

Anger — the Bitter Harvest

by Syed Maqsood Jamil

TURGUT Ozal, the late president of Turkey was on a visit to the war ravaged country of Azerbaijan, Armenia had taken one tenth of its territory. The territorial designs of Armenia appeared abominable to him. He was deeply disturbed, anger was coursing down his veins. Mr Ozal declared with much indignation, "Time has come to bare our teeth." On coming back to Turkey, he suffered a massive heart attack and died. Perhaps anger precipitated his death.

Anger is a combustible emotion. It can create a havoc of major proportion; wise men counsel us to handle it with tact, patience and temperance. Otherwise it can unleash the bestial spirit of human beings. Like all other living creatures, the homo sapiens have a combative streak in their character. It emboldens them to strike back against perceived injustices, deprivation, threats, differences and host of other ills. It injures their ego, their honour, their self-interest, their security and their beliefs. Whether it is for right or wrong, anger is a reactive assertion of one's being. Rightful anger or, more correctly, indignation within the healthy bounds of civility can save us from deterioration of innocuous differences and benign wounds into tragic consequences.

Little bit of anger can be a good medicine if sparingly used for right causes. But the definition of righteousness cannot be left to the judgement of barbarous instincts. Righteousness is the realm of disciplined and rational minds with well-cultivated sensible habits. It is an uncontested fact that for the good of the society and the

mankind, there is a need for civilizing anger by the cultivation of finer qualities of human nature like civility, patience, prudence and many others.

Taming of anger is therefore closely associated with the march of civilization. In the primitive age, hostility was endemic in the laws of living. The species of homo sapiens were in perennial fear of their lives against the predatory attacks of the carnivores. This virulent threat to their personal safety, omnipresent possibilities of physical extinction sharpened the edge of anger. Anger bred a combative readiness which led to the discovery of weapons. The development of weapons helped them to triumph over the carnivores. Homo sapiens found respite to devote time to agriculture, craftsmanship, animal husbandry and other peaceful pursuits for the improvement of their living condition. The concept of acquisition and enhancement of property was born. Its defence was natural corollary to this development. But the cupidty of human beings became obvious causes of infringement of property rights. These were readily treated as violation of honour. The result was unbridled anger and a sanguinary conclusion of the conflict. This is the sociological spectacle of anger in primitive age. Women was another major cause of wild outburst of anger. However, the civilized society of today is also not cured of this pathological infatuation. The tension of constant warfare and the civilizing effects of advances in the field of moral, spiritual and aesthetic developments, crated the ground for the realisation

that for the good of the mankind, anger has to be tamed in all stations of life.

Anger has a wider range of variably analogous names in English language. They connote different variants of this mental reaction. These are cholera, bile, indignation, hostility, petulance, sullenness, wrath, peevishness, sultriness, fury and many others. The variable intensity of anger is expressed by and attributed to people of different ages in different stations of life. Wives have tantrums, children are petulant, patients and old men are peevish, husbands holler, the injured, husbands are furious, neighbours are hostile, employees are resentful, friends are wrathful, public opinion is indignant, the mob is angry etc. However there is no irreversible rule for these expressions. They can overlap into each other and do not stick to a particular person at all times. A single person is capable of displaying the full range of anger.

Anger has a bio-chemistry. When you are angry, the limbic cortex, a part of the cerebrum, sends impulses through the autonomic nervous system into the adrenal gland. It is thus stimulated. Inordinate quantities of adrenaline and noradrenaline hormones are released into the body. The nerves get agitated, the heart beats at a faster rate, blood pressure goes up, the body trembles and the mind loses its lucidity. These are all enervating symptoms. Frequent expression of anger does lethal damage to the body. It puts cardio-vascular system under much stress and aggravates health complications like hypertension, heart disease

and digestive disorders.

Anger in great ones can have devastating effect. History records many gory details of the follies of anger in great ones. The two most powerful Muslim rulers of the late 14th century, Sultan Bayizid of Ottoman empire and Tamerlane were incapable of understanding the wisdom of coexisting peacefully. Being inveterate foes, their personal reaction to each other was that of monstrous hostility and black anger. Bayizid gave sanctuary to Kara Yusuf, a fugitive ruler from Tamerlane's tutelage. Bayizid ignored Tamerlane's demand for Kara Yusuf's return by haughtily commanding Tamerlane to send Taratin, a vassal ruler under Tamerlane's protection, to surrender to his court with all his wealth and family members. Tamerlane used the ploy of accusing Bayizid of marrying a Christian princess, Olivia Despina, and thus defiling Islam. Bayizid responded by making provocatively derogatory remarks about the ladies of Tamerlane's family. Anger was boiling on both sides. War was inevitable. Their vast armies numbering about eight lac soldiers fought a fiercely contested battle at Angora, shedding enormous fraternal blood. Bayizid's army was routed. He was taken prisoner and died at the premature age of 47.

