

# LIFE'S SECRET FILES

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In each of the groups of 3 words below, the first and second words make a 2-word phrase; the second and third words also make a 2-word phrase. Easy you might say and you would be right, if it wasn't for the fact that a third constraint requires that the first and third words be related. They may both be transposals, synonyms, antonyms, homophones, heterophones, different tenses of the same verb, palindromes, reversals, mutual shifts, rhyming words, AEIOU words, and so on. **Two-word** designations such as FINGER TIPTOE and THUNDERBALL LIGHTNING, in which one of the words under consideration in each case (toe and thunder respectively) is joined to the linking word (tip and ball respectively) are not admitted.

## TRANSPOSALS

First and third words are transposals.

<u>FUELS</u> FIRE <u>FLUES</u>	<u>BOMBED</u> CROWD <u>MOBBED</u>	<u>STAPLE</u> PAPER <u>PLATES</u>
<u>PLATE</u> BOX <u>PLEAT</u>	<u>LATER</u> ON <u>ALERT</u>	<u>CLASP</u> HAND <u>CLAPS</u>
<u>PLEAS</u> HEARD <u>PEALS</u>	<u>SHRUB</u> FIRE <u>BRUSH</u>	<u>SIGNED</u> LETTER <u>DESIGN</u>
<u>BOARD</u> GAME <u>BROAD</u>	<u>PHASE</u> IN <u>SHAPE</u>	<u>PINS</u> FLAT <u>SPIN</u>
<u>MALE</u> FISH <u>MEAL</u>	<u>LAMP</u> OIL <u>PALM</u>	<u>RACE</u> DAY <u>CARE</u>
<u>LUMP</u> SUGAR <u>PLUM</u>	<u>LEAN</u> BACK <u>LANE</u>	<u>TEA'S</u> DUE <u>EAST</u>

Longer groups of words can be achieved by incorporating multiple transposals. This particular group consists of 7 words and each adjacent pair of words makes a phrase.

MEAT'S HOT STEAM TRAINS TEAMS PLAY MATES

## SYNONYMS

First and third words have the same, or nearly the same, meaning.

<u>PART</u> TIME <u>SHARE</u>	<u>SPEAK</u> UP <u>STATE</u>	<u>JOURNEY</u> PLAN <u>TRIP</u>
<u>MAKE</u> WIND <u>FORCE</u>	<u>UTMOST</u> SPEED <u>LIMIT</u>	<u>PARE</u> FRUIT <u>CROP</u>
<u>FOSTER</u> CHILD <u>SUPPORT</u>	<u>CRIES</u> WOLF <u>HOWLS</u>	<u>FORECAST</u> WEATHER <u>OUTLOOK</u>
<u>DROP</u> LEAF (table) <u>FALL</u>	<u>HURL</u> STONE <u>SLING</u>	<u>IMPOSE</u> CHARGE <u>LEVY</u>

## ANTONYMS

First and third words have the opposite, or nearly the opposite, meaning.

<u>ON</u> TIME <u>OFF</u>	<u>RED</u> LIGHT <u>GREEN</u>	<u>ON</u> LEAVE <u>OFF</u>
<u>DARK</u> BLUE <u>LIGHT</u>	<u>WET</u> TOWEL <u>DRY</u>	<u>BEFORE</u> LONG <u>AFTER</u>
<u>ENEMY</u> CAMP <u>FRIEND</u>	<u>SLAVE</u> SHIPS <u>MASTER</u>	<u>NEW</u> AGE <u>OLD</u>
<u>FOREWARD</u> KICK <u>BACK</u>	<u>CAT</u> WALK <u>DOG</u>	<u>SHORT</u> WALK <u>TALL</u>
<u>IN</u> TIME <u>OUT</u>	<u>IN</u> WAY <u>OUT</u>	<u>UNDER</u> VEIL <u>OVER</u>

## HOMOPHONES

First and third words: same pronunciation; different spelling; different meaning.

<u>COARSE</u> WEAVE <u>COURSE</u>	<u>INN</u> SIGN <u>IN</u>	<u>WAY</u> UNDER <u>WEIGH</u>
<u>FLAWED</u> STONE <u>FLOORED</u>	<u>SLAY</u> DOG <u>SLEIGH</u>	<u>CAUGHT</u> BALL <u>COURT</u>
<u>SEES</u> OVER <u>SEAS</u>	<u>BASTE</u> MEAT <u>BASED</u>	<u>BOW</u> LOW <u>BOUGH</u>
<u>WEIGH</u> IN <u>WAY</u>	<u>BORED</u> STIFF <u>BOARD</u>	<u>ROW</u> HARD <u>ROE</u>
<u>RIGHT</u> WHEEL <u>WRIGHT</u>	<u>SAW</u> RED <u>SORE</u>	<u>SENT</u> FLOWER <u>SCENT</u>

**HETEROPHONES**

First and third words: same spelling; different pronunciation; different meaning.

