

## *A Word Game With License Plates*

DR. JEAN C. SABINE  
*Belmont, California*

This game is for license plates having a 3-letter prefix, as ABC-123.

The object is to make a word by adding letters before, between, and after the given letters, which must be kept in their original order. The scoring is as follows:

Any word—1 point.

A word formed by adding only vowels or only consonants—points equal to the square of the number of letters added.

No word can be made—subtract 1 point from total.

Rules can be made to suit the players. Generally, since cars do not contain reference libraries for verification, it is best to prohibit proper names, foreign words, abbreviations and initials, and words formed by adding -S, -ED, or -ER, unless the meaning is changed or it is impossible to make the shorter form, as in the first example below, where neither PUSH nor CRUTCH can be formed because of the given "E." It is also best always to treat "Y" as a vowel, unless all players are accomplished linguists.

### EXAMPLES:

| <i>Given</i> | <i>Word Formed</i>                     | <i>Added</i> | <i>Points</i> |
|--------------|--|--------------|---------------|
| UHE          | UsHEr                                  | 2 consonants | 4             |
| UHE          | pUsHEd                                 | 3 consonants | 9             |
| UHE          | crUtCHEs                               | 5 consonants | 25            |
| UHE          | chUrcHEs                               | 5 consonants | 25            |
| BLJ          | BLueJay                                | 4 vowels     | 16            |
| BTS          | Try this one for 36 points or better.  |              |               |
| EEE          | You can reach at least 81 points here. |              |               |

On a long trip, variations in rules can be made if the game begins to get boring. "Free doubling" of a given letter, for example, permits CLG to be turned into CoLLeGe for a count of 9 points.