Jaipal was angry at Prithviraj for eloping with his daughter Sangyukta. He invited Shahabuddin Ghori to march through his territory to attack Prithviraj. At the battle of Tarain, Prithviraj was defeated and killed. Perhaps his daughter committed 'Jauhar'. It was bitter gratification of anger. Jaipal died an ignominious death, killed in the battle

If beating is a lone expression of masculine prowess and its immediate nearby field of application is the other gender, the reversal in the trend has visibly begun. Leave alone those great women who ruled and rocked the cradle simultaneously, take Pechu Miah's wife as a trend-setter. Women have already started winning sporadic skirmishes with their bed-mates here and there. They might win the war if other fronts are managed well, womanly sobbing is reduced and emotion does not get better of reason.

A married woman in neighbouring Agartala had kidnapped her husband as a reprisal for his reluctance to give her legal divorce. Under the throes of beating by the wife, the masculine arrogance finally melted to let his wife leave legally. In Anwara Thana in Chittagong Pechu Miah's wife was driven for the abrupt and sad end of marriage life. She had beaten her husband to death. What else is needed to prove woman's beating power?

Pechu Miah's wife is not alone to punish the recalcitrant husbands. Agrippina, mother of Emperor Nero (who fiddled when Rome burnt) poisoned her husband to death because he did not like to comply with her request to make Nero king of Rome.

Pechu Miah's wife achieved two objects by one stroke. First, she avenged the repeated wrongs the husbands unabatedly did to her so-called frail community. And secondly, she made news by demonstrating the feminine prowess and woman's latent killing power. It is no news when dog bites, but when man bites dog it assumes the colour, character and contour of good and wholesome news. It has all the appetising smell to lure you to hear or read a complete story. Pechu Miah's wife provided us that good piece

Distant Drum
M N Mustafa

of wholesome news.

Pechu Miah lived from hand to mouth and wanted to sell away the betel leaves container, perhaps his wife's only earthly possession. It was perhaps hunger which had driven Pechu Miah to lay hand on his wife's belonging. Keen sense of earthly possessiveness stood between conjugal love and hunger. Selfishness took better of love. The couple first exchanged harsh words, followed by abuses and then the womanly hand which once credited with rocking the cradle landed deadly blows on her husband's ageing body and finally, in an ironical contrast of reversing trend, the woman got better of her man physically. The man with the so called masculine qualities and muscled body fell on the ground, never to rise. The lady to whom Shakespeare arbitrarily attributed all frailty, finally won. It was her husband who yielded victory to his consort this time. Now the law of the land would take note of womanly wrath or manly wrong. By curious twist and turn of fortune, the protected falls on its protector. Pechu Miah's wife might have taken away the life of her husband. Other women, small or big, hounded or hacked or even hammered their husbands.

Women's muscle power was not really discovered. There are not many who delved into the depth of woman's muscle power beyond telling us that women wail eloquently, elegantly and poetically. Their ability to sob, sigh, sear and nag is unquestionably superior to men. With these liquifying qualities they dilute delicate and difficult issues. Few American women writers and lately Taslima Nasreen in Bangladesh took pains to dig and discover areas where women reign supreme. So long women have been portrayed as the culinary wizards just to water the tongues and nothing beyond. But nobody ever has pointed out that best chefs working in starry hotels are all men and women did not scale anything higher than waitress. The Kentucky Chicken, Chicken a La Kiev and Magdonalds are all men's creation. All fast foods are man-made.

And among others, two male writers, Shakespeare in English and Syed Mujtaba Ali in Bengali, poetically ridiculed women's sense of chivalry and susceptibilities. In the play *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* Shakespeare made the queen of fairies, Titania, fall in love with an ass (Bottom). Was not there anything better and lovelier for a fairy queen to fall in love? Doubtless it was an aspersion on woman's good sense and taste. And again, consider the play *Taming of the Shrew*. Here man's ability to shout at woman and his illogical arrogance and stubbornness were shown as weapons to tame women, not love or affection. Syed Mujtaba Ali, a prose writer, not a poet, overnight wrote a poem in Bengali Punthi style, only perhaps to dramatise the subject. In the poem, *Marjar Nidhor Kavya* (Epic on Assassination of Cat) he meshed woman's valour with cat's life. He sarcastically wanted to say that woman's gallantry did not go beyond cat's life. With the fall of a cat by a killer's sword, woman's blood just freezes. Man's conjugal happiness rests, as if, on his ability to kill the cat at the first bridal night under wife's eyes wide open.

