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## Blogs - 2012 - July

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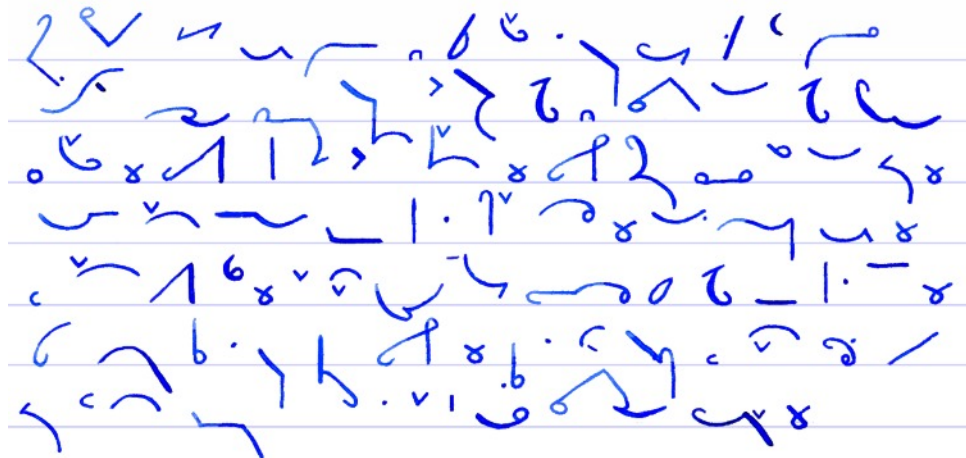
**Testing The Water**

Baby Bluetit: Shall I or shan't I? This is all new to me. I keep seeing others splashing around and having a great time, but I'm not sure how deep it is. Supposing there's\* nothing to stand on? Supposing I sink? Supposing I can't fly with wet feathers. Who does it belong to? Why did they put it

here? Am I allowed in it? It looks like a very nice way to spend a few minutes\* on a hot day. Anybody got any ideas?

\* "there's" Apostrophied versions use full strokes

\* "few minutes" For the phrase "few months" use the 1th intersection, as "minute" and "month" could end up looking similar

**Testing The Water**

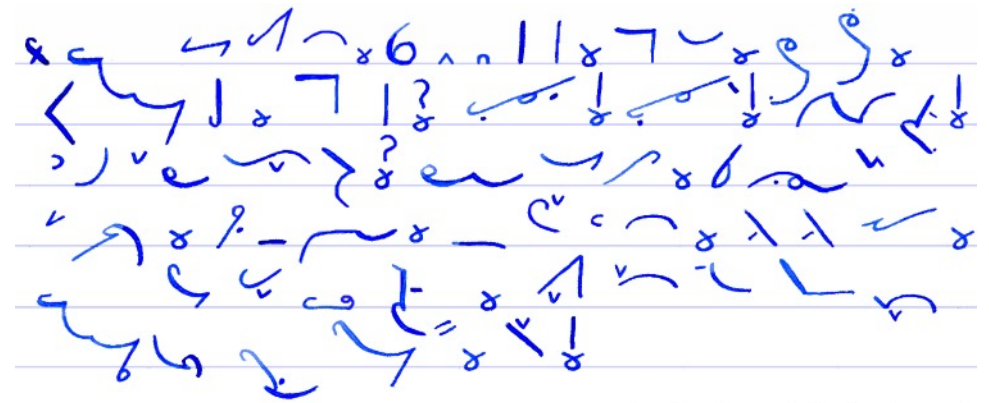
Chirpy Sparrow: Now look, you just find a bit near the edge that looks shallow, meaning you can see the bottom of the bath, and then you hop in, and then everything is fine. We do it all the time. Yesterday there were\* six of us in here. In fact\*, I'm going to give it a try myself. Any\* minute now. When I'm ready, that is. I might\* finish off the crumbs first, and then give it a go. Well, maybe it is a bit

deeper than yesterday. It's a lot better when my friends are here with me, to keep an eye on things happening nearby.

\* Omission phrases "there (w)ere" "in (f)act"

\* "any" It is in order to insert the final vowel sign, if it helps clarify

\* "I might" It is best not to phrase the halved version, i.e. may/might, can/could, know/note to help differentiate, and in this case add the vowel sign

**Testing The Water**

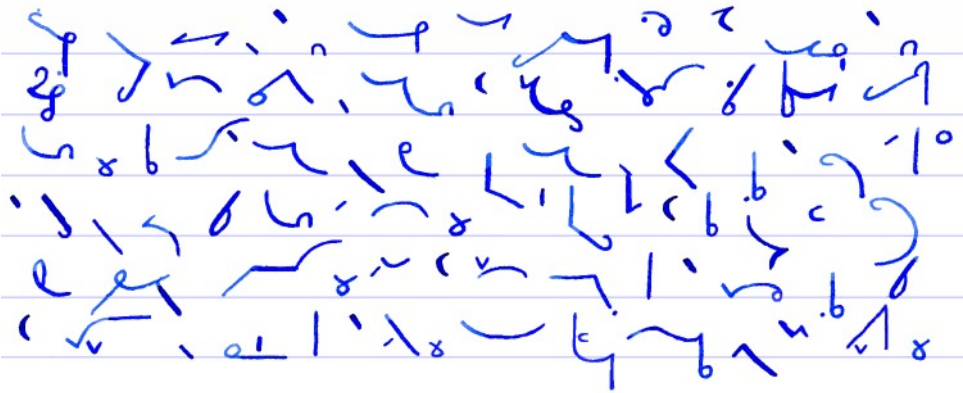
Bold Goldfinch: Watch me. This is how you do it. Get in. Splish, splash. Job done. Got it? Wa-hay! Yahoo! Lovely jubbly! What shall I sing in my bath? Singing In The Rain, Just Messing About On The River, Hey

Good Looking, Come Fly With Me, Up Up And Away, Goldfinches Over The White Cliffs Of Dover. Right, I'm off, back to my favourite preening branch. Bye! (Continued)

**Testing The Water**

Super Starlings: OK you guys, hope you've left some water for us. Never mind, any old puddle or birdbath will do, we can use anything. We can do anything. We can copy and sing any birdsong. We can eat all the worms in a football pitch. We are the champions! We don't really squabble, we

just have energetic discussions about where the best grubs are in the lawn. We are all going to fly off at the same time, and go and sit on someone's television aerial to dry out. The starling with the shiniest spots on his plumage wins. Starlings are the best. Starlings Rule OK!

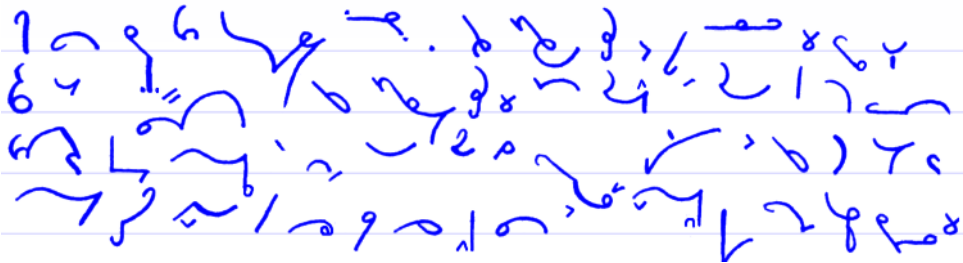


Testing The Water

Placid Pigeon: To all you interested in the winged arts, and that includes all you shorthand students\*, I am happy to inform you that I have spent absolutely ages testing the water for you. It is shallow enough to be safe, deep enough to do the job, it's all free and it has all been put here

just for you and me. On top of that, it is filled with fresh stuff reasonably regularly. Not that I'm keeping it all to myself, it's just that I like to soak it all up. Another 20 minutes should be about right. (464 words)

\* Omission phrase "shorthand s(t)udents"



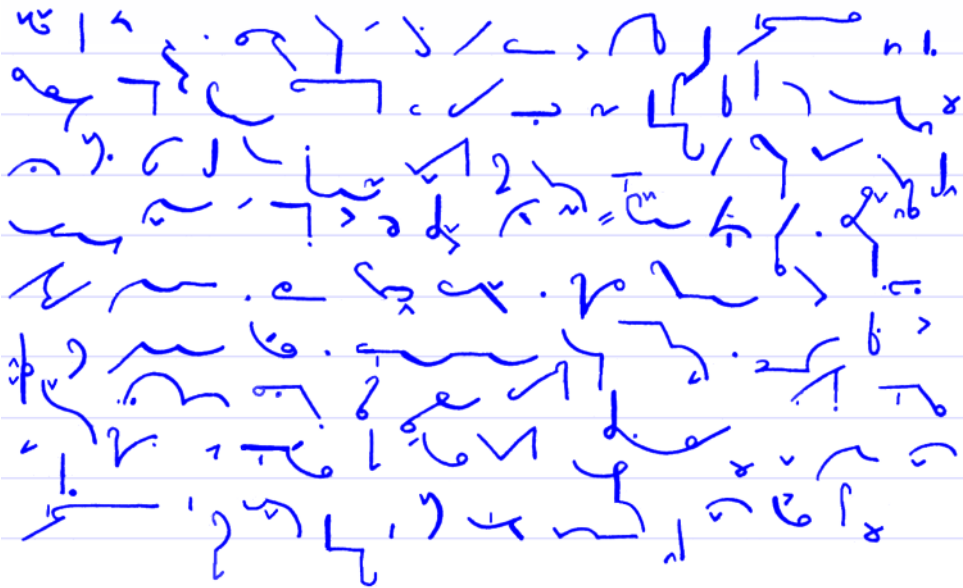
A Most Distinguished Writer

The perils of inconsistent outlines

Dear Mr Speedy, Thank you for your recent letter\* accepting the position of Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive. Please note that this is not the similar post of Personnel Assistant. I am astounded and astonished at your claim that you will be able to take the minutes of meetings in

shorthand, as the previous holder of the post was only able to manage shortened writing, which means he missed out some of the minute detail from the fastest speakers.

\* "letter" Downwards in order to join in the phrase



A Most Distinguished Writer

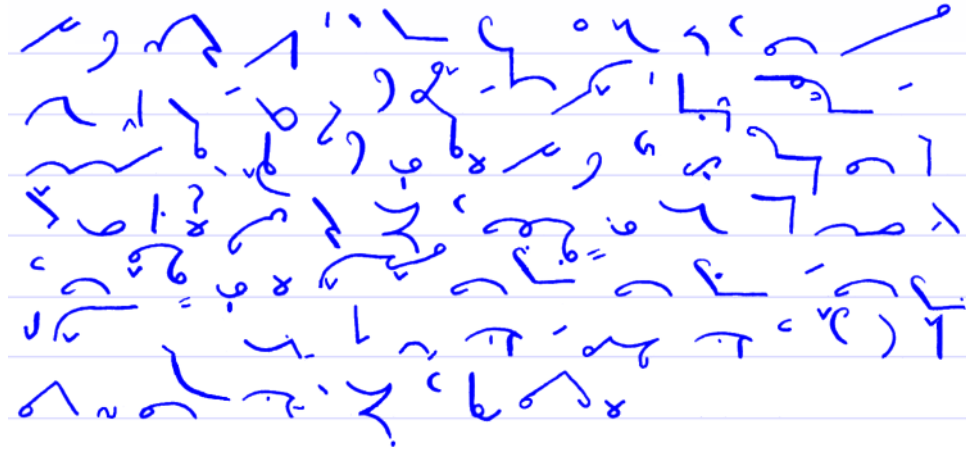
I find it hard to believe that a simple pad and pen are equal to the latest digital recorders, but you did surprisingly get everything correct when we gave you the dictation test at your interview. May I say well done for continuing to write through the power cut which brought all our computers\* down, including the lighting, and getting all the words, despite the low-flying jumbo jets, the high speed railway link, the school playground nearby, the drills breaking up the concrete outside, three ringing phones, the clunking photocopier, the weekly test of the fire alarm, scraping chairs, hissing water

dispenser, rattling cups on the tea trolley, and the guffaws at the office party next door\*. I left my recorder on through out the entire dictation but I was unable\* to make out my voice at all.

