

# The Invitational Week 80: Same Difference

We give you a random list of things, and you tell us how any two are alike or different. Plus for tl;dr types, history as two rhyming lines.

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Cargo shorts are like an ear hair how? Tell us in this week's Invitational contest. (temu.com)

**Hello. It's another lovely day out on the links** — as we return to one of our favorite contest tropes, one we've used many times with uniformly gonzo results. It's the beloved Compare & Contrast (or otherwise link) two items on a wacky random list. Here's this year's list, followed by a couple of examples.

- **The Alitos' flagpole**
- **Steve Bannon's cellmate**
- **That one ear hair that keeps growing back**
- **Rizz**
- **Shrinkflation**
- **A Chat GPT love letter**
- **A tube of Crest**
- **Pickleball**
- **Left-handed scissors**
- **A mask you still have from 2020**
- **A runny nose**
- **6-3**
- **An outie bellybutton**
- **Cargo shorts**
- **Commander Biden**
- **Earth's molten core**
- **[The Hawk Tuah Girl](#)**

*A tube of Crest vs. shrinkflation: The second one puts the squeeze on you.*

*Cargo shorts are like a runny nose: They both tend to fill up with gunk that makes their possessor even worse to look at.*

**For Invitational Week 80: Tell us humorously how any two (or more) items on the list above are alike, different, or otherwise linked, as in the examples above. We selected most of the items from a multitude of random noun phrases offered up last week by the lively [Style Invitational Devotees](#) group on Facebook. See last year's results [here](#).**

**Deadline is Saturday, July 20, at 9 p.m. ET.** Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, July 25. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form.

**[Click here for this week's entry form](#)**, or go to **[tinyURL.com/inv-form-80](http://tinyURL.com/inv-form-80)**.

**There's no special formatting this week** except the usual request not to break up any individual entry with a line break (i.e., don't push Enter within a single entry). This way the Empress can shuffle all the entries and not know how many she's choosing from any one person.

**This week's winner gets a special something** donated by Dave Prevar. Dave, it was noted last Sunday at the Loser Community's annual awards "banquet," the Flushies, has donated more than 125 Invitational prizes over the years. Not so coincidentally, Dave is only **[30-some blots of ink away](#)** from the 500 lifetime inks (including prize donations) that get you into the Losers' own Invite Hall of Fame to enjoy its attendant benefits (none). And so this week Dave is going above and beyond: He is donating a kidney.



This week's prize: Dave Prevar's kidney.

**Runners-up get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [eight nifty designs](#).** Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a personal email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for First Offenders.

## **Metrical History Tour: The couplets of Week 78**

In Invitational [Week 78](#) we asked you to sum up a historic event in two rhyming lines.

### ***Third runner-up:***

**1876:** That dandy Custer looked his best, succumbing in the dirt  
At Little Bighorn, where he wore his brand-new Arrow shirt. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

### ***Second runner-up:***

**1776:** “Unalienable rights,” yadda yadda yadda ...  
Except for the slaves, who have nada, nada, nada. (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.*)

### ***First runner-up:***

**1960:** A spy plane’s shot down; it’s a major snafu.  
Says Nikita to Ike, “We’ve been watching U-2.” (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

### ***And the winner of the [toilet-plunger earrings](#):***

**1776:** The LAW is king, wrote Thomas Paine — it caused a great commotion.  
Thank God our wise, enlightened Court struck down *that* foolish  
notion. (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

## **The Dustbin of History: Honorable mentions**

**44 B.C.E.:** Caesar deemed himself anointed.  
His friends’ response was rather . . . pointed. (*Marshall Begel, Madison, Wis., a First Offender*)

**200 B.C.E.-1644:** For two thousand years China built a Great Wall;  
Still waiting for Mongols to pay for it all. (*Kevin Dopart, Naxos, Greece*)

**1066:** Some Vikings first learned French, then conquered Britain,  
Which explains the crazy way English is written. (*Michael Stein, Arlington, Va.*)

**1184:** King Henry's church assembly was, they all agreed, a hit  
Until the floor crashed through a cesspool, drowning them in shit. (*Frank Osen*)

