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SOME ODD TITLE MALARKEY

DMITRI A. BORGMANN
Dayton, Washington

You've written a brilliant article for Word Ways - one destined
to change the future of logology. All that's left for you to do be-
fore you mail it in to the editor is to give it a suitable title.
That's where you get stuck. Days, weeks, months pass: you sweat
and you struggle, but nothing that you can possibly call your
work of genius comes to your mind. In despair, you throw the ar-
ticle into your fireplace, incinerating it. Both you and logology
have suffered an irreparable loss.

How often has something of the sort just delineated occurred to
you? More often than you'd care to admit? Well, worry no more! I've
come to your rescue, with a surefire, simple formula for creating
titles that will dazzle both you and your readers. The secret lies
in the magic number 227. As readers of my first book, Language
on Vacation, already know, that number has a mystical quality
in the domain of recreational linguistics. Whatever it touches is
transformed at once, acquiring supernatural force, validity, and
interest. This is neither the place nor the time for launching into
an erudite mathematical explanation of the virtues intrinsic to the
number 227 - let it suffice for me to remind you that the simplest
expression of pi, a number of great significance in higher math-
ematics, using integers, is the fraction 227/7. It follows that the
only right title for an article intended for publication in Word
Ways is a title the numerical values of the letters in which add
up to 227. To determine the total numerical value of a title, you
simply replace each letter in it with its numerical position in the
alphabet: A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, ..., Z = 26. You add the individual
letter values to arrive at the numerical value of the title. If that
value is 227, it's a guaranteed winner; otherwise, you reject it.

Consider the title of this article, for example: SOME ODD TITLE
MALARKEY. Appropriate as you may believe the title to be (and,
mind you, 227 is an odd, not an even, number), I did not select
it haphazardly. Check, and you will discover that it is, indeed,
a title with a value of 227. Neither was it the only possible title
for this article having that particular value. Here are 16 other
"227" titles that I considered before settling on SOME ODD TITLE
MALARKEY:

Dreaming up Fine Titles
The Name Is Everything!
Finding the Real Right Name
A Numerological "Renaming"
A Timely Onomastic Find

A Study of Ideal Titles
The Grandeur of Titles
The Title Struggles
Fine Logological Titles
Dazzling Onomastics
Self-Generating Titles
Titles to Treasure
Some Potent Titles
English-Language Titles

Check them out – every one of these titles is highly appropriate to this article, and every one adds up to precisely 227. Why is each title so uniquely appropriate? Undoubtedly, because it has a value of 227.

Next, look at two of the regular features in *Word Ways* – the Colloquy and Kickshaws. Since these titles far fall short of 227 in value, I’m afraid that they just aren’t right for their respective purposes. All is not lost, however – I urge the editor to waste no time in changing the title Kickshaws to the more expressive and numerologically correct KICKSHAWS FOR THE READER. As for the Colloquy, the damage there can also be repaired, but the feature will have to be divided into two separate articles, bearing the titles THE ENGLISH COLLOQUY and THE FOREIGN COLLOQUY. This particular pair of titles, by the way, brings an extremely interesting fact to light: the equivalence of ENGLISH and FOREIGN. In other words, English and foreign words, puzzles, logological curiosities, and articles on subjects in the field of recreational linguistics are really the same, so just ignore any superficial differences that catch your eye – they are totally insignificant.

To get you started on the road to successful title creation, I have devised numerous potentially useful titles, all of them representatives of the “227” genre. Please feel free to help yourself to my generous selection. By using some of these titles for your articles, you will acquire proficiency in the art of 227-naming, enabling you to go on and originate such titles yourself.

Would you like to prepare an article on word squares? Here are some ready-made and numerologically valid titles on that subject for you. Simply choose one of the titles, then write your article to match the title:

- Order 7 Word Squares
- A Cameo for Eight-Squares
- Welsh Word Squares

Numerals (such as the 7, above) occurring in titles receive their own values. You have the option, if you so desire, of assigning a value of “1” to any punctuation mark (such as the hyphen used above) occurring in one of your titles, if it is needed to realize the all-important goal of a 227 title total. Three of my five suggested titles reflect the rapidly mounting interest in foreign-language word squares. For my part, I can’t wait to see an article discussing Xhosa word squares. Xhosa is a Bantu language spoken in southern Africa. It has made many valuable contributions to English lexicography, beginning with its name, in which the letter combination XH is pronounced K, and the plural of which is, astonishingly, AMAXHOSA.