\* "computers" The plural does not use doubling, as the diphthong sign can no longer be joined

\* Omission phrase "ne(k)s(t) door"

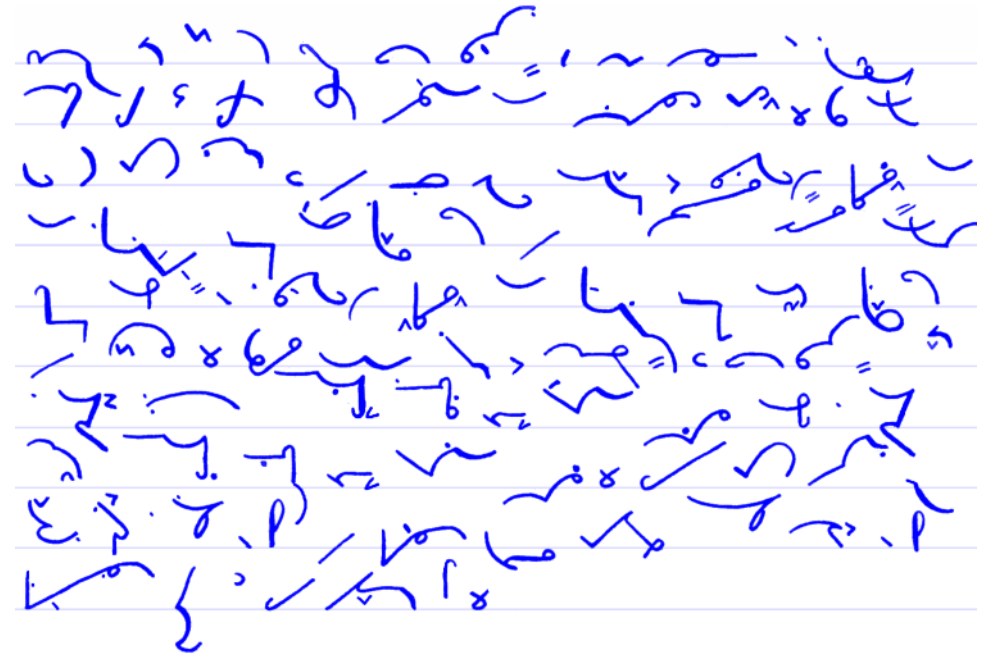
\* "unable" and "enable" Always insert the first vowel in these and their derivatives, as they have opposite meanings



## A Most Distinguished Writer

Are you sure you will be able to read it all back every time, as I have heard that some writers leave out bits and pieces to achieve their high speeds and rely on educated guesswork and memory to decipher their notes. Are you sure that you won't forget some of it by the next day? Will you be able to ensure that Mr Smith's comments

never get mixed up with Mr Smythe's notes? Likewise Mr Black, Mr Blake and Mr Blick do not like to have their input at the meetings muddled, and certainly not meddled with either, so I do hope you have some method of ensuring that does not happen.



## A Most Distinguished Writer

You may have heard about your predecessor Mr Slowlea who made the mistake\* of confusing the Major General\* with the General Manager, resulting in embarrassment all round. This unfortunate\* event was also marred when our guest should have been invited to the Heavenly Teahouse in Edinburgh to get honest advice from our lawyers, and was unfortunately\* directed instead to a slovenly outhouse in Dunbar to get the newest devices from our liars. This was nothing compared to the mix-up when Mr Slowlea hired an enjoyable amateur Canadian actress to create appalling emails, instead of a knowledgeable mature canteen cateress to create appealing meals. We are also relieved to have finally appointed an analyst to study our tourism figures, to

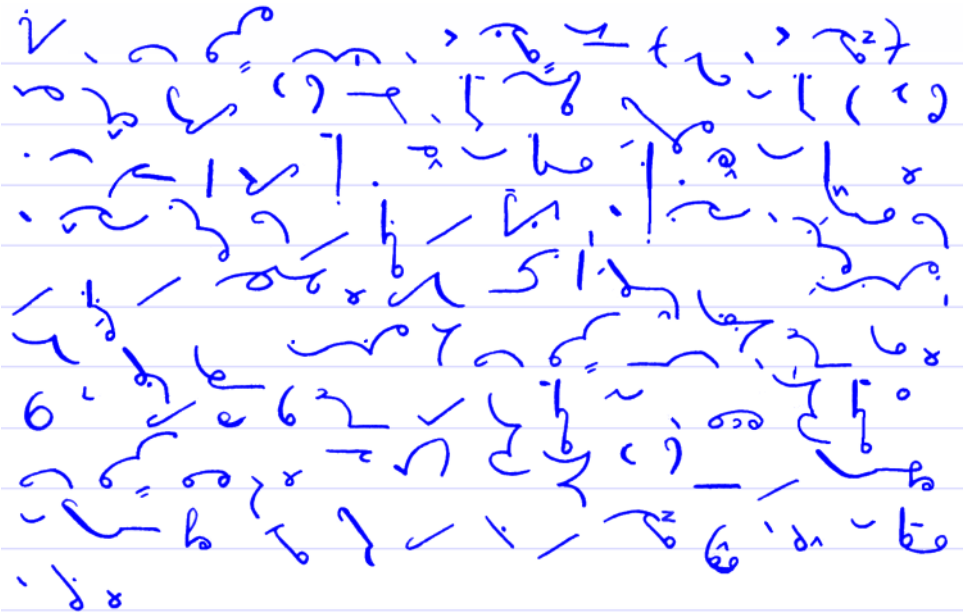
replace the naturalist employed to study terrorism, which was not\* what we required at all.

\* "mistake" and "mistaken" These omit the T, although "mistook" has a stroke T

\* "Major General" If you were using this term regularly, it would make sense to use the intersection for this instead, and write "general manager" in full, but it is essential to remain consistent in your usage

- \* "unfortunate" "unfortunately" Optional contractions

\* "was not" Do not use N hook and halving, as that is used for "isn't"



A Most Distinguished Writer

Contrary to Mr Slowlea's memo to all the Mabels in the company (should have been to all the employees), I must remind everyone that they are expected to adopt the manager's proposals, not adapt them, and that there is an important legal difference between auditing the accounts in advance and editing the amounts in defiance. All minor arrears from our debtors are tolerated, but all manner of errors from our editors\* are most certainly not. We have occasionally had obscure

fiscal anomalies, but never bizarre physical animals until Mr Slowlea came to work for us. This is why we send this work to our faithful auditors, and not to someone's unthankful daughters, as Mr Slowlea seems to think. Can you also ensure that they are given our bank statements, not blank statements, and please remember that we pay our employees thousands of pounds, not dozens of pence.

\* "editors" Special distinguishing outline

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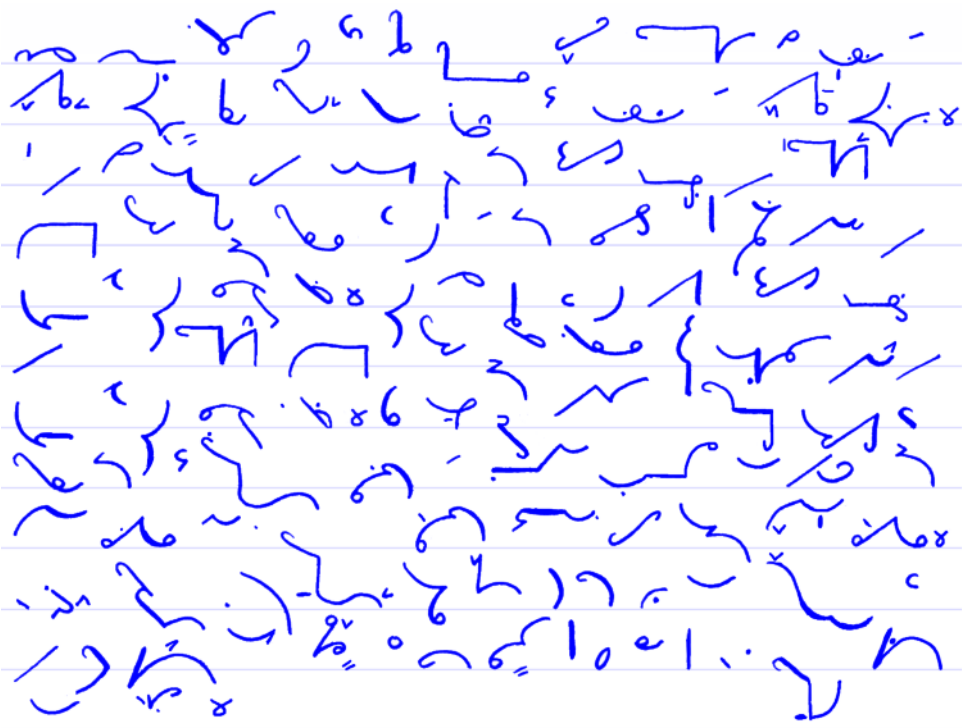
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A Most Distinguished Writer

You must make absolutely sure that you address the Director's wife correctly, as the innocent and righteous Charlotte does not appreciate being confused with the insane and riotous Shirley. On our last invitation, we intended to tell her that we wished to extend our cordiality, looked forward to her presence, that she and her husband had endlessly renewed our vigour, and that she was simply the best. She was most displeased when she read that we wished to expand our credulity, looked forward to her absence, that they had needlessly ruined our figure, and that she was simply a pest. This insult would have been\* rapidly

forgotten if we had been able to present her with the platinum, silver and garnet necklace in recognition of her long service, and not a plutonium, sulphur and granite one for her lino surface. To compound the problem, the order for this item was very late in arriving with our British jeweller in the Highlands, as Mr Slowlea had first sent it to a brutish jailer in Holland.

