

# KICKSHAWS

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Readers are encouraged to send their favorite linguistic kickshaws to the Kickshaws Editor (e-mail David-Morice@uiowa.edu).

## SERIAL PALINDROMES

The following palindrome lines up twelve chemical elements in a row. The story is about a logger who chops down a tree, which falls into a river with his saw, which cuts loose a trout line, which traps a gnu having a drink of water. Don't you agree it has a kind of haiku sound to it?

TIE CARBON, BORON, IRON, TIN, RADON, GOLD, NEON, XENON, NITROGEN, IODINE, PLATINUM, ARGON? NO GRAM UNIT, ALL PEN? I DO--IN (E.G., "OR")TIN. NONE? X NO END, LOG. NO, DARN IT! NOR I? NO, ROB--NO, BRACE IT!

And here's another, listing Columbus's three ships:

AIR, A MAT: NASA T' NIP A NINE-YEAR ERA? EYE NINA, PINTA, SANTA MARIA.

Can you come up with other serial palindromes?

## IN SHORT, FROM BLACK TO WHITE

Peter Newby sent a minimal doublet, as requested in a recent Kickshaw, that goes from BLACK to WHITE. His source is the OED:

BLACK

BLACE (Middle English spelling of black)

BLATE (Scottish & dialect adjective meaning "pale, ghastly")

BLITE (wild spinach)

WLITE (to pipe, chirp, warble)

WHITE

And Jay Ames shows how the BLACK to WHITE ladder can be shortened by going to different languages:

BLACK-BLANK-BLANC (French for "white")

BLACK-BLANK (Dutch for "white")

## ALPHANAGRAMS

Peter Newby sent two ALPHABET anagrams: PALE BATH and HELP A BAT. Any other anagrams of it or its extended family (ALPHABETIZE, ALPHABETICAL, etc.)?

## CHIMERA

Peter was inspired by the classical definition of CHIMERA as "any grotesque monster comprising the parts of different creatures" to look for words that are portmanteaux or blends of two creatures. CHIMERA itself is an example resulting from the crossbreeding of a CHIMpanzee with the goddess hERA. Other examples from Peter:

CARTOON = CARThorse and loON

PLUG = Pig and sLUG

HIPSTER = HIPpo and lobSTER

WISH = Wasp and goldfISH

## TRICHECHINE WORDPLAY

Peter writes "The OED defines the Middle English word RUSSWALE as 'walrus hide' which is curiously apt as RUSSWALE conceals WALRUS. Adding the unused letters gives us the anagram WALRUSES!"

## EPITAPHIC

Jay Ames sent the following two poem epitaphs:

Give a thought to Swearin' Sam  
died while blastin' on a dam  
though not the one you mighta thought  
but a 'damn an' blast' no momma taught.

Below these stones  
lies Maggie Jones  
let no man tear asunder--  
for these are not  
the only stones  
our Maggie once lay under.

## CLUSTERINGS

And Jay found the following names that have clusters of vowels or consonants in them. With pronunciations as he heard them, they appear below. Curiously, when I was in third grade, one boy's name was Richard Przybylsky, which still remember, partly because the pronunciation he used didn't jibe with the spelling--he pronounced it "shi-bil-skee". I learned how to spell it by mentally pronouncing it "prih-zih-bil-skee."



ASSOUIE (ass-oo-ee)  
 NOEIEA (no-ayah)  
 PRZYBYLSKY (per-zee-bil-ski)  
 RYTWYNSKI (rite-win-ski)  
 DEMSZCZYSZCZYN (dem-chich-in)

## THE HOUSE MOUSE

William R. Webster has written the following series of riddles featuring a mouse:

What was his position in Congress? Squeaker of the House  
 Is there any cheese he dislikes? Swiss--he prefers to make his own holes  
 What device does he want no part of? He's not rapt about a trap, especially concealed beneath a tarp, as it may cause a pratfall  
 What does a mouse say when its picture is taken? Cheese  
 What's a bad omen for him? Seeing cat's paws on the pond  
 What was his closet encounter? He squeaked by in a race with the house cat  
 What's the most common variety of mouse? Computer mouse  
 What kind of big game does he hunt? Moose  
 What kind of vestment does he wear? Amice