**1212:** The Children's Crusade got to Genoa, Italy.  
When the sea didn't part, it amounted to diddly. (*Chris Doyle*)

**1271-95:** Marco Polo journeys, sees Far Eastern rule,  
Returning with tales and a game for the pool. (*Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.*)

**1535:** When Thomas More an oath would not profess,  
King Henry's headsman made him Thomas Less. (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

**1536:** We know Henry and Anne had their problems in bed:  
Only once, and belatedly, Anne gave good head. (*Kevin Dopart*)

**1620:** The Mayflower docked at Plymouth Rock, one journal makes it clear,  
Because the Pilgrims had drunk up the ship's supply of beer. (*Frank Osen*)

**1773:** They dumped plain tea, no bubble mocha,  
A harbor free of tapioca. (*Jeff Rackow, Bethesda, Md.*)

**1726:** *Gulliver's Travels* told tales of a sailor—  
Best work by a Swift till the era of Taylor. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

**1775:** He rode much farther than did Paul Revere, so what's with his dismissal?  
Longfellow couldn't scan the line "The Midnight Ride of Israel Bissell." (*Frank Osen*)

**1776:** King George III was not the sort of royalty  
To inspire loyalty. (*Frank Osen*)

**1776:** We declared independence the fourth of July  
In the year MDCCLXXVI. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

**1784:** To save this Venezuelan Lenten dish  
**The Pope said capybaras can be fish.** (*Kevin Dopart*)

**1788:** In the **Battle of Karansebes**, although it sounds barmy,  
The Austrian army fought against the, um, Austrian army. (*Frank Osen*)

**1860-61:** The Pony Express sped the mail to tough spots,  
Then was quickly replaced by some dashes and dots. (*Kevin Dopart*)

**1861:** It's the death of Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's man,  
It's not clear if his body's interred in a can. (*Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.*)

**1863:** "Fourscore and seven years ago," Abe Lincoln had begun.  
And by the time they did the math, the entire speech was done. (*Jonathan Jensen*)

**1883:** The erupting Krakatoa  
Meant the island was no moa. (*Kevin Dopart*)

**1903:** They planned out a canal through which the cargo ships would roam,  
Which meant (much more importantly) a nifty palindrome. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

**1903:** They first took off at Kitty Hawk and then just kept on going;  
The brothers would be crushed to see what's happening at Boeing. (*Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.*)

**1911:** He went over Niagara and lived to tell all:  
Bobby Leach met his end from **an orange peel fall.** (*Kevin Dopart*)

**1915:** Antarctica is beautiful, with penguins, whales, and ice;  
But when you're **stuck without a ship,** it's really not so nice. (*Beverley Sharp*)

**1919:** In terms of social progress, Prohibition wasn't fruitful.  
Who hit on such a dumb idea? They must have had a snootful. (*Jonathan Jensen*)

**1921:** As tipsy Winston Churchill mapped the new Jordanian nation  
**He hiccupped, and its border got a giant indentation.** (*Frank Osen*)

**1953:** Edmund Hillary was the first to scale that Everest mount  
(That is, as long as all the local Sherpa guys don't count.) (*Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.*)

**1960:** *Psycho* comes out, and a lot of gals sour  
On the need in motels to get into the shower. (*Chris Doyle*)

**1989:** When the Exxon Valdez spilled its load in the water,  
We learned that it's bad to mix oil and otter. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

**2008:** The government showed: when the stock market tanks  
The people can suck it, but let's save the banks! (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

**2021:** Some folks were bummed: Trump never got a chance to put his fence up,  
And so they built the next best thing: a place to hang Mike Pence up. (*Duncan Stevens*)

**The Early Times:** Noah took 'em all; he did not judge, he spoke no vetoes.  
But damn it, did he absolutely have to save mosquitoes? (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

*The headline "Metrical History Tour" is by Jesse Frankovich; Jesse and William Kennard both submitted the **honorable-mentions subhead.***

**Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, July 13:** our Week 79 contest to suggest alternative ways to celebrate Independence Day. Click on the link below.



