

WHAT'S IN A PHRASE?

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We all use phrases without a second thought or glance. Many of these word liaisons, however, are hosts to a world of hidden words and hidden letter patterns. Some of these are now about to be exposed. The phrases under scrutiny here are mostly, but not exclusively, 2-word affairs. Unreferenced phrases can be found in the Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition, including the text. Non-OED references are: *bt* Bloomsbury Thesaurus, 1993, *Cham* Chambers Dictionary, *cpf* Chambers Phrase File by Roger Prebble, 1993, *Long* Longman's Dictionary, *LonV* Language On Vacation by Dmitri Borgmann, 1965, *Web2* Webster's Second Edition, *WW* Word Ways. Selected examples are offered for a range of categories. The following are *not* included: palindromic phrases (PULL UP), tautonymic phrases (COME COME) and Miami phrases (INK IN). Also excluded are hyphenated 'phrases'.

STRADDLES

Words, or significant letter patterns, are to be found straddling many 2-word phrases. Priority, but not exclusivity, is given here to those straddles in which at least 2 letters come from each of the 2 words (in MASS HYSTERIA only one letter of SHYSTER occurs in the first word). The straddles should not embrace either the first letter of the first word or the last letter of the second word. In letter pattern straddles (tautonymic etc.) the straddle may, or may not, be a word in its own right.

WORD STRADDLES

The straddles in FIRE BUSH (oed txt) and TELEPHONE MESSAGE will be familiar to the readers of Word Ways.

These 5- and 6-letter straddles are names: CORNEAL LENS (*Cham*), TOTAL THEATRE, RADIANT HEAT, ARABIAN CAMEL, GOLDEN CHAIN (Dench is a surname), BODY LANGUAGE, FORTIFIED WINE, MIDDLE NAME, HUMAN DYNAMO, PUERPURAL FEVER

Other 6-letter straddles: REPEAT ONESELF (*Cham*), MEDICINE MAN, MADE HISTORY, GOLDEN HAMPSTER (Denham is in UK), KNEE BREECHES (eebree = eyebrow), FIRE WARDEN, PHRASAL VERB, COUSIN GERMAN, LOST ONESELF (*cpf*), QUARTER GALLERY, LEVEL CROSSING

7- and 8-letter straddles: OPERA SINGER, FOREST RANGER

Some straddles are pertinent to the phrase of which they form a part:

CHRISTIAN NAME, CENTRE FORWARD (football), REGENT STREET in London provides all mod cons., THE REDEEMER is here.

By allowing the straddle to incorporate just one letter from one of the words, instead of at least two, we encounter the *apposite* FLEA PIT and discover that CAPITAL LETTERS are tall. On the other hand, the straddle in GROWTH INDUSTRY appears to contradict the phrase.

Word straddles can also be found in *3-word phrases* if the second word is included in the straddle: JUST A TICK (*cpf*), EAU DE NIL (*Cham*), THANKS A MILLION; and what the exchange rate has done - RISEN TEN CENTS (coined).

TAUTONYMIC STRADDLES

Here is an A-Z of 6-letter tautonymic straddles:

BAGGAGE AGENT (*Web2*), COBWEB WEATHER, SPECTACLE CLEW, STANDARD ARRANGEMENT, PEACE ACTIVIST, YAFFLE FLEW (coined. yaffle = green woodpecker), STINGING INJURY (coined), SHOP HOPPING (coined), FIDEI DEFENSOR, DIJON JONNY (coined), CONKER KERNEL (coined), WILD ELDER, SUMMER MERE, FIND INDISPENSABLE* (*bt*), LORD ORDINARY, REPRO PROOF (*Cham*), BURLESQUE QUEEN (*bt*), FREE REED, WASTE STEAM, NEWTON TONY (in Wiltshire, UK), OUTPUT POWER, SURVIVAL VALUE, SWAG WAGGON, MAGYAR YARNS and AMAZON ZONE (the last 3 coined)

Some phrases offer a choice of 6-letter tautonymic straddles:

FIND INDISPENSABLE (above*) has the two tautonymic straddles INDIND and NDINDI.