## NUMBERS IN WORDS

Regarding the numbers found in words (such as THREONINE three, one, nine, ten), Rex Gooch writes "There are many ways to define the most interesting words containing numbers, such as the ratio of the number of letters in the number words to that in the main word, the ratio of the sum of the values of the number words to the length of the main word, the number of different ways in which number words can be formed, the main word having the highest legitimate value (e.g. FIVE HUNDRED ONE) formed from the number words, and the main word containing most number words in any language. Furthermore, we can exclude phrases, names, hyphenated words, obscure words, words which themselves are numbers (though this can be interesting in itself), and so on." He included numerous examples of words and phrases containing the most number words. Here is a selection of English words and phrases with English number words in them:

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (one three seven nine ten thirty forty fifty seventy ninety)  
 MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY (one seven nine ten eleven thirty seventy ninety)  
 NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR (four eight nine ten nineteen eighty ninety)  
 COUNT ONE'S CHICKENS BEFORE THEY ARE HATCHED (one three nine ten thirty forty ninety)  
 HEPATICOCHOLANGIOCHOLECYSTENTEROSTOMY (one eight nine ten thirty eighty ninety)  
 PANHYSTEROSALPINGOOPHORECTOMY (one eight nine ten eighty ninety)

SEVEN-SIXTEENTHS (six seven ten sixteen seventeen)  
 SIXTY-SEVEN (six seven ten sixteen sixty)  
 THIRTY-SEVEN (three seven ten thirteen thirty)  
 TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE (one two six nine ten)  
 EIGHTY-SEVEN (seven eight ten eighteen eighty)  
 SUBCONTINENTALLY (one nine ten ninety)  
 UNAUTHORIZEDNESS (one three nine ten)  
 UNENLIGHTENMENT (eight nine ten eighteen)  
 CONSERVATIVENESS (one seven nine ten)  
 INTROSPECTIVENESS (one seven nine ten)

The second example has three number names in sequence (nine, ten, eleven); can anyone find a word with four?

Rex also generated a number of examples using German, Dutch, Latin, Spanish and French number names:

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGAN-  
 IZATIONS (eins drei neun elf million)  
 HEPATOCHOLANGIOJEJUNOSTOMIZING (eins drei sieben neun elf)  
 UNBEGUILEFULNESS (null eins neun elf)  
 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGAN-  
 IZATIONS (een drie negen tien elf dertien dertig negentig)  
 DERMATITOGENIC (een drie tien dertien dertig)  
 SELF-ADVERTISEMENT (een drie tien elf dertien)  
 UNLISTED SECURITIES MARKET (unus tres decem undecim sedecim)  
 ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (tres  
 septem octo centum)  
 SUPERCONDUCTORS (unus duo octo)  
 VENTRICULOCISTERNOSTOMIZE (un trois onze treize seize trente cent)  
 GASTROJEJUNOSTOMIZES (un trois onze treize seize trente)  
 DOCUMENTIZE (un onze douze cent)  
 QUATERCENTENARY (un quatre trente cent)

## ARMAGEDDON

Charles S. Purvis sent along the following anagram of Armageddon by Marge D. Doan:

Dear God, man.	O! Grand dame
Mad God near	and mad ogre
A modern gad	drag a Demon
nomad raged.	Man dare God?
a God damner	Go dread, Man.
dragon dame	Go and dream..
raged on mad.	...and, go armed...

## SEASONED PALINDROMES

Jim Puder sends the following palindromes incorporating the names of months. Can any others appear in palindromes?



On Matsu, Guam, raw islets,  
 Apropos a harem muse,  
 Rests a vast, sere summer.  
 Ah, a sopor pastels...  
 I, warm August, am, no?

Elle, tag a belle "bagatelle"  
 Zagreb-met pest or  
 Racy carrot. September gazelle,  
 Tag a belle "bagatelle".

