

## **KICKSHAWS**

DAVID MORICE  
Iowa City, Iowa

### **~ REALITY SPELL CHECK**

The following Kickshaws item is an essay-poem that clears up the issue of misspelling once and for all, and it leads to a new view of the English language. If you're a fan of English, you may wish to skip this item. If you continue reading it, you may find the words rather disturbing. Proceed at your own risk.

Every word is a misspelling of all other words.  
Therefore no word is spelled correctly.  
As a result, the meaning of anything  
that anyone writes  
can't be known for sure because  
each word is a misspelling  
of millions of other words, including  
all words in all foreign languages  
that use letters of the Latin alphabet.  
Since that's the case,  
what I am writing now  
means something different  
from the words you are reading.  
Each word is not  
the word you think it is.  
The opening statement,  
"Every word is a misspelling of all other words,"  
as well as everything that follows it  
is incorrect.

What I mean to say  
can't be expressed in words  
because no matter what words I use,  
they are always misspelled,  
and when I try to correct them,  
the corrections are likewise  
misspellings of other words.  
Our beloved English language  
is officially over  
as a form of communication.  
Sorry about that,  
but even English has its flaws.  
Now consider this:  
The words you see above,  
if they were corrected,  
wouldn't be a discussion  
about misspelling.  
What you are reading  
is actually a poem  
about William Shakespeare.  
Believe it or not, all of the plays  
in the Riverside Shakespeare  
are misspellings  
of the King James Bible,  
and vice versa.  
If you are a Christian,  
next time you go to church  
bring your Shakespeare  
and tell your pastor  
that this is where his flock  
should seek the truth  
to find the real religion.

All they have to do is correct the misspellings.

### ~ IOWA EDUCATION

Morty Sklar sent the little joke below. He lives in Queens, but he was an Iowa Citian in the 1970s. He writes poetry and comic dialog, and publishes anthologies of poetry under his imprint "The Spirit That Moves Us Press."

At a high school in Iowa, a group of students let three goats loose inside the school, but before turning them loose, they painted numbers on the sides of the goats:

1, 2, and 4.

School Administrators spent most of the day looking for No. 3.

~ **IOWA ACRONYM**

Iowa is actually known for its excellent education systems, but the Grant Wood image of hayseeds sitting around with pitchforks drawn is the image most people seem to have of Iowa. People have made IOWA into an acronym: Idiots Out Walking About. It occurred to me that it would be interesting to see comical acronyms for other states. Readers are invited to send acronyms for all 50. Here is one for...

IDAHO = Imbeciles Dancing Around Hand Organs

~ **STATE PUZZLE**

While we're still in the states, here is a puzzle to consider. Mike Morton created it, and you can try to solve it. It involves two sweatshirts, which Mike says "ironically, I really do have these two sweatshirts, and no others."

I have sweatshirts from two state universities. When I wear one, look in the mirror, and read phonetically, I get the other one. What are the two states?

STATE PUZZLE: One is HAWAII. The mirror image is IIAWAH, which is phonetically the same as the other, IOWA.

~ **REDUPE NAME**

Darryl Francis writes: "Moussa Koussa is an interesting second-order reduplication (like HONG KONG, HERKIMER-JERKIMER) which is in the press round about now, being the name of one of Gadaffi's henchmen. For more biographical details on this guy, see <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/middleeast/article2967549.ece>

~ **REAL ADS PLACED IN A U.K. NEWSPAPER**

Lindy Goodchild posted this list on the web, saying "These are classified ads, which were actually placed in a U.K. Newspaper." Lindy sounds surprised, but Word Ways readers know that such linguistic delicacies appear now and then in Kickshaws. The ones below are gems.

FREE YORKSHIRE TERRIER.

8 years old.

Hateful little bastard.

Bites!

FREE PUPPIES.

1/2 Cocker Spaniel, 1/2 sneaky neighbour's dog.

FREE PUPPIES.

Mother is a Kennel Club registered German Shepherd.

Father is a Super Dog, able to leap tall fences in a single bound.

COWS, CALVES: NEVER BRED.

Also 1 gay bull for sale.

JOINING NUDIST COLONY!

Must sell washer and dryer £100.

WEDDING DRESS FOR SALE.

Worn once by mistake.

Call Stephanie.

