GRAPHING THE PROVERBS

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As my recent contributions to Word Ways show, I enjoy graphing. But, one day I got bored with long words which I would never use in writing or speech. Somehow, I thought of graphing proverbs. Here is a sample.

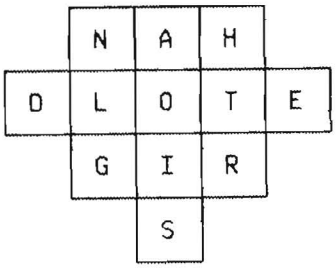
The reader is no doubt familiar with king and queen graphing (placing the different letters of a word on a chessboard in such a way that one can trace out the word by king's move or queen's move in chess). My original plan was to use king graphing only. However, the words in many proverbs do not all connect. Sometimes words like OF or IS or WILL don't make it. For some cases, I mixed in a second (related) proverb. This worked sometime, but the pair often became too much for a king graph. So, I shifted to queen graphing. Finding these challenging, I searched out longer proverbs, and now a new problem arose. I planned to present graphs as "decipher" puzzles but some are nearly impossible to decipher. So, I present them in a way that can be adapted to search-a-word puzzles.

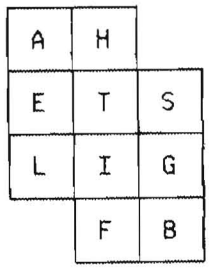
I have a computer program for king graphing. A potential graph was first laid out in rough form with pencil and paper. The guts were then entered into the computer program letter by letter until I recognized that a king graph was or was not possible. If it was, I usually let the computer finish, but sometimes completed the picture using tiles on a checkerboard. If a king graph was not possible, I tried to extend the king graph nucleus to a queen graph, again using tiles on a checkerboard. Often, all that was needed to complete a queen graph was an offset of one or two tiles; other times quite a bit of manipulation was needed. Occasionally a queen graph was not possible. For either type of graph, tiles were sometimes shifted to make the final form compact and/or symmetrical.

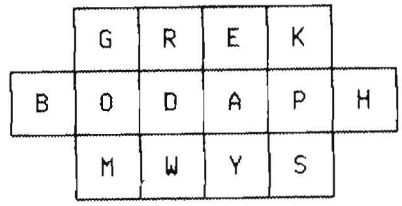
Some of these proverbs (or sayings or cliches) are not politically correct (a woman's place...) today. Those of Irish origin are easily recognized by the pugnacious tone. The proverb about the crows is of Scottish origin. Rooster-chicken analogies usually indicate a Spanish origin. Many proverbs appear in collections from several languages.

To illustrate the game, the following graphs may be read as "all that glitters is not gold", "big fish eat little fish" and "a graph a day keeps boredom away". The page preceding the graphs lists the proverbs to be searched for or taken as hints in deciphering. The Answers and Solutions keys each proverb on the list to the number accompanying its

graph. There are 61 proverbs on the list which are to be located in 51 different graphs. King graphs are in general more difficult to decipher than queen graphs because the tightness allows more false leads. It is possible that some graphs may include unplanned proverbs.

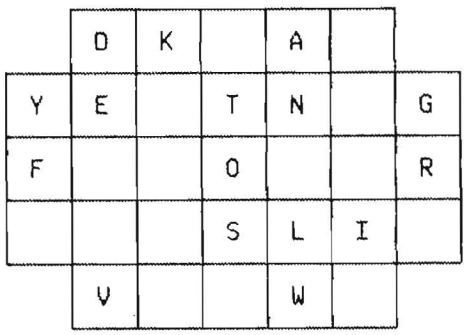




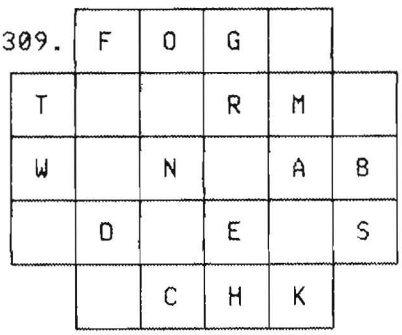


A limitation of both king graphs and queen graphs is that there can be no more than eight joins to a letter. With proverbs, that limit often occurs with the letter O, caused by DO NOT and/or YOU. DO NOT can be replaced with DON'T but I have avoided all contractions in this article. Often this replacement is of no value because some word like TOMORROW also calls for the TO join. The proverb "do not take love for granted or you will lose it" became graphable when YOU was replaced with YE, as shown below. The proverb "they speak of my drinking, but never of my thirst" became queen graphable when OF was replaced with ABOUT.