He comments that the latter might be entitled The Playboy's Philosophy as Confided to Miss September.

### PSEUDO-COMPARATIVES

Jim writes "In last November's Kickshaws, Richard Lederer solicited new examples of pseudo-comparative triads. In looking for these, I've noticed that they come in two varieties. The first kind are undoubted pseudo-comparatives:

att (Siamese coin)/atter (poison)/attest  
 car/carer/cares (archaic and poetic "caressed")  
 Cong (Viet)/conger/congest  
 divi (Zoroastrian demon)/diver/divest  
 hon (nickname "honey")/honer/honest  
 Ing (surname)/inger/ingest

"A second group consists of triads which might or might not be pseudo-comparatives, depending upon which of two or more definitions for some words are chosen."

crack (fracture)/cracker (biscuit)/crackest (most expert)  
 cross (mixed breed)/crosser (passer over)/crossest (crankiest)  
 fin/finer (monetary penalty imposer)/finest  
 halt (stop)/halter (garment)/haltest (lamest)  
 low (moo)/lower(sowl)/lowest

### FALSE NUMBER NAMES

The dictionary has entries that appear to be numbers, but they differ slightly from the standard form and they signify something else. Most false number names still refer to numbers in a specific context, such as TWENTY-TWENTY (normal eyesight) or TWENTY-SIX (a gambling game). Webster's Third defines TWENTY-EIGHT, however, as "a West Australian yellow-collared parakeet". The following examples are limited to cardinal numbers and are followed by the name of the field in which they can be found:

ONE-ONE (logic, math)  
 ONE-TWO (fencing)  
 ONE-TWO-THREE (fencing)  
 THREE-FOUR (music)  
 FOUR-FOUR (music)  
 FOUR-FIVE-SIX (dice game)  
 SIX-THREE-THREE (education)  
 EIGHT-FOUR (education)

## ETAOIN SHRDLU POETRY

This poem uses only the twelve letters of ETAOIN SHRDLU, the twelve commonest letters in running text. Each line is an anagram of those letters:

The loud rains!  
 His outer land!  
 Old hue? Trains:  
 "I rule hot sand."  
 The rail sound!  
 Ah, line or dust.  
 Sail? The round  
 Lie had no rust.

## MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB: FOURTEEN PATHS NOT TAKEN

In the following Anguish Languish, I tried to (1) make grammatical sense, or at least avoid making a simple word list, (2) stay as close to the original sounds as possible, (3) not use any of the words in the original line, and (4) not use any words in the same position in the parodies. Suppose you took one of these parodies and tried writing parodies of it--would the resulting lines still be parodies of the original Mary line?

Mere, wee ad: I'll eat a lime  
 Merry Hatter led Earl, Em  
 Murray added, lit owl lamp  
 Moray, add eel! I, doll, am  
 More, Ray? Odd ore, lid, or lam.  
 May, we ate. Al hid dill, yam  
 Marie? Hot, dull lady, Lem.  
 Marry Adelaide, all ham!  
 Mais oui! Ya! Da! Oui! Da! Wham!  
 Maury aided Leda, lame  
 Ma--whee!--at isle hit! dull aim?  
 Mir ahead? Ah, litter lab  
 Mirror, we addled it, tall limb  
 Myra, idle id alarm



## DOCTORS AND NURSES

Larry Cowan takes a legitimate first name (either male or female) and uses it to identify medical personnel by punning medical terminology; Tim Panic, Paul Zee, Adam Zapple, Sue Chur, Ann Thrax, Tess Tickles. For more advanced examples consider the Atrix brothers (Jerry and Petey), the recently-knighted English brain surgeon Sir E. Brill Cortex, and the noted Russian gynecologist N. Dimitri Osis. He writes "This can become habit-forming. It has resulted in people waking up in the middle of the night, usually to call me with their gems. Keep out of reach of children."