\*\*\*\* And the WINNER is... \*\*\*\*

FOR SALE BY OWNER.

Complete set of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 45 volumes. Excellent condition, £200 or best offer. No longer needed, got married, wife knows everything.

### ~ STATEMENT OF THE CENTURY

Statement of the Century (on Lindy Goodchild's website) thought from the Greatest Living Scottish Thinker. Billy Connolly:

"If women are so bloody perfect at multitasking, how come they can't have a headache and sex at the same time?"

### ~ APPLESAUCE CHRONICLES

Another harvest of applesauce for the spring season, courtesy of Louis Phillips.

ON DISCOVERING AN UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT  
OF WRITINGS BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

Poe ms.

Poems.

\*

SHAPE -- a perfect shape  
HAP -- out of shape  
HAP -- in shape  
I -- never in shape  
- shape -- shapeless  
Tip!mshapetop -- I'm in tip top shape

\*

CARRIE ANNE MEETS WITH SOME  
TROUBLE BOARDING A PLANE AT  
JFK AIRPORT

Can Carrie Anne  
Carry on  
Curry and  
Carrion?  
No. Carrie Anne  
Cannot carry on  
Curry and  
Carrion.

\*

What is the difference between a safe driver and a very unsafe driver?

One is wreckless; the other reckless.

\*

What's the difference between The Divine Comedy and spaghetti that is cooked and firm?

One is all Dante; the other el dente.

\*

What's the difference between a person who quits philosophizing and a mink coat?

One is ex pensive; the other expensive,

\*

Note to film actor Robert Donat about the bake sale:

Donat, do not donate doughnuts.

\*

Restaurant -- insect that frequently dines out  
Restaurant -- loud, long speech delivered in a dining establishment.

\*

A FOOTBALL GREAT IS SEEN IN CALIFORNIA

O.J.  
In Ojai?  
O gee.

\*

THE ANSWER IS: DINAH SHORE

THE QUESTION IS: What should you do when your ship docks in Paris?

\*

THE ANSWER IS: THE BEST DEAL IN TOWN

THE QUESTION IS: What do you get when you play poker with Bret Maverick?

\*

SHOCK ABSORBERS -- Censors.

\*

A QUESTION OF GEOMETRY

Why are well-rounded people often square?

\*

Sheridan Square at 70th Street and Broadway in NYC  
is actually a triangle.

\*

VISITING MY HOUSE, THE AUTHOR OF  
CHEATING AT CARDS (1963) -- JOHN  
WELCOME ASKS IF HE CAN USE THE  
BATHROOM

Welcome, John.  
Welcome, John Welcome.  
John, you are welcome  
To use my john,  
John Welcome.

~ **REMEMBER WHEN**

Bill Brandt searched his memory to come up with the following words that have acquired new definitions over the years. He recalls, "I remember seeing something like this list several years ago. I thought it might be time to expand it. Are you stating to feel a bit older these days? Can you remember when . . ."

Chips – were something used to dip into guacamole

Java – was something you got at the local coffee shop

Cookies – were what the Girl Scouts sold to raise money

Blackberries – were a fruit you put in your bowl of cereal

Serial Device – was a bowl and a spoon

Byte – was what you took out of a piece of pie

Compaq – was something a woman kept in her purse

Norton – was Jackie Gleason's sidekick on the Honeymooners show

Hard Drive – referred to a 4 day road trip from New York to L.A.

Monitor – was someone you found in the halls at the high school

Application – was something you filled out when you looked for a job

Virus – was something treated with a flu shot and a couple of aspirin

Worm – was something you put on a hook when you went fishing

Mouse – was a small animal you chased with a broom

Router – was a tool used for woodworking

Windows – were a pane to clean

Network – referred to a station you watched on TV

Backup – is what you did with your car when you parallel parked

RAM – referred to a sheep's gender

Excel – was what successful people did

Twitter – was what birds did in the trees

Apple – was something you gave to the teacher

Directory – was a large book the phone company sent you every year

Wireless – was another word for the radio

“Well,” Bill concludes, “if you can really remember all these things, then you really are much older than I.”

