

AN AEIOU EXAMINATION

DAVID SHULMAN
New York, New York

We have often seen comments on words that have all five vowels AEIOU, usually in alphabetic order. I decided to take a particular dictionary and list all the words I could find with AEIOU in any order, eliminating those words in which a vowel was repeated, such as AdvEntIt-IOUs with two I's. The dictionary I selected was the Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (1973 printing) which I use frequently in the game of Scrabble.

To my surprise, I found 283 words; the editor subsequently provided me with 80 more for a total of 363. At his suggestion, I have listed the words that were found according to the order of the vowels. There are 120 possible permutations of AEIOU, of which 68 are represented by one or more words (about 60 per cent of the total).

Of course, the list could be greatly expanded with the use of other dictionaries. In the November 1969 Word Ways, the editor gives examples of words for 104 permutations, and dictionary words for nine more were later found.

The alphabetic-order pattern AEIOU is represented by AbstEm-IOUs, fAcEtIOUs, and pArEcIOUs, but the reverse alphabetic-order pattern UOIEA is realized only by UnnOtIcEAbLY (is it really unnoticeable?). Of the five possible circular alphabetic patterns, all but UAEIO are represented in the listing; contrariwise, the only other reverse circular alphabetic pattern to be found was AUOIE, in AUthOr-IzE and other words.

Such a list as this ought to prove useful in solving a cryptogram by the vowel-spotting method, familiar to cryptanalysts. If a word is found with five different vowels, none repeated, this list will reveal which one of 363 words will fit by length and pattern or non-pattern.

My final observation is that the shortest words with AEIOU have at least two consonants, and the longest words have sixteen letters (such as nOnUndErstAndIng). One word, mIAOUEd, has its vowel pattern clustered together uninterrupted by any consonants.

AEIOU abstemious, facetious, parecious
AEOIU aerobium, archeonium, pandemonium
AEOUI warehousing
AEUIO maleruption

- AIEOU ambidextrous, calciferous, glaireous, glandiferous, gramineous, jaspideous, lactiferous, lanigerous, spadiceous, stramineous
- AIOEU carillonneur
- AIOUE captiousness, factiousness, gladioluses, graciousness, grandiloquent, radiolucent, spaciousness, variousness
- AOEIU androecium, apothecium
- AOEUI manoeuvring
- AOUIE agouties, favourite, jalousie, labourite, malnourished, patchoulies, savouriness, tabourine, tambourine, vapourize
- AUEOI albumenoid, aureomycin
- AUIOE aluminothermy, auctioned, audiometry, audiphone, cauliflower, lanuginose
- AUOEI autoecism
- AUOIE authorize, autopsies, glauconite, sautoire, staurolite
- EAIUO behaviour, edacious, feracious, gelatinous, gregarious, keratinous, mendacious, nefarious, precarious, predacious, tenacious, veracious, vexatious
- EAOIU crematorium, pelargonium
- EAUIO belabouring, preannouncing
- EAUIO exhaustion, preassumption, precaution
- EIAOU fetiparous
- EIOUA semivoluntary
- EOAIU endocarpium, leprosarium, mesogastrium
- EOUAI encouraging, expostulating
- EOUIA preconubial
- EUAIO decussation, degustation, denudation, deplumation, depuration, deputation, despumation, detruncation, education, emulation, equation, eructation, exculpation, exhumation, expurgation, exudation, exultation, fecundation, menstruation, mensuration, peculation, permutation, persuasion, perturbation, refutation, regulation, reputation, speculation, sternutation
- EUAOI pneumatolytic, regulatorship, rheumatoid
- EUIAO denunciatory, elucidator, enunciator, renunciatory, resuscitator
- EUIOA delusional, equivocal, reductional
- EUOAI deutoplasmic, deutoplastic, edulcorating, leucocratic, neuropathic, pneumodynamics, pneumogastric, pseudoclassic
- EUOIA eulogia, euphonical, euphoria, euphorbia, neuroglia, neuropsychiatry, pneumonia, sequoia
- IAEOU diadelphous, diathermous, filamentous, intraserous, intravenous, ligamentous, micaceous, pinaceous, spinaceous, vineaceous, vitaceous
- IAOUE chivalrousness, dialogue, disfavoured, infamousness, miaoued
- IEAOU bicephalous, dicephalous, dipetalous, tripetalous
- IEOUA interglobular, interocular
- IOEAU micrometallurgy
- IOEUA bimolecular, incommensurably
- IOUAE bicornuate, biloculate, bivouacked, discountable, discourage, dismountable, importunate, impoundable, impoundage, incommutable, incomputable, inconstruable, inconsumable,

