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Blogs - 2013 - April

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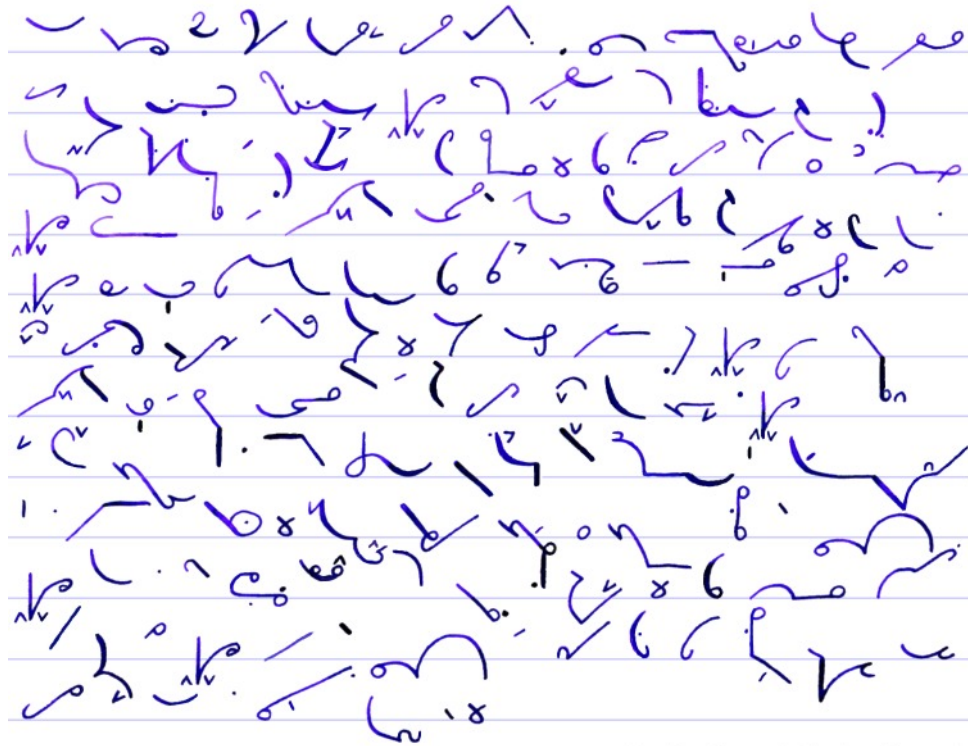
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Cease And Desist!

In Pitman's Shorthand there are various ways of representing the same group of consonants, for several reasons, vowel indication, preventing the outline from rising or descending too far, easy formation of derivatives and ease of joining the other strokes. This last one particularly is what makes the outlines quick and reliable in use and often overrides all other rules. However, if an outline is not known well enough, having this choice of methods can cause hesitation as the mind wavers between the options available. Only instant

recall of each outline will produce reliable notes and speed increase, and although one might have to create an outline on the fly to prevent a gap, it is something to be avoided by working on vocabulary on a regular basis. I have found the best way* to proceed is to practise sets of similar outlines for a particular sequence of sounds or piece of theory. This makes learning much easier as the outlines are all similar and you are then well set up to deal with new ones in a hurry if you have to.

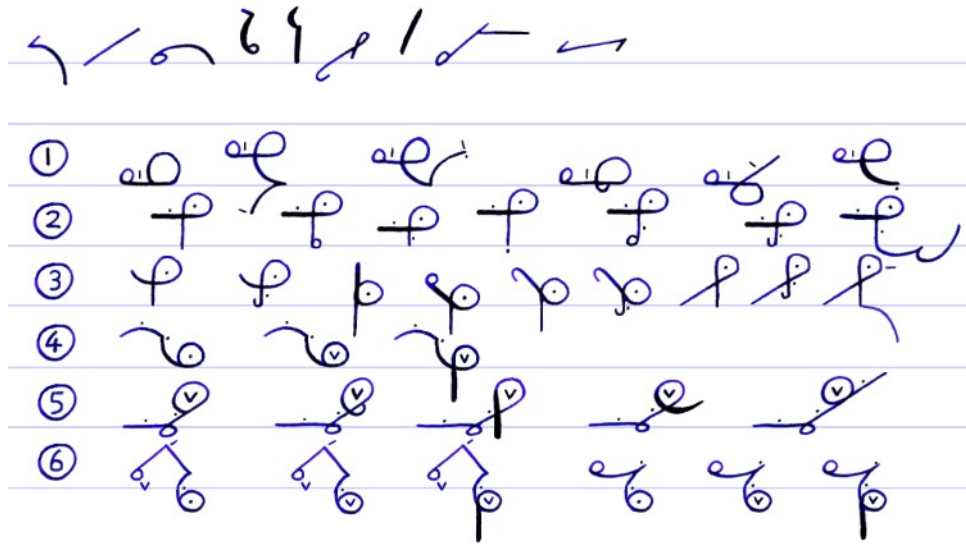
* Omission phrase "bes(t) way"



Cease And Desist!

Combinations that have the S plus S sound but which do not use the large circle are the ones that I have found to be in need of extra attention. They seem to thwart one's efforts at hastily creating a "working outline" that will do until one can check out the dictionary version. I have hunted them all down and corralled them here, so that you can overcome them and defend yourself against being taken by surprise by these

hissing creatures. Those outlines not in the shorthand dictionary are underlined and are based on other similar outlines. A few "shun" derivatives are also shown for completeness, but care should be taken not to confuse them with the others as they are not "ses" words, despite their longhand being written with those letters. (314 words)



Cease And Desist!

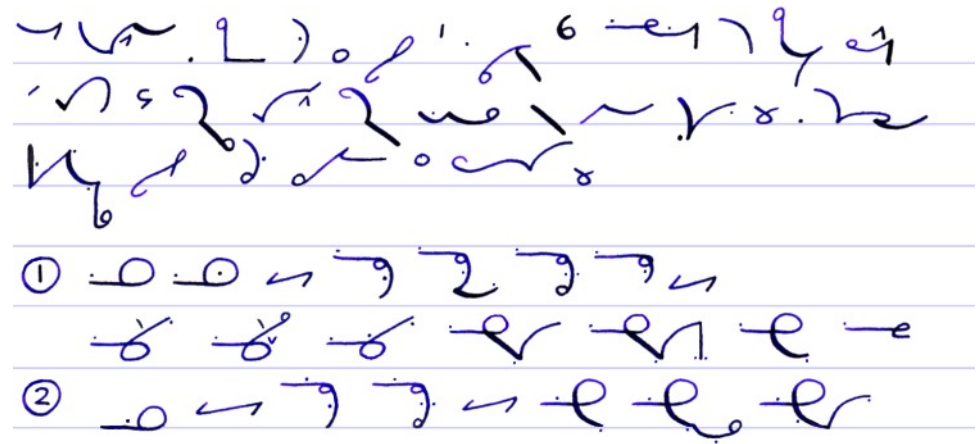
The examples below do not show every possible derivation of every word, but there are enough to enable you to arrive at the correct outline.