How about an article on anagrams? Here are some available titles in that field:
Verbal Metamorphoses
Superanagrams on Parade

Notice how most of these titles encourage to turn out work of extraordinary caliber. That just goes to show how wholesome "227" titles are.

Are transposals your strong point? Or those special transposals known as reversals? Try one of these titles on for size:

Perfect Transposals
Word Metamorphoses

If you prefer to combine reversals to produce palindromes, the title you want is "Authentic Palindromes."

Just possibly, you like crossword puzzles. Here is a fine selection of titles dealing with them:

English Crosswords
Foreign Crosswords

Once again, observe the equivalence of ENGLISH and FOREIGN.

Are you at work on that frontier of logology facing the world of high-quality, sesquipedalian, esoteric English? If you enjoy such English and wish to write about it, here are titles for your consideration:

Elevated English Words
Elevated Words on Parade
Lofty English Terms
The Toughest Words
Words to Conjure By
An Abidity for Words
Majestic English Prose
Eternal English Set Free

Are you, by contrast, into foreign-language logology? Use one of the following titles:

Foreign Terminology
Foreign Words on Parade
Foreign "English" Words
English Words in Limbo!
Nigerian Words and Names
Majestic Foreign Prose

The Xhosa language has, you will note, surfaced again. Don't you think it's about time you dashed off an article on the subject?

Is the interface between logology and the world of mathematics your specialty? I haven't forgotten you:

Arithmetical Logology
Reveling among Figures

Conceivably, what fascinates you is the future of English and English logology. I have just the thing for you - choose:

An English Tomorrow!
Tomorrow: A Vision
New Words in Waiting
A Glimpse of the Future
Extraterrestrial English
A Supernatural Word
Are you given to discoursing about figures of speech? A couple of possibilities:
A Tropical Thesaurus
A Real Tropological Canon
Would you like to prepare an article glorifying logology or English, or present some outstanding achievement in the field? Once again, you have multiple options open to you:
English Word Legerdemain
A Paroxysm of English
Language Skillfulness
Particular Logology
True English Unleashed
High-Powered Logology
Ripsnortin' English
Let Logology Thrive!
Positively English!
Spectacular Logology
An English Perspective
It is obviously impossible for me to foresee every possible subject about which you might wish to write a Word Ways article. Here, therefore, is a potpourri of other "227" titles, to one of which you may be inspired to attach an article:
Logological Horseplay
Superficial Logology
English for Word Buffs
Verbalization, Limited
Heterosexual English
Miscellaneous Words
English Terminology
Logological Word Charades
Terminological English
The Case of the Missing "T"
Collections of Words
Unappropriateness
Expert Word Diamonds
Aid for Unfortunates
Obscene Words or Names
Profound Thoughts
English Words on Parade
Note that, if the caliber of your articles is as high as it ought to be, then my final suggestion, "Profound Thoughts," becomes an all-purpose title: you can use it for any article in which you present topnotch thinking. If you feel that one-word titles are the "in" thing today, dream up something that you can title "Unappropriateness" - say, a nasty critique of an article in Word Ways by someone else. If you wish to emulate me and dispense advice about how to write articles to other readers, use the title "Aid for Unfortunates."

I have, altogether, presented more than 100 titles of the "227" stripe here. It follows that you can always find one to suit your particular tastes and needs. The wide range of suggestions I have made will also give you the expertise you need to construct limitless numbers of additional "227" titles yourself. Consequently, there is no further need for you, ever again, to use an ordinary title, or to discard an article for want of an appropriate title.

From now on, I shall be computing the numerical values of all titles I see in Word Ways. Don't let me catch you using an unauthorized (non-227-total) title!