<u>WIND</u> UP <u>WIND</u>	<u>WOUND</u> BANDAGE <u>WOUND</u>	<u>DESERT</u> TROOPS <u>DESERT</u>
<u>LIVE</u> ON <u>LIVE</u>	<u>POLISH</u> GLASS <u>POLISH</u>	<u>PRESENT</u> AWARD <u>PRESENT</u>
<u>REFUSE</u> TIPS <u>REFUSE</u>	<u>CONCERT</u> PLAN <u>CONCERT</u>	<u>HOUSE</u> PETS <u>HOUSE</u>
<u>MARIA</u> BLACK <u>MARIA</u> (person's name)	<u>SEAT</u> * CAR <u>SEAT</u> (* car manufacturer)	<u>ENTRANCES</u> PUBLIC <u>ENTRANCES</u>

...and, with a stretch of the imagination, LAME SILVER LAMÉ where lame describes Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*.

**TENSES**

First and third words are different tenses of the same verb.

<u>STEPPED</u> IN <u>STEP</u>	<u>SHRUNK</u> HEAD <u>SHRINK</u>	<u>STRUCK</u> COAL <u>STRIKE</u>
<u>BENT</u> ROUND <u>BEND</u>	<u>ROSE</u> HIGH <u>RISE</u>	<u>BLEW</u> HARD <u>BLOW</u>
<u>BEAR</u> WELL <u>BORE</u>	<u>RAN</u> HOME <u>RUN</u>	<u>LEAVE</u> OUTSIDE <u>LEFT</u> (football)
<u>SANK</u> UNDER <u>SINK</u>	<u>LIT</u> CANDLE <u>LIGHT</u>	<u>HELD</u> ON <u>HOLD</u>

In one case, at least, the tenses have the same spelling. They are pronounced differently.

READ WELL READ

**PALINDROMES**

First and third words are both palindromes.

<u>ROTOR</u> HEAD <u>NUN</u>	<u>YAY</u> HIGH <u>NOON</u>	<u>REPAPER</u> WALL <u>EYE</u>
<u>POP</u> IN <u>DEED</u>	<u>SEES</u> RED <u>EYE</u>	<u>LEVEL</u> TWELVE <u>NOON</u>
<u>PEEP</u> SHOW <u>EWE</u>	<u>ROTOR</u> CLOUD <u>LEVEL</u>	<u>ROTOR</u> SHIP <u>RADAR</u>

**REVERSALS**

First and third words are reversals.

<u>SPAY</u> DOG <u>YAPS</u>	<u>NOD</u> HEAD <u>DON</u>	<u>NET</u> PLAY <u>TEN</u>
<u>DAM</u> POWER <u>MAD</u>	<u>PETS</u> CORNER <u>STEP</u>	<u>TRAP</u> TWO (greyhound racing) <u>PART</u>
<u>NO</u> GO <u>ON</u> (in which 'no go' and 'go on' have opposing meanings)	<u>TOP</u> MONEY <u>POT</u>	<u>TIP</u> COAL <u>PIT</u>
<u>NIPS</u> TAIL <u>SPIN</u>	<u>LAID</u> STONE <u>DIAL</u>	

**SHIFTS**

The first and third words are mutual shifts. The letters of the first word are shifted along the alphabet (looping from Z to A) to make the third word. The numbers represent the number of steps the letters are shifted.

1 <u>STAR</u> FRUIT <u>TUBS</u>	4 <u>OPAL</u> STONE <u>STEP</u>	6 <u>WOLF</u> HAIR <u>CURL</u>
8 <u>HAW</u> BERRY <u>PIE</u> ,	11 <u>ETCH</u> DRAWING <u>PENS</u>	12 <u>TOUCH</u> WOOD <u>FAGOT</u>
13 <u>NAG</u> WORKER <u>ANT</u>	14 <u>FAKE</u> FUR TOYS	18 <u>TIE</u> BREAK <u>LAW</u>
19 <u>SPUR</u> ROAD <u>LINK</u>	20 <u>HOT</u> COAL <u>BIN</u>	23 <u>HOP</u> PLANT <u>ELM</u>
15 <u>LAP</u> PET <u>APE</u> (in this case LAP to PET is also a shift - 4 steps, as is PET to APE - 11 steps)		

**RHYMING**

The first and third words rhyme.