Here are some of those that do use the large circle:

1. success successful successfully successes successor successive
2. exist exists existed existing existence existent existential
3. insist insistent desist subsist persist persistent resist resistant resistor
4. emphasis emphasize emphasized
5. exercise exercises exercised exercising exerciser*
6. hypothesis hypothesize hypothesized* synthesis synthesize synthesized

* "exerciser" See "exorcize" in last paragraph below

For other -est -ist endings, see www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/theory-19-suffixes-general.htm#-est-ist



Cease And Desist!

In the following, the stroke S is used on a syllable that is accented, or strongly sounded, and also with the verbs to allow the verb endings to be written easily. The remaining derivatives use the Ses circle as normal.

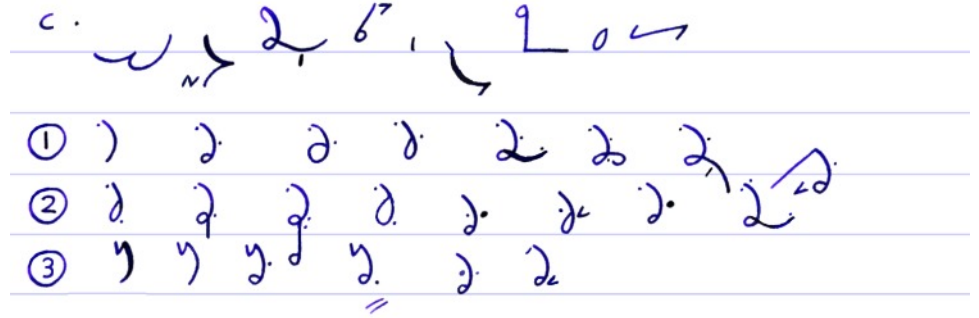
1. axes axis – access accessing accesses accessed – accessory accessorize accessory accessible accessibility accessive accession
2. "x's" – excess excesses – excessive excessiveness excessively



Cease And Desist!

1. incise incises incised incisor – incisive incisively* incision
2. poses – possess* possesses possessing possessed – possessor possessory possessive possessively possession
3. praises – process processes processed processing – processor processive procession
4. precise preciseness – precisely precise precision
5. raises – recess recesses recessed – recessive recession
6. bosses- abscess abscesses obsess* obsesses obsessed obsessing – obsessive obsessively obsession

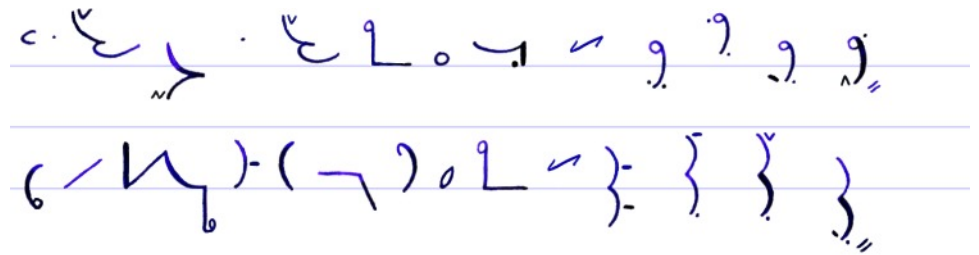
* "possess" and "obsess" Always insert the initial vowel in "obsess", as these two are similar in shape and meaning



Cease And Desist!

With an initial vowel there is no choice but to have the stroke first:

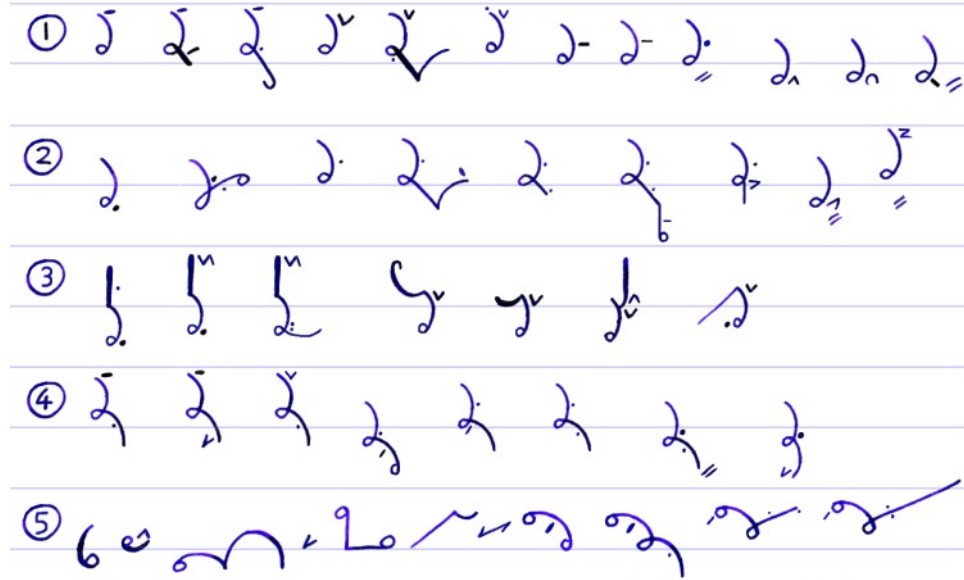
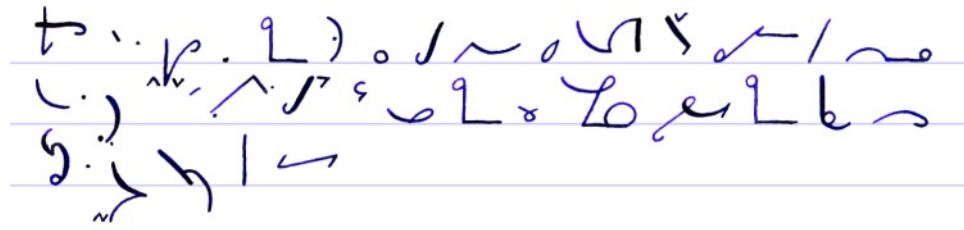
1. ass asses/assess assesses assessed assessing assessment assessor reassess
2. assist assisted assistance assister essays essayist assays assassin
3. eyes ice ices Isis aces osseous



Cease And Desist!

