Lesson 7

Whole-Word Lower-Sign Contractions for in, enough, be, his, was, were Part-Word Lower-Sign Contractions for in, en, be, con, dis, com Introduction to Short-Form Words

7.1 Definition of Lower Signs

In addition to the one-cell contractions already studied, there is another group of contractions known as lower signs. Combinations of dots from the middle and/or lower portion of the cell form these lower contractions. In other words, none of them contains an upper dot, dot 1 or dot 4. It should be noted that all of the punctuation signs studied in Lesson 2 are formed in the lower part of the cell. There are lower-sign contractions for both whole words and parts of words. Following are the lower-sign contractions that will be studied in this lesson.

	Whole-Word		Part-Word	
Contraction	Meaning	Contraction	Meaning	
: •	in	• • •	in	
•:	enough	• ;	en	
· · • ·	be	: :	be	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	his	• •	con	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	was	 • •	dis	
	were	:: ••	com	

• Note that the contractions for the words *in*, *enough*, and *be* are the same as the contractions for the LETTERS *in*, *en*, and *be*.

7.2 Whole-Word Lower Signs for in, enough, be, his, was, were [XIII.39]

These contractions, when standing alone, represent whole words. Example:

Was the food in his backpack enough for the hike—or were more sandwiches needed?

7.2a In contact with punctuation or composition signs. Some of these contractions also have the same form and position as certain marks of punctuation. Confusion is avoided by a rule that requires that these whole-word lower-sign contractions *must never be in contact with any other letter, contraction, word, or punctuation sign* whereas punctuation marks are normally in direct contact with a word or other punctuation. Whole-word lower-sign contractions may, however, be preceded by composition signs, such as the capital sign

and/or italic sign (to be studied later). Thus, in the following sentence none of the wholeword lower-sign contractions can be used.

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"His history book was—or rather is—in the same place my books were."
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Note that the word *his* could have been contracted if it had been preceded only by the capital sign, but since it is also preceded by the opening quotation mark it must be spelled out. The contraction for *his* cannot be used in the word *history* because the lower wholeword contractions cannot be used as parts of words. The contractions for *was* and *in* may not be used because the one precedes and the other follows a dash. The contraction for *were* may not be used because it would be in contact with the period.

7.2b In hyphenated compound words. Unlike the whole-word contractions previously studied that use the upper part of the braille cell, these lower-sign contractions cannot be used to form hyphenated compound words because this would bring them into contact with a hyphen, contrary to the rule. Thus, the contraction for *in* cannot be used in *brother-in-law* nor the contraction for *be* in *bride-to-be*. However, where such hyphenated compound words are divided between two braille lines, the whole-word lower sign can be used if it starts the new line and is not followed by punctuation. Examples:

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stand-in : stand- stand- in in. stand-
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7.2c En as contraction for enough. [XII.38.d] The whole-word contraction en cannot be used for anything other than the word enough. When the letters en form part of an anglicized expression or a name such as en route, en masse, Chou En-Lai or Aix-en-Provence the contraction cannot be used, and the letters must be spelled out.

7.3 Part-Word Lower Signs

7.3a In and En. [XIII.39] The same braille configurations that represent the whole words in and enough are also used to represent the letters in and en as parts of words. These two partword lower-sign contractions should be used as parts of words wherever the letters they represent occur, except when specific rules, such as the prefix and suffix rules, limit their use. Consequently, the in sign is used in instant, main, pine, minor, and Carolina. The en sign is used in enforce, often, senior, and Gene. Note that their use does not depend on whether the vowel is long or short.

7.3b Prefixes. The *in* sign is not used in *binomial* or *trinodal*, and the *en* sign is not used in *denominator* or *prenatal* because one of the letters falls into a prefix and the other into another syllable that constitutes part of a root or base word.

The contraction for *en* is also used in *coenzyme* and *gastroenteritis* where a prefix that ends in an *o* is added to a base word starting with an *e* because all of the letters of the contraction fall into the same syllable.