\* Omission phrase "would have been" The saving with this phrase is that the straight stroke provides a quicker and clearer join, rather than just shortening the total writing

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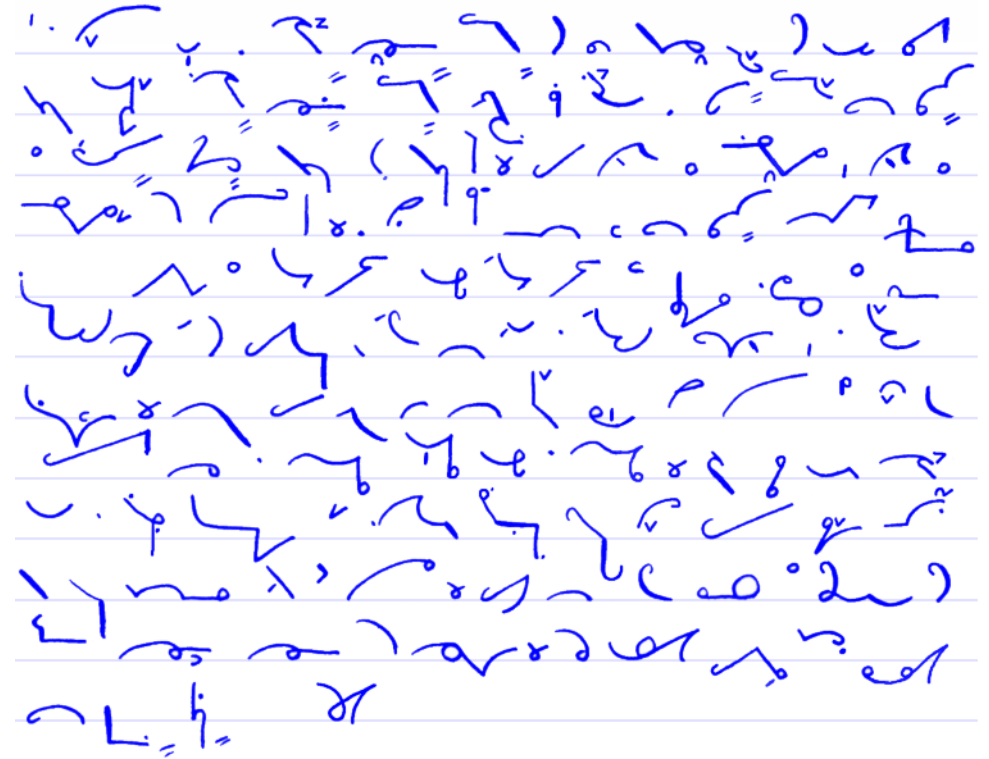
### A Most Distinguished Writer

I am so glad you will be able to spare us all the above mishaps with our paperwork and help us to regain a place in the business marketplace that is virile and undeniable, and not frail and untenable or unattainable. Your workstation does include the necessary keyboard and computer, and not the nicer cupboard and puppy that the unfortunate\* Mr S. originally ordered. You have been allocated a car parking space by

the peculiar onion sign under the overgrown bridge. It should have been a big neon sign near the evergreen approach, but its novelty value has increased our business, the one and only benefit we gained from Mr Slowlea's amusing and amazing time with us.

\* "unfortunate" Optional contraction

Mr Slowlea and his exasperated colleagues are fictional; his errors can be very real. See [www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-intro.htm](http://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-intro.htm) to help you emulate the Distinguished Writer Mr Speedy.



### A Most Distinguished Writer

On a lighter note, the Employee Music Club was somewhat bemused to find their new headed paper entitled the Ample Mistake Club and briefly considered appointing the well-qualified Mr Slowlea as Honorary Chairman, before thinking better of it. We loved his exuberance but loathed his experience, or lack of it. The last straw came when Mr Slowlea marked the Managing Director's confidential report as "for the record" instead of "off the record"\* with disastrous\* consequences, as you can imagine, and so we have had to offer him not an official furlough but a final farewell. Maybe we should have let him type his own last letter, as he might have awarded himself a minute's notice instead of a month's. I believe he is now employed in a pasta factory on the alphabet spaghetti production line, where he will actually be paid to mix up all the letters. We wish\* him every success, as there is nothing there

that he can misquote, mistake or mis-spell. Yours necessarily, whoops\* I mean sincerely, Mr Dick Tayter (1075 words)  
"Yours sincerely"\*

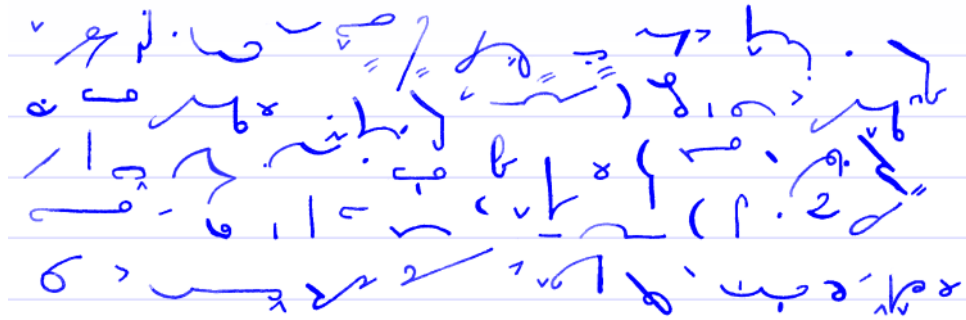
\* "for/off the record" Always insert the vowel in "off", so that these two are not misread for each other

\* "disastrous" Note that "disaster" has a doubled S stroke

\* "whoops" Pronounced with just a W, not a HW sound. The verb "whoop" (to shriek) is pronounced with a H, and written the same as "hoop"

\* "we wish" You can vary the angle of this phrase, so that the Ish is on the line for "we shall" and through the line for "we wish"

\*"Yours sincerely " This phrase is how it should be written

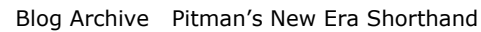


## Stained Glass Story

I recently attended a function in Christ Church, Chislehurst, Kent, and enjoyed admiring the beauty of the stained glass windows. The zoom button on the camera was indispensable but some of the windows are at ground level allowing a close study of the detail. They do, of course, all illustrate Bible characters and events, but it occurred to me that I could\* make them

tell a shorthand story as well, of the encounter between the shorthand writer and the wild beasts of unknown words and outlines.

\* "I could" Helpful to not phrase "could", to make sure it is not misread as "can", but safe to phrase "could not" as that is different from "cannot"



## Stained Glass Story

This window shows Daniel in the lions' den, surrounded by the roaring hungry big cats that would like to attack and make a meal of him. In my story, this is "Dan the Shorthand Man" who has studied his manuscripts well. He has not only learned the rules and advice on how to conduct himself in such circumstances, but he has actually applied them, and is now safe from the claws and teeth of the beastly\* marauders that threaten to destroy him. He is calm, serene and peaceful, with his mind firmly fixed\* on higher things. The lions seem to have decided that they had better look elsewhere for dinner, upon which they will pounce with great force as soon as it appears. In the historical account they got their meal the next day\*, when King Darius ordered brutal justice and retribution to be visited on Daniel's accusers. This same

event is illustrated in the realistic and skilful painting "Daniel's Answer To The King" by Briton Rivière in 1890 showing a supremely calm situation in the dungeon the next morning, when King Darius anxiously\* called down to Daniel to see if he was still alive.

- \* "beastly" Insert the last vowel, and the diphone in "bestial" as they are similar in outline and meaning

- \* "fixed, focused" Always insert the first vowel, as they are similar in outline and meaning

\* Omission phrase "ne(k)s(t) day"

\* "anxiously" Omits the K sound = "anq-shusly"

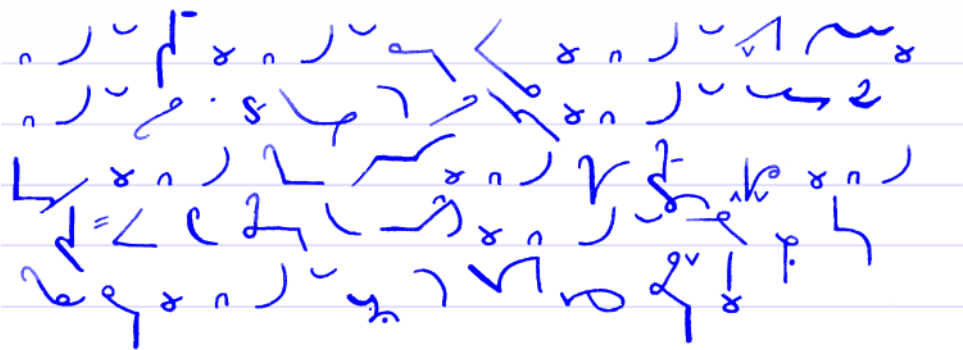


Stained Glass Story

These are the Ten Commandments tablets\*, showing only the numbers one to ten. They are actually written in a type of shorthand that everyone is familiar with – numerals – so there is no need to inject shorthand meaning here when it is already present. Roman numerals are still the norm for public monuments or for special decorative or classical effect, but in daily life our Arabic numerals are far quicker and easier for our purposes, namely writing mathematical\* calculations on paper. The Romans used an abacus for calculations, so their writing method was perfectly adequate for just recording the result. The change from Roman to Arabic (originally from India, via Arabia) seems to me to mirror the purpose of shorthand, a cumbersome system of representation

replaced by a more swiftly written one, which, once learned, makes it very difficult to return willingly to the previous slow and awkward method. Here are Ten Recommendations for the shorthand student\*, offered in the spirit of encouraging excellence in your new stenographic skill.

- \* "tablets" Keep the B short and insert the second vowel, so it does not look like "tables"
- \* "mathematical" The shorter words "maths" and "math" are normal outlines, above the line and vocalised
- \* Omission phrase "shorthand s(t)udent"

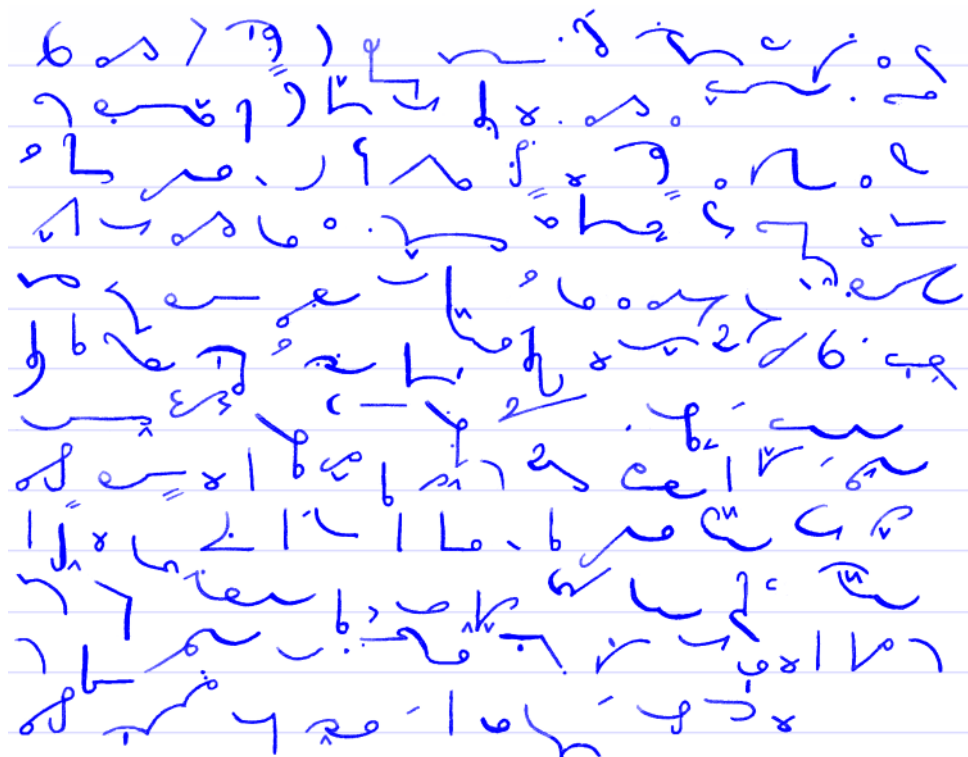


Stained Glass Story

- You shall not dawdle.
- You shall not skip chapters.
- You shall not write longhand.
- You shall not use a blunt pencil or rough paper.
- You shall not neglect the shorthand dictionary.
- You shall practise regularly.
- You shall drill troublesome outlines.