With a final vowel, a final stroke is needed: cissy/sissy sassy susi Sousa

These are derivatives so they keep their first stroke: so-so saucy sisy Susie/Suzy

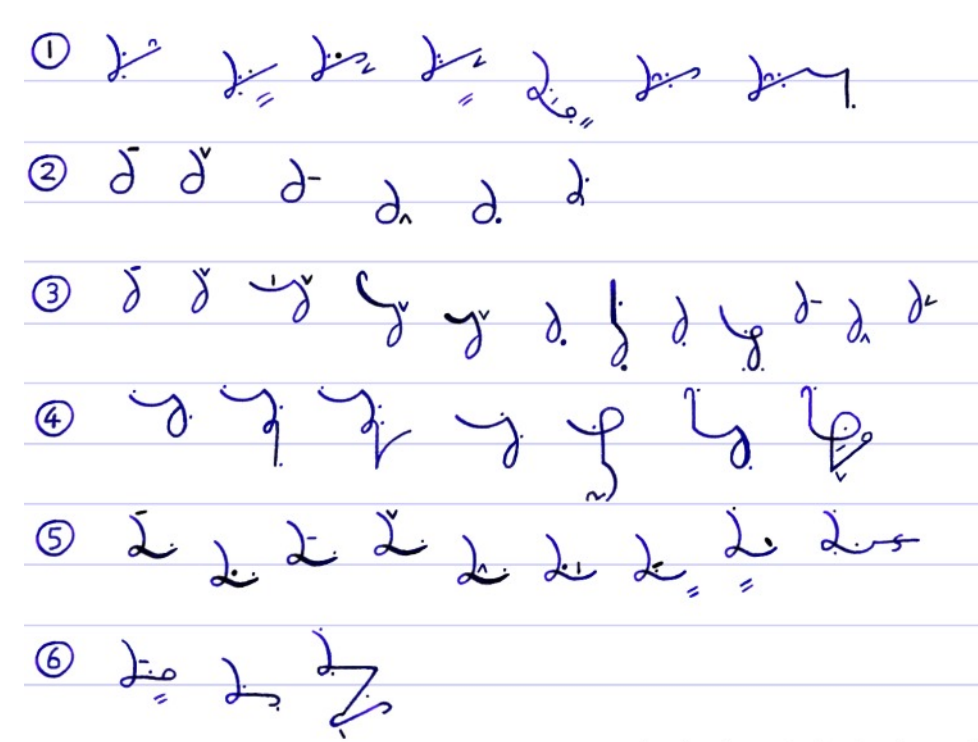


Cease And Desist!

At the beginning of an outline the stroke S is generally written first, followed by the circle, which makes for an easy and rapid join with the next stroke. In such cases using the stroke does not necessarily mean that there is a vowel before it:

1. sauce sauceboat saucepan size/sighs sizeable/sizable concise sews/sows suss Sayes, souse/sows sues Sue's
2. cease/seize ceaseless says/sess/cess cesspool cesspit cespitous* cestoid Suez Soyuz
3. decease diocese diocesan oversize undersize downsize resize
4. saucer saucier sizer scissors cessor cesser seizer/Caesar caesious
5. These sound similar but the strokes are not: source sourcer sorcery sorcerer

* "cespitous" a botanical term = "turfy", nothing to do with "cesspit"



Cease And Desist!

1. cesura Sisera Caesarean Caesarea Sisyphus suzerain suzerainty
2. sauces sizes susses souses ceases/seizes cessation*
3. sauced sized unsized oversized undersized ceased/seized deceased sist/cist/cyst physicist sussed soused sayest
4. ancestor ancestry ancestral incest incestuous transistor* transistorize
5. saucing ceasing/seizing sussing sizing sousing season Susan Sassoon Sassenach
6. Sussex siskin Saskatchewan

* "cessation" has an identical outline to "secession" below, see www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-4-care-c-d.htm for a suggestion on how to differentiate these

* "transistor" Note that it uses stroke Z



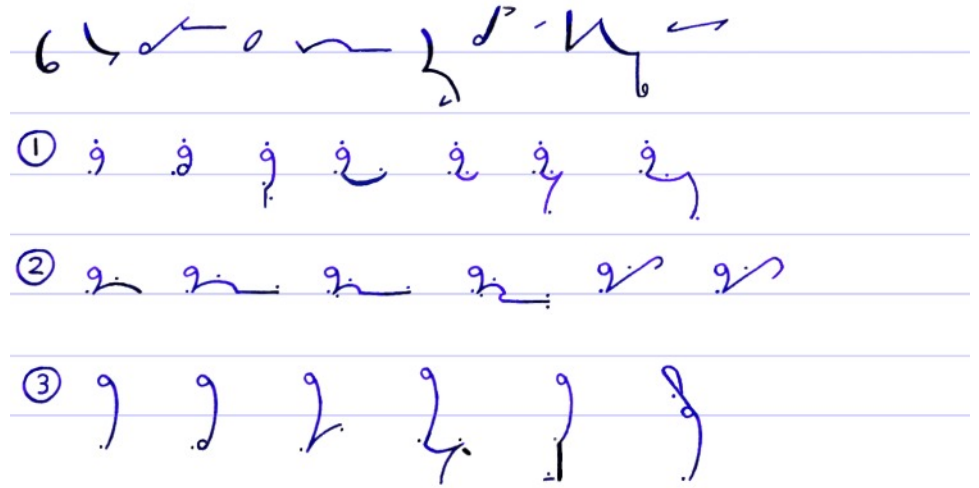
Cease And Desist!

1. sizzle/scissel/size* sizzled sizzling sozzle* sozzled sisal Cecil/sessile Sicily cisalpine
2. secede secession* secessionist sesame caesium seismic seismology sousaphone sassafras
3. sustain Sistine systole cystic cistus suscite resuscitate society ostenuto sesterce
4. suspend suspended suspense suspire suspect* (noun), suspect* (verb), suspicion susceptible
5. sausage syzygy assuage sewage

* "sizzle, sozzle" and derivatives do not have a vowel sign before the L, as it is hardly sounded

* "secession" has an identical outline to "cessation" above, see www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-4-care-c-d.htm for a suggestion on how to differentiate these

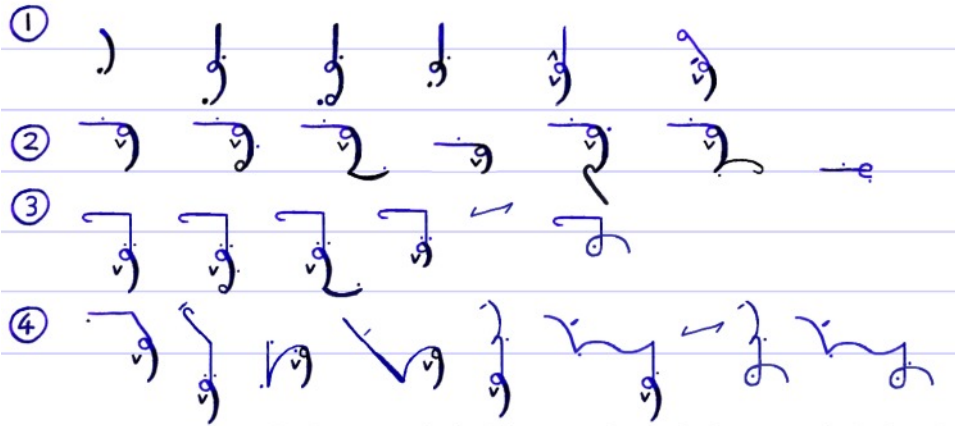
* "suspect" the noun has full outline, the verb uses the contraction



Cease And Desist!