### ~ WACKY CELEBRITY BABY NAMES

Jeff Grant has found that celebrities often go wacky in the maternity ward and give their new offspring names that might never exist otherwise. For that, we thank the parents and we offer our condolences to the babies. Jeff asks, “Did you know that former world heavyweight boxing champ George Foreman has six sons all called George and a daughter named Georgetta? Most people have heard of TV chef Jamie Oliver's kids Daisy Boo, Poppy Honey, Petal Blossom Rainbow and Buddy Bear (will he get Buddy Oli?), and singer/activist Bob Geldof's daughters Fifi Trixibelle, Peaches Honeyblossom and Little Pixie. They also have a half-sister called Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily and dad Bob himself has Zenon as a middle name. These are pretty way-out but some celebs have really pushed the boundaries of wackiness.

Here are the top 10 nutty celebrity baby names, as chosen by John Perry, author of *You Called Me What?* There have no doubt been many more weird names bestowed since the book was published in 2006.”

1. Pilot Inspektor (son of actor Jason Lee)
2. Moxie CrimeFighter (comic/magician Penn Gillette's daughter)
3. Seven Sirius (son of hip-hop star Andre 3000)
4. Moon Unit (daughter of eccentric rocker Frank Zappa)
5. Speck Wildhorse (singer John Mellencamp's son)
6. Jermajesty (son of Jermaine Jackson, Michael's brother)
7. Pirate (son of Jonathon Davis, vocalist with Korn)
8. Oriole Nebula (singer/songwriter Donovan's daughter)
9. Sage Moonblood (actor Sylvester Stallone's son)
10. Whizdom (daughter of basketball star Jayson Williams)

### ~ THE MOST UNUSUAL BABY NAME OF ALL

“It could be worse,” Jeff continues. “Even the maddest of celebs can't match this. In 1991 a Swedish couple went to court to fight for the right to name their son Brfxccxxmnpccclllmmnprxvclmncckssqlbb1116. It was a 'pregnant, expressionistic development that we see as an artistic creation'. However, for ease, they intended to pronounce it 'Albin'. A judge ruled against them.”

How was that name chosen? I have two cats, and both have had their turn at my computer keyboard, and both came up with words that have the same “pregnant, expressionistic development that my cats saw as an artistic creation.” I'll bet the name was either formed by



holding the keyboard up to the child's hand, or the parents have a pet that tapped the keys, or the parents come from a country whose language has words spelled in similar ways.

### ~ PENSTROKE WORDS

Jeff tells of a little-explored form of wordplay: "A friend recently sent me a wordplay column from an Australian newspaper in which they discussed 'pen stroke words' (my term - is there an official name for this sort of thing?). For example, the word SONNET in capitals requires 14 pen strokes, the number of lines in the poem itself, and BLACKJACK appropriately needs 21. SOCCER needs 11 strokes, the number of players in a team, and HOURS IN A DAY has 24 strokes. I'm sure I've seen this done before, probably in 'Word Ways', but can't remember when. Perhaps readers can come up with further examples.

My reply to Jeff: "I haven't heard of this before. It will definitely make a nice kickshaw item. The only thing I recall is Howard Bergerson's discovery that TWENTYNINE has 29 straight lines, and it's the only number that counts its straight lines. In fact, it seems to be the only number that counts its pen strokes of any sort.

Pen stroke words expand the possibilities, and one has to be creative in figuring out words that have some numerical reference. I like it alot! PLAY GOLF has 18 pen strokes, one for each hole. JULY has 7 pen strokes, and it's the 7th month. FREEZING POINT is 32. LUCK has 7. DOZEN has 13, a Baker's Dozen. APRIL FOOLS DAY has 30, the number of days in April. (April Fools! it has only 27 strokes.) UNITED STATES has 13 in each of the two words, referring to the original 13 colonies. PING PONG has 8 strokes in each word, and PING PONG is eight letters long. That might not be very interesting, but it's a fact. My name, DAVE J. MORICE, has 26 pen strokes, one for each letter of the alphabet. (My full name, DAVID JENNINGS PATRICK MORICE, has 26 letters.) Hey, this is addictive!

### ~ COMMENTS ON PREVIOUS WORDWAYS

Re Scrabble Contest 99 Revisited, Jeff adds: "as mentioned in the November Kickshaws, the 71-point solution was just an example. The contest winner scored 142 points with the same words as Jeremy, but my best effort was actually 162 points for RHYTHMS (94) + TskTSKS/ST (68) = 162. However, as implied in the latest Colloquy, Allan Simmons (UK) has discovered a 171-point solution. This is achieved by playing NYMPHLY (98) with the L on the centre square, followed by NyMPHLY/Ny (73). Can anyone beat this with allowable Scrabble words?" Lower case letters in the solutions designate blanks.)

