

Lesson 4

Alphabetic Wordsigns Contractions for *and, for, of, the, with*

4.1 Contractions in General

To save space and facilitate reading, certain groups of letters appearing frequently in the English language are represented in braille by special characters known as *contractions*. These contractions may utilize one or two cells, and they may represent whole words, parts of words, or both.

Contractions that have the same or similar rules governing them are grouped together and given a name, as in the following section that discusses *alphabetic wordsigns*. It is important that the names of these groupings be remembered because they will be referred to throughout the course.

4.2 Alphabetic Wordsigns [UEB §10.1.1]

The first type of contraction to be discussed is the alphabetic wordsign—a word that is represented by a single letter of the alphabet. Following is a complete list of these contractions, which should be thoroughly memorized.

b	but	h	have	p	people	v	very
c	can	j	just	q	quite	w	will
d	do	k	knowledge	r	rather	x	it
e	every	l	like	s	so	y	you
f	from	m	more	t	that	z	as
g	go	n	not	u	us		

Note that, except for *it* and *as*, all these words are represented by their initial letters. Because the letters *a*, *i*, and *o* are also single-letter words in themselves, they cannot be used as contractions for other words.

Use these contractions to represent the words for which they stand, regardless of the part of speech involved. They are also used to represent whole proper names, such as “*Will Rogers*” and “*Thomas More*.” It must be emphasized that these contractions can be used to represent *whole words only*. Thus, *c* standing alone reads *can*; but *c* cannot be used as a part word to represent *can* in *canopy* because this would be read as the word *copy*. Similarly, *x* cannot be used for *it* in *merit* and *h* cannot be used for *have* in *haven't*.

It is important not to use these contractions when the letters for which they stand are pronounced separately as in acronyms, such as US for United States or IT for Information Technology.

The letter *s* cannot be added to any of these contractions to form the plural. Thus, the plural of *will* is brailled *wills*, not *ws*.

- Note: An apparent exception to this rule is the use of the contraction for *it* in *its*. This word is considered a *shortform* that will be studied in Lesson 11.

Drill 12

Practice brailleing the following sentences.

1. You may eat more ravioli if you desire, but you will not like it.
2. Can boys from Camp Quail play baseball on that field every week?
3. Do not set that donut on my bookcase.
4. I am not so very well, as you can see.
5. He is a just man, but not very humane.
6. William's knowledge on US subjects is rather vague.
7. So few people like that petty politician—he will surely lose.
8. Ronald can play do, re, mi quite well.
9. Like it or not, we will visit Mr. More next week.
10. Go away, Will — we do not like you.
11. Let us have two sweets.

Exception: These and other groupsigns that you will learn in future lessons may not be used when they overlap the components of a solid compound word. Therefore, the *of* contraction cannot be used in *photoflood* or *twofold*.

When a choice must be made between two possible contractions, preference is given to the contraction that saves the greater amount of space. It is for this reason that the sign for *with* is used in *withe* rather than the sign for *the*.

Drill 15

Practice brailleing the following sentences.

1. The man that lives next door took Theodore and me for a ride on the trolley.
2. He spoke the phrase emphatically: "THE LAND OF THE FREE AND THE HOME OF THE BRAVE!"
3. You will profit from the lecture on mathematical theory, and for once, you will come to see the value of it.
4. Foreign travel has a twofold purpose: It helps you relax, and it gives you an idea of the way other peoples live.
5. You can tie the bundle with the withe that's withheld from the other job.
6. My wreck of a sofa looks as if it came from Holland with the Pilgrims.
7. I will live with and provide for the forlorn old man.
8. Samuel will give the girl he is fond of a brand-new Ford.
9. We'll take off for Cleveland on a plane and, for the sake of economy, we'll return on a bus.
10. Sandra completely forgot the sandals, the bandanna, the box of candy and the thermos bottle that I left on the sofa.
11. The professor will hold a forum on foreign policy.
12. Twanda gave me back my copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with profuse apologies.
13. Patrice will play next the Andante from Haydn's "Surprise Symphony."

Reading Practice

Write the following sentences in print. Compare your work with the print version in Appendix A.