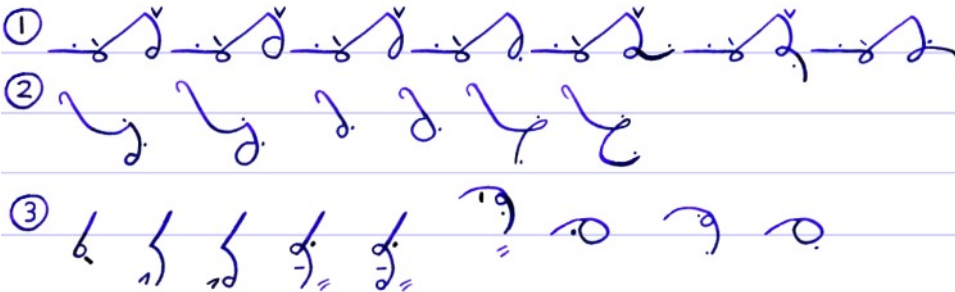
These have the circle first to make easier joins and derivatives:

1. consist consists consisted consisting consistent consistently consistency
2. system systemic systematic systematically cistern Cistercian
3. sister sisters sisterly sister-in-law sisterhood stepsister



Cease And Desist!

1. ease – disease diseases diseased outside supersize
2. excise excises excising excised excisable exciseman excision
3. criticize criticizes criticizing criticized – criticism
4. capsize politicize italicize publicize ostracize romanticize – ostracism romanticism

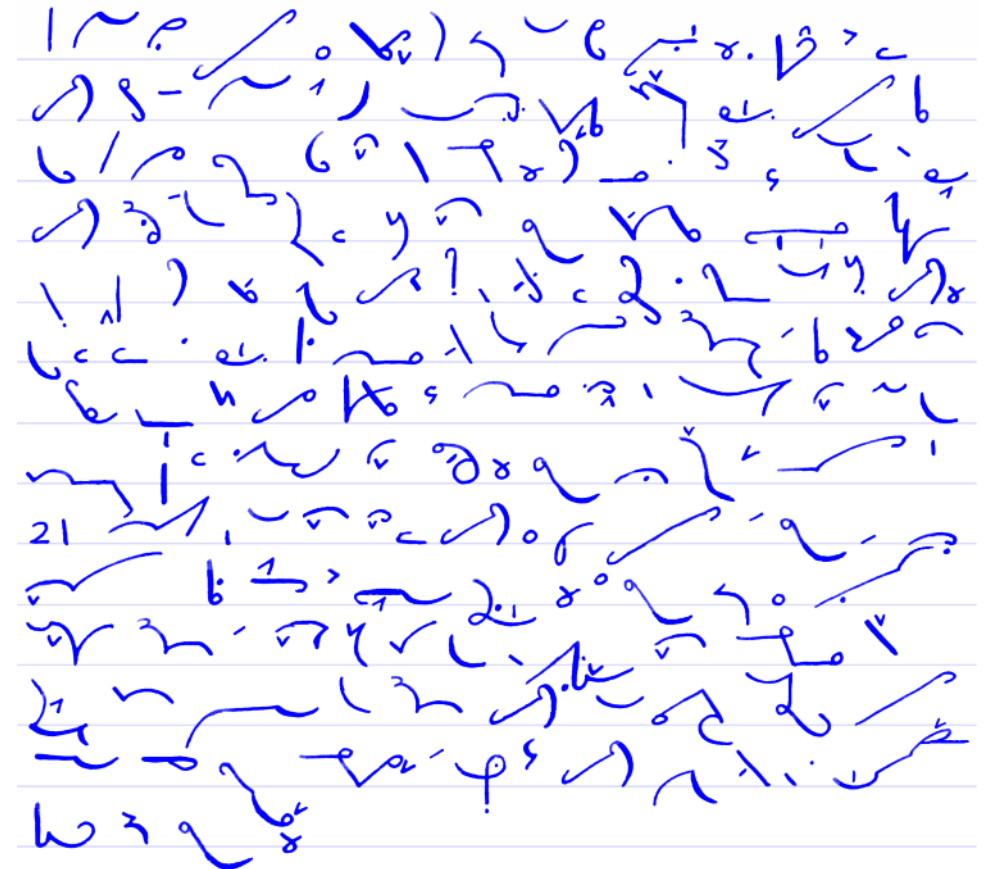


Cease And Desist!

Some sets of distinguishing outlines:

1. exorcize* exorcizes exorcized exorcist exorcizing exorcizer exorcism
2. princess princesses prince princes princely princeling
3. Jews Jewess Jewesses Jesus Jesus's Moses mazes Mrs/missis Misses

* "exorcize" Compare with "exercise" above



Spring At Last

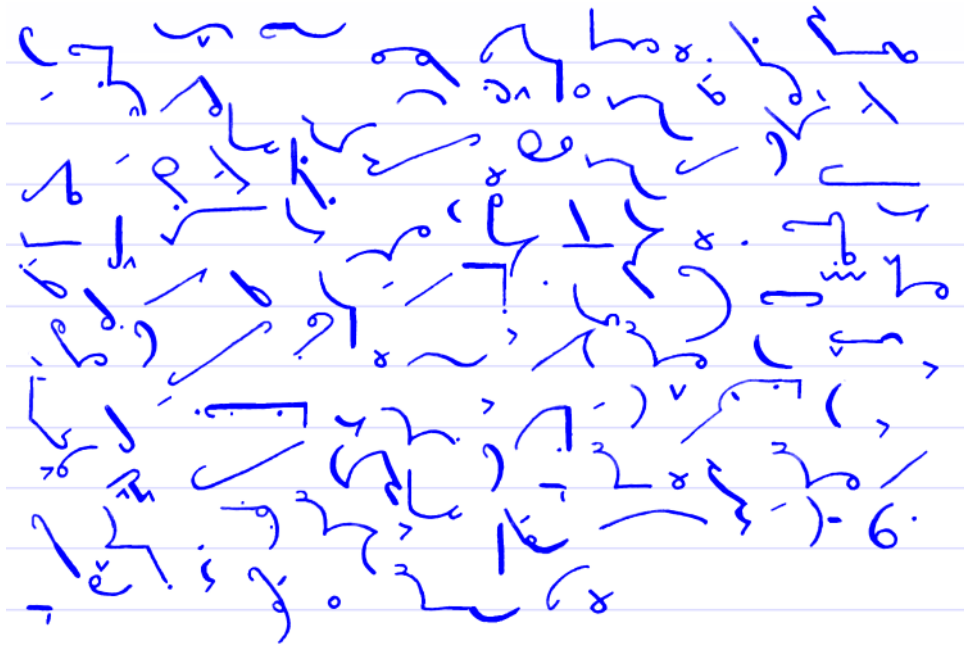
At long last winter is behind us here in southern UK. The duration of the cold weather has been quite long and the usual intermittent periods of bright sunny* winter days have been much less frequent than might be expected. There comes a point when the novelty of snowy* weather wears off, especially when I see my spring bulbs, crocus and daffodil, putting out their buds and even one or two trying to open when there has been a break in the icy weather. Even when cold, a sunny* day makes up for the lack of warmth, and it is always more pleasant to go about one's daily business with the maximum amount of natural light and not have to make up the difference with artificial light sources. Spring may arrive on the calendar on 21 March but in my mind cold weather is still

winter and spring should mean milder days and the beginning of the growing season. As spring here is rarely* entirely warm and mild, I think I will have to redefine my expectations* by saying that I am looking for warm weather in hopeful anticipation rather than going against previous experience and insisting that the weather live up to an unrealistic definition of the word spring.