I noticed that the letters in graph 309 are all on the same color squares of a checkerboard, allowing me to reform the graph to the one on the right below. This is related to making ordinary search-a-word



309.



puzzles. The best plan there is to make two separate rectangular crossword arrays, convert each to a diagonal array, and intermix by placing each on a separate color. Then add connecting words orthogonally as you can. King graphs are actually search-a-word graphs if one considers each bigram to be a two-letter word.

001 A leopard cannot change his spots
002 A man's tongue has often broken his nose
003 A shut mouth makes no enemies
004 A woman's place is at home

005 Absence makes the heart grow fonder
006 Actions speak louder than words
007 After the game the king goes into the sack like the pawn
008 All that glitters is not gold
009 April showers bring May flowers
010 Bad news travels fast
011 Beggars cannot be choosers
012 Better safe than sorry
013 Beware of Greeks bearing gifts
014 Birds of a feather flock together
015 Bread is the staff of life
016 Death is the poor man's physician
017 Do not bite the hand that feeds you
018 Do not bite off more than you can chew
019 Every man has his price
020 Explore every avenue
021 Familiarity breeds contempt
022 Good luck beats early rising
023 Had you not been among the crows you would not have been shot
024 He that will enter Paradise must have a good key
025 He who sleeps with dogs wakes up with fleas
026 Hitch your wagon to a star
027 Ill-gotten gains never prosper
028 Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery
029 It is easier said than done
030 It takes two to tango
031 Leave no stone unturned
032 Leave well enough alone
033 Look before you leap
034 Love is blind
035 Love makes the world go around
036 Make hay while the sun shines
037 Melons and women are difficult to judge
038 Might is right
039 Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows
040 No news is good news
041 No pain, no gain
042 One rotten apple spoils the barrel
043 Politics makes strange bedfellows
044 Practice makes perfect
045 Rabbits and lies multiply easily
046 Shoemaker, stick to your last
047 Strike while the iron is hot
048 The best things in life are free
049 The early bird gets the worm
050 The early bird catches the worm
051 The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence
052 The pen is mightier than the sword
053 The wolf may lose his teeth, but never his nature
054 There is always an exception to the rule
055 There is no place like home

056 There is no honor among thieves
057 There is no fool like an old fool
058 Too many cooks spoil the broth
059 Words are to be weighed, not counted
060 You cannot teach an old dog new tricks
061 You reap what you sow

168.

		A		
	W	E	R	
S	K	B	I	G
	T	F	N	
		O		

173.

		A		
	W	E	R	
S	K	B	I	G
	T	F	N	
		O		

224.

		W	G		
	A	R	O	U	
M	K	V	L	D	N
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		T	S		

220.

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F	O	A	
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	K	S	

155.

	Y	A	M	
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	W	O	F	

156.

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	C	N	U	A

157.

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159.

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	S	M	A	

C	I	N	170.
M	A	S	D
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R	P	H	B

G	W	Y	R	171.
S	N	O	U	C
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B	V	A	D	

