a few of the most colorful words? It couldn’t hurt! From German, from Polish, from Hebrew, from American slang, here are 25 Yiddish words which have attained currency in at least some metropolitan areas of these United States. For your convenience, all of them begin with SH.

1. to drag around, to carry
2. a big nose
3. a professional beggar
4. gossip, chitchat
5. sentimentality, chicken fat
6. a matchmaker
7. a born loser
8. grease, bribe, the whole ball of wax
9. trickster, fool, big penis
10. meek nobody, small penis
11. shoddy, gaudy, ersatz
12. non-Jewish woman (especially a wife)
13. cheap dress, rag, weak woman
14. pathetic fool, born victim
15. a dingbat, a nebbish
16. a wet blanket at a party, a slattern anywhere
17. a detective, a narc, a stool-pigeon
18. an unfortunate, a misfit, a clumsy fool
19. intoxicated, blotto
20. a jerk, a sycophant, a klutz
21. trifles, bobkes, nonsense, meshugge ideas
22. a nip, a snort, a drink
23. a brave man, a hero, a mensch
24. to fornicate, to give a push
25. a black, especially a servant

Answers can be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of the issue.