* "sunny" "snowy" Always insert the vowels in "sun/snow, sunny/snowy"

* "expectations" Optional contraction

* "rarely" Ensure the two Rays are clearly full length, so it does not look like "really" and it is helpful to insert the vowel

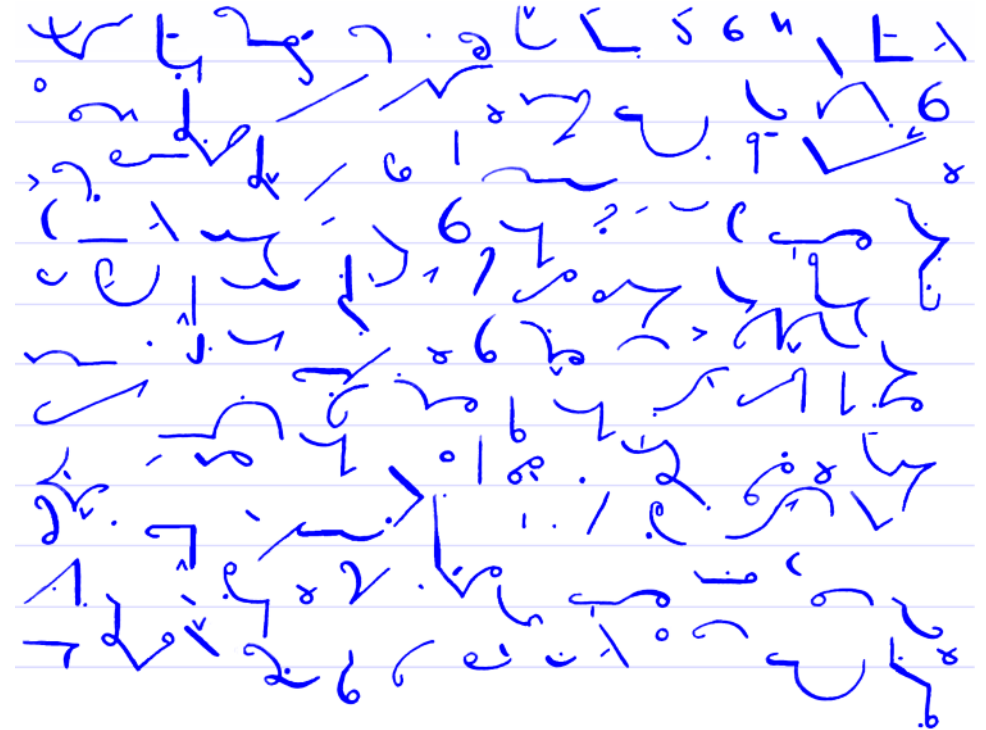


Spring At Last

Every creature in my garden seems to be* well fed at the moment*. The pairs of blackbirds and robins continue to follow me around as I move pots, pull up weeds and sweep up the debris of winter. As soon as I move away, they are quick to come down to look for the meals that suddenly become available. The "critters" in the compost bins are the best fed, and are getting a few fresh green items to supplement their winter rations. Many of the earthworms

have climbed to the top of the bin and congregated under the rim of the lid and so I relocated them to the soil roundabout where they will be able to continue their good work. I believe that the worms are probably escaping the excess warmth of the decomposing matter, and so this is a good sign that the process is working well.

* Omission phrases "seems (to) be" "at (the) moment"



Spring At Last

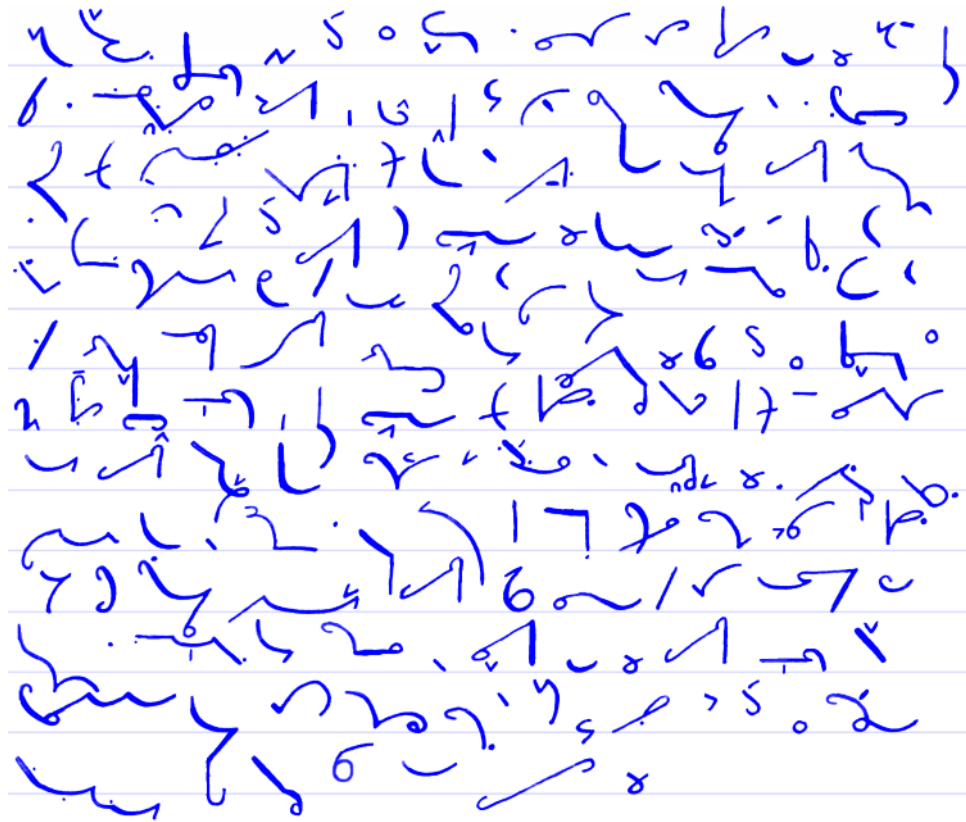
Unfortunately* the donated frogspawn, from a friend's tiny boggy pond that is about to be dug up, has somehow dispersed rather rapidly. I am sure the goldfish have been helping themselves to the free snack, despite our efforts at making a straw barrier. They come up underneath and push themselves into the raft and any other clumps of vegetation, in order to* flush out anything edible, and the larger ones certainly have the strength to make a dent in the greenery. This reminds me of the wildlife films where the killer whale rams itself into the shallow water at the shoreline, and almost onto the beach,

as it hunts the unsuspecting seals. Fortunately there is a crowd of wriggling tadpoles on a much safer shallower part ready to disperse to safety. There are a few clumps of eggs that seem to have been killed by freezing* but these will soon end up as more goldfish titbits.

