

The Arcade (Solution)

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With a grid and a word bank, the first step is to try to find the words via traditional word search rules. Most of the words should be findable:

A	J	R	M	Z	P	J	D	H	M	J	W	W	B	L	S	I	T	Y	Y	X	D	U	W	F	U	U	S
T	Q	U	T	T	R	I	L	E	I	T	P	D	E	W	T	N	S	E	A	Z	P	D	K	A	B	Q	F
A	T	P	H	T	R	T	F	V	I	M	R	J	Q	I	I	K	V	V	B	Y	S	Z	B	Y	C	J	R
R	S	A	P	B	N	Y	L	L	A	R	N	I	A	R	T	W	O	K	C	I	N	D	T	G	N	I	H
I	F	S	J	L	S	F	Z	H	J	Q	Q	D	Q	H	Y	F	U	U	Q	J	U	Q	Q	J	G	Y	T
H	R	X	I	Z	V	W	C	Z	G	Z	Y	C	X	N	B	J	S	D	R	Q	Q	K	N	D	U	P	D
G	H	W	S	O	M	T	R	F	F	K	M	X	G	R	Y	H	M	P	F	U	W	D	U	R	A	J	R
R	F	U	L	J	N	S	H	Y	W	I	T	Y	N	R	Y	M	N	S	I	W	Q	J	R	F	S	D	W
F	Q	W	E	E	H	P	J	U	I	I	Z	P	C	Y	K	D	M	N	H	N	T	I	Q	D	N	M	R
N	Z	Z	C	Q	F	D	U	Z	T	N	T	P	F	U	U	W	K	U	I	U	S	C	Z	Z	G	X	Q
A	J	A	S	R	U	H	S	T	X	S	X	G	T	Z	W	Z	Y	V	O	W	N	H	A	D	W	H	B
Z	P	A	C	N	O	W	H	S	A	U	Q	S		T	W	U	R	T	O	R	S	C	O	L	I	C	X
K	B	D	R	V	Y	G	Z	H	T	W	K	F	B	W	N	B	N	E	D	G	P	P	O	T	F	R	J
Z	Q	X	R	O	Q	J	Y	I	B	J	A	J	A	L	G	I	T	M	R	M	D	N	I	I	P	Y	M
F	F	P	A	Y	S	Q	A	B	K	W	Q	Y	D	Z	O	U	G	S	N	I	Z	Z	I	G	D	A	W
S	S	F	A	U	H	Q	D	P	C	J	G	L	S	P	X	P	P	Q	U	X	X	W	L	D	Y	X	J
N	M	Q	Y	Y	R	M	R	I	N	B	E	L	T	I	R	D	K	R	H	W	D	E	E	Y	T	X	T
D	C	A	U	A	J	J	W	M	P	G	U	E	Y	T	S	K	H	W	A	R	W	O	D	Q	Y	S	G
B	J	Q	Q	J	Y	I	I	X	D	P	S	N	H	H	H	M	J	W	W	D	W	J	G	B	F	W	C
Z	U	Z	G	G	J	T	B	N	R	G	I	R	J	X	G	U	A	D	X	N	F	B	P	Z	U	Y	Q
T	W	M	Z	G	T	Y	Y	U	I	A	Q	Q	I	R	J	Q	N	S	Y	B	Q	Z	C	Q	J	X	H
I	J	B	T	P	H	J	I	D	Q	N	S	P	D	Q	Q	J	W	Q	H	H	Q	Z	W	P	Y	M	X
C	Z	H	U	U	U	F	I	Z	H	C	R	X	D	T	P	A	K	D	W	T	D	R	Q	J	Z	T	X
K	X	B	R	G	C	S	P	O	B	Q	G	Y	T	N	X	I	R	I	K	Y	I	J	Q	D	Y	H	P
G	M	T	J	Q	T	S	L	L	Q	P	J	D	Z	X	I	J	K	J	R	X	J	T	W	F	S	L	F
M	I	U	N	I	C	A	L	W	K	N	N	N	Q	T	T	N	M	I	R	A	N	W	L	V	A	J	E
G	T	S	R	A	Q	G	A	D	Z	Q	C	A	K	B	Y	B	S	A	N	W	K	A	Q	E	J	D	X
I	Y	G	Q	N	S	P	D	J	X	G	J	Q	Q	N	C	S	F	N	C	F	Q	F	L	N	S	P	J

One thing to notice is that there almost seems to be a path forming from the little white ball in the center. This, along with ATARI at the top left and the title, is cluing Pong.