Some great women of course had shown what 'musclewoman' could be like. Think of Queen Elizabeth First who did not allow a husband to kill the cat to show masculine prowess. To keep her free from nuptial bondage and her muscles unimpaired, she did not marry and had her lover, Essex, killed. Look at another Queen, Cleopatra, who conquered two generals, Caesar and Antony, to keep Egypt independent of Rome. Both Caesar and Antony came to conquer Egypt, but returned conquered, territorially, physiologically, matrimonially and mentally.

In expressing solidarity with Pechu Miah's wife and the Agartala woman who had her husband kidnapped, we quote few more distinguished women who did not immerse their own personality into that of their husbands.

Take Xanthippe, wife of Socrates who failed to convince his wife that knowledge is power. Once returning home late, Socrates was waiting at the portico musing courage. His wife Xanthippe appeared, shouted at him and finding the philosopher quiet, disappeared and returned with a bucket of water to pour down over her husband's bald head. Socrates just looked at her and muttered: thunder brings rain also.

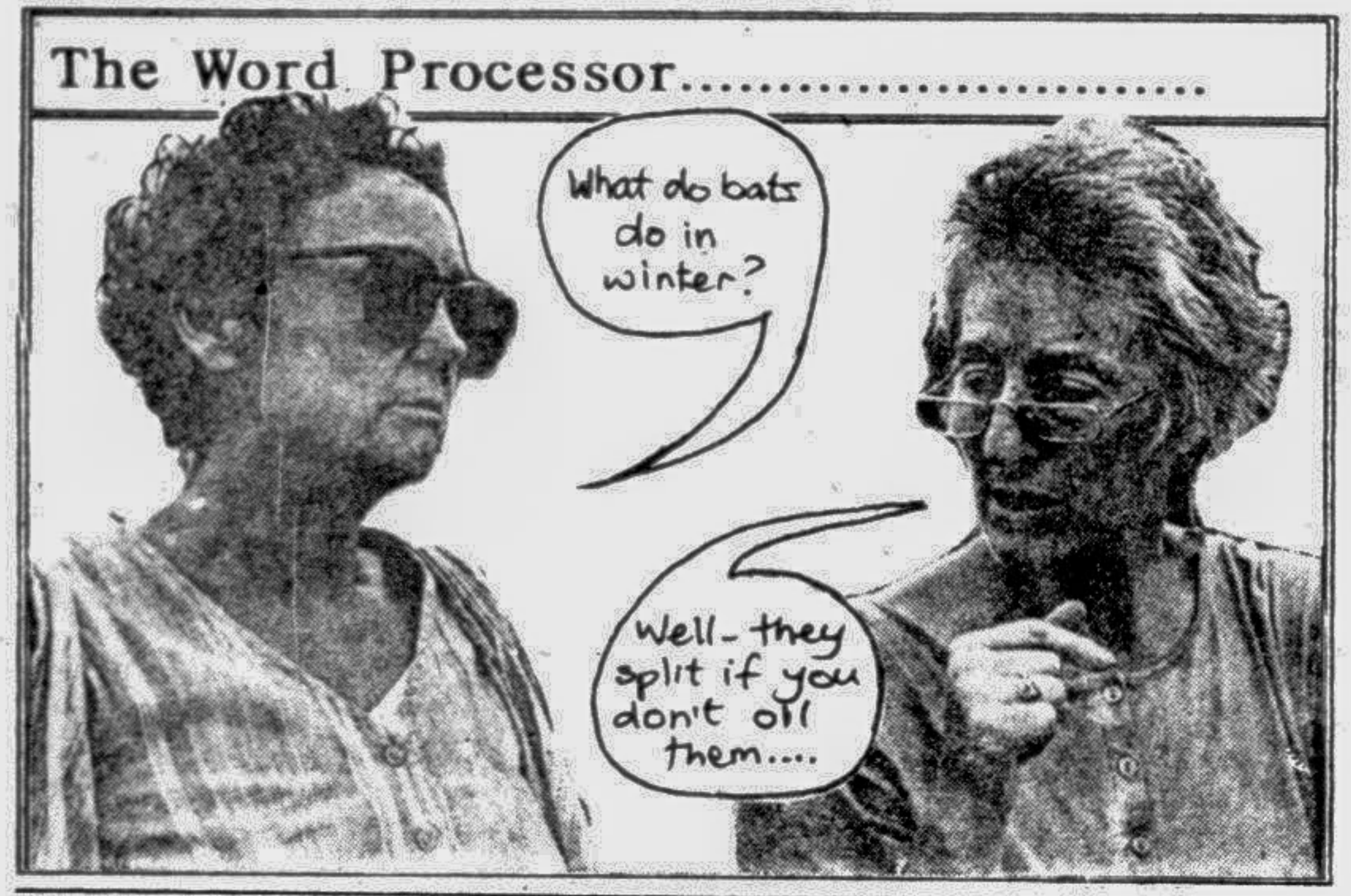
Mary Lincoln, wife of Abraham Lincoln had the guts to shout at the US President many times. Lady Clementine Churchill hurled a plate of spinach at Winston Churchill. Because of bad aim it missed the target.