* "Unfortunately" Optional contraction

* Omission phrase "in ord(er to)

* "freezing" and "frozen" Always insert the vowel



Spring At Last

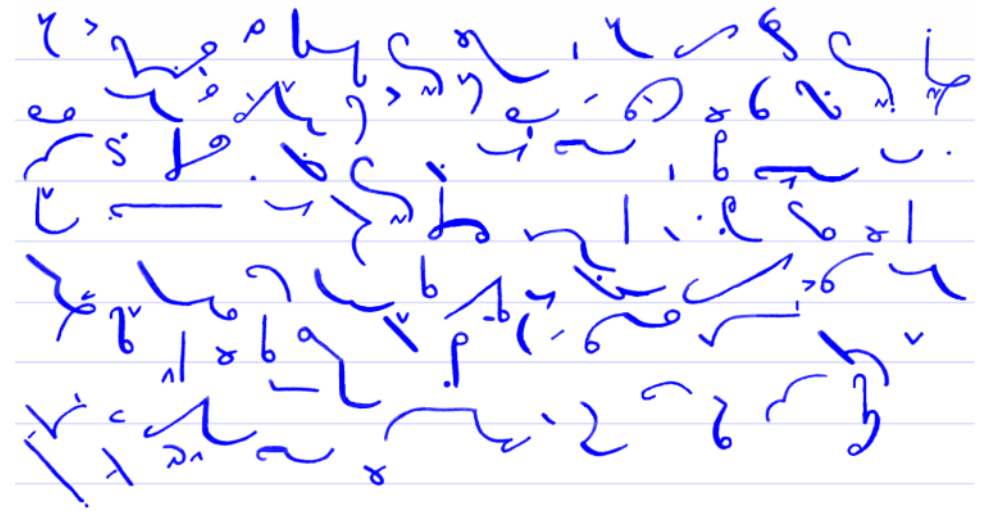
I have finally discovered how the pond has acquired a small island at one end. I thought it was just an exuberance of weed, but found out that the low spreading branches of an evergreen* shrub (Ionicera piliata) have all rooted into the water and formed a thick mat, on which the pond weed was growing. Having pruned and teased them apart, there are now several large new shrubs that will fill in the gaps along that edge and provide extra shelter and protection for the inhabitants. This plant is described as drought tolerant ground cover, but it was growing (at least part of it) quite happily in the water, obviously doing very well on the abundance of nutrients. The replanted pieces will now

have to work a bit harder at getting their requirements from the soil, at least* until their own branches re-enter the water and this is something which I will encourage in order to* form a canopy for the frogs to hide under. Water covered by overhanging vegetation also remains free of ice when the rest of the pond is frozen*, benefiting the birds as well in winter.

* "evergreen" Insert the first vowel, so it is not misread as "overgrown"

* "at least" & "at last", "freezing" & "frozen" Always insert the vowel

* Omission phrase "in ord(er to)"



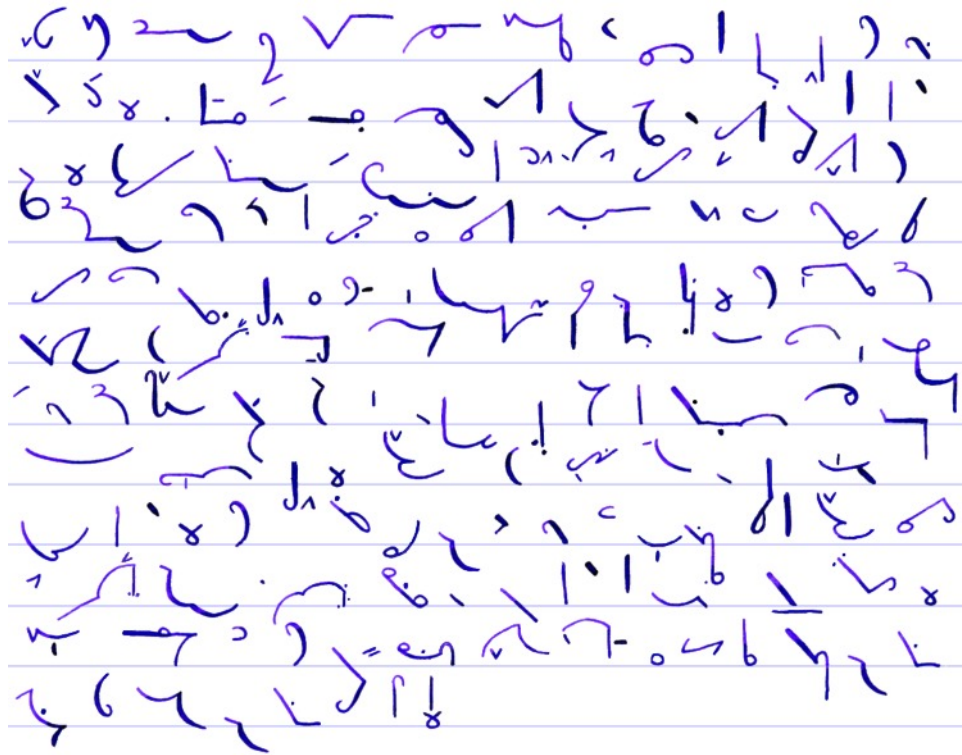
Spring At Last

I think of the primrose as the definitive flower of spring but I have one that has been flowering continuously since November*, and has survived through all the ice, snow* and slush. This brave little plant deserves the best flower bed in the garden, but as it is growing in a tiny crack in the path, it is impossible to move it to a safer place. It obviously benefits from having its roots under the paving where the

soil never dries out. It is spreading by seed though and as long as I look before I pull when weeding, I can look forward to seeing more of these little treasures popping up around the garden. (821 words)

* "November" Same outline as "never", if necessary insert the cap marks underneath