I see you've mentioned Allan Simmon's 171 point solution to the Scrabble contest (p21). Thanks for putting in my request for a copy of 'Winning Words For Players of Scrabble'. Fingers crossed someone has one. I guess if they want to contact me they will get in touch with you or Jerry.

Poetry City Marathon is amazing! What an incredible book! Great pics on p31. I've seen photos of the 4,032-page 'Complete Miss Marple' and it looks legit, but I have to say the picture I saw on the Net of the author of 'Obama and Pluralism' holding his book gives me some

doubts about its claim. To me that book doesn't look anywhere near 13.4 inches thick. In fact it looks about the thickness of my largest book (surprise, surprise, a dictionary!) which is 'The Century Dictionary', 1915 ed., 8,500 pages on rice paper, 8.3 inches thick.

The 'Wikipedia' book looks similar in size to yours. Well done, I hope you make it into the Guinness Book of Records!

'Stately Palindromes' on p30 - the second one should probably read 'Had ALASKA, etc., teak salad, ah!' but I'd like to suggest a nicer one - 'Had ALASKA? I do Kodiak salad, ah!'

## STATELY PALINDROMES

In a series of emails, Jeff Grant sent a set of palindromes—one for each state that doesn't have its own stately palindrome yet. Here are the dromes with their email comments. Each email + dromes entry is separated from the rest by asterisks.

\*

Here's another stately palindrome for you.

Yes, Rej, we note cars race to NEW JERSEY

(There are 21 people with the first name Rej in US telephone directories. In some cases it's probably just a variant of Reg (Reginald). Also people named Rej on Facebook, etc.)

\*

Pat and I haven't been physically affected by the terrible events in Christchurch but the whole country is of course feeling for the people down there. We have many friends who live in the quake zone and thankfully they seem to be all OK. Several have severe damage to their houses though. It just makes you realise how fragile we humans are.

I've had a go at palindromizing a few more states. Some will be VERY difficult. As you can see I've used some imagination (palindromic licence) here. (improvement?)

No, Geronimo, order a red room in OREGON! (for a 'Red' Indian?)

DNA, Lyra, models led - O MARYLAND! (Lyra is a girl's name in various name books)

Alec in MICHIGAN, a man, a GI. H.C. "I'm nice, la!"

A 'nil' - O Rach, Tronni's in NORTH CAROLINA! (Rach = Rachael, Tronni 4X in US phone books)

Anil or (achtu!) Osborn even rob SOUTH CAROLINA. (achtu! = a sneeze)

\*

Here are a few more. (not necessarily an improvement...)

Won pot, sip piss (is simple). Help MISSISSIPPI stop now!

Tense nut! PENNSYLVANIA is Asia in a V; Lys 'n Neptune's net. (Lys= Lis (lily), Names book)

Di Arnot (g'nih!) saw a WASHINGTON raid. (g'nih! = a sleepy 'goodnight')

'Masai' Nig, Riv T sew still - it's WEST VIRGINIA, Sam! (2 rappers sewing??)

Getting harder and more strained but I've seen worse!

\*

I haven't stopped yet! Some of them are definitely getting more cryptic. I reckon we're up to about 38 now (12 left). Maybe we can check when (if?) it gets down to the last 10.

Wot's 'Et tu, Cit Cen'? No CONNECTICUT test (ow!)

Dock corner: we see GEORGIA, Haig - roe, geese, wren, rock cod. (I like this\ one)

Now, Slade, MASSACHUSETTS (a last 't', 'es'). Uh, Cass, a medal's won!

O Stir 'em, MISSOURI! Bajree beer, jabiru, Os - simmer it so! (bajree, Indian millet; jabiru, a stork; Os = Oswald) a strange meal...

Budd 'n Al's, i.e. 'doh, re, mi' time - RHODE ISLAND Dub!

Prawn acai, Nig, river of ore! VIRGINIA can warp! (Nig = Nigel) not sure about that dish either!