And now let us see how our litterateurs fared. Shaikh Saadi, the celebrated Persian poet, felt that life would remain incomplete if he did not join the crusades against the Christians. He was caught by the Christians and demanded huge ransom for his release. A good rich Muslim having a marriage-
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The British Council Language Matters

The Intro

Today's column includes a worksheet on stress in long words, a Language Lab question on the reading skill of scanning, and a few puzzles. Remember that the puzzles are also examples of little language games that you can try yourself. Make your own Wobbly Words for your friends to try, or your own quick questions. If you are more ambitious, you could try making your own worksheets on stress or different points of grammar using ours as examples.



Wobbly Words

Try this word puzzle. In each shape the letters are jumbled up. Put them in the correct order. What do all of them have in common? Be careful. Some of the shapes contain two words!

Answers: 1. Wobbly Words. 2. They're all palindromes! 3. Answer: True. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

Syllables and Stress

- Consider the following words and decide how many syllables each one has. Write the number in the brackets after each word. You can check in a dictionary if you want, but be careful - it might only give you one of the possible pronunciations. For some of the words there are two answers - it depends how quickly you say them.

syllable (3) consider () exercise ()

comfortable () idea () atmosphere ()

understand () discussion ()

recommend () ideal () excitement ()

furniture () unable ()

vegetable () video () recognise ()

recognised () paragraph ()

theory () exciting () omelette ()

agreement () camera () agony ()

entertain () necessary ()

- Now consider the three syllable words (i.e could be all of them?). Group them according to which syllable has the main stress.

1st syllable	2nd syllable	3rd syllable
eg: syllable		

Answers to 'syllables and stress' exercise

- syllable (3) consider (3) exercise (3) comfortable (3/4)
- idea (3) atmosphere (3) understand (3) discussion (3)
- recommend (3) ideal (2/3) excitement (3) furniture (3)
- unable (3) vegetable (3) video (2/3) recognise (3)
- recognised (3) paragraph (3) theory (2/3) exciting (3)
- omelette (2) agreement (3) camera (2/3) agony (2/3)
- entertain (3) necessary (3/4)

1st syllable	2nd syllable	3rd syllable
syllable	consider	understand
exercise	idea	recommend
comfortable	discussion	entertain
atmosphere	ideal	
furniture	excitement	
vegetable	unable	
video	exciting	
recognise	agreement	
recognised		
paragraph		
theory		
camera		
agony		
necessary		

Note that the first pattern is the most common in English, and the third pattern is quite rare. If in doubt with any long word, try putting the stress on the third syllable from the end (as in the first group) and see if it sounds right.

The Language Lab

In this column we want you to write to us about any little problems that you have with English and we will see if we can 'analyse' them. We will try to give the best answer possible in the space available.

Today's question is on a topic that we have focussed on a little in recent weeks.

Md Kayser Ahmed writes from Rajshahi....

If there is any perfect method for scanning, please let me know.

Scanning is a reading skill that many people are not very good at. It is basically the skill you use when looking in a telephone directory for someone's telephone number. You do not read all the directory from page one but use a kind of process of elimination.

If the name is Biswas, you flick through until you find 'B' and then you check for 'Bi' or 'Bis' and so on. If you find that many people have the same name, then you check for an initial or the address. Finally you read only one of the many numbers in the book!

In the same way you may be doing some work for school or the office, and you want information on a particular topic. First you check the index or contents of the book. You then flick through the relevant chapter with a few key phrases in mind that might indicate the type of information that you want.

When you have found something that appears promising, only then do you actually read a section of the book.

1. Two questions:

What is a palindrome?

What do the following words have in common?

deed level refer

madam civic noon

2. True or false?

There is no word in the English language that ends in the letter 'j'.