

HOMOGRAPH PUNS

ANIL

Perth, Australia



Unrelated HOMOGRAPHS can make amusing pairs: **cricket cricket**, latest sports feature at the Flea Circus. A to C alone in *Chambers Dict. Etymol.* ('88) revealed maybe two hundred pairs, most of which could by twist be interpreted meaningfully, if at times fancifully like cricket. Here's a selection. Verbal phrases are punctuated as sentences. The Multiples are presented as a Quiz.

Alight alight. to land lit up (Extra drinks on the flight in? Or is this Rudolph Reindeer here?)

Aye? Aye! Forever? Yes! (Long live the **aye-aye** lemur, still being killed as a harbinger of evil!)

ball ball formal sex dance, dress optional (Possible influence: ball = dance, several "dance" = sex: *Cassell Dict. Slang* ('98); but it says the primary derivation of ball = sex is from testicles.)

bank bank a financial institution on the edge, where the money can suddenly go down the river (They all seem to be hogging the river lately. 2008 redux?)

bark bark a tree trying to scare off the loggers

Bats bats. animal cruelty

Boils boils. Drops pus-filled swellings into steaming broth. (*Why??* For flavouring, of course.)

boom boom! Someone didn't duck the swinging mast's spar!

bridge bridge card playing over the river

Trump rules: If wind blows a card away, play on! Last card left wins. (It's a trump.)

brogue brogue a stylish shoe with an Irish accent (widely conjectured to be related: *CDE*)

Brush brush. = Scrub scrub. Clean up the environment manually. (*What, an acre per year?*)

Hey, if that's one acre per person, together we could clean up 7 billion acres a year. That's a lot. I crudely calculate that we could clean up 4 Australias or one Africa per year. If we kept it up for 5 years we'd have brushed and scrubbed Earth clean clean. *Let's do it!!!*

buff buff an enthusiastic nudist or manicurist (Most likely a nude manicurist. If not for incest laws s/he could also have buff hair or skin and be in buff muscle tone, but no, both are kin to buff naked.)

bull bull a papal decree that's full of you know what (Hey, it's only a theoretical possibility!)

bunk bunk a fake bed or a bed of nonsense (Buncombe County NC has a lot to answer for.)

bust bust striptease raid, or an intimate body search found contraband

butter butter the high-hopes ram who thought he could break thru the EU butter stockpile

card card the joker (I cheated. These two are related. But they've acquired very different meanings so I thought it still a good pun. An oldie, I imagine.)

carp carp bichir's bitching (I've promoted the bichir fish to Honorary Carp Representative.)

champ champ winner of the World's Fastest and Noisiest Chewer contest

cleaving cleaving divorce

cobbler cobbler a maker of cobblestones out of fruit pies (*my wife!*)

Console console. Don't whack your TV when it dies on you! Give it a caring, sympathetic pat and words of comfort. (And, if you're sincere, call the repairperson.)

corn corn a silly joke about my sore toe (Don't laugh! It hurts when you laugh.)

counter counter a New Age stall at the markets (where they reluctantly have to *count* the filthy lucre)

curry curry ingratiate oneself to gain flavour

• QUIZ: MULTIPLES These mind-twisters are all mutually unrelated homograph constructs. You are to "translate" them as coherent phrases or sentences, with a different unrelated definition for each instance of a word. You add the punctuation if any. My answers below. Others are possible.

ash ash asp asp

bit bit bit bit

blaze blaze blaze

bore bore bore

bound bound bound bound

bow bow bow

box box box

buck buck buck buck

butt butt butt butt

chap chap chap

char char char

chase chase chase

chuck chuck Chuck chuck chuck chuck

con con con con

• **NON-HOMOPHONES** All the above homographs are also homophones (sound-alikes) except **bow bow bow** in the multiples. I found only these few other unrelated heterophonic homographs.

agape agape stunned by a show of brotherly love in 2018

Are are. They = 100 m². (The two words are optionally also homophones.)

bass bass a fish that plays in a band or sings in a choir (School activities?)

buffet buffet bump the cabinet (But please don't hit Jimmy the singer/songwriter!)

cashier cashier the dismissal from the army of a more cashed up offender
(Did he win big money off his officers at cards by allegedly cheating?)

• My **ANSWERS** to the Multiples. The numbers clarify word order by identifying which bold words in the quiz correspond to which definitions in the verbal answers (see **bound**). Once you know the number of each meaning, the numbers *are* the Answers.

Ash ash, asp-asp. Burn to ashes two trees, an ash and an asp housing an asp snake. 1 2, 4-3.

Bit bit, bit bit. Bit off some computer-bits, but only a small amount. (bit³ = but, Scot.) 1 2 3 4.

How, you ask, can I bite computer bits? I can't actually, I lack the teeth for it. But hackers can do it.

Blaze, blaze, blaze. Mark a tree, burn it down, then proclaim your misdeed as if bragging. 1, 2, 3.

Bore bore bore. Endured a tiresome person who bragged incessantly about holes he'd drilled. 1 3 2.

bound bound bound bound headed toward¹ jumping² over a tied-down³ fence⁴ 3 4 2 1

bow bow bow a kneeling at the archer's weapon carved on a ship front (New religion? Old!) 3 2 1

Box box box. Fist-punch a container made from the wood of a certain tree. (Ouch!) 1 3 2.

buck buck buck buck responsibility for a cheap male prostitute's obscene sawhorse 4 1 2 3

I couldn't find out just what made his sawhorse obscene. Any ideas? I never got into sawhorses.
Did I miss out on a lot of fun?

butt butt butt butt the barrel where one's scorned rear end is head-butted 4 1 2 3

chap chap chap the hog jowl of a cracked-lips man (or v.v.) 2 3 1 (or 1 3 2)

Char char char. Burn the charwoman's tea. (char = cha, chai, tea: Br.) 1 2 3.

Chase chase chase. Seek to hire a pipe-groove engraver. (They're hard to find, I hear.) 1 2 3.

Chuck chuck Chuck chuck (chuck?), chuck. Throw provisions (beef?) to a woodchuck called Chuck (Charles), then touch it playfully under the chin. 1 4 (5?) 2 3, 6. (4, 5 & 1, 6 possibly related)

con con con con against the study of a jailbird's trickery 1 3 4 2