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Six words, occupying three rows of the grid in total, are clued without their common definition. Using that common definition, with particular reference to one of the six and an answer elsewhere in the puzzle, each row can be converted into a letter, spelling the word to be entered below the puzzle. Failed attempts at spelling may need to be removed from clues before solving, adjusting punctuation and spacing where necessary.

## Across

- 3 Study institute (8)
- 11 Australian crook shirking college responsibility (4)
- 12 Put off dismissing fellow in moot case, say (4)
- 13 Male muscles concerning male among film scouts? (10)
- 14 American author? American outcast, nothing less, about to backtrack (6)
- 15 See one creature from Oz coming back - a sheep (6)
- 16 Direct action for Newcastle's provided by elderly duke (4)
- 17 Choctaw soldiers heading for Utah (4)
- 19 Religious book, one of Baltic origin (4)
- 20 Perform better than party that's not elected? (5)
- 22 Spot punctured by one tack with sharp point (5)
- 24 Bass, definitely not soprano (4)
- 25 Consequence of time off hard for tenor (4)
- 26 Soprano abandoning hard work to secure note (4)
- 27 Regard half of bees in front of swarm (6)
- 28 Look at this approach to saving yen (4, 2 words)
- 32 Funk's heading live do (4)
- 34 No participant in society recalls this grief of old (4)
- 36 Old relative ignoring fashionable signs of affection (4)
- 37 Chinese plant not accepting pounds - but accepting these? (4)
- 39 Spy that woman's toast in Edinburgh (8)
- 40 Awkward, lacking dash, recalled as a boor (4)
- 41 Composer avoiding us in foodstore (4)
- 42 Payment fact judge rejected (4)
- 43 Offend old woman disrespectfully (6)
- 44 Journey time includes end of tour (6)

## Down

- 1 Harms bistro with action arranged as description of historic style? (13)
- 2 Lactate around third quarter of hour, when required (5, 2 words)
- 3 Ancient Court official ruined our tactics before King (8)
- 4 A million resident in Nebraska state (4)
- 5 Area not about to be placed in mock component of airstrip design (8)
- 6 Improve edibility of pies, soon, with cooking (8)
- 7 To point, as before, shows no hint of politeness (4)
- 8 Tacit gibes rumoured to circulate around King and I (8)
- 9 Backfiring stun gun was tested again (5)
- 10 This legionary in a flat-cap could do for health worker (13, 2 words)
- 17 Symbolic language, increasingly imitating English, used around Sweden (9, 2 words)
- 18 Escort's function, taking our group plundering up North (9)
- 21 Top's worn off red rubbers (4)
- 23 Tack North on a river, making one knot (4)
- 29 Story-teller's promoted main work (5)
- 30 Libertine taking on new hectare in France? (5)
- 31 Talks nonsense, including pound in variable quantities (5)
- 33 Former operation's brought in excellent antique gold coins (5)
- 35 No longer happy to relinquish first of fish (4)
- 38 Agree broth's recipe's forgotten (4)