DEFINITIVE ACROSTICS

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These are ‘backward’ acronyms. Instead of abbreviating a given phrase or company name, etc, they start with the abbreviation given, usually a single word, and use its letters as the initial letters of a phrase created to define or relate to the word. Ideally, no words in the acronym should be related to the head word etymologically. A famous Medieval example was the popular Latin graffiti:


This game was popular in earlier issues of *Word Ways* (73-37, 81-244, 82-224), featuring, among others, these gems:

- **acronym** a condensed representation of nomenclature yielding meaning
- **bra** bust raising apparatus
- **cigar** carcinogenic incendiary gadget attenuating respiration
- **diet** disciplined intake encouraging thinness
- **ear** elementary audio receptor
- **letters** little etchings that transcribe every readable sound
- **lights** luminous incandescent gadgets helpful to sight
- **logophile** lovable old gent [or gal] outlandishly pursuing happiness investigating lexicographic enigmas
- **nose** natural olfactory sensor extension
- **mouth** muscular orifice, usually toothed, hungry
- **shovel** sharp, hand operated vertical earth lifter
- **smile** stretched mouth indicating likeable experience

Having not resurfaced for nearly three decades I thought readers might be ready for a revival. Here I offer at least one for each letter. If the list seems long, it’s very short compared to Robert Patton’s proposed *complete* Acronymic Dictionary of English (73-37). It does, however, lend some credence to the possibility of an all-inclusive list, although in reality I expect a majority of words would be intractable, especially those containing jqxyz, very short words and overly specific hard-to-define nouns. And most long words would have to contain lots of ‘padding’.

Regarding hyphenated words I cheat and use a double standard: either both elements are counted or only the first. Some of the following run two or more acronyms together, like polyanagrams.

- **antonym** a name taking opposite nuance, yea meaning
- **antonymic** affinity-negative to other name you mention; in contradistinction
- **arm** articulated reaching mechanism
- **ass** anus, shit sphincter
- “*asshole*” a stupid shit hazarding our level emotions
- **bears** bruins (Eat anything, really slumber.)
- **bold** brazen, of large daring (Brave, or largely duped?)
bread baked, readily eaten appetising dough
cold chilly, of low degrees °
cop [n.] constable or policeman
cop [vb] come onto passively, can't obviate politely
cows [n.] 1. cattle; 2. obese women; 3. subdues (Is this 3-for-1 cheating, or a bargain?)
ditto Do it thus twice over.
entire Everything's neatly there, isn't requiring elements.
eyes encryptors yielding electromagnetic sensitivity
fast for a short time
faster fleet and speedy transit, enhanced rate
faster than light forbidden acceleration: speedier than electromagnetic rays
(The heavens await no landings if glow holds top.)
(ie, the heavens outside our solar system; no neighbourhood stars have solid planets)
fed Finished eating dinner, fulfilled eating desire.
fire flame; ignition-released energy
“Fit in!” (Free in thought it's not.)
gather glean and take home earned resources
gem geologically exciting mineral
good greatly outdoing ordinary dullness
hands holding-arms-near-digits structures
heavy having extreme avoirdupois/volume yield (heavy dense)
hot heightened overall temperature, high on thermometer
ibis iconic bird (Is sacred.)
inside Is nested (sequestered), isn't denied entry.
job just one's business
joker jester offering kinky ending rib-ticklers
kindergarten kids in nursery deriving education regarding group activity, reciprocal treatment, ego normalisation
legs locomotives earning ground scissors-like
Lethe lotus-eaters' torpid heedlessness experience
lie Largely inaccurate equivocation, literalness isn't evident.
logology Linguistic oddities, gematria, onomastics, letter-ordering games—yahoo!
love 1. liking one very especially; 2. licking one very erotically
mind mysterious intellectual nous domain
nobs niche: “old boy” Sirs (network of bull shit!) (Except Sir Jeremy Morse of corse!)
now no other when “Now!” “Not on Wednesday!” (a self-referential: applicable generally but Not on Wednesday!)
obey Observe boss's edict, yes-man, operate beyond ego, yield.
open only partly enclosed now (corral, room)
“pig” policeman in gear
pigs porcine individuals, genus Sus
quart quantitation unit; application: runny things (Like a quart horse?)
replica reproduction exact, perfect, lacking in creative additions
rip up Rend into pieces, undoing perfection.
rob relieve of belongings
scissors  shearing/cutting instrument ("snips"), serrated or razor sharp
senses  skin, eyes, nose, stoma, ears, soma  [skin = touch, temperature, pain; stoma (mouth) = taste;
  ears = hearing, gravity and balance; soma (body) = proprioception or positional body awareness]
shit  sewage haul in turds
siblings  "sisters" including brothers; location initially: nest group situation
snowflakes  sixfold nodules of water forming lovely and kaleidoscopic "ephemeral stones"
sow  Seed out (whatever: sorghum, oats, wheat...)
sows  swine (only 'women' swine)
synonyms  "same yet not": other notations yet mean same
three  two, having received extra element
toe  terminal oblong extremity
top  [n.]  tip of projection; totally "on" part
top  [vb]  trounce other participants
udders  "underside dairies" delivering emulsion-rich soup
valid  verified and locked-in (data)
vase  vessel as stem enclosure
violins  vibration instruments offering lyrical intonations (non-fretted strings)
waste  what afterward survives to eliminate
wit  wide in thought; where ideas triumph
xerox  xeric exact reproduction of X
yearn  You eagerly anticipate receiving "need".
"yes"  You essentially sympathise.
zealous  zestful energy about loved object, utterly serious
zebras  zoological entities bearing regularly arranged stripes

I hope you'll be tempted to play this open-ended game again and send your best efforts to the editor
or to the Kickshaws editor.

NATURAL ORDER

SIR JEREMY MORSE
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The quaking jungle
Becomes a zone
Of unvexed order
When the lion preys—
  A buck dies fighting;
  Jackals moan;
  Opaque forest
  Curves in waxy haze.