inoculable, inoculate, inoppugnable, inosculate, involucrate, thiosulfate

- IOUEA thiourea
 IUOAE circumrotate, insupportable
- OAIUE colatitude, odalisque, portraiture
 OAUIE coadjutrices, consanguine, nonaculite, nonplausible
 OEAIU overfaithful, overfanciful, overpainful
 OEAUI commeasuring, overhauling, overlaunching, somersaulting
 OEIUA nonresidual, nonvesicular
 OEUAI coequality, coequating, conceptualism, overquantity
 OEUIA nonrequital
 OIAUE foliature
 OIUAE continuance, continue, contributable, orbiculate
 OUAEI outanswering, outbantering, outbrazening, outcapering, outchattering, outflattering, outgathering, outhastening, outslandering, outtraveling
- OUAIE boundaries, columbaries, communalize, commutative, conjugative, consultative, consummative, contumacies, copulative, formularize, gourmandize, journalize, obduracies, occupancies, oppugnancies, outcaviled, outlawries, outpatient, outpraise, outraise, outsailed, outstrained, outwaited, popularize, tourmaline, voluntaries
- OUEAI countenancing, counteracting, counterblasting, counterchanging, countercharging, counterclaim, countermanding, counter-marching, counterplanting, countersignal, countertallying, countervail, housemaid, housewarming, mousetail, mouse-trapping, nonunderstanding, noumenalism, outbeaming, outbeggaring, outbleating, outdreaming, outeating, outfeasting, outhearing, outlearning, outreaching, outreading, outrearing, outscreeching, outspeaking, outspreading, outswearing, outwearing, outwearying, troublemaking
- OUIAE communicable, communicate, concubinage, conduplicate, conglutinate, conjunctivae, noncultivated, nondutiable, nonpunishable, nonuplicate, nourishable, outdistance, outrivaled
- OUIEA nonuniversal
- UAEOI quaestorship, quatrefoil, ultradespotic
 UAIOE mustachioed, ultraviolet, unsanctioned
 UAOIE fumatories, ultraconfident, unabolished, unsavoriness
 UEAIU nucleation, numeration, putrefaction, rubefaction, sustentation, tumefaction, ulceration
- UEAOI superabhorring, superastonish, supercatholic, unreasoning
 UEIOA questionably, questionnaire, subregional, subventionary, successional, superdiplomacy, superignorant, superimportant, unmentionably
- UEOAI nucleoplasmic, superromantic, undemocratic
 UEOLA questorial, supercordial, superformidably, superlogical, superordinary, superstoical, unheroical, unmethodical, unrecognizably, uterodynia
- UIAOE multiramose
 UIEOA multipersonal
 UIOAE multicostate, multilobate, unicostate, unimportance

UOIEA multicornia, undiscoverably
 UOAIE buoyancies, customariness, sulfoamide, sulfonamide, uncon-
 strained, uncontradicted, unordained, unorganized, unpolar-
 ized
 UOEIA duodecimal, uncongenial, unpoetical, urogenital
 UOIAE unmotivated
 UOIEA unnoticeably

A DISCERNING/DISCRIMINATING DICTIONARY

Groups of words with closely-related meanings but different spellings and pronunciations have been collected into synonym dictionaries. However, similar dictionaries of groups of words with closely-related spellings or pronunciations have, to my knowledge, never been produced. A first attempt at filling this gap has been made by Adrian Room, in Room's Dictionary of Confusibles (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979; \$10), which contains groups of words resembling each other simultaneously in all three attributes: meaning, spelling, pronunciation. With each group, he provides brief definitions designed to bring out the differences in meaning. He does not consider variant spellings of the same word, such as theatre/theater or curb/kerb.

A few samples will, perhaps, give the flavor of the whole. Similarity in spelling alone is not enough: accidental/occidental does not appear, though accidental/incidental and occidental/oriental do. Some of the groups of two words are very good: ingenious/ingenuous, affect/effect, banister/baluster, vice-regent/vicegerent, magnificent/munificent, torturous/tortuous. However, his larger groups are less successful, often linking words with substantially different spellings or meanings:

babble/rabble/gabble/rabbit/burble/blather
 rigid/turgid/turbid/tumid/torrid
 pagoda/pergola/portico/gazebo
 catacomb/hecatomb/catafalque/cenotaph

Many of these were probably included on the basis of similarity in syllabification.

If one is looking for the right word to convey a particular shade of meaning, this book is no substitute for a good synonym dictionary. As the author recognizes, the book cannot hope to include everyone's pet confusibles, being a personal and idiosyncratic list. Nevertheless, the book does "distract, divert, and even delight" the browser, and serendipitous discoveries can be made: did you know that 'slot' comes from the Old French eslot, 'hollow between the breasts'?