

ED'S PALINDROMIC TRICKERY

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The Nov 1998 Kickshaws presented two palindromic poems starting and ending with ED I HIDE, plus one consisting of ED, I HID A ... --AD, I HIDE. In this article we analyze their structure in detail, and also exhibit a number of palindromic variations that Ed can exploit.

The third poem originally read:

Ed, I hid a pat, I bit a rag, I jig a bat, I hit a cab, I bib a cat,
I hit a bag, I jig a rat, I bit a pad--I hide!

Notice that each phrase is of the same form, I -I- A -A-, where the three-letter word with I is a verb and the three-letter word with A is a noun. This structure enables the palindrome to turn back on itself with an offset of three letters. The challenge is to generate as many phrases as possible without ever repeating a noun or a verb:

Ed, I hit a cad, I bit a rag, I dip a gat, I fix a tad, I rib a cam,
I did a lap, I nix a sap, I rig a ban, I tip a man, I pit a ham,
I air a can, I win a car, I aim a hat, I pin a map, I tin a bag,
I rip a sax, I nip a lad, I dim a cab, I rid a tax, I fit a rap,
I dig a rat, I bid a cat, I hide!

The other two poems, as already noted, repeat ED I HIDE twice; the second ED is used to form the past tense of a verb which describes someone's vocalization. The best examples:

"Ed, I hide," Naomi moaned, "I hide!"
"Ed, I hide," Kramer remarked, "I hide!"
"Ed, I hide," Gary raged, "I hide!"
"Ed, I hide," Tony noted, "I hide!"
"Ed, I hide," Lia wailed, "I hide!"
"Ed, I hide," I lied, "I hide!"

Some of the more off-the-wall phrases include LEDO YODELED, RUSS ASSURED, MIMI MIMED, and PRU BURPED. One can add an I to the center of the first two palindromes, repunctuating accordingly:

"Ed, I hide Naomi," I moaned, "I hide!"

"Ed, I hide Kramer," I remarked, "I hide!"

With care, one can interchange persons and utterances to assemble a longer palindrome:

"Ed, I hide," Gary noted; "I hide!" Kramer remarked; "I hide!" Tony raged; "I hide!"

This works only when one has two internal palindromes with the same central pivot letter, such as TONY NOTED and GARY RAGED, or internal palindromes with no central letter.

Suppose that one uses an action verb instead of a vocalized verb, The best examples are:

Ed, I hide, Dave evaded, I hide

Ed, I hide, Rob bored, I hide

Ed, I hide, Tad dated, I hide

Ed, I hide, Cary raced, I hide

Ed, I hide, Pat taped, I hide

Ed, I hide, Ron snored, I hide

Ed, I hide, Tia waited, I hide

Ed, I hide, Vi lived, I hide

Ed, I hide, Doc coded, I hide

Ed, I hide, Flo golfed, I hide

Ed, I hide, Lia failed, I hide

Some of these can be improved by inserting a central I or SAW I WAS:

Ed, I hide, Dave I evaded, I hide

Ed, I hide, Tad I dated, I hide

Ed, I hide, Rob saw I was bored, I hide

Ed, I hide, Pat saw I was taped, I hide

Ed, I hide, Fink saw I was knifed, I hide

Why not have more than one protagonist?

Ed, I hide, Tam and Edna mated, I hide

Or put words in front of the name?

"Ed, I hide--cane me!" Lyle menaced, "I hide"

"Ed, I hide--woe, Mia!" I meowed, "I hide!"

"Ed, I hide." Tamely, Lyle mated. "I hide!"

Or omit the person completely?