

Lesson 4

One-Cell Whole-Word Contractions ***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* or *signs*. These signs 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 one-cell whole-word contractions. It is important that the names of these groupings be remembered because they will be referred to throughout the course.

4.2 One-Cell Whole-Word Contractions (Alphabet Contractions) [XI.36]

The first type of contraction to be discussed is the one-cell whole-word sign 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.

These contractions should be used 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*.” There is an exception to this rule: when the words *do* and *so* refer to the notes in the musical scale, the contractions *d* and *s* cannot be used.

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*. 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*.

(1) Between a prefix and a base or root word. Thus, the *of* contraction is not used in *professor*, *profane* or *profile*. Note that the letters *pro* are not always prefixes—as in *profit* and *product*, for example.

(2) Between a suffix and a base or root word. There are no examples using the contractions you have learned so far to demonstrate this rule, but you will become acquainted with some in Lesson 6.

(3) Between the components of a solid compound word. Therefore, the *of* contraction cannot be used in *photoflood* or *twofold*.

All other syllable divisions are considered *minor syllable divisions*.

4.5b(2) Minor syllable divisions. Part-word contractions are used when they overlap minor, or incidental, syllable divisions, regardless of pronunciation, as in *sofa* (⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠), *Sofia* (⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠), and *scandal* (⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠). A few exceptions to this rule will be discussed later.

4.5c Contraction preference. 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*.

4.5d Word division. When dividing words at the end of a line, caution must be taken to ensure that the word is properly divided between syllables, even if this means sacrificing a contraction. Therefore, *Andrew* is divided *An-drew*, not *(And)-rew*, and *forum* is divided *fo-rum*, not *(for)-um*. (In these examples braille contractions are shown enclosed in parentheses.)

A good dictionary includes the etymology of each word, thus indicating prefixes and suffixes, which can be helpful when trying to decide whether a contraction should or should not be used in braille. The *Typical and Problem Words* list in Appendix C at the back of this book is also a helpful tool. It lists over 2,500 words showing proper syllable division and contraction usage. An even more comprehensive source is the *Braille Enthusiast's Dictionary* (compiled and edited by Alan J. Koenig and M. Cay Holbrook, ISBN 0-9634229-7-9, SCALARS Publishing, P.O. Box 382834, Germantown, TN, 38183-2824, 1-901-737-0001. www.scalarspublishing.com).

Drill 10

Practice braille 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 with emphasis: "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 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. Matthew gave a book review on Jack London's THE CALL OF THE WILD.
10. We'll take off for Cleveland on a plane and, for the sake of economy, we'll return on a bus.
11. The play at the Orpheum Theatre is just a run-of-the-mill melodrama.
12. Sandra forgot the sandals, the bandanna, the box of candy and the thermos bottle that I left on the sofa.
13. The professor will hold a forum on foreign policy.
14. Twanda gave me back my copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with profuse apologies.
15. Patrice will play next the Andante from Haydn's "Surprise Symphony."

Reading Practice

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

Foreign travel has a twofold purpose: It helps you relax, and it gives you an idea of the way other peoples live.

You can tie the bundle with the withe that's withheld from the other job.

My wreck of a sofa looks as if it came from Holland with the Pilgrims.

I will live with and provide for the forlorn old man.

Samuel will give the girl he is fond of a brand-new Ford.

Matthew gave a book review on Jack London's THE CALL OF THE WILD.

We'll take off for Cleveland on a plane and, for the sake of economy, we'll return on a bus.

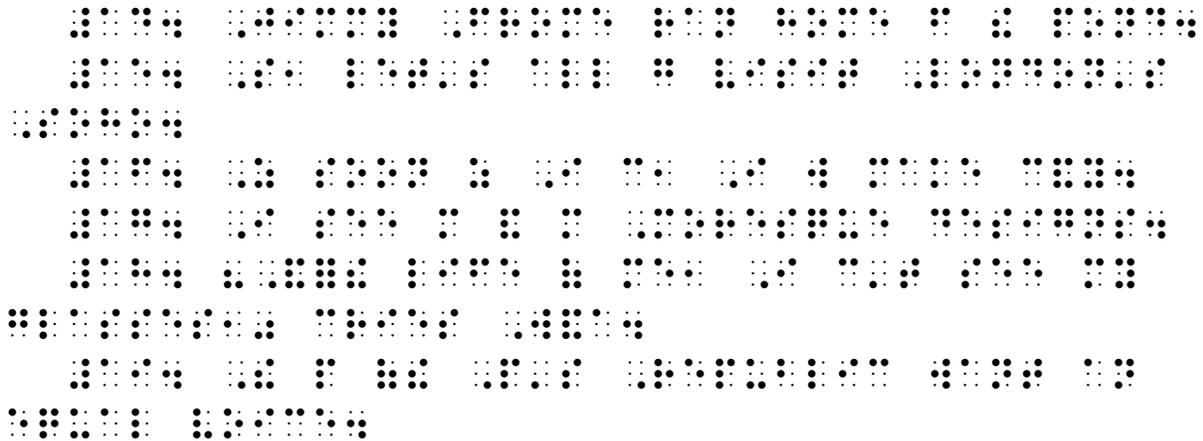
The play at the Orpheum Theatre is just a run-of-the-mill melodrama.

Sandra forgot the sandals, the bandanna, the box of candy and the thermos bottle that I left on the sofa.

The professor will hold a forum on foreign policy.

Twanda gave me back my copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with profuse apologies.

Patrice will play next the Andante from Haydn's "Surprise Symphony."



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 for AS YOU LIKE IT.
9. I'd like more leisure so that I can play more golf.
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 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. I'd go with you, but my d--n rheumatism keeps me home.
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. Another of Swift's satires is A TALE OF A TUB.
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, and I'll get it back—just you wait and see!"
25. The Athenians won a moral victory at Thermopylae.
26. San Francisco, California, has a very unusual climate.
27. It'll provide me with ample funds for the trip if I withdraw that small sum from my safe deposit box.
28. The girls will travel with and baby-sit my small son on the trip.
29. The Netherlands is a land of man-made dikes and canals.
30. The nosy visitor drawls: "I just met up with Aunt Ethel, and Auntie gave me all the village scandal and 'dirt'."
31. My job as a cocktail waitress will give my snooty Aunt Anne cause for scandal and suspicion.
32. Fortune is an elusive will-o'-the-wisp.
33. Hit with a rock, the pickpocket writhed with agony.
34. A force of 1,000 Yankees securely held the fort despite the very valiant assaults of the Rebels.
35. He is not quite as tall as I am, but he is more agile.
36. Mandy spoke with emphasis: "I demand that you probate Uncle Elmore's and Aunt Alexandra's wills at once."
37. I have a jigsaw puzzle for the kids, and for the adults I have a box of homemade candy.
38. For the next lesson you will practice the Andante of the Sonata.
39. 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.
40. Grandpa spoke of the 1950s as a rather tranquil decade.
41. The plane rose 15,000 feet—a safe altitude for that region.
42. The blue- and gray-clad forces met at the crossroads.