

VOWELINDROMES REVISITED

JOHN FOSTER

Auckland, New Zealand

In "The Vowelindrome" in the August **Word Ways**, Stephen Chism overlooked a third vowelindrome. All words but MEM are in Chambers 20th Century Dictionary:

MAM	mother
MEM	letter of Hebrew alphabet (in OSPD)
MIM	demure, prim
MOM	mother
MUM	silent; childish word for mother

Note that a PAP or TIT is found on a MAM, MOM or MUM!

More broadly, the five vowels can be interchangeably used to replace the asterisk in the following words (+ indicates Y may also be substituted). All words are found either in Chambers or in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary:

B*G, B*N, B*T, M*D, N*B, S+N, T+G, *RE
 B*LL, C*LL, C*RE, C+TE, H*CK, L*KE, L*NG, M*TE, T+NE, R*CK
 D*LLY, H*LLO, M*SSY, P*PPY
 B*GGED, B*LLED, B*TTED, R*CKED, R*TTED
 B*GGING, B*LLING, B*TTING, H*LLOED, R*CKING, R*TTING
 H*LLOING

Note that the five versions of H*LLO mean the same thing!

I have not so far found a word set longer than five letters which is not an extension of a verb. The nearest exception is VIRTUOSA, VIRTUOSE, VIRTUOSI, VIRTUOSO, VIRTUOUS which is spoilt by the transposition of the final two letters of the fifth word.