- You shall double-check every transcript\* for accuracy.
- You shall not expect to stay at your present speed.
- You shall not underestimate your ability to master high speed!
- \* "transcript" this and derivatives omit the second R, to keep it different from "describe" which has a similar meaning, and whose outline has the reversed circle to indicate the R hook on the G stroke





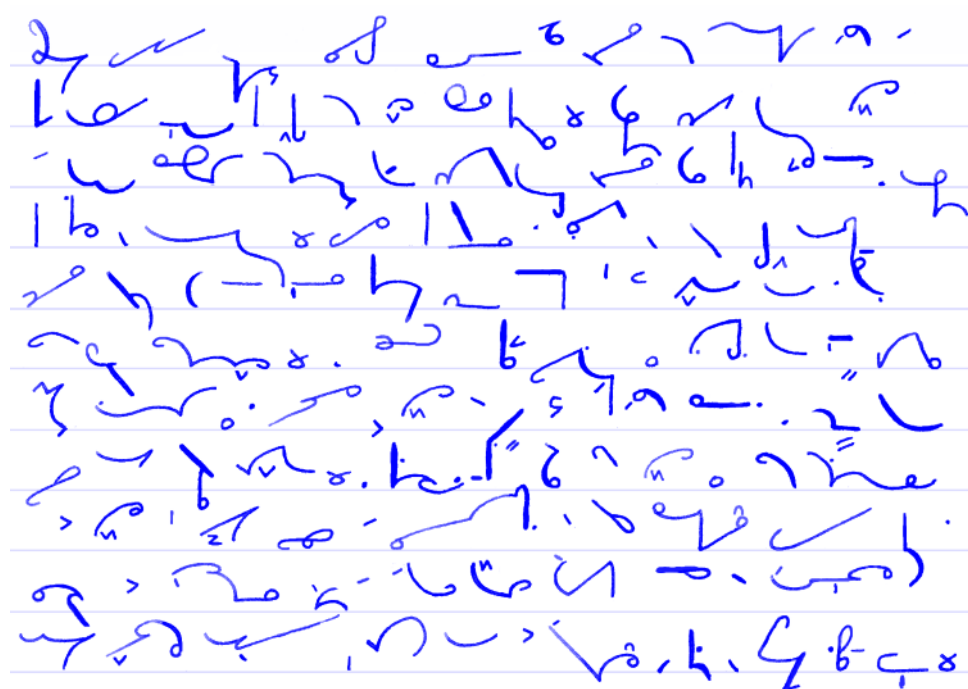
### Stained Glass Story

This is the serpent of which Moses was instructed to make a bronze emblem in order to\* heal his people from snakebites during their time in the desert. The serpent is climbing a cross and has dragon wings to show that it represents Satan. Moses is holding his staff right in the serpent's face, as a reminder of his dominion over the creature. I can almost hear the snake hissing in defiance, and his face is certainly full of snarling displeasure at his present impotence\* and his impending doom and destruction. In my shorthand story, this is a close-up encounter with one of the beasts that can beset the shorthand writer\*, the insidious and clinging Hesitation Snake. It winds itself round your

shorthand pen, squeezing it tightly and slowing it down. If you shake it off, it takes to its wings, flying along the line of your pad and fastening itself to the next outline that you are having trouble with, magnifying your difficulty, resulting in a cavernous gaping hole in the notes. It turns your hesitation "molehills" into "mountains" and it needs firm and instant action.

\* Omission phrases "in ord(er to)"  
"short(hand) writer"

\*"impotence" Insert the second vowel, so it does not look like "impudence"



### Stained Glass Story

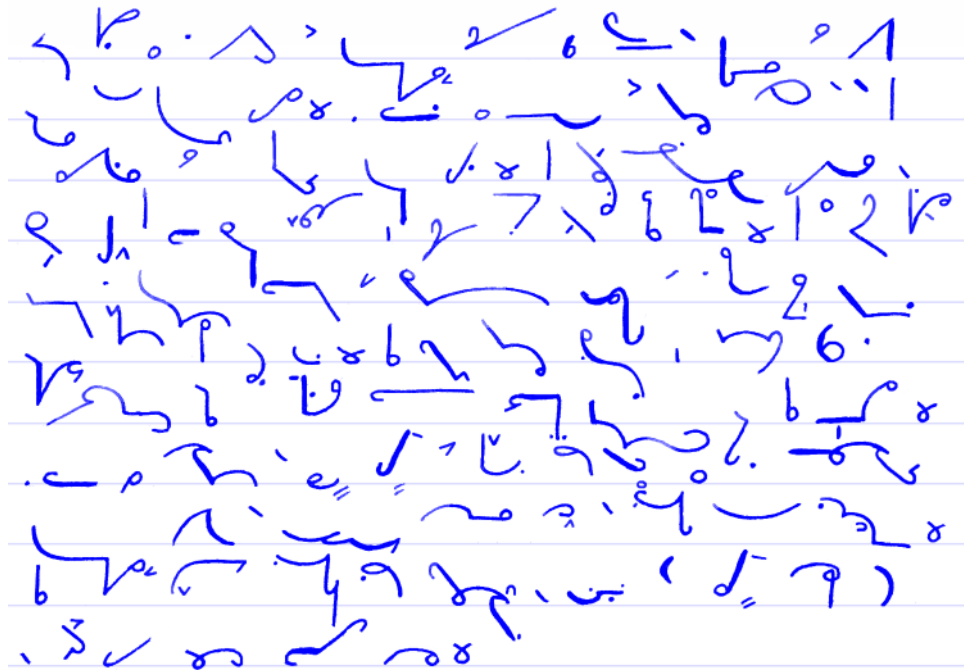
There is only one way to deal with the Hesitation Snake and that is to use your mental sword and do the necessary, cutting it out of your mind as soon as it appears. This time you are the fierce lion, and, having successfully removed the foe, you will be confident to use this attitude again the next time\* it attempts to interfere. Once it becomes a habit\* to put down intrusive worries before they can cause damage, you can get on with writing in a more comfortable frame of mind\*. The inscription "Deus Juvat" is Latin for "God helps" and I think the animal is a reference to the Lion of Judah with the sword signifying the Word of God being used in the battles of life. The demeanour of this particular lion is very reminiscent of the

lions on royal crests and heraldry of past centuries, where it was a symbol of the monarch's ultimate and often violent authority against all oncomers, not only rivals in war but also any of the populace\* who dared to challenge the status quo.

\* Omission phrases "ne(k)s(t) time"  
"frame (of) mind"

\* "habit" Helpful to insert the vowel in this and "hobby" as in some contexts they could be misread for each other, as their meanings are close

\* "populace" Keep the S small and closed, so it does not look like "population"



### Stained Glass Story

Here at last\* is a representation of the victorious shorthand writer\* who has overcome all difficulties and is ready to face any future ones. The eagle is king of the birds, master of all it surveys, and is top of the food chain. It possesses expansive\* wings to swoop down at great speed, silently but surely catching up with its target. It has sharp talons to keep a firm grip on the subject matter under consideration and a strong hooked beak to deal with the item as it sees fit. Its brow appears severe, but I am sure this is a reflection of its audacious character and gritty\* determination to achieve its goals. The eagle is the emblem of Saint John, and the tiny star above is an example of the Victorians' love of including the maximum

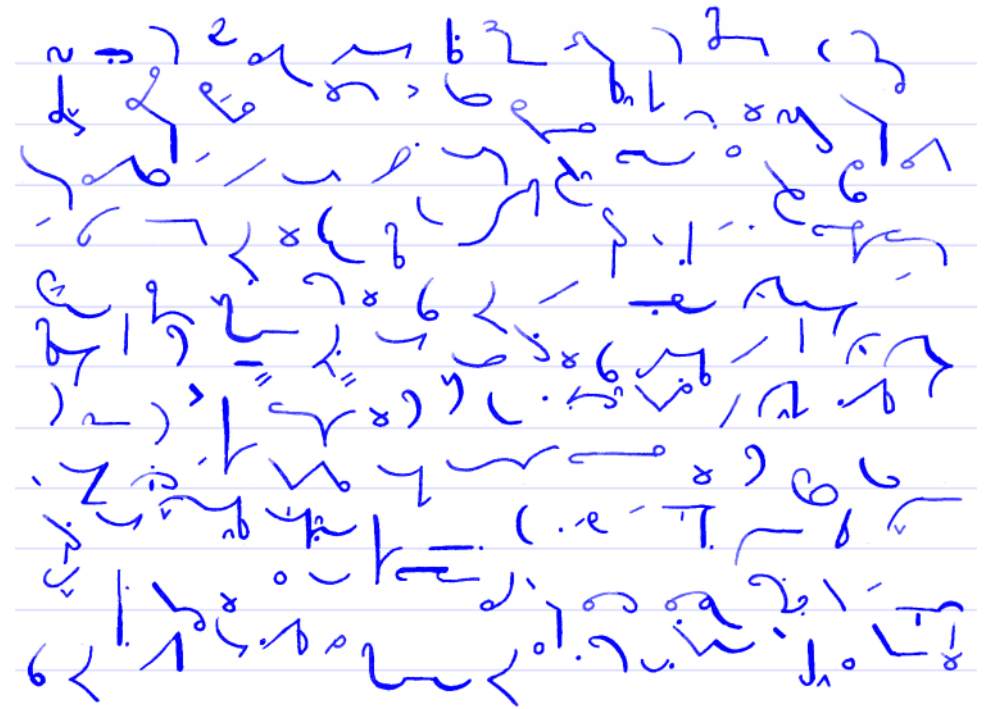
amount of narrative in their artwork. It is like the Nativity star, presumably to indicate that John's ministry was to point the way to someone greater than himself.