- **7.3***c* **Compound words.** Contractions cannot be used if they overlap the elements of a solid compound word; consequently the *en* sign is not used in *toenail* or *treenail*.
- **7.3d Diphthongs.** In words like *Phoenix* and *subpoenaed*, the *en* sign is not used because the *e* is part of the diphthong *oe* and may not be separated from the *o* to form part of a contraction.
- **7.3e** Preference for *and*, *for*, *of*, *the*, and *with* signs. [XII.38.b] In words like *then* and *Athens* the *the* sign and *n* are used in preference to the *th* and *en* signs because of the rule stated in 6.11*b*, which gives preference to the contractions for *and*, *for*, *of*, *the*, and *with* over any other contractions provided their use does not waste space.

7.4 The Lower-Sign Rule [XIII.40]

The six whole-word lower signs learned earlier in this lesson must always stand alone. However, any number of unspaced PART-WORD lower signs can follow one another as long as the series is in contact with a character containing an upper dot (dot 1 or dot 4). Thus, in the following example both the *in* and *en* contractions are used in the word *linen* because the lower signs are in contact with the letter *l*. Example:

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Was it truly his, that suit of fine linen?
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As always, care must be taken when dividing words. Often when words containing lower signs are divided, the lower sign contraction cannot be used because it is no longer in contact with an upper dot. Examples:

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They enjoy tennis.

"It's made of linen."

"It's made of linen."

"It's made of linen."
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• Note: This rule also applies to other part-word and whole-word lower signs that will be studied later in this lesson and in Lesson 8.

When two or more lower-sign contractions would follow one another without being in contact with an upper dot, the *final* lower-sign contraction is not used. Example:

We'll need milk, sugar, flour and shortenin' for the cake.

Since dots 3-5 represent both the whole word *in* and the letters *in* as part of a word, it is extremely important to correctly determine how the letters are used. For example, in the word *shut-in* the whole word *in* has been joined to the whole word *shut* to form a hyphenated compound word. As a whole word brailled on one line, the *in* contraction cannot be used since it is in contact with the hyphen. However, in the word *shut-ins* the letters *in* are simply a part of the word *ins*, and the contraction is used. Examples:

shut-in	shut-	shut-ins	shut-
	in		ins
	• • · · • · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		•• • · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	· · · • •		· · · • • • •

When used as *part of a word*, the contractions for *en* or *in* may be in contact with other letters or punctuation as long as the sequence is in touch with an upper dot. Examples:

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It's all in vain—encourage her anyway.

I was self-indulgent.
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Drill 15

Practice brailling the following sentences.

- 1. The man carried the child in his arms.
- 2. When they were finished with the interview the clock was striking seven.
- 3. If you don't hurry we'll be late for dinner.
- 4. I worry that they don't have enough food in the house for the entire weekend.
- 5. In the initial stages of the war all went well.
- 6. "In my not-so-very-humble opinion," the indignant man from Virginia proclaimed, "General Lee was indubitably the most outstanding general in the Civil War."
- 7. "I will be—er—in my study if you need me."
- 8. When my in-laws invaded our domain I was in a state of frenzy.
- 9. Ingmar met his bride-to-be, Ingrid, at a fly-in fishing camp in Sweden.
 - 10. If you insist that I be frank, I will be.

- 11. How few they were, yet how magnificently they defended the homeland!
- 12. "Enough's enough!" cried the infuriated parent.
- 13. Dennis is having trouble with denominators that are binomials.
- 14. His ingrown toenail is giving Henri intolerable pain.
- 15. You can't deny that the theater is badly in need of a thorough renovating.
- 16. His enormous hand grasped mine in hearty welcome.
- 17. Demosthenes was a famous orator of ancient Athens.
- 18. The insects descended en masse and denuded the fields.
- 19. If you haven't anything in our price range we aren't interested in looking.
- 20. I remember Aunt Inez and how she told me in her southern drawl, "Joy, for my biscuits you'll need the best flour and fine shortenin'."
- 21. Americans just weren't adequately prepared for the attack on Pearl Harbor and the events that followed.
- 22. The Senator wasn't in, but his secretary greeted us warmly.
- 23. He finds the climate in Phoenix, Arizona, beneficial for his asthma.