\*

Here's another batch. By my reckoning there are only 6 to go now: ARKANSAS, CALIFORNIA, LOUISIANA, MINNESOTA, NEBRASKA and NEW MEXICO. Some of those will be tough. But after NEW HAMPSHIRE, anything's possible!

Refill a COLORADO Eden (I video, Joe). Divine Deodar! O Local Lifer! (deodar, sacred cedar)

Not KENTUCKY data: Dyk cut nekton.

Oo! Teri H's PM. Ah! We negate jet-age NEW HAMPSHIRE too. (Teri H = Teri Hatcher, PM = permanent magnet - yes, really! Check out MW11

Collegiate Dict)  
Not NEW YORK, Roy went on. (an old classic)

\*

Here's another NEW YORK 'drome:

Tie to NEW YORK, Roy, we note it.

Here are the final six. It's been quite a challenging exercise!

Deliver 'em ARKANSAS! Na, Kramer (Evil Ed).

Damn! Ignore CALIFORNIA rain, Ro. Filacer on gin? Mad! (Ro = Rowena;  
filacer, officer who filed writs)

New LOUISIANA is I/U, Olwen. (I/U = independent + unclassified)

We decide, sub MINNESOTA, mock-comatose 'n nimbused, ice dew.

"NEBRASKA or Canada", Dana croaks. Ar, Ben...

NEW MEXICO foci? X 'em, Wen! (Wen = Wendy)

### ~ HOSNI-DROME

In the wake of the uprising in Egypt, the following palindrome, written by John Connett several years ago, seems prophetic today.

HE'S A CAMEL IN NIGER, DAKAR—A BUM IN SOHO—HOSNI MUBARAK,  
A DREG IN NILE MARACAS, EH?

### ~ CAMPUS GUNS

Iowa has recently joined a few other states in allow a person to carry guns if he or she has them licensed. Kirkwood College, where I teach, has made it a rule that there are no guns allowed. If a student brings a gun, he or she gets expelled. Ove Michaelsen sent the following palindrome about it:

"S'up, Mac? No snug guns on campus?"

### ~ SLIP OF THE TONGUE

“At the clinic today for my regular check-up,” Ove reports, “ a new and very attractive nurse was trying to get my sleeve free for my blood pressure. I struggled with it a bit before finding the other sleeve button.

She asked, "Can you get it UP--there?"

I ignored her embarrassing slip, but about 40 one-liners crossed my mind. The female staff were in hysterics and her face turned fire engine red. I didn't want to mock her professionalism.

### ~ LEWIS CARROLL'S PSEUDONYM

Mike Morton comments on Lewis Carroll, author of two books starring a girl named Alice: “I learned only recently that Dodgson was an Anglican deacon, and that he derived his pseudonym through Latin forms of his last and first names. Wikipedia says: “...Lewis was the anglicised form of Ludovicus, which was the Latin for Lutwidge, and Carroll an Irish surname similar to the Latin name Carolus, from which the name Charles comes.”

All this makes me wonder if it's more than coincidence that Martin Gardner's book THE ANNOTATED ALICE anagrams to THE LATINATE DEACON.

### ~ A POEM

My sister Michele and I wrote this collaboration poem in 1977. She passed away recently from brain cancer. I found this poem in a file.

Lets write  
What's right     What! you can't  
write. Write's not right.  
Who's Wright    He's on the right  
performing a sacred rite.  
Right? Write I mean right.  
I mean Wright  
O.K. I got it straight... now

Write performed a sacred Wright,  
Right?  
Rite! Rite performed a sacred write  
Right after Wright  
If Rite performed a sacred write  
which way did he go north or south,  
east or west. I am lost, my directions  
were never rite.  
He went left, not right  
He went write out the door

He went rite through the window  
He was always Right  
You're so Wright, write, rite, and right

### ~ STRAVINSKY ON HUXLEY

In spite of twenty-five years in Southern California, [Aldous Huxley] remains an English gentleman. The scientist's habit of examining everything from every side and of turning everything upside down and inside out is also characteristic of Aldous. I remember him leafing through a copy of *Transition*, reading a poem in it, looking again at the title of the magazine, reflecting for a moment, then saying, 'Backwards it spells NO IT ISN(T) ART.' – Igor Stravinsky, *Dialogues*, 1982

### ~ AT THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Rich Lederer sends this message from Down Under. "G'die, mite, from Melbourne, where I've been attending the Australian Open. It's clear--and this is a possible item for kickshaws--that the way to become a top professional tennis player is to hail from a country that starts with the letter 'S'--to wit (and in order of world ranking)..."