## EASTWARD HO! TO TIMES SQUARE AND MIDNIGHT FEEDINGS

Edmund Conti sends along the following progressive acrostic:

HOw doth the little Boise bee  
 WHO's busy in the sun?  
 we HOpe they let him noisy be  
 o, IdaHO, you can't be fun.  
 so we tHOught you'd like to read this rhyme.  
 maybe, tHOusands will agree  
 that if I cHOose to spend the time  
 then no pathOs will bother me?  
 and, folks, althOUGH brouhaha  
 is our special sHOW,  
 to all readers WHO ha ha  
 I can only say, oh, HO

He adds "Nothing could be more perfect than Peter Newby's Square Deal, but what could be more timely than Times Square?"

B C  
 A D

He adds "Back when I was a hotshot computer programmer, I used to pore over hexadecimal memory dumps, the hex digits being 0-9 A B C D E F. After awhile my eyes would glaze over and I would see things like

ED TO ABE:  
 "FEED BABE."  
 ABE 2 ED:  
 "BABE FED."

## MINI-POEMS

Edmund Conti published in 1994 a small pamphlet of his poetry, entitled *Hic Haiku Hoc* which includes many examples to please the logologist:

## I LOVE TO WRESTLE

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR TIMES

amo  
amas  
a mat!

Stephen Hawking  
Stephen (haw!) King

FALL

BAH, GOLDBUG!

Try poe-  
try, Poe.

Two leaves.  
One leaves.  
One leaf

OPEN EVERY DAY EXCEPT SUNDAY openopenopenopenopenopenNOPE

HITTING STREAK ENDS hitshitshitshitshitSHIT

THE PARTY'S OVER galaxyz

Sight rhymes  
Were used at times  
By Keats  
And Yeats.

How do I love thee?  
Let me count the syllables.  
sixteen, seventeen.

## INTERNET MACINTOSH

Mike Morton fired up his Anagram Generator to discover the following reorderings of "Internet Macintosh"

That intense Mr. Icon  
Then: omniscient art  
M. Eisner into that NC  
Constraint in theme  
Heart. Instinct. Omen

TNT, the insane micro  
Instant home-cretin  
NT? Interim CEO has NT?  
Home CRT isn't innate  
Machine isn't rotten

If you don't like these, consider the following irrelevancies:

Intention: shame CRT  
Other name: instinct  
The omniscient rant  
Emit innocent trash  
Ancient monster hit

Mention this nectar  
The innermost antic  
Titanic, then sermon  
Mother isn't ancient  
Instinct or methane?

## MAD ADAM

In the following interior monologue, Adam ponders the meaning of his life after the notorious apple incident. Suddenly he realizes that the world is not full of smiling faces:

Evil at salt! Now I'm Adam. I do gag, nit. See?  
Bare, tall Eve, rise! Dawn: a mere red, rosey,  
Live fog gets apple hot. One pose. Yet I, son,  
Am foe, do miss old "I". Paradise? Yes,



I'd a rapid loss. I, mode of Man! O, sit, eyes open.  
 O, to help past egg of evil. Yes, order ere  
 Man wades: I revel later, a bee-sting a God.  
 I'm Adam. I won't last alive.

## CHESS WORDS

Chess words are words containing the letters that symbolize chess pieces (KQNRP) as well as other letters. According to Rex Gooch, QUASI-BANKRUPT(CY), the word I listed as a made-up example containing every chess letter, is actually a word in Webster's Second. Rex noted that there are several pure chess words in which all consonants are chess piece symbols. He cites the following:

KINNIK-KINNIK (Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico)  
 PURBROOK PARK (a placename)  
 QUINQUENNARIAN (OED)  
 BENPROPERINE (Stedman)  
 BUBUBUBUBUBUBU (Dictionary of Jamaican English)

He also lists examples of chess words with other consonants, including:

10 ARTHROPNEUMOROENTGENOGRAPHIC (Stedman)  
 10 PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION  
 10 GEORGE FRIEDRICH BERNHARD RIEMANN (mathematician)  
 9 PNEUMONULTRAMICROSCOPICSILICOVOLCANOKONIOSIS  
 9 WINTERBORNE HERRINGSTON