8-letter tautonymic straddles:

BECOME COMPLETE, POLITE LITERATURE, ANGLING LITERATURE

In this sentence, adjacent words have 4-letter tautonymic straddles:

WHILE LES ESCAPED, EDWIN INSPECTED EDWINA'S ASSIGNMENT.

By including the second word of this *3-word phrase* in the straddle, BEAT A TATTOO (*bt*) exhibits the ATATAT triple tautonymic straddle and also the palindromic straddle ATATA.

PALINDROMIC STRADDLES

Here is an A-Z of 5-letter palindromic straddles:

LOMBARD RALLY (UK motoring), BAR GRAPH, VERBAL ABUSE, YUCCA CACTUS, GRANDE VEDETTE (*Cham*), BEST SELLER, SAFE LEFT (coined), LARGE LEGS (coined), EIGHTY THREE, OIL SLICK, PYJAMA JACKET, SILK COCKS, CABLE TELEVISION, SUMMER EMPLOYMENT (coined), PIANO CONCERTO, CORN ROCKET, SUPER EPIC (coined), IRAQI PIQUE (coined), FUTURE PERFECT, CREASE RESISTANT, FATAL ATTRACTION (film), QUEUE FEUD (coined), 'ROVER' EVENT (coined), TWO DOWN, FIXED EXPRESSION (*bt*), POYA DAYS, POPULARIZE BEZIQUE (coined)

7-letter straddles: SHEET STEEL, HARMSWORTH TROPHY (UK power boat racing)

In Kickshaws WW2001225 I offered the following straddles:

6-letter straddles: CART TRACK, SITS STILL, HARD DRAWN

7-letter straddles: DIRTY TRICKS, MOBILE LIBRARY

8-letter straddles: SKELETON NOTES

9-letter straddles: SPORTS TROPHY (*bt*), JUVENILE DELINQUENT

LADDER STRADDLES

These 9-letter *ladder straddles follow one of nine ladder patterns*. Each trigram (3-letter group) differs from its trigram neighbour(s) by a single letter (see *Ladder Words* WW2002279). The significance of the asterisks is explained under *Miami Straddles* below.

123423523 AVENGING ANGEL* (*bt*), NUCLEAR WARFARE*

123423453 INTEGRAL CALCULUS**, SCARLET LETTER**

123423425 HARBOR PORPOISE**, NONSENSE NAME*

123143543 PRISON SENTENCE, REVERSE OSMOSIS, STANTON LONG* (in Shropshire, UK)

123143153 MISTLETOE TREE*, WATER TORTURE*

123143145 MANCHESTER TERRIERS**, STEPHEN HENDRY** (UK snooker player),
WATER TORTOISE*

123124524 ARTISTIC LICENCE* (*bt*), GIANT ANTEATER* (*Long*), FIGHTER AERODROME*

123124154 SECULAR VARIATION*. A *3-letter phrase*: CREATE A SENSATION

123124125 DRINKING INNE*, PRINTING INDUSTRY*, THE SHEPHERDS*

A phrase may incorporate *2 different ladder patterns*. OPEN SENTENCE* embodies the 2 extreme patterns 123423523 in which the first letter of each trigram changes (OPEN SENTENCE), and 123124125 in which the last letter of each trigram changes (OPEN SENTENCE).

MIAMI STRADDLES

Here is an A-Z of Miami straddles with the letter pattern 12?12 (see *Miami Words* WW2000014). COMBAT FATIGUE, AMBER BEADS, CHURCH SCHOOL, LABRADOR DOG, DINNER SERVICE, TRANSFER FEE, CHANGES GEAR, ANCHOR HOLD, TIN MINING, WICKET KEEPER, SMILE PLEASE (*cpf*), ECONOMIC MIGRANT (*bt*), BLIND ENDING (*Cham*), RIGOR MORTIS, DAMPER PEDAL, BURLESQUE QUEEN (*bt*), TYRE PRESSURE, TRUST ESTATE, MOTOR TOUR, QUANTUM NUMBER, MOVE OVER, RAILWAY WAGON, FIXED XEROX (coined), ROYAL YACHT, SIEZES ZEBRA (coined)

There even exists a Miami Miami straddle in the shape of THALASSAEMIA MINOR (a carrier state of the disease Thalassaemia).

