

(J) Get Edumacated! (1/2)

“Homeric infixation is a morphological construction that has recently gained currency in Vernacular American English. People who are familiar with this construction invariably credit the TV animation series, *The Simpsons*, particularly the speech of the main character Homer Simpson, for popularizing this construction.”

(Yu, A.C.L. 2004. Reduplication in English Homeric infixation. *NELS 34*)

Many speakers of American English, particularly younger generations, can insert the syllable “ma” into a word (like “edumacation” or “saxomophone”) to produce a humorous variant. For many words, everyone agrees on how the “edumacated” variant should be formed, but there’s a lot of disagreement, too.

Below, three people give what they feel are the correct “edumacated” versions of twelve words. We’ve capitalized the stressed syllables of the respondent’s answers. Stressed syllables are spoken with more emphasis than unstressed syllables; for example, the second syllable in poTAtato is stressed.

J1. We’ve left out some of their responses. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words from the list below. You should likewise indicate stress with capitalization in your answers.

	Alan	Barbara	Chris
Alabama	AlamaBAma	AlamaBAma	AlamaBAma
capital	CApimaTAL	CAPimaTAL	CAPimaTAL
captain	CApamaTAIN	CAPtamaTAIN	Uh... I’m not sure.
congratulations	conGRAtumaLAtions	conGRAtumaLAtions	conGRAtumaLAtions
hypothermia	HYpomaTHERmia	HYpomaTHERmia	HYpomaTHERmia
oboe	ObamaBOE	OboemaBOE	OOOmaBOE
octagon	OCTamaGON	OCTamaGON	OCTamaGON
octet			I dunno...
purple			
tuba		TUbamaBA	
wonder	WONdamaDER	WONdermaDER	WONNNmaDER?
wonderful	WONdermaFUL	WONdermaFUL	WONdermaFUL

- (A) PURpamaPLE
- (B) OCTemaTET
- (C) TUbamaBA
- (D) TUUUmaBA
- (E) PURplemaPLE
- (F) OcamaTET
- (G) PURRRmaPLE



(J) Get Edumacated! (2/2)

J2. How would each respondent say the following words? We've given you a few to get started.

	Alan	Barbara	Chris
antiseptic			
Canada			
feudalism		FEUdamaLISm	
optics			
party	PARtamaTY		
table			
water			WAAAmATER

J3. Respondents usually hesitate before two-syllable words, and are less sure that their answers feel "correct". Why, and what motivates Alan's, Barbara's, and Chris's eventual answers?