\* "at last" and "at least" Always insert the vowel

\* Omission phrase "short(hand) writer"

\* "expansive" This and "extensive" are similar in outline and meaning, so keep the P well sloped, and insert the second vowel, similarly all their derivatives

\* "gritty" Cannot be confused with "great" which is a halved stroke



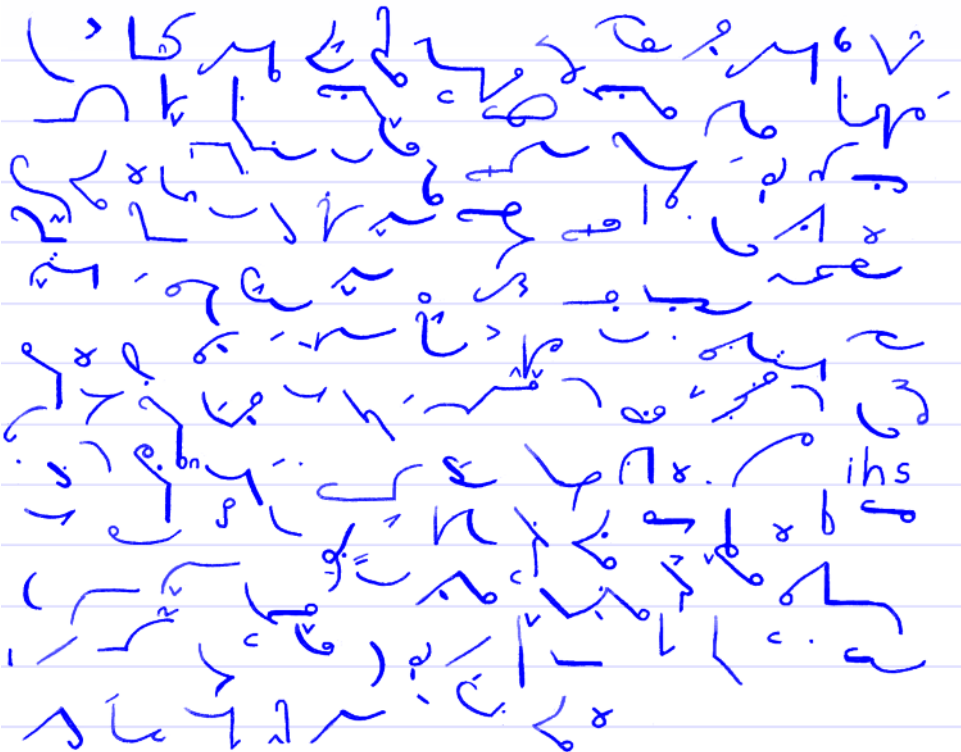
### Stained Glass Story

You have gained your shorthand certificate, written the day's work and produced your transcript without errors, despite the high speed spurts of some of the fast speakers at the meeting. You have been paid for your services and are now resting in your beautiful garden, as peaceful\* as these happy and well-kept sheep. They have trees for shelter, plenty to eat and a crystal-clear flowing stream to drink from. These sheep are gazing lovingly and trustingly at their Good Shepherd in the next pane. These windows are at low level so you can see all the detail clearly. Their eyes have a human\* appearance, which allowed the artist to inject emotion and purpose into the animal characters. Their

fleeces have been painted in the minutest undulating detail, giving them a soft and cuddly look, just like white teddy bears. As in agricultural shows of today, someone seems to have freshened up and combed these sheep ready for the artist, as the drinking sheep has a very neat parting all down his back!

\* "peaceful" Where outlines use hooked FL stroke for "-ful", always insert the final vowel for "-fully" as often both words would make sense

\* "human" Above the line, following the second vowel, to distinguish it from "humane" on the line



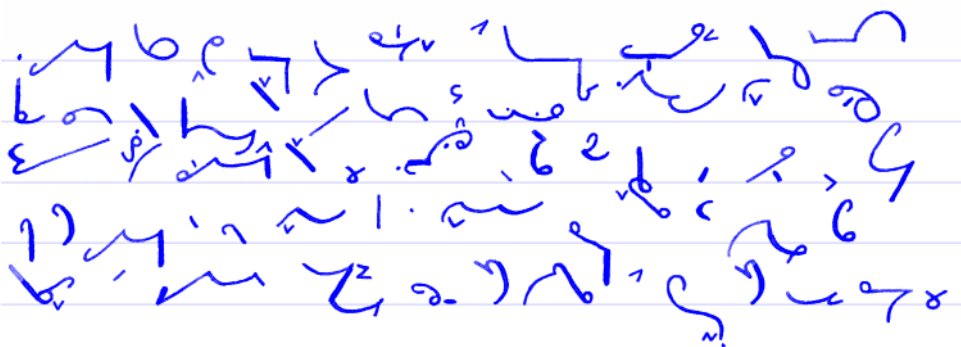
Stained Glass Story

After all the educational\* windows showing troubles and victories, here is the magnificent rose window that is pure colour delight, depicting grapevines, with clusters of grapes, leaves, tendrils and flower shapes. If you copy any of these curling branches and shoots, you will gain very good practice in pen control, writing graceful curves at an even rate. Light-handed and smooth flowing writing is one of the keys to gaining and increasing speed. Stiff, slow and halting drawing of the outlines in a heavy-handed manner will only produce furrows in the paper and marks or stains on the reverse, or even worse a bent or splayed nib and a quickly

blunting pencil lead. The letters I H S in the centre stand for Jesus, and the twelve petal shapes signify the disciples. At first\* glance they look like figures in robes with bishops' pointed headgear, but are actually filled with vines whose shoots are tied together at the top with a golden ribbon and continue into the outer ring of floret shapes.

\* "educational" Normally the U diphthong is written outside a shun hook, as it is in "education", but here it can only go inside because of the presence of the L stroke

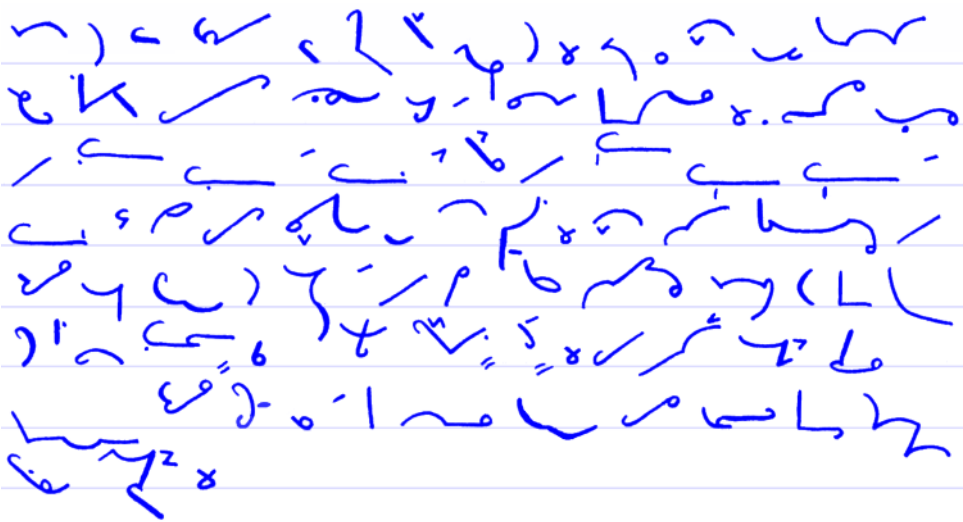
\* Omission phrase "at (fir)st"



Stained Glass Story

The window faces south to get full sunlight, and the effect of the glorious burst of colour does not seem to be diminished by our familiarity with the intense artificial light sources that we are constantly surrounded by. Congratulations to all those shorthand disciples who ROSE to the

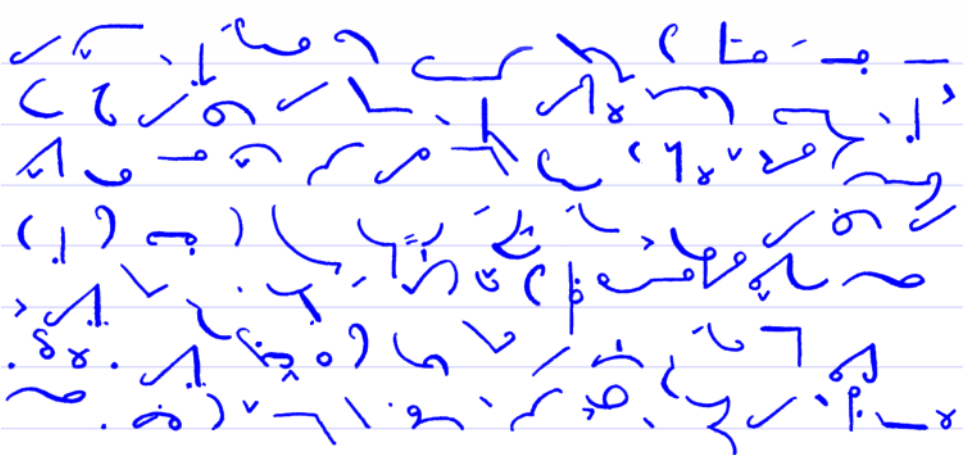
challenge during their WINDOW of opportunity, writing at a LIGHTning speed that LEAVES the others behind, and who are now enjoying the FRUITS of their labours and the FLOWERING of their new skill. (1474 words)



Ducklings

I am so glad that you are able to drop by and visit us. Here is my new family of seven\* adorable, wonderful, amazing\*, intelligent and smart ducklings. The girls' names are Quack, Queck and Quick, and the boys are Quock, Qwuck, Quoak and Quook, with the last one hiding under my shadow. My little adventurers are always into everything so enthusiastically and are such fast learners, I am sure they take after their Dad Mr Quacker who is in charge of Priory Pond. We really enjoyed the generous picnic that was thrown to us and it makes having one's photograph taken so much more\* pleasant\* and enjoyable.

- \* "seven" Keep the N hook clear, so it does not like "several"
- \* "amazing" and "amusing" Always insert the second vowel
- \* Omission phrase "so much m(ore)"
- \* "pleasant" and "pleasing" Helpful to insert the vowel as these are similar
- \* "enjoyable" Always insert the triphone, as otherwise it looks like the contraction "knowledgeable"



Ducklings

We like to eat the offerings very quickly before the other ducks and geese come along, and then we swim away back to deeper water. I am very careful to eat all the right things, because my little ones copy everything that I do. I always make sure they eat their greens so, after the photo-shoot and showing off to the visitors,

we swam away to the weedy part to have a nibble and also find other tasty snacks hiding amongst the plants. The weedy playground is their favourite part of our home, but they often get hidden among the stems so I keep up a system of little noises to ensure we all stay together.