Miami straddles are also to be found in phrases exhibiting other types of straddle:

All the 6-letter *Tautonymic Straddles* listed above also carry 2 different Miami straddles (eg. SURVIVAL VALUE + SURVIVAL VALUE). In *Ladder Straddles* above, most of the phrases incorporate a Miami straddle *; some incorporate 2 different Miami straddles **.

ALPHABETICALLY-CONSECUTIVE LETTER STRADDLES

A few phrases embody *alphabetically consecutive letter straddles*:

FILM NOIR, SCISSORS TURN (*bt*), STOCKBROKERS TUDOR, TANNERS TURF

DOUBLED LETTER STRADDLES

These phrases embody *triple doubled letter straddles*:

FEED DOOR, QUEER ROOSTER, SWEET TOOTH, GUERRILLA ATTACK (coined), BALLOON NAVIGATION, ANTENNA ARRAY, WOOD DEER

REPEATED LETTER STRADDLES

There are a strictly limited number of phrases like the coined THREE EELS with its 4 consecutive like letters! The following selection of repeated letter straddles consist of *3 like letters*. This means that 2 of the letters occur in one of the words and one in the other word.

SPEOVELIA AAA (a bug - WW95171), FREE ENERGY (*Web2*), LEE ENFIELD, CLIFF FACE (*Web2*), EGG GLASS (*Web2*), PLIMSOLL LINE, CUCKOO ORCHIS (*Web2*), BUSINESS SCHOOL, WIRELESS STATION

In GARNETT TEETH and STILL LIFE the 3 like letters form part of the palindromic straddles ETTTE and ILLLI respectively.

THE KING OF STRADDLES

What phrase has the most different straddles? A contender for the 'king of straddles' must surely be CONTACT ACTION. It embodies the ladder straddle NTACTACTI (pattern 123423425), the 2 tautonymic straddles TACTAC and ACTACT, as well as the 3 Miami straddles TACTA, ACTAC and CTACT, making 6 straddles in total.

ENVELOPES

WORD ENVELOPES

Removing a sequence of straddling letters which either make a word, or which adhere to a specific letter pattern, leaves 2 sets of enveloping letters. In some cases, when brought together, *the 2 sets of enveloping letters form a word*. Such is the case in the following phrases in which the straddle is underlined and the enveloping world shown in brackets.

Word straddles: FIRST AIDER (firer), LEVEL CROSSING (lessing)

Tautonymic straddles: ALMA MATER (alter), GOOD ODDS (gods), MINOR ORDERS (minders), BOSH SHOT (boot)

Palindromic straddles: COAL FLAP (*cpf* - cop), COAT TAILS (coils), LINE FENCE (*Cham* - lice), BOOT TOPPING (*cpf* - bopping)

Miami straddles: LOCAL CALL (loll), MELON LOUSE (*Web2* - meuse), COON SONGS (cogs), FIRE TRENCH (finch)

TAUTONYMIC ENVELOPES

A group of letters at the beginning of the first word, when repeated at the end of the second word, results in a tautonymic envelope. *These phrases have 6-letter tautonymic envelopes:*

ANTISEPTIC LUBRICANT, BELLY WINBEL CERVICAL CANCER (*bt*), DESIGNATED TRADES (coined), EASTERN SEAS (coined), FEROCIOUS HEIFER (coined), GARLIC VINEGAR, HERB CHRISTOPHER, INDEPENDENT MIND (*bt*), KERSEY MAKER, LORD CHANCELLOR, MANCHESTER WAREHOUSEMAN, NESTING CRANES (coined), OVEN GLOVE, PERSONAL SHOPPER, PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY, REMAINDER THEOREM, REST CURES, SAMARITAN'S BALSAM, TESSELLATED PYRITES, UNDER GROUND, VERT OVER, WAGES' SWAG (coined)