* "snow" and "sun" Always insert the vowel



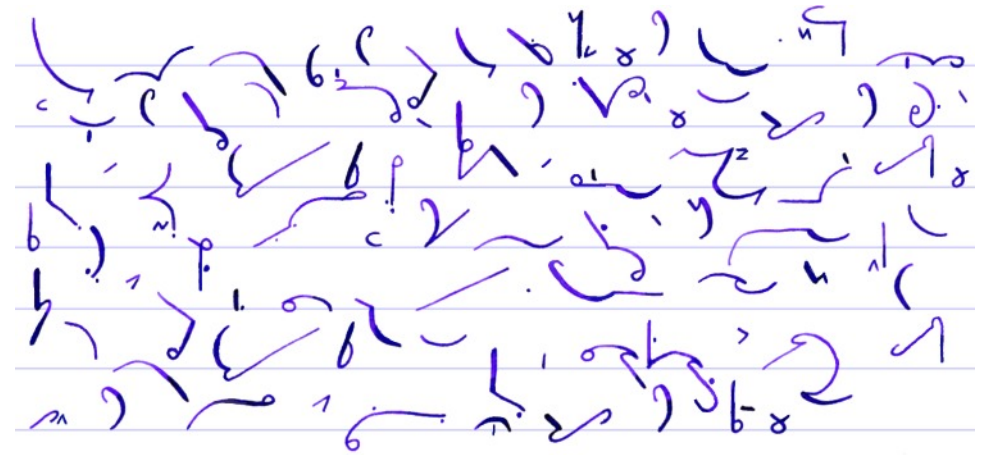
Pigeons

While I was walking through the park last week*, I noticed that someone had tipped out their bread by the pond. The ducks and geese must have been* already full, and these two wood pigeons had it all to themselves. They were pecking* and flinging it around, and the one on the right was working very hard at waving his head and neck about in order to persuade just one more piece down his throat, but eventually he had to admit defeat. Their crops were bulging, they really couldn't manage any more, but instinct and opportunity were driving both of them on to continue eating until it became impossible to get another crumb down.

Finally they wandered off to digest, unable to finish it all. Their past wishes to have all the bread with no competitors had finally happened, and the reality of having a limited space to put it all had now become apparent. I know exactly what their pigeon-centred life motto is: "It is better to have pecked* and failed, than never to have pecked* at all!"

* Omission phrases "las(t w)eeek" "mus(t have) been"

* "pecking, pecked" Insert the vowel, as "picking, picked" could also make sense

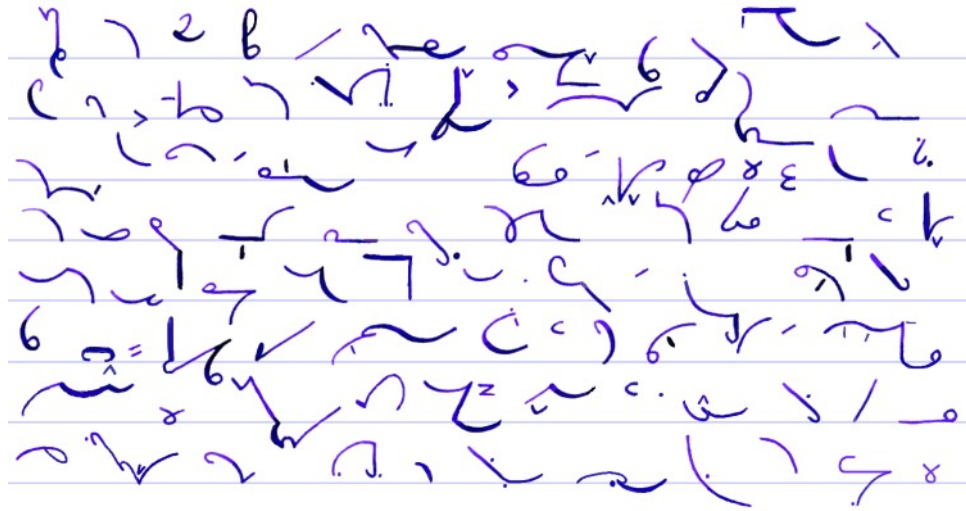


Pigeons

After the meal, maybe these other pigeons have the best idea. They are having a quiet moment, with no other birds or walkers to disturb their ablutions. In between their sessions of dipping and showering, they were just sitting and soaking, and enjoying the cool water. It is easy to stay relaxed

when there are many pairs of eyes looking out for danger, and the pigeons did seem to have rather a blank manner about them, or maybe they were just in deep but simple contemplation of the refreshing water around their legs and the silky mud between their toes.

Handwritten practice lines consisting of several horizontal lines for writing.



Pigeons

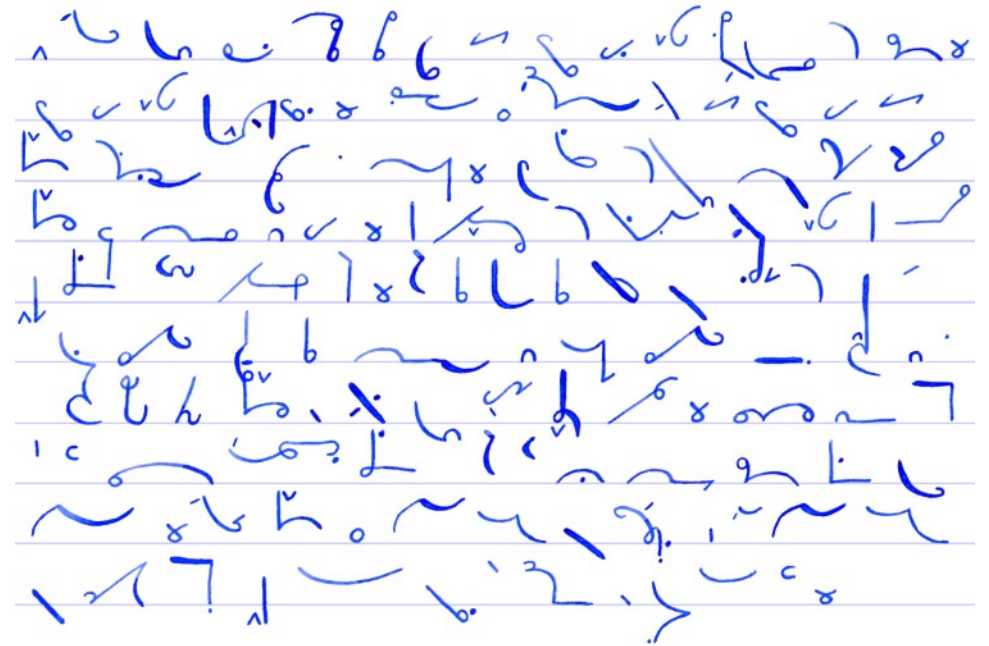
I trust that* your shorthand studies are progressing something like these pigeons, gobbling up every opportunity to the utmost of your ability*, digesting all the material so that you can make room for more, and soaking in the lessons and outline lists. When you have achieved your next speed goal, you can preen yourself on your achievements, coo with delight in your new skill, never get in a flap, and confidently soar above those ground-dwellers who are lumbering along with their slow and monotonous longhand. I hope that you are* also enjoying writing with a fountain pen, which comes, most appropriately*, from the Latin word

"penna" meaning feather or quill. (389 words)

* Omission phrase "I trus(t) that" " I (h)ope that you are"

* "your ability" You could also write "ability" using just the stroke B against the previous outline, like the suffix "-ability", see www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/phrasing2-theory.htm#Suffixes