F	T	K	172.
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R	S	N	G
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C	N	S	174.
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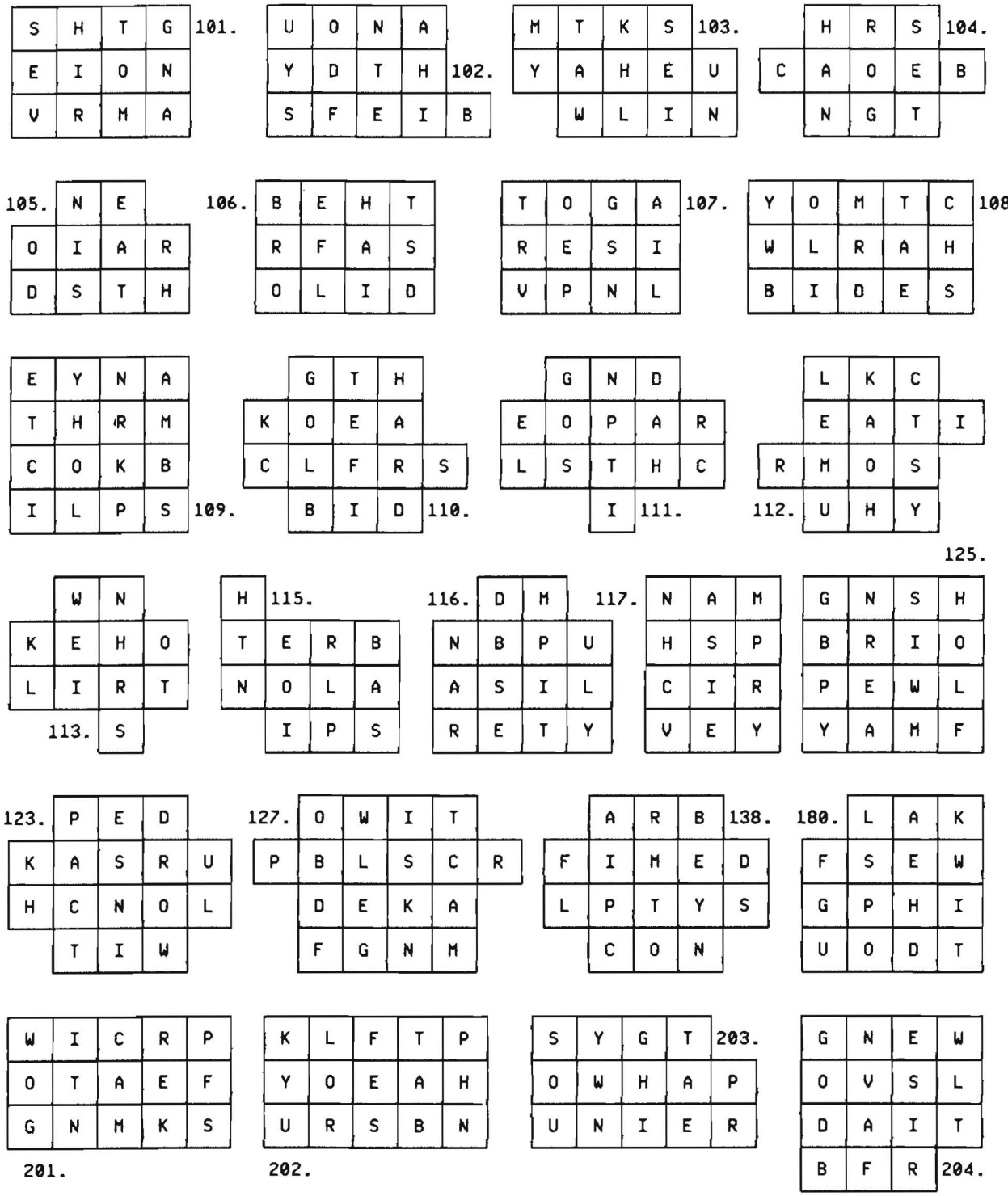
S H T G 101.
E I O N
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S F E I B
M T K S 103.
Y A H E U
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H R S 104.
C A O E B
N G T
105. N E
O I A R
D S T H
106. B E H T
R F A S
O L I D
T O G A 107.
R E S I
V P N L
Y O M T C 108
W L R A H
B I D E S
E Y N A
T H R M
C O K B
I L P S 109.
G T H
K O E A
C L F R S
B I D 110.
G N D
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L S T H C
I 111.
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112. U H Y
125.
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113. S
H 115.
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N O L A
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116. D M
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117. N A M
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B R I O
P E W L
Y A M F
123. P E D
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127. O W I T
P B L S C R
D E K A
F G N M
A R B 138.
F I M E D
L P T Y S
C O N
180. L A K
F S E W
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K L F T P
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U R S B N
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S Y G T 203.
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G N E W
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D A I T
B F R 204.

319.

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320.

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	S	T		

323.

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321.

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325.

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310.

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309.

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308.

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	P	O	G		

306.

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