PALINDROMIC ENVELOPES

A group of letters at the beginning of the first word, repeated in reverse order at the end of the second word, forms a palindromic envelope. *These phrases have 6-letter palindromic envelopes:* ALLA CAPPELLA, DRAFTING YARD, GALA FLAG, METRIC SYSTEM, NOISE POLLUTION, POOP SCOOP, RED ADDER, SECRET PLACES, TIME LIMIT, WORLD SORROW, YELLOW YOWLEY (the yellow hammer)

These phrases have 8-letter palindromic envelopes: CALIFORNIA LILAC (*bt*), LATERAL PETAL, NOISE SUPPRESSION, REVERSE LEVER, SPECULUM FORCEPS

PALINDROMIC ENVELOPES WITH A DIFFERENCE

These phrases begin with a 3-letter palindromic trigram and end with a different 3-letter palindromic trigram: ANACLASTIC GLASSES, BUBBLE SCHEME, ENERGY CRISIS, GIGOT SLEEVE (*Web2*), IRISH LINEN, MUMMY CASES, PUPPET DRAMA, RARE GASES, SYSTEMATIC PHONEME, TITLE PIECE

The phrase BABY BATTERER (*cpf*), in addition to beginning with BAB and ending with RER, encompasses the palindromic sequence ABYBA and the tautonymic ending ERER.

BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

BEGINNINGS

The first 3 letters of both words are the same:

ALEXANDER ALEKHINE (world chess champion 1927-35 and 1937-46. Apparently he lost in 1936 because he was drunk!), BERMUDA BERRY (the soap nut plant), BRITANNIA BRIDGE, COUNTY COURTHOUSE (*bt*), DEATH DEALER, EVERY EVENING (*bt*), FORK FORGER (*Web2*), GRETNA GREEN (Scotland), HEMEL HEMPSTEAD (in Hertfordshire, UK), KRISS KRINGLE (Santa Claus), LOGISTIC LOGARITHMS, MARSH MARIGOLD, NORWEGIAN NORGE (*Long*), ROSIN ROSE, SCHOOL SCHNAPPER (a fish - *Web2*), THREAD THROUGH (*bt*), WILD WILLIAMS (the plant ragged robin)

The first 4 letters of both words are the same:

BRINISH BRINK (the sea shore), CIRCASSIAN CIRCLE, CONTACT CONTROL, GALLOP GALLIARD, POLITICAL POLICE, STARK STARING, STATIONARY STATE, STRATTON STRAWLESS (in Norfolk, UK), WINDOW WINDER

The first 5 letters of both words are the same:

INTERDIGIT INTERVAL (*Telecommunications Dictionary*)

The first 6 letters of both words are the same:

MALIGNANCY MALIGNITY (*bt*), READING READINESS

The first 7 letters of both words are the same:

REDUCTION REDUCTIVE

Personalities: CELINE CELESTE, CHARLES CHAPLIN, KENNETH KENDALL (a UK broadcaster),

MARY MARTIN, WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, YEVGENII YEVTUSHENKO (poet)

ENDINGS

The last 3 letters of both words are the same:

BACK TRACK, WEBER NUMBER, MACHU PICCHU, GULDEN MORDEN (in Cambridgeshire, UK),

DIRECT OBJECT, RIFTY TUFTY (helter-skelter), LIGHT DRAUGHT, KOSHER BUTCHER,

POLICE OFFICE, OLDE WORLDE, YEOMAN GENTLEMAN, SEQUENCE DANCE,

LOCH RANNOCH (Tayside, UK), NEWSPAPER WRAPPER, TLOQUE NAHUAQUE (Aztec deity - *bt*),

HORSE COURSE, PISHA PAYSHA (a Jewish card game), ALSTON SUTTON (in Somerset, UK),