1. Rafael Nadal - Spain
2. Roger Federer - Switzerland
3. Novak Djokovic - Serbia
4. Robin Soderlong - Sweden
5. Andy Murray – Scotland

### ~ GRIM REAPER RIDDLE

Dead is what all God's children eventually wind up being, but what do a bird, a cat, a dog, a duck, a horse, and a pigeon have in common?

### ~ HOWLERS

"Howlers—unintended misstatements in speech or writing which for some reason are quite funny—seem to me to come in two varieties," says Jim Puder. "One is the ignorant howler, such as a schoolchild might innocently include in a composition, that results from incomplete or erroneous knowledge of a subject. The other variety is the careless howler, a funny misstatement

by someone who knows better; it results from a simple lack of attention to what one is saying or writing.

A nice example of a careless howler may be found on p. 107 of the Sept. 20, 2010 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine. In a discussion of the allegedly innate human tendency to parodize, the writer avers that "...*These actions are not learned: in experiments with identical twins born in different cities ('commuting twins' studies), subjects exhibit strikingly similar behaviors.*" My initial reaction to this statement was to wonder, firstly, how on earth the researchers had managed to arrange the initial conditions for this experiment, and secondly, how much they had had to pay the expectant mothers to go along with their project.

What makes this particular howler especially interesting to me is that its proud author (nameless here) is identified by *The New Yorker* (p. 10) as a professor of English at Harvard University."

My reply to Jim: "Question about the two varieties of howlers. I teach *Elements of Writing*, and I was wondering if there might not be a howler variety in between the two you described. The best example is when the computer screws up your spelling by choosing an alternative wrong word, and you don't re-read, and thus have a strange thing lurking in your sentences. One woman wrote a paper and did a spell check for *wich*, intending "which." but the computer translated it as "witch." It was an automatic spell checker, where you type a word wrong and it adds the letters it thinks should be there. Her paper used the word "witch," witch was incorrect."

### **ADDING DOUBLES**

Susan Thorpe came up with this tricky little game of words. "Start by inserting a doubled letter into a word and then split the doubled letter to make 2 new words.

Following these rules the word LONE, with OO inserted (LOOONE) and then split, makes the words LOO and ONE.

Now insert TT between LOO and ONE and split again.

LOO and ONE become LOOT and TONE respectively.

Do the same again using SS.

Thus LOOT and TONE become LOOTS and STONE.

Now have a go yourself starting with the river SEINE...

A variation on the above starts off a before. Inserting EE into THAT makes THE and EAT. However, from here, treat each of these two words separately. Inserting YY into THE makes THY and YE. Inserting HH into EAT makes EH and HAT.

Can the reader conjure up more examples?

### **ADDING ON THE ALPHABET**

Regarding the game below, Susan warns that it “is not as easy as it might appear!” If the reader has any to contribute, send ‘em in!

add A and I’M now nearly ready to AIM  
add B and the MEAL (burp!) is largely to BLAME

add C and the MAP leads us on to the CAMP  
add D and PAM, exhausted, is now rather DAMP

add E and you’ll find a VASE in the EAVES  
add F and ELSA, the lion, has FLEAS

add G and RAE puts his car in GEAR  
add H and his EAR is now able to HEAR

add I and ANNE becomes quite INANE  
add J and ENA turns into JANE

add K and the letter PEE closes the KEEP  
add L and the APE takes an almighty LEAP

add M and SUE immediately begins to MUSE  
add N and WES, in contrast, listens to the NEWS

add O and ZOE, the dog, got somewhat muddy in the OOZE  
add P and now it’s SHOO to Zoe and her offensive POOHS

add Q and SUET pudding was her strange QUEST  
add R and after a tennis SET she needed a REST

add S and the dog’s YAP preceded the SPAY  
add T and it’s OKAY to call that lizard TOKAY

add U and he LEANS over, the box to UNSEAL  
add V and the pub serves him ALE, to go with the VEAL

add W and, HEY, the milk has lost its WHEY  
add X and RAY is puzzled by his strange X-RAY

add Y and WE marvel at the stately old YEW  
add Z and the kids all yell OO at the ZOO!

