

Quip Factory: Thousands of Quips, Rips, Dingers, Zingers, and Barbs, and How You Can Create Thousands More

Caleb Spalding Atwood

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Caleb Atwood is an amazingly astute aficionado of alliterations, rhymes, and incongruities, having put his almost obsessive interest with words to good use in writing a primer everyone can use for creating endless variations of well-known quips. *Quip Factory* is a pleasure to peruse, and every page offers another surprising opportunity to manipulate the English language in new and witty ways. From writers to public speakers to anyone with a passion for language and a desire to entertain themselves and others, Atwood's book is a must have. Using the simple strategies he has developed, anyone can be a wizard of witticisms, both droll and delightful.

Quip Factory opens with what Atwood calls "Gloria Steinems," taking her famous statement that a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle and using its formula of A needs B like X needs Y, or variations thereof, to create thousands of amusing to absurd permutations. Atwood provides a plethora of lists to get one started, so, for example, coming up with "a gal needs a guy like a gopher grovels for galoshes," is an effortless and enjoyable endeavor.

"Steinems" give way to Johnny Carson and Ed McMahon and their exchange on the epic *Tonight Show* when a certain word would come up and McMahon or the audience would ask, "How ____ was __?" and Carson would reply, "As __ as __!" Again, Atwood provides a cornucopia of cute and comical cerebral creations on this theme: "How scintillating was she? As scintillating as a pompadoured penguin!" "Like putting lipstick on a pig" is the next dinger Atwood delves into, followed by extensive elaborations on Jay Leno's line, "Isn't trying to spend your way out of debt kind of like trying to drink your way out of alcoholism?"

The above examples scarcely scratch the surface of *Quip Factory*'s brilliant compilation of pretty much everything one would need to invent and enjoy a lifetime of literary laurels. Using the book's multitude of animal and people characteristics gives one the enviable ability to "juggle jellyfish, cause yaks to yearn for yoga, teach tarantulas to tango, sell accordions to amoebas," ad infinitum.

In the appendices, each letter of the alphabet gets a long list of alliterations, rhyme options, and common categories for making quips from the earlier formulas or from scratch. The final section contains all the verbs and adjectives one could ever need.

Quite frankly*,* in conclusion*, Quip Factory* is unquestionably and unequivocally of quintessentially high quality.

PATTY SUTHERLAND (February 17, 2011)

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