

MAPPING MERCATOR

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I had finished my work for the day and had an idle afternoon ahead. So I said to my computer, "Darwin, let's play with 'MERCATOR' in a word way. Mercator was born about 500 years ago."

Darwin replied:

Gerhard de Gemor [or 'de Kremer'], a.k.a Gerhardus Mercator? The one from Rupelmonde, Hapsburg County, Flanders, Holy Roman Empire; born March 5th 1512?

"That's the one, Darwin. Would you scan the 'Names of Geographic Features'-fields of our copy of the GNIS database, please? How many word squares could you map 'MERCATOR' to?"

I can map 'MERCATOR' to 764 word squares whose corresponding lines and columns of geographic names will repeat themselves.

I can map 'MERCATOR' to 23 word squares none of whose lines and columns of geographic names will repeat themselves.

"Would you write out the first three and the final two squares? It'll be fun to celebrate the 500th anniversary-year of his birthday this way."

Sure. Those are:

M E R C A T O R	M E R C A T O R	M E R C A T O R
E a r a k o b a	E a r a k o b a	E b a s s o k o
R r e m u l l i	R r e m u l l i	R a j a a b a d
C a m a t l a n	C a m o t l a n	C s a k n e m a
A k u t u k p a	A k u t u k p a	A s a n g r a n
T o l l k r u g	T o l l k r u g	T o b e r b e g
O b l a p u r a	O b l a p u r a	O k a m a e r e
R a i n a g a r	R a i n a g a r	R o d a n g e n

M E R C A T O R	M E R C A T O R
A t a i k u l a	A t a r r a y a
T i n d a t o k	C a m a r a t a
R o s e b u s h	A m e n a b a r
A l a m a n i a	M a z a l i n a
M a r a n d r y	O y a n a n g a
A n a n d a u a	M e n i n g e r
T e n g a r a n	A n i o g a n e

"Thanks, Darwin. See you later."

Lookim you behind, Walt.