FIGURE SUTURE, SILVER PLOVER

The last 4 letters of both words are the same:

WALLAROO KANGAROO, JACKET POCKET, SHEFFIELD SHIELD (a UK cricket trophy),

YELLOW MALLOW, CHANNEL TUNNEL, FLOWER POWER, WHORLLE BOURLLE,

BUTTER LETTER

The last 5 and 6 letters of both words are the same:

5: HICCIUS DOCCIOUS, HYSTERON PROTERON (*Web2*)

6: JEEPERS CREEPERS

Personalities: MARIE CURIE, CHARLTON HESTON, MELVIN CALVIN (US biochemist)

LETTER GROUPS

ALPHABET HALVES

Phrases may be constructed entirely from the letters of either the first half (A-M), or second half (N-Z), of the alphabet. Alternatively, one word(s) may be from the first half whilst the other word(s) is from the second half.

Letters from the first half of the alphabet:

10 letters: BLACK MAGIC, CALLED BACK, DECKLE EDGE, GALLIC ACID (note also the palindromic straddle ICACI), JELLIED EEL, MIDDLE DECK

11 letters: FIELD BLEACH, HIGH BAILIFF, LEGAL BEAGLE, MAKE ILLEGAL (*bt*), MEDICAL HALL

12 letters: CHEMICAL MACE, FEMALE MAMMAL, FEEL LIKE HELL (*bt*)

13 letters: MAKE ILLEGIBLE (*bt*), MIDDLE LAMELLA, MADE A COMEBACK (*cpf*)

Letters from the second half of the alphabet:

10 letters: STURT STONY (an Australian desert), TO STOUT OUT, TO RUN OUT ON

11 letters: TO SUP SORROW

12 letters: STOUR PROVOST (in Dorset, UK)

The 2 words consist of letters from opposite halves of the alphabet:

first/second: BEDDED/BLACKED/CHECKED OUT, FIELD SPORTS, GILDED SPURS, LIFE SUPPORT, MAKE POROUS (*bt*), MAKE SORROW/STOUT,

second/first: PROTON BEAM, PUTTY FACE, TURN HEAD, TOP DECK, TRUSTY BLADE

These 3- and 4-word phrases can be 'cut' into second and first half of the alphabet words:

PUT ON . ICE (*Cham*), TOUT . DE MÊME (*Cham*), NOT ON YOUR . LIFE (*Cham*)

TYPEWRITER PHRASES

Top row of typewriter keyboard (QWERTYUIOP)

PIPE UP, PIPE TREE, PETER OUT, PEPPER POT/TREE, PEWTER POT, OUTPUT POWER,
OUT TO IT, IT WERE TO WIT

Middle row of typewriter keyboard (ASDFGHJKL)

ASH FALLS, HALF FLASH (*The Scoundrel's Dictionary* - note also the palindromic sequence ALFFLA),
HALF GLASS, FLAG FALLS, SHAG ASS (be swift - *bt*)

LETTER DESIGN

These phrases are made from letters which conform to a particular design: straight line letters,
tall letters, narrow letters, symmetrical letters.

STRAIGHT LINE LETTERS (AEFHILMNTVWXYZ)

10 letters: FAMILY NAME, FIANNA FAIL (*Cham*), LATENT HEAT, MILKY WHITE,
HEAVY METAL, INLET VALVE, LIFE TENANT, THINK ALIKE, TWELFTH MAN (in
cricket), VITAL FLAME, WAIT AWHILE, WENT NATIVE, WHITE WHALE, AT THE
WHEEL (*Cham*), IN ANY EVENT (*Cham*)

11 letters: ALKALI METAL, ANN HATHAWAY, FEMME FATALE, MEET HALFWAY,
TAMMANY HALL, WHITTLE AWAY

TALL LETTERS (bdfghijklpqty)

hit it (*bt*), pig it, fly high, tight fit, thigh lift, fly blight

NARROW LETTERS (acemnorsuvwxyz)