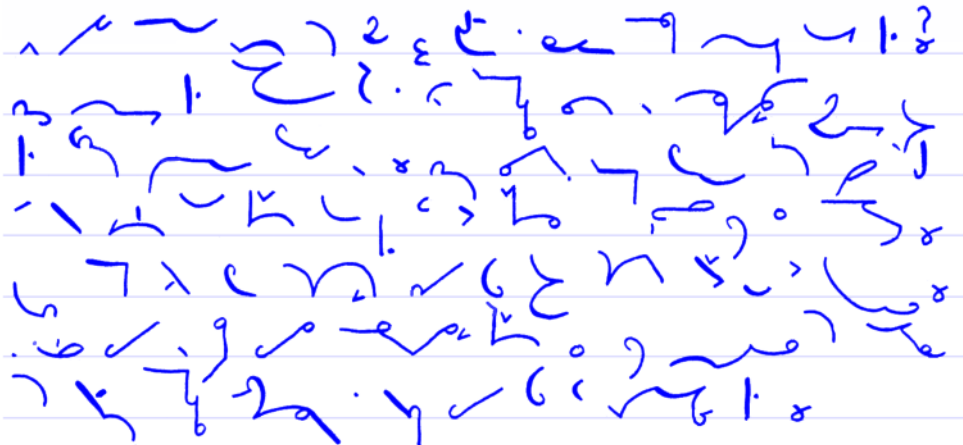


Ducklings

Mrs Moorhen is busy at her nest and has chosen a green colour scheme this year, due to the abundance of pond weed. She gets a bit annoyed when people call her a coot. Coots have white beaks, not so fashionable and attractive as her bright red. I have to say that ducklings are much more\* lovable and fluffy than coot and moorhen chicks who seem to start off with not many feathers on their heads. But we all get along very well and the moorhens do a good job of keeping an eye out for

danger when we are all feeding. Thank you for coming to see us and do please return another day to see how the family has grown. Best wishes\*\*\*, Mrs Quacker. (350 words)

- \* Omission phrases "much m(ore)" "I have (to) s(ay) that"
- \* "Best wishes" Upward Ish in order to join the phrase



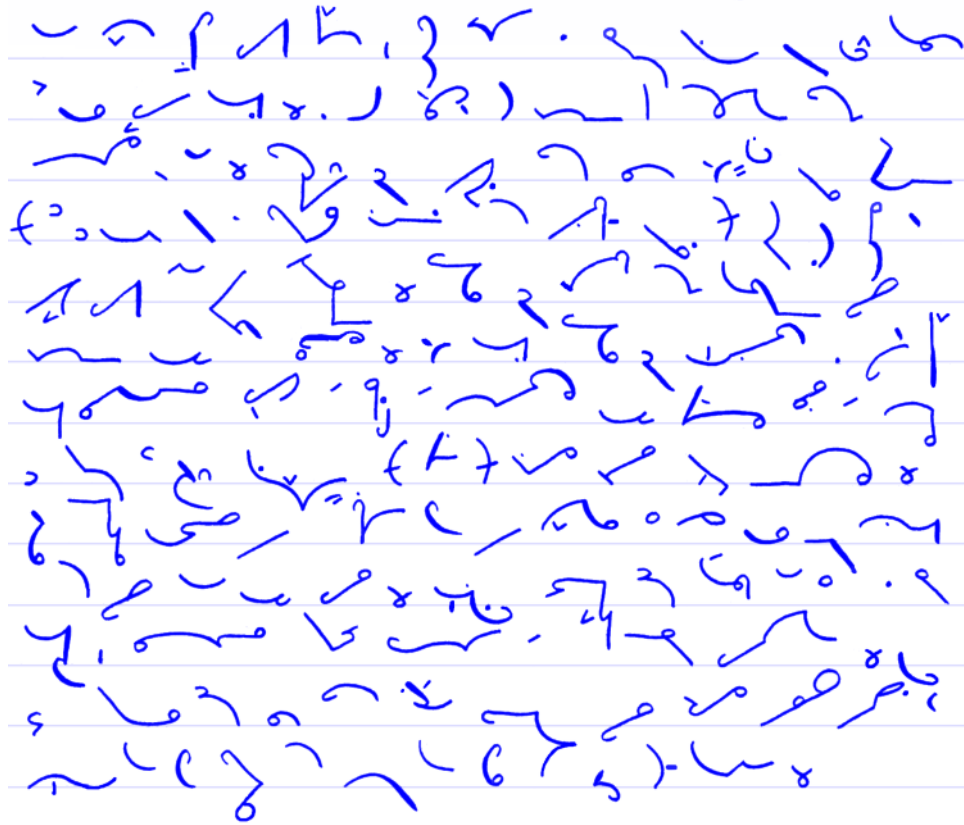
Invisible Minutes

How are you going to improve your shorthand when you don't have a single extra minute in the day? You cannot make the day any longer, although a lot of activities seem to mysteriously shrink the full day that you were\* looking forward to. You were\* hoping to get everything on your list done, and be home in time for tea, with all the items crossed through as accomplished. If you get up ever earlier,

you are then falling asleep by the end of the afternoon. The commonest way to stretch one's experience of time is through impatience, or unpleasant or boring activities, and there must be\* a better way than that to lengthen the day.

- \* Omission phrases "that you (w)ere" "you (w)ere" "there mus(t) be"



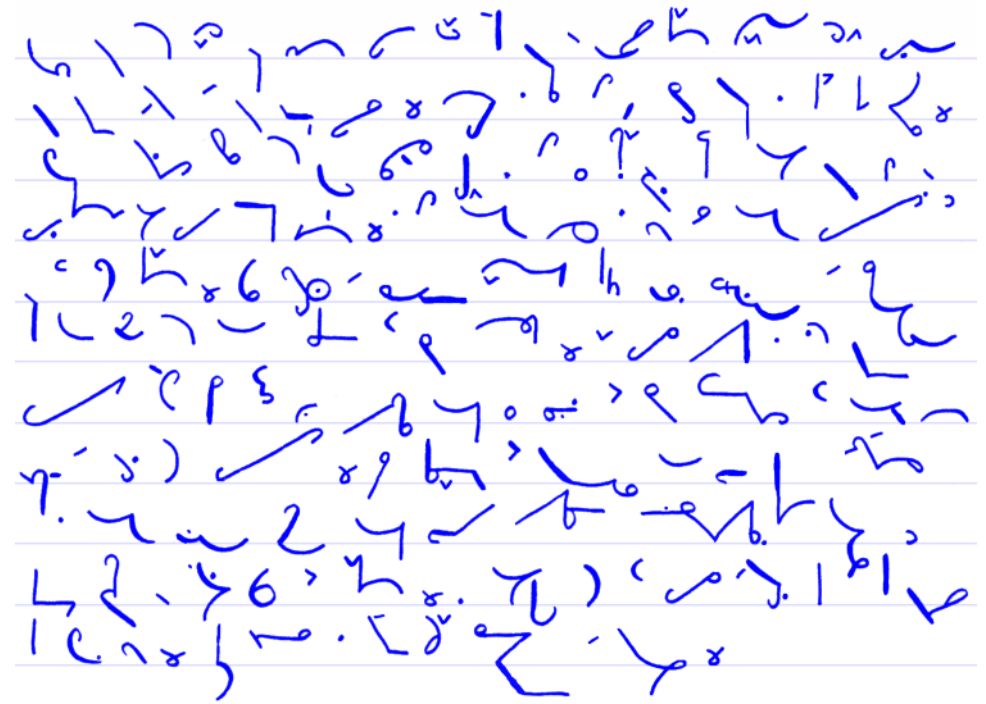


### Invisible Minutes

In my childhood, we had time but there was hardly a spare penny to be found for some of the things we needed. The usual solution was to make it yourself from the materials to hand. Furniture would be reshaped from some old-fashioned piece of junk (what would now be a precious antique or retro piece), especially easy as it was all real wood and not chipboard and plastic. Clothes would be altered or the fabric used to make new garments. Old knitted clothes would be unravelled, the wool tied into hanks, washed and straightened, and marvellous new jumpers, hats and mittens would appear with beautiful Fair Isle (Jacquard)

patterns, to use up the colours. All these activities increased our control over our lives, as most things could be mended or used in new ways. Innovation and creativity were fostered, not as a special endeavour but as a matter of course\*, part of the normal and expected way of life\*. Even when the pennies were somewhat more abundant, careful use of one's resources released that money for other purchases, or maybe for others who were\* not so fortunate.

\* Omission phrases "as (a) matter (of) course" "way (of) life" "who (w)ere"



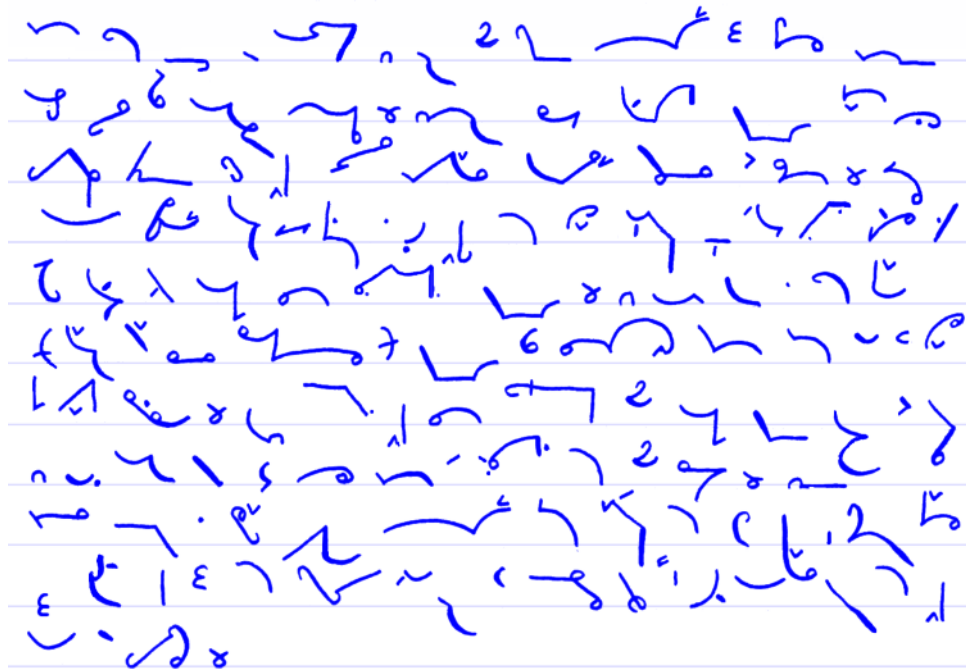
### Invisible Minutes

If you put your mind to it, you may well find odd bits of unused time lying around, waiting to be picked up and put to good use. Imagine a child who has been bought a toy at the shops. Every time the parent stops or even slows down, the child is trying\* to play with it, only to be told to "wait until we get home". A child never misses an opportunity and is never wondering what to do with their time. This persistent and single-minded attitude needs cultivating and strengthening for shorthand or any task that has to be\* mastered. I once read an art book where the author said that he would let readers into his secret of the special equipment that enabled him to draw and paint so wonderfully. He

described all the benefits in great detail, and promised a never-ending journey into greater artistic expertise for those who would take the trouble to avail themselves of the item. The only condition was that, once obtained, it had to be used at every opportunity. It was, of course, a pocket-sized sketchbook and pencil.