There are many different kinds of animals in the world. Some are big and some are small. Some live on land and some live in the water.

Some animals are dangerous and some are not. Some animals are fast and some are slow. Some animals are smart and some are not.

Some animals are friendly and some are not. Some animals are helpful and some are not. Some animals are beautiful and some are not.

Some animals are useful and some are not. Some animals are interesting and some are not. Some animals are funny and some are not.

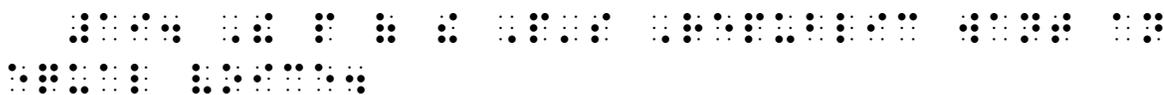
Some animals are cute and some are not. Some animals are scary and some are not. Some animals are smart and some are not. Some animals are beautiful and some are not.

Some animals are helpful and some are not. Some animals are interesting and some are not. Some animals are funny and some are not. Some animals are cute and some are not. Some animals are scary and some are not. Some animals are smart and some are not. Some animals are beautiful and some are not.

Some animals are useful and some are not. Some animals are interesting and some are not. Some animals are funny and some are not. Some animals are cute and some are not. Some animals are scary and some are not. Some animals are smart and some are not. Some animals are beautiful and some are not.

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EXERCISE

Prepare the following sentences for submission to the instructor.

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1. I will not help you with the essay, for that is not quite fair.
2. Will has an adequate theoretical knowledge of the subject but can't apply that knowledge very well.
3. I can go with you, but I'd rather not.
4. We fill every vacancy as soon as we can.
5. Sandy's plane took off from Dulles Airport at noon.
6. Do is a note on the diatonic scale.
7. Just a bit of humor helps people forget small worries.
8. Let us write at once and ask for tickets to see AS YOU LIKE IT.
9. I'd like t'have that.
10. William and Theresa will gather forget-me-nots from the woods.
11. Mike Sanford tries, but it's not likely that he will make the grade.
12. Do you want two cans of plums as well as the can of apricots?
13. The have-nots of Turnville will profit from the mayor's new rule.
14. Oh, Randy, will you give Esther that good pecan? You ate all the almonds.
15. Let us locate Sofia on the map of Europe.
16. The husky sophomore halfback made the goal that won the game.
17. Cy's language is very crude and likewise profane; and for a fact I hope he will reform.
18. My favorite band is the LEMONPeels—do you like them?
19. Will you ask for and pay my bill at the hotel?

20. The woman I spoke with a week ago came back for more details.
21. Swift's THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS is a satire.
22. Pick the appropriate response: My pants do/don't fit anymore.
23. As the happy-go-lucky man races onto the railroad platform, he exclaims:
"I've got no more'n two seconds for adieus!"
24. "That _____ so-and-so took off with my new truck!"
25. The Athenians won a moral victory at Thermopylae.
26. San Francisco, California, has a very unusual climate.
27. The girls will travel with and baby-sit my small son on the trip.
28. The Netherlands is a land of man-made dikes and canals.
29. The nosy visitor drawls: "I just met up with Aunt Ethel, and Auntie gave me all the village scandal and `dirt.'"
30. Fortune is an elusive will-o'-the-wisp.
31. Hit with a rock, the pickpocket writhed with agony.
32. A force of 1,000 Yankees securely held the fort despite the very valiant assaults of the Rebels.
33. He is not quite as tall as I am, but he is more agile.
34. Mandy spoke with emphasis: "I demand that you probate Uncle Elmore's and Aunt Alexandra's wills at once."
35. I have a jigsaw puzzle for the kids, and for the adults I have a box of homemade candy.
36. For the next lesson you will practice the Andante of the Sonata.
37. The objective of the naval campaign is twofold, the blockade of all ports of the foe and the removal of the foe's fleet as an active force.
38. The plane rose 15,000 feet—a safe altitude for that region.
39. The blue- and gray-clad forces met at the crossroads.