13 letters: common measure, monsoon season, news cameramen, nonsense verse,
common-room man, on ones ownsome, score a success

14 letters: news camera crew (*bt*), one-man canoe race (*bt*)

15 letters: resonance curves

16 letters: common assurances

17 letters: common occurrences

TALL/NARROW LETTERS

These phrases consist of one tall-letter word and one narrow-letter word:

tall/narrow: billy can, fifth avenue, flight crew, high cross/mass/noon (film)/season (*cpf*), jib crane

narrow/tall: aces high (film), arum lily, cannon bit, neon light, razor bill, rear light, rescue bid

SYMMETRICAL LETTERS

Some phrases are made from horizontally-symmetrical letters; others from vertically-
symmetrical letters.

horizontally-symmetrical letters (BCDEHIKOX)

BED CHECK (*Web2*), CHECK BOOK, CODE BOOK, COOK BOOK

vertically-symmetrical letters (AHIMOTUVWXY)

TIMOTHY HAY, WITHOUT THAT, AWAY WITH YOU, OUT WITH IT, TO MOUTH IT,
TO TAXI OUT, TO WAX OUT, TO WAIT IT OUT

CONSONANTS AND VOWELS

The use of Cs and/or Vs is constrained in these phrases.

CRASHING VOWELS

The same vowels occur in the same positions in both words:

2 like vowels: MAGNA CARTA, SHEET STEEL, GIRLISH KIDDING (coined),
DOCTORS' COMMONS, SURPLUS CUPSFUL (coined)

2 different vowels: BALLET DANCER, CAMPO SANTO, CLEAN BREAK, NICKEL SSILVER,
FOSTER MOTHER, SOUTH BOUND, RUBBER BULLET

3 vowels: SIEGE PIECE (*Cham*)

3 different vowels: MOBILE POLICE

HOMOVOCALIC AND HOMOCONSONANTAL PHRASES

Homovocalic Phrases

Phrases in which only one of the 5 major vowels appears, any number of times, were examined in *A Homovocalic Survey* (WW 2005127).

Homoconsonantal Phrases

Homoconsonantal phrases are rare compared with homovocalic phrases.

GO GAUGE, OLEO OIL (*Web2*), NO ONE, PPIPE UP (*oed*), TO EEAT OUT

ALTERNATING CONSONANTS AND VOWELS

In these phrases, vowels and consonants alternate across the whole phrase:

16 letters: AS I HOPE TO BE SAVED, ELEVATOR OPERATOR,

FORAMEN OF AN OVULE, HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE (*bt*), TO BUY A PIG IN A POKE

17 letters: BECOME DILAPIDATED (*bt*), SENATUS ACADEMICUS, TO PUT IN A CARETAKER

18 letters: CUMULATIVE MEDICINE, IN A MANIPULATIVE WAY (*bt*), UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

LETTER SUBSTITUTION

Either one, or all, of the letters of the first word undergo substitution to form the second word.

ISOMORPHS

The 2 words which make each of these phrases have *the same letter pattern but no crashing letters* - they are isomorphs:

EMERY PAPER, FREE WILL, FULL TOSS, HIGH SEAS, KEEP COOL, PROOF SHEET, ROOT BEER,
 SEE OFF, STATION MANAGER, SUITING ONESELF, TOOK HEED, YELLOW HAMMER

These coined examples were included in my article *Designer Isomorphs* (WW2001090):

HEMMED COTTON, HISTORICAL FAIRYTALES, MEDIAEVAL BRAVERIES,
 NARRATED COLLOQUY, ROBBER SNOOPS, SMELLED BLOSSOM, SPRAYERS DRENCHED,
 TENNIS VOLLEY, THESAURUS JARGONING, THATCHED PROPERTY

... and ENGLAND REDUCES CAPITAL in which the 3 words are mutual isomorphs.

