

SUPER DUPER LOOPERS

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The letters of some words can travel in a circle, like the whirling of juggled balls. Such words -- in which the first letter can be moved from frontword to backward to form another word -- have been labeled "cyclic transposals." I prefer the more straightforward term "looping anagrams."

The most common looping anagrams, and the easiest to construct, are those beginning with S. That's why you can change your SPOT and SPAN to POTS and PANS, simply by moving the S from front to back. That's why you can so easily replace your SWORD with WORDS so that WORDS have then become your SWORD. SMILE/MILES, STRAP/TRAPS, SEXIST/EXISTS, and SHOE/HOES are other S types. More satisfying are looping anagrams that don't start with S and are especially surprising in their new form:

aye/yea	ether/there	lease/easel	rave/aver
car/arc	ethos/those	name/amen	ruse/user
den/end	evil/vile	near/earn	tap/apt
each/ache	free/reef	nope/open	trap/rapt
ear/are	gelatin/elating	now/own	trio/riot
echoic/choice	grin/ring	plum/lump	tough/ought
eon/one	heart/earth	pram/ramp	wane/anew
esprit/sprite	height/eighth	range/anger	who/how

The transmogrification of AIDE into IDEA is especially delightful because with a single swoop the word triples its syllables.

Animals figure prominently in all this hoopla and loop, ha!:

asp/spa	emit/mite	flea/leaf	snail/nails
drake/raked	emus/muse	low/owl	swine/wines
emanate/manatee	ewe/wee	rhea/hear	tan/ant

You'll GRIN at the RING of bright letters.
You'll SMILE at the MILES of fun.
You'll ROVE OVER anagrams looping.
You'll laugh till you ACHE at EACH one.

A SNAIL NAILS PA'S ASP in a hot SPA.
Then a DRAKE RAKED a FLEA off a LEAF.
A RHEA will HEAR, SHARK HARKS, EMUS MUSE.
Will a MANATEE EMANATE grief?

The HEART of the EARTH is the looper.
 Like an APE with a PEA, you'll soon try it.
 When a STAG TAGS a LOW OWL, TAN ANT, and WEE EWE,
 The TRIO is likely to RIOT.

Not yet done, because enshrined in our lexicon are triple super-duper loopers, words that can be looped and then looped again:

asp/spa/pa's emit/mite/item sear/ears/arse stable/tables/ablest
 stripe/tripes/ripest

To complete our exhibit of looping, swooping anagrams, we present three spectacular triples. In the first triad, the words progress from one syllable to two to three:

route outer utero

In the second cluster, the first letter loops to the back. Then the next two letters and then the next three execute the same maneuver:

terran errant ranter terran

The third grouping is more a progress of meaning:

eat ate tea

ATE is the past tense of EAT. After we ATE, we washed the whole thing down with TEA. In this instance, the triple loop returns EAT to its original base, allowing us to form three word squares:

EAT	ATE	TEA
ATE	TEA	EAT
TEA	EAT	ATE

More than just one letter at a time can leap from frontword to backward to form a looping anagram. Excluded, of course, are reverse compounds, such as BOATHOUSE/HOUSEBOAT, HUNTSMAN/MANHUNTS, and SHOTGUN/GUNSHOT; particle verbs, such as TAKEOUT/OUTTAKE, PASSOVER/OVERPASS, and UPSET/SETUP; or repetitions, such as YO-YO, FIFTY-FIFTY, and PRETTY-PRETTY.

We can command a cluster of two letters to leapfrog over two other letters so that the two pairs switch places:

arch/char	chin/inch	eddy/dyed	game/mega	sear/arse
arts/tsar	code/deco	emit/item	mesa/same	chit itch

Now watch three letters loop across two letters:

bowel/elbow	ideas/aside	ranter/errant
cedar/arced	loyal/alloy	sonar/arson
glean/angle	mitre/remit	verse/sever

Next, four letters will leap over two others:

centre/recent	pineal/alpine	stable/ablest	route/utero
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The most balanced of multiple loops is three letters bounding over three other letters, producing a three-three switch:

bedlam/lambled	callow/low-cal	german/manger	rowing/ingrow
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Finally, I present a four-three transposal: raining/ingrain.

A notable number of these multiple-letter loops include proper nouns:

bare/Reba	etch/Chet	manor/Norma	roast/Astro
Cain/Inca	evil/Levi	only/Lyon	rove/Vero
dieted/Teddie	Gerber/Berger	opals/Alsop	saunas/Nassau
divers/Verdi	harlot/Lothar	rave/Vera	sexes/Essex
Dale/Leda	Derry/Ryder	toot/Otto	banal/Alban

Given this pattern of names, it is surprising how resistant English is to multiple looping.

Now we combine a loop-the-loop with a charade:

Start with the word SAFARI. Move the back letter to the front, and then cleave the word. The result -- IS AFAR.

Start with WASTE, and relocate the W to the end. Then charade, and you'll find that when we WASTE resources, we end up in a A STEW.

To close our super-duper looper act, let us gaze upon one of the most spectacular feats of logology -- the looping and charading of CABARET. Move the C from the front to the back and -- presto, chango! -- we stand in the presence of Harry Ober's extraordinary A BAR, ETC., which is just what a CABARET is!