

VICINAL AND NONVICINAL HETEROGRAMS

ERIC IVERSON

Eagan, Minnesota

A vicinal, as defined in Dave Morice's *The Dictionary of Wordplay*, is a word in which each letter has an alphabetic neighbor; that is, each letter in the word occupies a position in the alphabet next to another letter that appears in the word. (The term was created by Eugene Ulrich in the August 1983 *Kickshaws*.) Let us write the alphabet in a circle, regarding A and Z as alphabetic neighbors as well. Here is a collection of heterograms (words with no repeated letters) that are vicinals:

2 pairs

abed abut adze azon bade balk balm bars bast bats beat bona bras chid daze done dope duct duet
efts faze fest fets hide hied hist hits hong hopi join lamb meld mend nimh node nots onyx oped
opts polk post pots pout pros reds refs rust ruts serf shit shri sith snot sorn spot stab stop Styx tabs
tabu teds this thug tons tops tuba unto vugh xyst

1 pair, 1 triple

abuts bacon banco block brats chide coden coned coped crabs demon drest ducts duets duvet
educt fetus frets girsh monde morns mount norms notum ohing plank porns ports pouts prost
punto puton shirt sight snort snout sport spout stoup strop tabus thugs tonus tsuba tubas upton

3 pairs

ambled aplomb ardebs badmen balked bardes barons basted batons beards bedamn bedlam
beldam blamed breads broncs cobnut debars depots despot dopers drones fetish fisher flambé
Fresno habits habitu hagbut hidens histed hognut hoiden honied jerids joined joints jurist kiblah
klutzy lambled nought pedros phobia phobic posted pouted prosed quartz rhinos sabred serdab
shedir sherif Shinto snored soften sonder sorned spored stoned stoped tabued thongs tonish
updove

2 triples

bracts educts girths griths homing hoping jutish mounts puntos putons rights sacbut unstop

1 pair, 1 quadruple

abduct dolmen duster fights Proust rudest rusted sprout stupor

2 pairs, 1 triple

abdomen bedfast bighead bingham carbons chiders clomped clonked cobnuts corbans counted
dabster deports demount disject ditches dithers docents dustmen endmost foments fondest frontes
gabfest gunshot habitus hagnuts hedonic herdics hognuts holking horsing hosting Jacobin
moderns mounted mulcted noughts plonked ponders redfish redtops respond rodents rodsman
scoring shifted shifter shoring shotgun snorted snouted sported spouted thouing throngs unmoved

1 triple, 1 quadruple

abducts compend crudest crusted frights nostrum

1 pair, 1 quintuple

blackened menfolk

4 pairs

bandores banjoist Brahmins broadens confuted habitude halutzim hedonist hoatzins hordeins
joinders pibrochs spheroid

1 pair, 2 triples

contused demijohn demounts ditchers document forspent gunsmith mordents mouthing mudstone
outspend portends shorting shouting

1 triple, 1 quintuple

fighters freights refights

3 triples

documents

1 pair, 1 triple, 1 quadruple

undermost

2 pairs, 1 quintuple

absconder bedchairs scrambled

3 pairs, 1 triple

adsorbent basketful bismuthal blacktops construed Dobermans eastbound habitudes obscurant
outshined thumbnail thyroxins

5 pairs

rhapsodize

2 pairs, 2 triples

blackshirt blacksmith chondrites hindermost thumbnails

1 pair, 3 triples

Christendom

2 pairs, 2 quadruples

flourishment

In a nonvicinal, no letter has an alphabetic neighbor. Here is a small collection of heterograms of nine or more letters that are nonvicinals. (The maximum possible length is thirteen.)

9 Letters

Berkowitz capsuling carpeting certainly claverling coxalgies cravingly expulsing flowchart
franticly interplay lacewings lawyering neuralgic overmatch packeting paltering panegyric
parceling parleying pecuniary picayunes preacting prelaunch privately puckering racketing
repacking replacing replating replaying sluiceway Spaulding squawking squeaking squealing
traveling unshapely vectorial

10 Letters

caperingly lacqueying taperingly