SHIFTS

The letters of some words, when shifted n places along the alphabet (looping round from Z to A) make other words. Thus ADDER + 1 = BEEFS, BANJO + 4 = FERNS, and BUNNY + 17 = SLEEP. Careful scrutiny of the many shift pairs that have appeared in *LonV* (see 'Curious Codes' and 'Super Ciphers') and previous issues of *Word Ways* reveals that, in some cases, *the two words can be combined to form a perfectly good, coined, phrase*. The numbers in brackets indicate the number of steps the letters of the first word of the phrase are shifted to make the second word of the phrase.

BAR(13)ONE, FAT(8)NIB, FIX(22)BET, HOT(20)BIN, LAP(4)PET, PET(11)APE, TIE(22)PEA,
 WET(22)SAP

COLD(3)FROG, DAMP(14)ROAD, FAKE(14)TOYS, HAWK(8)PIES, PENS(15)ETCH,

SHUN(23)PERK, TWIN(18)LOAF, UGLY(20)OAFS

CUBED(10)MELON, FILLS(6)LORRY, JOLLY(19)CHEER, TOFFS(25)SNEER

The name GAIL KEMP, a 4-step shift, has appeared in *Word Ways*.

SIT PHRASES

These are the phrasal equivalent of the single word Singularly Imperfect Tautonyms in which the first half of the word differs by one letter from the second half of the word - as in MISHMASH (see WW2003165). *In these 2-word phrases it is the 2 words which differ by a single letter:*

PALY PILY, BIG WIG, COME HOME (*cpf*), DOWN TOWN, EFF OFF, FAVE RAVE, GOOD FOOD, HONG KONG, BAIL BALL, JET SET, BREAK BREAD, LAST PAST, MILL HILL, NOLENS VOLENS ROPE RIPE, PALL MALL, RIDE SIDE, SUCH MUCH, TICKET WICKET, MUSTER MASTER, VINO FINO, WAVY NAVY, YOO HOO

HETEROGRAMS, AND PAIR AND TRIO ISOGRAMS

HETEROGRAMMIC PHRASES

A heterogrammic phrase is one in which all the letters are different. Here is a small selection:

14 letters: EXHAUSTING WORK (*bt*), GUNPOWDER FLASH/MATCH, QUICK ON THE DRAW (*Cham*), RESPOND QUICKLY (*bt*), RHAPSODY IN BLUE (film), RHYMING COUPLET SOUTH CAMBRIDGE (New York), TURKEY SANDWICH (*bt*), WATCHFUL PERSON (*bt*)

15 letters: BUCKTHORN FAMILY

16 letters: GUILD OF MERCHANTS

PAIR ISOGRAM PHRASES

In *Split Sentence Transposals* (WW99302), I included an A-Z of 2-word phrases in which the words are transposals. When each word is a heterogram, the phrases have exactly 2 of each different letter and are *phrasal pair isograms*. Here are some additional, coined, examples:

ALES SALE, AMBRIDGE GAME-BIRD (especially for UK readers), ATE TEA, BAREST BREAST, BELOW ELBOW, BEST BETS, BRUSH SHRUB, CAMPERS SCAMPER, CLASP SCALP, CHEAP PEACH, CITED EDICT, COIN ICON, CROAT ACTOR, CRAVEN CAVERN (White Scar Caves in Craven, Yorkshire, UK), DUSTY STUDY, EATS TEAS, FIEND FINED, HARMONIC CHOIRMAN, IDEAS ASIDE, KID'S DISK, LACIEST ELASTIC, LIFE FILE, MARINE AIRMEN, MENORCA ROMANCE, NICEST INSECT, OCEAN CANOE, ORIENTAL RELATION, PITON POINT, PLANE PANEL, POSH SHOP, PRAM RAMP, QUAD'S SQUAD (quad bikes), REGAL GLARE, ROMAN MANOR, SCARLET CLARETS, SHORE HORSE, SPOKE POKES, SPREAD DRAPES, STAPLE PLEATS, WASTE SWEAT

EDNA DEAN, GARY GRAY, LEON NOEL and other people which are listed on PhoneDisc have appeared in previous issues of Word Ways (95250 and 96037).

