RESIDUAL HETEROGRAMS

SUSAN THORPE
Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, England

A heterogram is a word with no repeated letters. Residual heterograms are made by discarding letter repeats in words and then rearranging the remaining letters to form a word. Words with repeated letters can be divided into

- those which do not have an equal number of each different letter
- those with an equal number of each different letter: pair isograms (two of each letter), trio isograms (three of each letter), etc.

Let us add the constraint that a word must have at least two different letters which are repeated.

The editor notes that residual heterograms are known as letter banks in the National Puzzlers’ League. Puzzles based on this concept were introduced by Will Shortz at their 1980 annual convention.

Residual Heterograms of Words Which Are Not Pair or Trio Isograms

Eliminating an O and an I from OTHELLO makes THELO which rearranges into HOTEL.
Readers might like to try starting with a phrase or name. Thus STAR TREK makes STREAK or SKATER and ROSS ECKLER makes LOCKERS. Here are more single-word examples. Most of the words can be found in the OED Second Edition. Subtracted repeats are shown in lower case.

Words with two different repeated letters
STAMMERS - ms = master, stream
GOOGOL - goo = log
TABULATE - at = betula (birch)
RUBBERS - br = rebus
SYLLABLES - lls = basely
ACROSTICS - cs = Caistor
MNEMONICS - mn = incomes

LINGUISTS - Is = lusting
AMSTERDAM - am = smarted
SENSELESS - eesss = lens
CASSELL - Is = scale, laces
ARGENTINA - an = granite
ALPHABETICAL - aal = pitchable
REVERSAL - er = salver

Words with three different repeated letters
RECREATIONAL - aer = clarionet
EPHEMEROPTERA - eeepr = metaphor
DODECAHEDRON - ddeo = anchored
TRANSDELETION - ent = sternoidal
GLENEAGLES - eegl = angels

TORPEDOERS - eor = sported
MISSISSIPPI - iiipssss = imps
SENTENCES - eens = scent
RECIPIENCE - cei = prince
DETROITER - ert = rioted, editor
Words with four different repeated letters

ASSEGAAlING - aaigs = easing
GREAT BRITAIN - airt = berating

PERPETRATE - eeprt = taper
ALLITERATION - ailt = oriental

Words with five different repeated letters

RENEGOTIATIONS - einot = orangiest
INTERSECTIONS - einst = corniest

PARTICIPATOR - aiprt = apricot
SECRETARIATS - aerst = raciest

Words with six different repeated letters

ANNIVERSARIES - aeinrs = ravines
TRILITERALNESS - eilrst = entrails

SEMI-RETIREMENTS - eeeimrst = minster
TRANSADDITIONS - adinst = intrados

Caistor is in Lincolnshire, and Gleneagles in Scotland; assegaaiing is found in Chambers.

The letters of the residual heterogram may occur in the same order as in the original word:

UNDERGROUND - drnu = undergo
TENNESSEE - eens = tens
SOONNESS - noss = ones
INTENSEST - enst = inset

PARTICIPLE - ip = particle
SIMILIES - iis = smile
CROSSWORDS - orss = crowds
BARBARA - aabr = bra

Best of all, the original word may give rise to an apposite word.

APPELLEE - eelp = plea

NEWSAPER - ep = enwraps

Residual Heterograms of Words Which Are Pair or Trio Isograms

In spite of the not-inconsiderable space devoted to pair isograms in Word Ways, it appears that little attention has been paid to the two identical groups of letters which actually make the pair isograms (ABIL + ABIL for the pair isogram BILABIAL). Below is a selection of pair isograms with one of their two identical groups of letters discarded and the other made into a well-known heterogram. Heterograms whose letters appear in the same order as in the pair isogram are marked with an asterisk. Occasionally an entire heterogram appears as such in the pair isogram from which it is derived, such as SOME in MESOSOME, a word which could be said to be a twosome! I do not include these particular heterograms in the list below. The pair isograms listed below fall into two groups, those in which the letters in the first half of the word are repeated in the second half in a different order (REAPPEAR), and those in which this is not the case (APPEASES). Pair isograms which are also palindromes or tautonyms are not included. Only pair isograms with eight or more letters are considered.

Letters in first half repeated in second half

8 BILABIAL bail*
ADINIDAN Dina*
NOTITION into
REAPPEAR pare, rape*
SHAMMASH hams*

10 HORSESHOER shore
INTESTINES inset
SUPERPURES purse

14 TAENIODONTIDAE adonite, on a diet
SHIPPISH hips*
SINGINGS gins*
TEAMMATE meat, tame*
TEISTIES site

Letters in first half not repeated in second half
8 APPEASES apes*
CONCISIONS coins*, icons
MILLIEME Emil, lime*, mile*
RATTAREE rate*, tear, tare*
TITANIAN Tina*
UNENDED dune, nude
VIVIENNE vein, veni, vine*

12 CANCELLANSES cleans, lances
CHARACTERETH hectar, Thrace
CONOCUNEUSES ounces, Unesco
GRADGRINDIAN daring
INTERINSERTS nitre, trine*

16 ANTIPERSPIRANTES painters, pantries
10 ARRAIGNING grain
INSCIENCES since*
MAAMSELLES males*, meals, Salem
REPROPOSES pores, poser, prose*, ropes,*
spore
RETARDATED rated*, trade
RIVERVILLE liver, viler
TESSELLATA least, slate, tales
TOOL-STEELS stole
TROMOMETER metro

For the record, charactereth (under 'character'), conocuneuses, maamselles, reigning, teisties (under 'tystie') and tool-steels (under 'tool' n.) are in the OED Second Edition; concisions, gradgrindian, insciences and interinserts are in Webster's Second; cancellanses is in Webster's Third; tessellata is in Nomenclator Zoologicus; and Riverville is in the Times Index-Gazetteer of the World.

Finally, turning to the twelve-letter pair isogram TRANSNISTRIA (in the Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World, 1964), lo and behold we discover that it takes two TRAINS to reach TRANSNISTRIA, a former Romanian administrative division organised in the occupied Ukraine during 1941 to 1943.