<u>PLUME</u> ROSE <u>BLOOM</u>	<u>DRANK</u> WATER <u>TANK</u>	<u>STATE</u> ROOM <u>MATE</u>
<u>DEAD</u> LEVEL <u>HEAD</u>	<u>TIGHT</u> FIST <u>FIGHT</u>	<u>BLEAK</u> HOUSE <u>LEEK</u>
<u>STAYS</u> AWAY <u>DAYS</u>	<u>SLAM</u> DOOR <u>JAMB</u>	<u>THIN</u> HAIR <u>PIN</u>
<u>COAL</u> FISH <u>SHOAL</u>	<u>SPREAD</u> BUTTER <u>BREAD</u>	<u>PHONE</u> HOME <u>GROWN</u>
<u>STONE</u> POT <u>GROWN</u>	<u>MATT</u> PAINT <u>FLAT</u>	<u>RAW</u> SKIN <u>PORE</u>

**AEIOU WORDS**

Both the first and third words have just one each of the 5 vowels a,e,i,o and u.

AUTHORIZE CHANGE BEHAVIOUR                      WAREHOUSING COMPLEX EQUATION  
ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT UNDERCOATING

**LINKED BY 'AND'**

When linked by the word 'and', the first and third words make a well-known phrase.

BOOT LEATHER SADDLE              FUR HAT FEATHER                      FETCH HELP CARRY  
LOCK DOOR KEY                      ROCK BAND ROLL                      SAGE GREEN ONIONS  
TIDE OVER TIME                      HOME SPUN DRY                      HIGH LINE DRY

**MULTIPLE GENRES**

The first and third words can be related to each other in more than one way.

GREAT FIRE GRATE (transposals + homophones)  
BEAR ARMS BARE (transposals + homophones)  
SORE SKIN RAW (synonyms + rhyming)  
NOON HOUSE DEED (a 16-step shift + palindromes)  
ERE LONG BOB (a 23-step shift + palindromes)

**THREE PHRASES**

Each example makes a 3-word phrase in addition to the two 2-word phrases: three phrases in total.

TAME DOG TEAM (transposals)                      ORGAN PATIENTS GROAN (transposals)  
WASTE BIN LITTER (synonyms)                      BACK IN FRONT (antonyms)  
BLUE WHALE BLEW (homophones)                      DAB SMELLS BAD (reversals)  
GIG NOISE LEVEL (palindromes)                      'CIVIC' (Honda) ENGINE REVVVER (palindromes)  
MOUNTAINLESS COUNTRY BOUNDARIES (aeiou words)  
LAW COURT ORDER (linked by 'and')

Some shift pairs, linked by appropriate intervening words, also make 3-word phrases.

8 LOG SEATS TWO  
11 SPIT OUT DATE  
17 BUNNY RABBITS SLEEP  
19 JOLLY CROWDS CHEER,    DOLL'S PRAM WHEEL  
20 RUM CAKE LOG

So far, the 3 phrases have been made from words 1+2, 2+3 and 1+2+3.

In RED INDIAN INK, on the other hand, the 3 phrases are made from words 1+2, 2+3 and 1+3. 1+2+3 is not eligible (I nearly typed 'indelible') as a 3-word phrase because indian ink is not red!

**FOUR PHRASES**

Each of these examples makes 4 phrases, the maximum possible. They are made from words 1+2, 2+3, 1+3, and 1+2+3. I introduced this genre as *Triads* in May 1995 (page 111).

The first three are non-generic examples.

HARD PUSH UP                                      WHITE SNOW BERRY                                      GREEN MOSS CARPET  
SAIL ON SALE (homophones)                                      RECORD TRACK RECORD (heterophones)  
DRAY HORSE YARD (reversals)                                      MAINS WATER DRAINS (rhyming)  
FLOAT COMPANY BOAT (rhyming)                                      TIED BOW TIE ('tied' and 'tie represent 2 tenses)  
FAT PEN NIB ('fat' to 'nib' is an 8-step shift)                                      HOT ASH BIN ('hot' to 'bin' is a 20-step shift)