Another name game may give us an insight into a person's character. These phrases are coined: REALIST ALISTER, AMY MAY, BASIL BAILS, CASPER CAPERS, DAEMON MOANED, DIRE REID, EDGAR RAGED, GASTON TANGOS, GLENDA ANGLED, SHORT HORST, IMELDA MAILED, LONE NOEL, ROMAN NORMA, OLDIE ODILE, HURT RUTH, SAEMUS AMUSES, SANE SEAN, VOILA VIOLA, ZELDA LAZED

TWO-PHRASE PAIR ISOGRAM

Dictionary phrases which transpose into other dictionary phrases appear to be rare. One such is LIVES OUT = LOVE SUIT (both in *cpf*). Together, with exactly 2 of each different letter, the 2 phrases form a *different type of phrasal pair isogram*.

TRIO ISOGRAM PHRASES

These coined phrases, in which the 3 words are transposals, have exactly 3 of each different letter. They are *phrasal trio isograms*:

DAME MADE EDAM, DISCOUNTER INTRODUCES REDUCTIONS

ORDERLY LETTERS

AEIOU PHRASES

A few phrases, and hyphenated designations, with the 5 major vowels *A, E, I, O and U in order and no other vowels*, have appeared in *Language On Vacation* and earlier issues of *Word Ways*. Here are some additions:

From *Bloomsbury Thesaurus*, 1993: CANCELLING OUT, CHASTENING THOUGHT, FALSELY PIOUS, GATHERING CLOUDS, MAGNETIC SOUTH, PARCELLING OUT, TRAVELLING THROUGH

From the OED: DANDELION PLUSH (the hairy head of a dandelion)

It is also possible to coin phrases: AMENDING COUNT, ANGELIC CHORUS, ASSESSING BONUS, BAD NEIGHBOURS, CATERING FLOUR/YOGHURT, FATHERING FOUR, FATTENING POULTRY, HARVESTING GOURDS, HASTENING THROUGH, LAMENTING SOUL, LAWYER'S MISCONDUCT, PATTERNING SOUND, SCAVENGING HOUND, STAGGERING HOURS, WANDERING ROUND

Longer phrases include LAWN TENNIS COURT (*LonV*), HAVE WITH YOU (*Cham*), MAKE RINGS ROUND (*Cham*), TRADE-WIND CLOUD, MAKE IT COUNT (coined), HALF EIGHT'S FOUR (coined)

Phrases with A, E, I, O and U in reverse order:

BURTON PIDSEA (UK), PHYLUM PORIFERA (sponges) has A, E, I, O, U, and Y in reverse order. ... and the longer phrases CHURCH OF IRELAND, BURTON IN KENDAL (UK), and UPON HIS PENALTY. A 4-word phrase which springs to mind is CUT OFF HIS HEAD.

ALPHOMIC PHRASES

In *Alphomic Phrases* (WW99229), I offered a series of coined *phrases whose letters are arranged in alphabetical order*. They include ACE FILM, BEEF GIN (short for 'Beefeater' Gin) and CHILL OOT (what the Scots do when the English 'chill out'). Subsequently, I found the following phrases in the OED: A DEUX, AD FIN, ALL MOST and BE FIRST.

MONOGAMY

Monogamous words are those which are always, or nearly always, linked to one or more specific words. Here are a few of the phrases involved, taken from WW95164 and 95172. The monogamous words are underlined.

IN CAHOOTS (*Cham*), RIDE ROUGHSHOD OVER, FOREGONE CONCLUSION, MALICE AFORETHOUGHT, TAKE UMBRAGE, HIGH DUDGEON, RUN AMOK, FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL, TAKEN ABACK.

The above survey by no means reveals all the hidden secrets held by phrases. The 3-word phrase ROYAL ALBERT HALL, for example, incorporates 2 discrete straddles, the tautonymic ALAL and the name BERTHA. The phrase TO T.URN RUSTY, in addition to incorporating the 2 discrete palindromic straddles TOT and URNRU, is made exclusively from second half of the alphabet letters.