If it is desirable to divide this lesson into two sections, the first 20 sentences in Exercise 7 may be assigned at this time, as they relate only to the material studied in the unit to this point.

7.5 Part-Word Lower-Sign Contractions for be, con, dis [XIII.43]

7.5a As first syllable of word. The contractions for *be, con*, and *dis* are used only when they constitute a syllable and occur at the beginning of a word or at the beginning of a line in a divided word. Thus, these contractions are used in such words as *believe, conduct*, and *district*. They are not used in words such as *unbelievable, misconduct*, or *predisposed* where they do not occur at the beginning of the word. Nor are they used in such words as *belligerent, conch*, and *disc* where other letters are included in the syllable; or in *coniferous* and *disheveled* where all the letters do not fall in the same syllable.

Although, as mentioned above, these contractions cannot be used in the middle of a word that is located all on one line, they are used when the letters of the contraction fall at the beginning of a line in a divided word. Examples:

7.5b As last syllable of word. Although these contractions are used when they occur at the beginning of a line in a divided word, they cannot be used if they constitute the last syllable of such a divided word. Thus, when words like *maybe* and *beacon* are divided between

lines, the contractions for *be* and *con* cannot be used for this would leave a part-word lower sign not in contact with a dot 1 or 4. Examples:

Charybdis	Charyb-	bacon	ba-
	dis		con
		• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
	• • • •		

7.5*c* **With punctuation.** The contractions for *be, con*, and *dis* are used when punctuation comes before them. Therefore, these contractions can be used when they constitute the first syllable in the second word of a hyphenated compound word. Examples:

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"Control that dog!" self-contained

becoming, don't you think?) non-disposable

non-disposable
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The contractions for *be, con,* and *dis* are not used when punctuation comes immediately after them. As a consequence, they cannot be used in syllabicated words. Examples:

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[be]hold dis'armony Con-rad!
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Although contrary to the Lower Sign Rule, when a word such as *self-control* is divided between braille lines following the first syllable of the second word, *self-con/trol*, the *con* contraction is not used because the contraction would then be followed by punctuation (the hyphen). Examples:

7.5d The word con. [XIII.43.a] Remember that the contraction for con is purely a part-word contraction and therefore cannot be used to represent the whole word con, as in the expression pro and con.

7.6 Contraction for com [XIII.44]

The contraction for *com* is similar in use to *be*, *con*, and *dis* in that it can only be used at the beginning of a word or at the beginning of a line in a divided word. However, unlike *be*, *con* and *dis*, it need not constitute an entire syllable in order to be used. Thus, this contraction is used in words like *come* and *coma* as well as in words like *command* and *compost*.

To avoid confusion with punctuation, this contraction can never be used in contact with a hyphen, dash, or apostrophe—whether such punctuation comes before or after the letters. This rule applies even though a composition sign may intervene between such punctuation and the letters *com*. Example:

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"Come in! Com'ere and meet the ex-committee chairwoman, Jane Heath-Comar."
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7.7 Preserving the Usual Form of the Base Word [X.34.b(1)]

Be alert to base or root words that have more than one prefix. When words such as *disturb*, *distinguish*, or *distinct* take on a second prefix, as in *undisturbed*, *indistinguishable*, and *indistinct*, the *dis* is no longer the first syllable of the word and cannot be contracted. And, to ensure easy recognition of the word, the *st* is not contracted either. Example:

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distinct indistinct indistinct indistinct
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The same applies to *ingenuous*, where the *ing* contraction cannot be used because the letters occur at the beginning of the word. When the prefix *dis* is added to create *disingenuous* the *ing* contraction is still not used. This preserves the original form of the base word and ensures proper pronunciation. Example:

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ingenuous disingenuous disingenuous
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7.8 In Proper Names [XIII.43, 44]

The contractions for *be, con, dis,* and *com* are used in names containing an apostrophe, such as *O'Connell*. They are also used in names starting with *Mc* or *Mac*—as long as they constitute the first capitalized syllable following *Mac* or *Mc* and are not the last syllable of the name. Examples:

7.9 Be, con, dis, and com in Abbreviations [XIII.43.a]

If any of these four contractions can be used in a complete word, it can also be used in the abbreviation for that word. Thus, since the *con* sign is used in the word *Connecticut*, it should also be used in the abbreviation *Conn*. Likewise, the *dis* sign should be used in *Dist.*, the abbreviation for *District*, and the *com* sign should be used in *Comdg.*, the abbreviation for *Commanding*. Of course, if the letters comprising any of these contractions constitute an entire abbreviation, as in *Con.* for *Consolidated*, the contraction cannot be used as it would result in two lower signs following one another without a space, and neither would be in contact with a character containing dot 1 or dot 4. Also, if these contractions could not have been used in the word itself, they should not be used in its abbreviation, as in *Belg.*, the abbreviation for *Belgium*.

7.10 Introduction to Short-Form Words [XVI]

In addition to contractions, braille contains abbreviated forms for many words that will be studied in succeeding lessons. They are called short-form words. Memorize the following six short-form words.

Short- form	Meaning	
gd	good	
lr	letter	
11	little	
pd	paid	
qk	quick	
sd	said	

Example:

The letter said that good little boys and girls get paid quick.

Drill 16

Practice brailling the following sentences.

- 1. The letter, I confess, left Dad looking rather bewildered.
- 2. I was disconcerted when I learned that residents of the District of Columbia were denied home rule until the twentieth century.
- 3. I paid little heed when I was told that Connie and Beatrice were becoming constant companions.
- 4. Disposing of this problem will not be quick and will require the combined efforts of all of us.
- 5. The neighborhood park can hardly be compared with Coney Island.
- 6. The chairman of the sub-committee on the conduct of wayward youth lost his self-control when the members became disorderly.
- 7. Betty's behavior in school was unbecoming for a child her age—maybe she'll improve next year.
- 8. "The patient has come out of his coma and has improved considerably," said the good doctor.
- 9. Benedict's wife, who is the president of the Ladies Benevolent Society of St. John's Church, paid me a visit.
- 10. With considerable effort she regained her self-composure and continued perusing the letter.
- 11. "Com'ere and help me fix this flat tire," said the exasperated motorist.
- 12. As the boy lay dying on the field of battle, he gasped, "May God com-fort and pro-tect the Con-fed-era-cy!"
- 13. Most of the men who man our submarines are trained at New London, Conn.
- 14. Congress debated the issue pro and con for weeks.
- 15. Ben O'Connor, a good little guy, is my choice for the job come what may.
- 16. Constable Hemingway pointed his gun menacingly and ordered, "Quick! Come out from be'ind that bar!"
- 17. An ignored child is often unruly and disobedient.
- 18. Czech immigrants settled in Wisconsin.
- 19. Mandy's belligerent attitude is completely incomprehensible.
- 20. Credit is given Sir Francis Bacon for having originated the modern scientific method of thinking.
- 21. The politician's denial was disingenuous.

Reading Practice

See print version in Appendix A.

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EXERCISE

Prepare the following exercise for submission to the instructor. Correspondence students: Submit the entire exercise at one time and ignore the line of asterisks between sentences #20 and #21.