\* "trying" No triphone, as the I vowel is included in the Dot Ing

\* "has to be" The similar "is to be" is best written as separate outlines, being clearer and less likely to be confused with this one



### Invisible Minutes

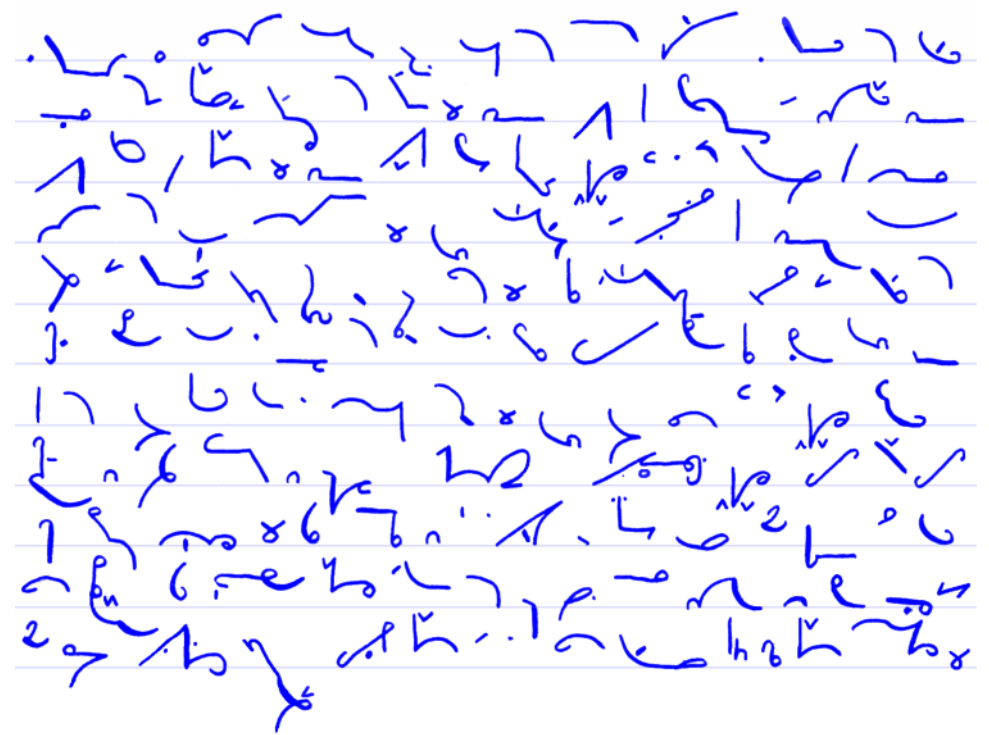
I am very keen to encourage you to have shorthand practice material with you at all times\*, to make instant use of those invisible minutes. You may have seen the folded booklet\* on my main website, which you can print out and use to revise various basics of the system. Here is another suggestion for them: tear a sheet out of your lined notepad, cut off the ragged holes edge, and then fold up into the same handy booklet. You now have a very tiny (five by six centimetres) booklet that is smaller than the palm of your hand, with lines at the right spacing. If you copy out some correct shorthand into the book,

filling all the pages, you need never be without the means to improve and consolidate your shorthand skill. You can of course keep a supply of reading material on your Ipod\* or other device, but there may be times when you don't have it with you, or prefer not to have that expensive possession on show in public or out in all weathers.

\* "at all times" Halving to represent the T of "times"

\* "Ipod" and "Ipad" Always insert the second vowel

[www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/downloads.htm#folded-booklets](http://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/downloads.htm#folded-booklets)  
and folding demo at <http://www.youtube.com/LucyPaintbox>



### Invisible Minutes

The booklet is small enough to fit into your card holder, the back of your phone case or the tiniest purse or pocket. You can read it over and over again\*, and you will find you can read faster each time. You can write over the top of the outlines with a hard pencil which makes little or no mark. If you unfold and reverse it, you can have another passage on the back of the paper, so that you have two to choose from. It is unobtrusive to use on the bus or train, standing in a queue, or any\*place where it is safe for you to give it your full attention for a minute or two. If you fill some with all the outlines that have been troubling you, this will\* equip you to deal with and demolish the recalcitrant outlines one by one during spare moments. This gets you "on a roll" to attack the next shorthand difficulty and is even more satisfying than

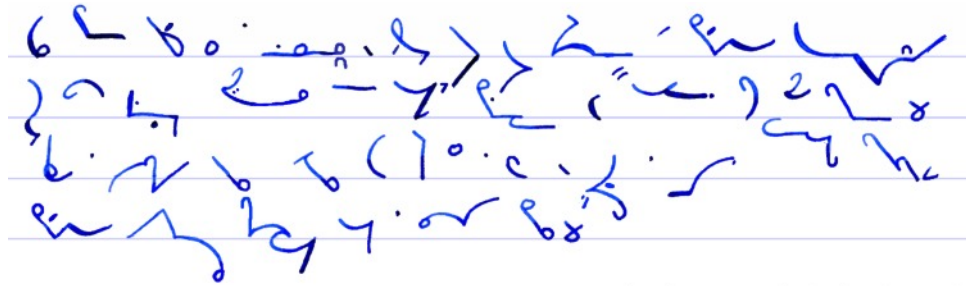
crossing items off your to-do list, because you will have made several gains, shorthand skill, redemption of previously wasted time and a more focused attitude towards time management. (865 words)

\* Omission phrases "over (and) over again". The second "over" is reversed to make a convenient join in this phrase.

\* "any" This short form has no vowel signs, but it is helpful here to insert the dot so it is not misread as "in places"

\* "this will " Downward L to join the phrase, similarly "this letter"

\* "focused" and "fixed" Always insert the first vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning

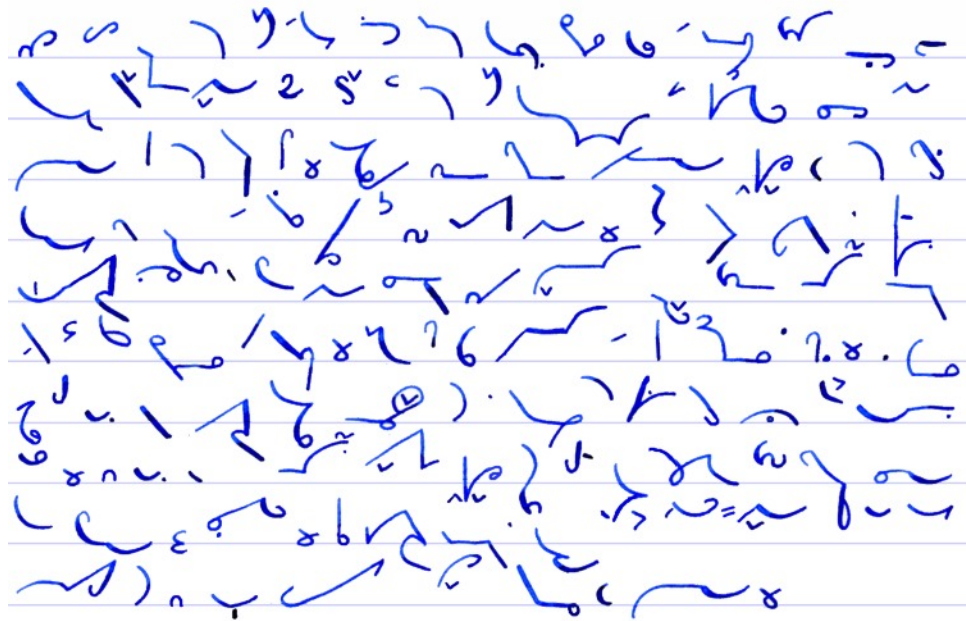


### Olympic Vocabulary

This blog post is an excuse to stuff the page full of Olympic and sporting vocabulary, so that the more dedicated shorthanders\* can enjoy the spectacle without neglecting their shorthand practice. It is not a literary piece and please think

of it as an effort to shoehorn a goodly quantity of appropriate sporting reporter's terminology into a small space.

\* "shorthanders" The D sound is included in the doubling, so do not thicken. A thickened N would signify a doubled Ing = ang-ger or ang-ker



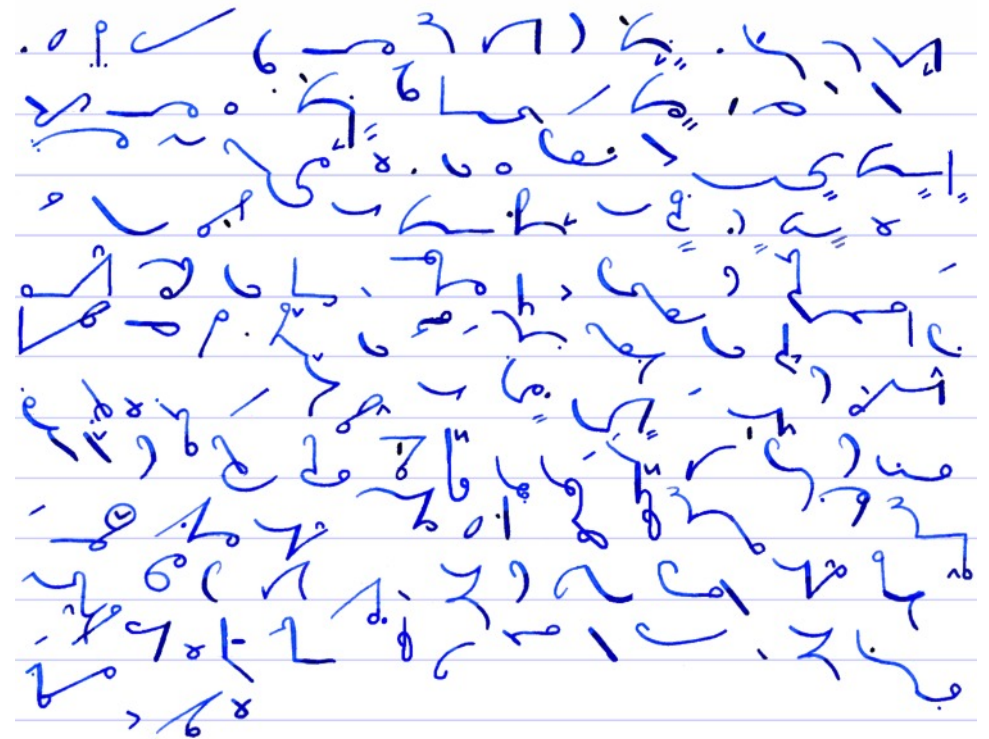
### Olympic Vocabulary

You will not want to take your eyes off the action of your favourite\* sports events, and I can assure you that you will gain great benefit by writing shorthand "blind" with your eyes firmly on the television screen and not looking at your pad at all. In this way you can practise recalling outlines without your brain having the opportunity to view and pass judgement on what you have already written. Although the page will be a totally unreadable mass\* of overwritten scribble, you are likely to find that you can actually keep up with the fast

speakers much better. I have tried this regularly and it works a treat. The thicks and thins do not need to be readable for this exercise so a pencil or gel pen may avoid inky hands. You need to actually write the outlines, so that you don't fool yourself that you have produced something for everything when you haven't. It is helpful to keep a finger of the non-writing hand in the margin so you know where the line begins without looking.