* "appropriately" Insert the diphone, and the second vowel in "properly", as these are similar in outline and meaning



Please Wait

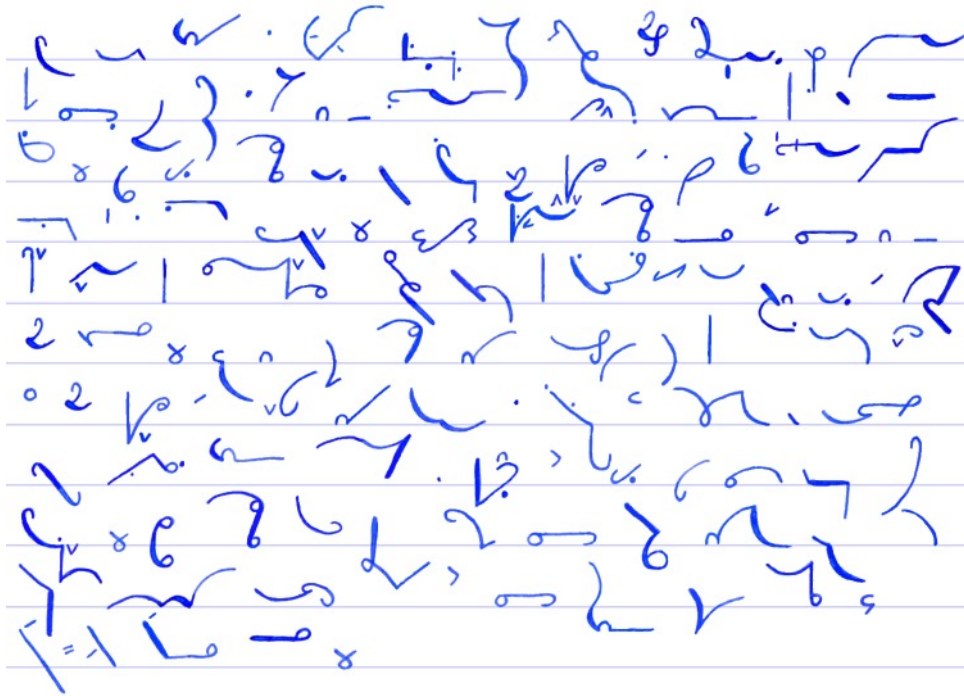
How often have you seen messages such as these: "Please wait while setup configures your system." "Please wait while download completes." "Scanner is warming up. Please wait. Time remaining less than* a minute." However fast your computer may be, there are always times when it makes you wait. It requires your patient obedience while it carries out the task that you have requested of it. Although it is doing its best to be your dutiful* and faithful servant, at those times* it is making you into the servant, giving you an instruction which you have to obey if you want the desired result. Sometimes you can get on with

some other on-screen task, although that may make the system take even longer. Often the time is long enough to be frustrating, but not long enough to be worth getting out another piece of work to fill in with.

* "less than" Downwards L in order to make a good join

* "dutiful" Full length T, so that it does not look like "doubtful"

* "at those times" Insert the vowel in "those", as "these" would also make sense



Please Wait

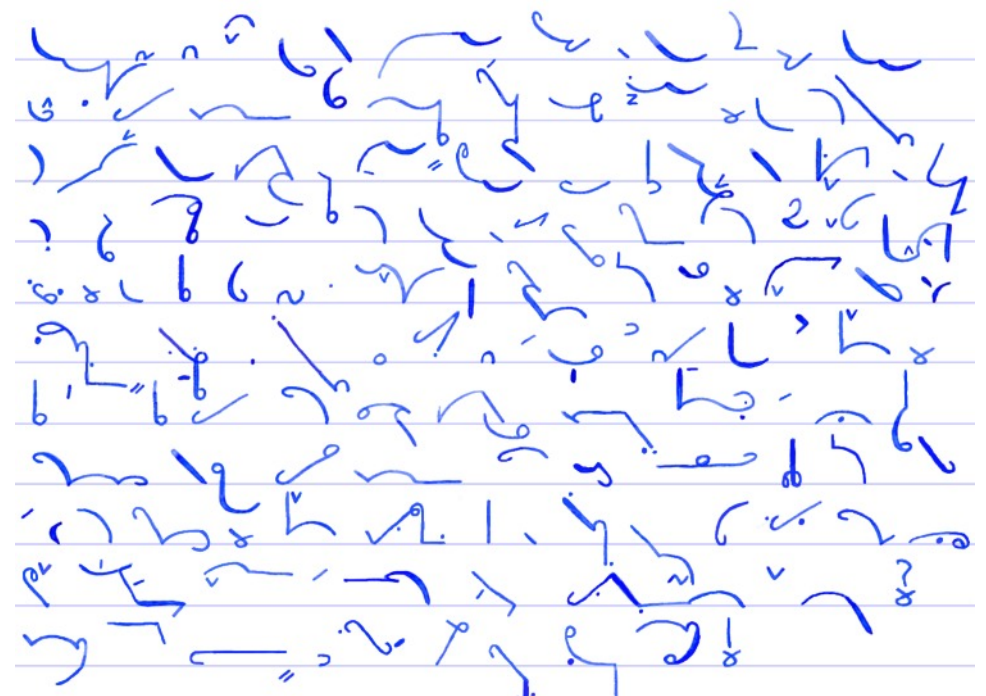
However, now that you are a thoroughly dedicated, enthusiastic and persevering shorthand student*, there is no need to sit looking at the screen, wishing there was a handle you could crank round to make it all go faster. These "wait" messages need to be converted to shorthand outlines and a list of those occurring regularly kept on a card nearby. When one of the delaying messages comes on the screen, you could try writing it as many times as possible before it vanishes, in beautifully* neat and legible shorthand of course. Whenever you see the message, you will instantly see it in your mind as shorthand outlines and while you are having a competition with yourself to increase the number of repeats that you

can manage, the duration of the wait will seem to get shorter every time*. As these messages often disappear from the screen by themselves, you will have to have your pad immediately in front of the screen so that you can easily notice when the popup box goes.

* Omission phrase "shorthand s(t)udent"

* "beautifully" Insert the final dot, as "beautiful" would also make sense here

* "every time" Helpful to insert the second vowel in "every", as it is similar to "over time"



Please Wait

Eventually you might even be looking forward to being asked to wait, having found a way to make those minutes profitable instead of annoying. If your computer was really being helpful to its long-suffering owner, it would obviously be delighted to change the wording of these messages in your favour to "Please practise your shorthand while download completes." If it does, then you have an entirely different problem on your hands. Like the best old Star Trek episodes, the computer is watching you and knows what you are

doing all the time. It is on its way from simple helpfulness to creeping domination, and may at this very moment be considering ways to make more independent executive decisions on your behalf and without your permission. Time to restrict it to battery power, well away from the mains supply, unplug the mike and cover up the webcam eye, maybe? I am sure Captain Kirk would approve of such prudent safety measures! (480 words)