LESSON 7

- 1. Dickens and Thackeray were the two most outstanding British novelists of the nineteenth century.
- 2. Grandpa will be in his late seventies when I graduate from college.
- 3. The doctor was insistent that he not get out of bed until well enough.
- 4. He recited Tennyson's "In Memoriam" with intense feeling.
- 5. "The enormous volcano is erupting," enunciated the announcer.
- 6. Her prenatal exam shows that she has gastroenteritis.
- 7. "In-and-out, in-and-out! Can't you decide what you want?"
- 8. The savagery of the fight was revolting (in fact, three people fainted).
- 9. We laughed as she told her tale—in a rather loud, animated, but humorous vein—involving her dog.
- 10. She says she feels insecure when she rides in a twin-engine plane.
- 11. When I've saved enough, I'll buy the entire set of Dickens for my grandchild.
- 12. Virgil's AENEID opens with the flight of the hero from Troy.
- 13. If he will take daily calisthenics for a few months his physique will be immensely strengthened.
- 14. Chou En-lai, premier of the People's Republic of China, 1949-76, was skilled in negotiating.
- 15. "I am going in," cried Ingrid, shivering with cold.
- 16. A wooden peg used for joining timbers is called a treenail.
- 17. The renovated home was splendidly decorated in the style of the 1890's.
- 18. I think Selena's injury was self-inflicted.
- 19. When Mr. Engles retired he started delivering groceries for shut-ins.
- 20. Jane loved the linen suit her Mom sent her from Italy.

- 21. We felt very sad when the lovely coniferous tree fell down.
- 22. Benedict Arnold betrayed the United States when he surrendered West Point.
- 23. His boss said that my brother-in-law wasn't responsible for the failure of the company.
- 24. "Which'll it be, madame, soda or gingerale?" inquired the bespectacled waiter.
- 25. Tell the papergirl—be sure you make it very plain—that we aren't returning home for three more weeks.

- 26. His behavior denoted that Adam was completely undismayed at the most unexpected outcome.
- 27. Our officers' meeting will be chiefly concerned with considering the new budget.
- 28. The lines of the pattern are very subtle and indistinct.
- 29. The denial of freedom of the press is a distinctly totalitarian phenomenon.
- 30. I find things like trinomials and logarithms a constant enigma.
- 31. I left the dinghy on the side of the Wisconsin River and continued my journey on foot.
- 32. People in the town are saying that the groom-to-be has become very unhappy and, in fact, quite disenchanted since learning of his betrothed's flirtatious ways.
- 33. "You be good an' come out quick with yer hands up," said the sheriff, "or I'm comin' in and git yuh."
- 34. As a Naval ex-commander, John was a firm believer in discipline.
- 35. Inter-continental flights arrive hourly at Dulles Airport.
- 36. The auto crash left his hair disheveled and his clothing in disarray.
- 37. I think our son will soon become an accomplished violinist.
- 38. Little three-year-old Johnny proudly enunciated for his admiring grandparents' benefit: "Con-stan-ti-no-ple."
- 39. Miss O'Connor will be in charge of the kindergarten this year.
- 40. As the cockney orator took his place on the rostrum, he began: "On be'alf of all decent Henglishmen I protest this insolent be'avior of the 'Ouse of Commons!"
- 41. On the corner, he passed a disreputable-looking stranger, who whined, "Will you 'commodate me with the price of a cup of coffee, sir?"
- 42. In a closely-contested race he was chosen Congressman from the 2nd Dist. of Iowa.
- 43. If you will con the pages of the text diligently, you will find enough material for the essay.
- 44. When she arrived at the studio, she discovered a hastily-scribbled note that said, "Called out of town unexpectedly; for next lesson practice Mozart's Con. No. 18."
- 45. The new freight rates which the Interstate Commerce Committee has recommended are unbelievably high—but they will be paid.
- 46. If Leslie remains very patient, maybe Mr. Drew will change his mind and write her that letter.
- 47. Charybdis is a sinister whirlpool in Greek mythology.