\* "favourite" Reversed Vr, compare with "favoured" which has normal Vr

\* "mass" Insert the vowel, as "mess" would also make sense



### Olympic Vocabulary

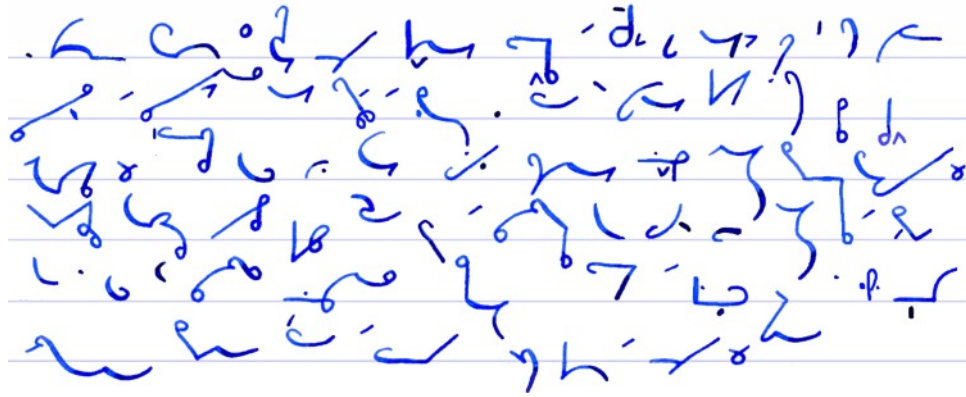
The first city where these games were held was Olympia\*, the four-year period between games is an Olympiad, and those taking part are Olympians, who must all be amateurs and not professionals. The event is overseen by the International Olympic Committee and is being hosted in the Olympic Stadium in Stratford, East London. Security measures have been taken to extremes, due to the ever-present threat of trouble-makers and terrorists\* against such a high-profile event, and guards and army personnel have been deployed at every conceivable position. Competitors are housed in the Athletes' Village, and no doubt they are surrounded by their personal trainers, coaches, dieticians,

physicians, physiotherapists and podiatrists, who will oversee their fitness and exercise regimes, injury management, first aid, warm-ups, massage, workouts and nutritional requirements, as well as other health routines to ensure their wellbeing, flexibility, endurance, strength and energy. Dope and drug tests will of course be in order, to ensure fairness and adherence to the rules.

\*Olympia was a sanctuary to their gods, near the ancient city of Elis, Greece.

\* "terrorists" Keep the two Ray strokes clearly long, compare "tourists" in next paragraph





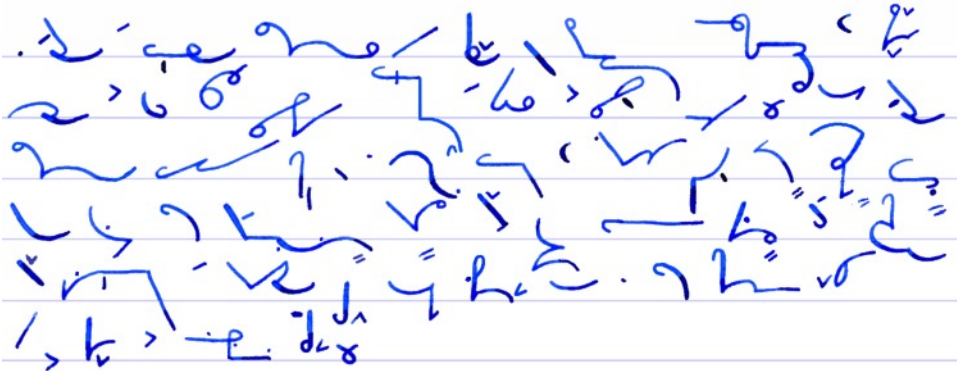
### Olympic Vocabulary

The Olympic flame has travelled the country, delighting the crowds and audiences who have enjoyed cheering on their local heroes and heroines in the processions and savouring the honour of welcoming the torch through their cities, towns and villages. Cauldrons have been lit along the way, thrilling the excited and enthusiastic spectators everywhere. Participants, volunteers, residents, tourists\*, ordinary people and celebrities have shown great enthusiasm and support\*

for an event that celebrates excellence, strength, courage and dedication to achieving a stated goal, and bringing sporting honour and glory to their team and country.

\* "tourists" Compare with "terrorists" in paragraph above

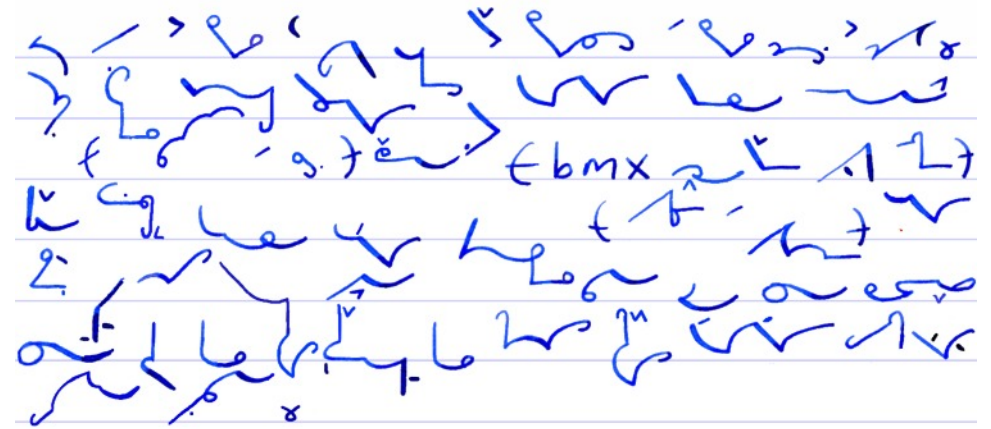
\* "support" Insert the first vowel, as this article is all about "sports" which looks the same without vowels



### Olympic Vocabulary

The opening and closing ceremonies are designed to be spectacular extravaganzas that highlight the meaning of the event, as well as the history, culture and achievements of the host country. In the opening ceremony we were treated to a movie clip that apparently showed Her

Majesty the Queen being fetched from Buckingham Palace by the film character James Bond, travelling by helicopter and parachuting down into the stadium in a very dramatic style much to the delight of the ecstatic audience.



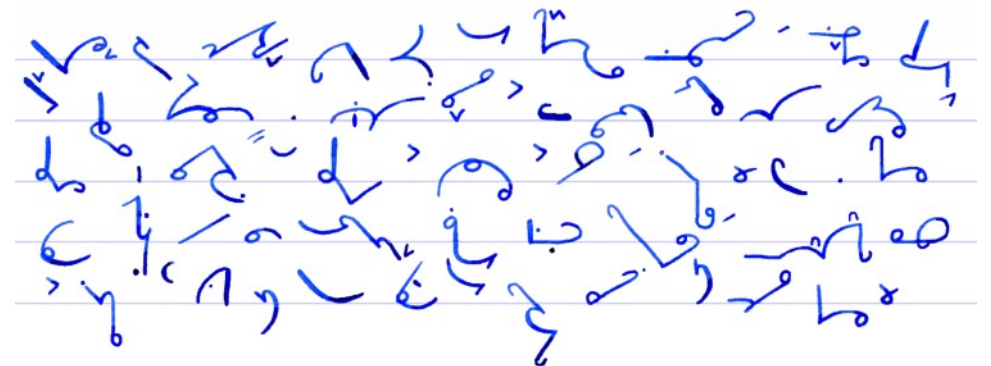
### Olympic Vocabulary

Here are all the sports that will be undertaken by the sportsmen and sportswomen\* of the world. Archery, athletics, badminton, basketball, beach volleyball, boxing, canoeing (slalom and sprint), cycling (BMX, mountain bike, road and track), diving, equestrian, fencing, football\*, gymnastics (artistic and rhythmic, handball\*, hockey, judo, modern pentathlon, rowing, sailing, shooting, swimming, synchronised swimming, table

tennis, taekwondo, tennis, trampoline, triathlon, volleyball, water polo, weightlifting, wrestling.

\* The singular "sportswoman" has the second part above the line

\* "football" "handball" Insert the vowel in "football" and also in "netball", so that these three are not misread for each other.



### Olympic Vocabulary

Billions of people worldwide will be sharing in the triumphs, exhilaration and excitement generated by the displays of Olympism, the emotional highs of the gold, silver and bronze medal winners, and the disappointment, but hopefully not despair, of the losers of the races and competitions.

However, the terms losing and defeat are somewhat inappropriate considering the dedication, preparations and cumulative successes of the competitors that led to their being chosen for the privilege of serving on their country's teams.

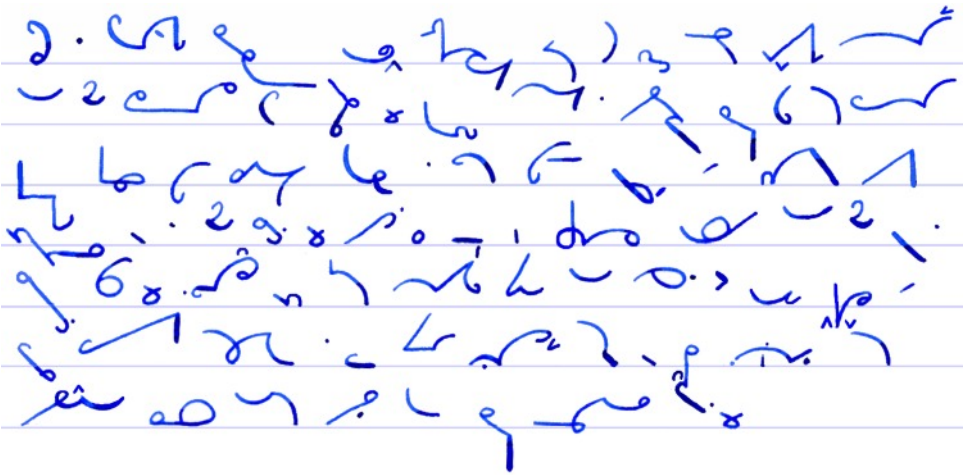


Olympic Vocabulary

The five coloured interwoven Olympic rings signify the five continents of the world, blue for pursuit of excellence, black for joy of effort, red for fair play, yellow for respect for others and green to represent balance between body, will and mind. The Latin motto "citius altius fortius" means faster, higher, stronger. The Olympic hymn is addressed to the sun as the source of light and provider of the first lighting of the

Olympic flame, and is reminiscent of ancient sun-worship which has long been part of human history. The strength and endurance of the athletic champions, who seek to embody the ultimate in physical wellbeing through their achievements, is acknowledged to be the result of the sun's light and warmth that sustains ourselves, our immediate environment and our whole world.

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Olympic Vocabulary

There is an overload of specific nouns and terminology here, so you cannot expect to write the material in shorthand as quickly as other passages. If you have managed a respectable speed, then your normal dictation texts will certainly have received\* a very welcome boost and you will be ready to progress to a shorthand sprint. Running is good but it is sometimes necessary in shorthand to be a sprinter as well.

Congratulations to you on your marathon achievement in mastering all the new outlines and please award yourself a gold chocolate medallion or two, to suitably commemorate your resounding success in your race for speed excellence!.(959 words)

\* Omission phrase "have (re)ceived"

Blank lined area for notes.