

PANGRAM COMPETITION

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If typists ever want a replacement for the old chestnut “The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog”, do I have some suggestions! Below are my favorite sentences submitted by National Public Radio “Weekend Edition Sunday” listeners in a creative pangram competition on September 22 and 29, 2002. Each sentence uses all 26 letters of the alphabet at least once (that’s a pangram) and contains the name of a famous person (the extra requirement of the contest). Out of thousands of entries, I selected the following on the basis of brevity, meaning, naturalness of syntax, and (sometimes) their ability to make me smile. All the winners use 40 or fewer letters; the grand prizewinner has only 30. A few entries were even shorter, but none read so smoothly.

G. W. Bush quickly fixed prize jam on TV (30) Gordon Gerwig

Beloved Groucho joked with a mix of zany quips (38) Grant Griffin
 Foxy Gen. Schwarzkopf jumbled Iraqi TV (32) Daniel A. Martinez
 Jeb Bush quit work on crazy Florida voting mixup (40) Dot Barr
 John Quincy Adams grew vexed by talk of puzzles (39) A.J. Demetra
 My expensive quartz watch once belonged to JFK (39) Barbara Mandel
 Watch “Jeopardy,” Alex Trebek’s fun TV quiz game (37) Peter Mowrey

A good, quick jab of a pen may vex Will Shortz (35) Jo LoBiondo
 Bad Joaquin Phoenix wrecks zingy TV film (34) Mike Weepie
 Fax back Jim’s Gwyneth Paltrow video quiz (34) Ken Neunzig
 Fixing the razor, J.S. Bach vowed to primp quickly (39) Marcia Marvin
 Foxy but quick John Leguizamo ponders view (36) Edwin C. Kruse
 Foxy Tariq Aziz vows to pack enough jade marbles (40) Gerry Cechony
 Gen. Schwarzkopf’s job quietly vexed him (33) Jim Tyrrell
 Gorbachev’s quixotic plan fazed jumpy hawks (37) Albert Tumpson
 Jeez, by TV film Schwarzkopf expunged Iraq ((35) C. Vaughn Stetzenmuller
 Lawbooks forgave John Quincy Adams, sixth prez (39) Alan Inkenbrandt
 Mozart’s jawing quickly vexed a fat bishop (35) Ben Hochman
 Putin backs away from Iraq zeal; Bush, vexed, jogs (39) Alan Hirshfeld
 Queen Elizabeth’s major picked five sexy wigs (38) Paul Hadavas
 Queen Elizabeth’s proxy waved off Mick Jagger (38) Daniel A. Martinz
 Quickly Shortz dreams up a few vexing jumbles (38) Gertrude Beal
 Quincy Jones vowed to fix the bleak jazz program (40) Julie Levin
 Quip-crazy Gorbachev went and mixed flapjacks (39) Tony White
 Schwarzkopf vexed Iraq big-time in July (33) William F. Pahle
 Seiji Ozawa quit, vexing rabid symphonic folk (38) Adam Hirshfeld
 Sexy diva Jennifer Lopez wasn’t baking me quiche (40) Al Gori
 The big plump jowls of zany Dick Nixon quiver (37) Ruth Bell
 Then a cop quizzed Mick Jagger’s ex-wives briefly (40) Donna de Vries
 TV folk buy ex-prez John Quincy Adams’ wig (33) Susan Petry
 Whacky pangram quiz flummoxed Steve Jobs (35) Janet McDonald
 What deaf banjo player gives Max Planck quartz? (39) N. James Carson