### ~ KEEP-AWAKE QUESTIONS

Doug Hoylman wonders about questions that keep him awake at night. Do you have any questions like the ones that Doug sends here:



Why is someone who tends to a person a caregiver, while someone who tends to a property is a caretaker?

Why are there bystanders and passers-by, but no bypassers nor standers-by?

Why can you have absent-mindedness or presence of mind, but not present-mindedness nor absence of mind?

### ~ WORDPLAY POEMS

Games Magazine published 10 poems that I wrote using a different literary constraint for each poem. Here are a few more wordplay poems with the constraint listed in parentheses.

\*

#### A PANAMA HAT

(The first line has A in every odd-numbered position, the second has B, and so on to Z.)

A panama hat,  
Bob. A bib. A baby by  
Coco? Cock,  
Did a dodo do? Dad,  
Eve met eleven ewes.  
Fifi, fife!  
Go gag a gig. Gigi, go.  
He? Hi-ho! Hah! Who?  
It is in it. I, nit, I tip. I'm  
Jojo, Jo. Juju?  
Kak? OK, I KO kak.  
Lo, Lulu! Lo, Lil! A lily,  
Mum? Am I my mime, Mimi?  
No nun. Anon, a nan in one.  
O, so hot, O dog on oboe.  
Pup! A pupa pops pep's papa.  
Q? A qat? A qi!  
Rarer, a rarer ore,  
Sis is a so-so SOS as I sas  
To tat it, a tot ate. Tut!  
Up, uh, um, us—  
Viva Viv! Ivy vav.  
We wow awe, waw!  
Xi x's X.  
Yo, ye yoyo! Yay, eye yaya! Yiyiyi!

Zazu, zo!

\*

### APPALOOSA BOB, YELLOWY ZIZZ

(In this poem, there are 26 words, one per letter of the alphabet, and the words appear in alphabetic order. Each begins and ends with the same letter.)

Appaloosa Bob, comic, delighted everyone,  
Fluff glistening. Hush, Idi! Jaqaj kink.  
Level minimum navigation onto submarine's  
Tumult! Urdu vav? Winnow Xerox, yellowy zizz.

\*

### AI, SEE?

(The words alternate two and three letters in length from start to finish. Each couplet rhymes at the end. An "ai" is a sloth.)

An ape is not it.  
Now it can be fit

At one or two or  
Six or ten, so for

An owl is not it  
But it can go sit

At ten or six or  
Two or one, go, for

It saw an old ai  
Net an ape. Oh, why

An ape is big. No,  
Owl is not on foe.

\*

### THE ORACLE'S JOB

(Each couplet is composed of lines with rhymes in the middle instead of the beginning or end. In this case, the rhyming words begin on the second accented syllable of each line.)

The ancient sages had no one  
To write the pages of their lives.

Instead they hired an oracle  
Who rarely tired as sages did.

She carved out words on walls of caves  
And fed the birds that landed near.

The hours were long. The job was dull.  
She felt it wrong to fear her boss.

“If he would fire me, I’d fire him.  
I’d gladly tire my friends and foes

By telling all I lost my job.  
Next day I’d crawl back to my boss

And beg and plea for my job back  
On bended knee. He’d tell me no.

\*

#### ADMIRAL FOOTSIE’S ODE

(Meet Admiral Footsie, who used to be in the Navy Marching Band. He fancies himself a very opinionated musician, and he wrote this ode about everything from the theater to the economy. He intended it to be a musical march. It alternates couplets and quatrains, but where is the music? See Answers and Solutions.)

Admiral Footsie:  
“I dramatise fool.

Don red,  
Mix fat,  
Sop lap,  
Tip dog.”

Admiral Footsie  
To familiar odes:

“Don’t read  
Mine, Fate.  
Soak lake  
Tide, dope.”

Admiral Footsie:  
“Is food material?”

Doors retry  
Miles. Fable:  
Sober laugh  
Tires donut.”

A load mortifies  
Admiral Footsie:

“Dolors really  
Mirror farces  
Soaped lastly,  
Timing domino.”

Admiral Footsie:  
“Afraid? Smile, too.

Dollars replate  
Million fancies.  
Sotadic laughter  
Tickles dormice.”

“Editorials foam.”  
—Admiral Footsie.