In Pong, the white ball is volleyed from left to right, bouncing off a paddle that is 1 wide on each side. When the ball hits the paddle, it can go off at a trajectory different from the incident angle (and not necessarily at a 45-degree increment); however, if it hits the top or bottom of the screen, the bounce has to be reflected at the same angle it entered (like a mirror reflecting light). This rigid ruleset can help locate the remaining words:

A	J	R	M	Z	P	J	D	H	M	J	W	W	B	L	S	I	T	Y	Y	X	D	U	W	F	U	U	S
T	Q	U	T	T	R	I	L	E	I	T	P	D	E	W	T	N	S	E	A	Z	P	D	K	A	B	Q	F
A	T	P	H	T	R	T	F	V	I	M	R	J	Q	I	I	K	V	V	B	Y	S	Z	B	Y	C	J	R
R	S	A	P	B	N	Y	L	L	A	R	N	I	A	R	T	W	O	K	C	I	N	D	T	G	N	I	H
I	F	S	J	L	S	F	Z	H	J	Q	Q	D	Q	H	Y	F	U	U	Q	J	U	Q	Q	J	G	Y	T
H	R	X	I	Z	V	W	C	Z	G	Z	Y	C	X	N	B	J	S	D	R	Q	Q	K	N	D	U	P	D
G	H	W	S	O	M	T	R	F	F	K	M	X	G	R	Y	H	M	P	F	U	W	D	U	R	A	J	R
R	F	U	L	J	N	S	H	Y	W	I	T	Y	N	R	Y	M	N	S	I	W	Q	J	R	F	S	D	W
F	Q	W	E	E	H	P	J	U	I	I	Z	P	C	Y	K	D	M	N	H	N	T	I	Q	D	N	M	R
N	Z	Z	C	Q	F	D	U	Z	T	N	T	P	F	U	U	W	K	U	I	U	S	C	Z	Z	G	X	Q
A	J	A	S	R	U	H	S	T	X	S	X	G	T	Z	W	Z	Y	V	O	W	N	H	A	D	W	H	B
Z	P	A	C	N	O	W	H	S	A	U	Q	S		T	W	U	R	T	O	R	S	C	O	L	I	C	X
K	B	D	R	V	Y	G	Z	H	T	W	K	F	B	W	N	B	N	E	D	G	P	P	O	T	F	R	J
Z	Q	X	R	O	Q	J	Y	I	B	J	A	J	A	L	G	I	T	M	R	M	D	N	I	I	P	Y	M
F	F	P	A	Y	S	Q	A	B	K	W	Q	Y	D	Z	O	U	G	S	N	I	Z	Z	I	G	D	A	W
S	S	F	A	U	H	Q	D	P	C	J	G	L	S	P	X	P	P	Q	U	X	X	W	L	D	Y	X	J
N	M	Q	Y	Y	R	M	R	I	N	B	E	L	T	I	R	D	K	R	H	W	D	E	E	Y	T	X	T
D	C	A	U	A	J	J	W	M	P	G	U	E	Y	T	S	K	H	W	A	R	W	O	D	Q	Y	S	G
B	J	Q	Q	J	Y	I	I	X	D	P	S	N	H	H	H	M	J	W	W	D	W	J	G	B	F	W	C
Z	U	Z	G	G	J	T	B	N	R	G	I	R	J	X	G	U	A	D	X	N	F	B	P	Z	U	Y	Q
T	W	M	Z	G	T	Y	Y	U	I	A	Q	Q	I	R	J	Q	N	S	Y	B	Q	Z	C	Q	J	X	H
I	J	B	T	P	H	J	I	D	Q	N	S	P	D	Q	Q	J	W	Q	H	H	Q	Z	W	P	Y	M	X
C	Z	H	U	U	U	F	I	Z	H	C	R	X	D	T	P	A	K	D	W	T	D	R	Q	J	Z	T	X
K	X	B	R	G	C	S	P	O	B	Q	G	Y	T	N	X	I	R	I	K	Y	I	J	Q	D	Y	H	P
G	M	T	J	Q	T	S	L	L	Q	P	J	D	Z	X	I	J	K	J	R	X	J	T	W	F	S	L	F
M	I	U	N	I	C	A	L	W	K	N	N	N	Q	T	T	N	M	I	R	A	N	W	L	V	A	J	E
G	T	S	R	A	Q	G	A	D	Z	Q	C	A	K	B	Y	B	S	A	N	W	K	A	Q	E	J	D	X
I	Y	G	Q	N	S	P	D	J	X	G	J	Q	Q	N	C	S	F	N	C	F	Q	F	L	N	S	P	J

The gaps in the path (plus the ball flying off the screen at the game's end) spell the phrase:
CANT WE JUST SIT DOWN B SIDE, which is a clue for the answer, **I FEEL LOVE**.

Construction notes

The starting consideration for this puzzle was trying to build the theme around an alternate interpretation of the answer's meaning. I FEEL LOVE is a song, so during brainstorming, we considered LOVE as a reference to tennis and racket sports that use it as zero in scoring. However, no one really wanted to write a sports puzzle, so we thought about ways to make it adhere to writers' interests while still being related to racket sports. That's how the Pong concept started.

The actual construction was highly algorithmic, paths had to follow intuitive (after the Pong aha) and very strict rules in order to be able to cleanly extract the cluephrase. However, this tested well, and the extracted letters always appear in pairs as further confirmation, so we didn't have to do too much fiddling.