

The Pillow Book

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Answer: XXXXXXXXXX

The title refers to *The Pillow Book*, a book of observations and musings recorded by Sei Shōnagon during her time as court lady in Heian-period Japan.

(The Pillow Book was initially Shōnagon's private diary and was never meant to be publicized. Allegedly, "she inadvertently left it on a cushion she put out for a visiting guest, who eagerly carried it off despite her pleas." Rude! Today, it's recognized as one of the most important works of Heian-era literature and an invaluable resource for historians studying court life in that period.)

The titles above each of the grids correspond to different list titles from the website linked in the flavortext (<https://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/17th-november-1967/8/lists-of-things-from-the-pillow-book>), except with one word replaced with a crossword-style clue/definition.

When you compare the answer with the replaced word in the actual list title, note that there is an extra letter in the latter. For example, if you anagram BORING, you can get ROBIN with an extra G.

List title in the puzzle	Answer	List title from <i>The Pillow Book</i>	Missing letter in answer
Red-breasted bird things	ROBIN	BORING things	G
Things that people are irritated and frustrated	PISSED	Things that people DESPISE	E
Extremely transporting	FREIGHTING	Extremely FRIGHTENING	N

<i>goods in bulk by a train</i> things		things	
Things that are unpleasant to a <i>pronoun</i> for a woman	HER	Things that are unpleasant to HEAR	A
Things that give a <i>liver-like</i> impression	HEPATIC	Things that give a PATHETIC impression	T
Things that should be a <i>person who receives or entertains guests</i>	HOST	Things that should be SHORT	R

These letters clue to the missing letter in each list. Some of the words in the "piles"/grids can be prepended with that letter and still be a word. If you highlight all such words, you will get the grids below.

G: Red-breasted bird things

Gloss	Glow	Gate	act
Grain	heat	how	jam
Grave	Grip	Globe	hut
mice	ire	Grill	web
Grub	Gash	Grove	zip

E: Things that people are irritated and frustrated

fled	Escape	Emerge	Event
bird	Elapse	halt	meet
sane	Eloper	Emotiona l	prune
pilot	Elite	heart	jumpy
wane	Every	Equip	Erode

N: Extremely transporting goods in bulk by a train things

Nail	Narrow	Nearly	usurp
Number	try	mouse	iris
Nova	lee	outside	sword
Never	odor	globe	agar
Nit	Nape	Nether	size

A: Things that are unpleasant to a pronoun for a woman

sow	Abet	Acorn	Again
use	Ahead	ore	Aside
hymn	Amaze	Arose	hate
melt	Along	Avast	shed
rasp	Amend	take	Amuse

T: Things that give a liver-like impression

Tart	Tact	There	rob
Tromp	sap	dip	pond
Tenfold	Twill	worn	elves
Theater	chest	spells	cower
Trust	Tease	Terror	crime

R: Things that should be a person who receives or entertains
guests

Rice	Rant	Roil	nap
add	Remit	ooze	idle
oath	Rally	tough	able
ilk	Rage	fig	lot
bony	Revert	ivy	omen

The words in each grid that can prepend the missing letter spell out a letter in each grid. Reading the letters, you get **SECRET** as the answer.