

TWO HUNDRED EIGHT-SQUARES?

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In his article "More Quality Word Squares" in the February 1988 issue of *Word Ways*, Dmitri Borgmann exhibited the four finest eight-by-eight word squares known to him. The first example is clearly the best of those shown, as the others all resort to two-word terms which rather detract from their standing.

The two squares below would rank on a par with the "Agaricus" square in my opinion.

DECISIVE	ROSETTER
EGOMANIA	OVERRULE
COMPUTES	SEQUINED
IMPOTENT	ERUPTIVE
SAUTERNE	TRITICAL
INTERRER	TUNICATE
VIENNESE	ELEVATES
EASTERED	REDELESS

The example on the left is a slight modification of an eight-square originally published in 1902 by Charles B. Stewart. It employs all solid-form words from Webster's Second Edition. The square on the right was constructed by Darryl Francis, and uses solid-form words from Webster's Third Edition, except REDELESS, which is in the Second.

I recently discovered a set of base words which has proved incredibly fertile in producing eight-squares. Exhibited here are sixteen variant squares which all use essentially the same base.

NAVALIST	FINALIST	EUCARIST	SOLARIST
ANIMATER	IDOLATER	UDOMETER	ODOMETER
VITATIVE	NOTATIVE	CONATIVE	LOCATIVE
AMARINES	ALANINES	AMARINES	AMARINES
LATINERS	LATINERS	RETIRERS	RETIRERS
ITINERAR	ITINERAR	ITINERAR	ITINERAR
SEVERANE	SEVERANE	SEVERANE	SEVERANE
TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET

SOLARIST	GOMARIST	VOTARIST	BONAVIST
OXIMETER	ODOMETER	ODOMETER	ODOMETER
LIMITIVE	MONITIVE	TOTITIVE	NOTATIVE
AMIDINES	AMIDINES	AMIDINES	AMARINES
RETIRERS	RETIRERS	RETIRERS	VETIVERS
ITINERAR	ITINERAR	ITINERAR	ITINERAR
SEVERANE	SEVERANE	SEVERANE	SEVERANE
TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET

PAPALIST	METALIST	FINALIST	MEDALIST
ADULATOR	EMANATOR	ISOLATOR	EMULATOR
PUTATIVE	TAXATIVE	NOTATIVE	DURATIVE
ALANINES	ANAXONES	ALANINES	ALANINES
LATINERS	LATONERS	LATINERS	LATINERS
ITINERAL	ITINERAL	ITINERAL	ITINERAL
SOVERANE	SOVERANE	SOVERANE	SOVERANE
TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET
VOCALIST	MODALIST	MORALIST	MORALIST
OPINATOR	OXIDATOR	OZONATOR	OPERATOR
CITATIVE	DILATIVE	ROTATIVE	REGITIVE
ANAXONES	ADAMINES	ANAXONES	ARICINES
LATONERS	LATINERS	LATONERS	LATINERS
ITINERAL	ITINERAL	ITINERAL	ITINERAL
SOVERANE	SOVERANE	SOVERANE	SOVERANE
TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET	TRESSLET

A few of the terms may be unfamiliar. AMARINES, ALANINES, AMIDINES, and ARICINES are chemical compounds; LATINERS are interpreters; ITINERAL is an obsolete synonym for itinerant; SEVERANE and SOVERANE are early forms of sovereign; EUCARIST is a reformed spelling of eucharist; a UDOMETER is a rain-gauge; a NAVALIST is a supporter of naval interests; a SOLARIST is one who interprets ancient legends as being based on sun-worship; an OXIMETER measures oxidized haemoglobin in the blood; a GOMARIST is a supporter of the Dutch Calvinist Francis Gomar; a TOTITIVE is a type of mathematical integer; a BONAIVIST is a hyacinth bean; ANAXONES are types of nerve cells; LATONERS are brass-workers; ADAMINES are kinds of mineral; and REGITIVE means governing. All words can be found in either Webster's Second Edition or the Oxford English Dictionary, except VITATIVE, pertaining to the preservation of life, which is in Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary.

What is remarkable about the base is its flexibility. TRESSLET can be replaced by TRESSLES or TRESSLED, and SEVERANE by SEVERATE, an obsolete form of separate, or SEVERALE, an early spelling of several. Throughout the squares many other exchanges are possible, for example NOTATIVE/NOVATIVE, UDOMETER/UROMETER, MODALIST/SODALIST, ARICINES/ARIBINES, ODOMETER/OROMETER, MEDALIST/PEDALIST, MORALIST/CORALIST, and so on. It is likely that if every avenue were explored and every permutation recorded it would result in a total of over two hundred eight-by-eight word squares. Would anyone like to take on the challenge?