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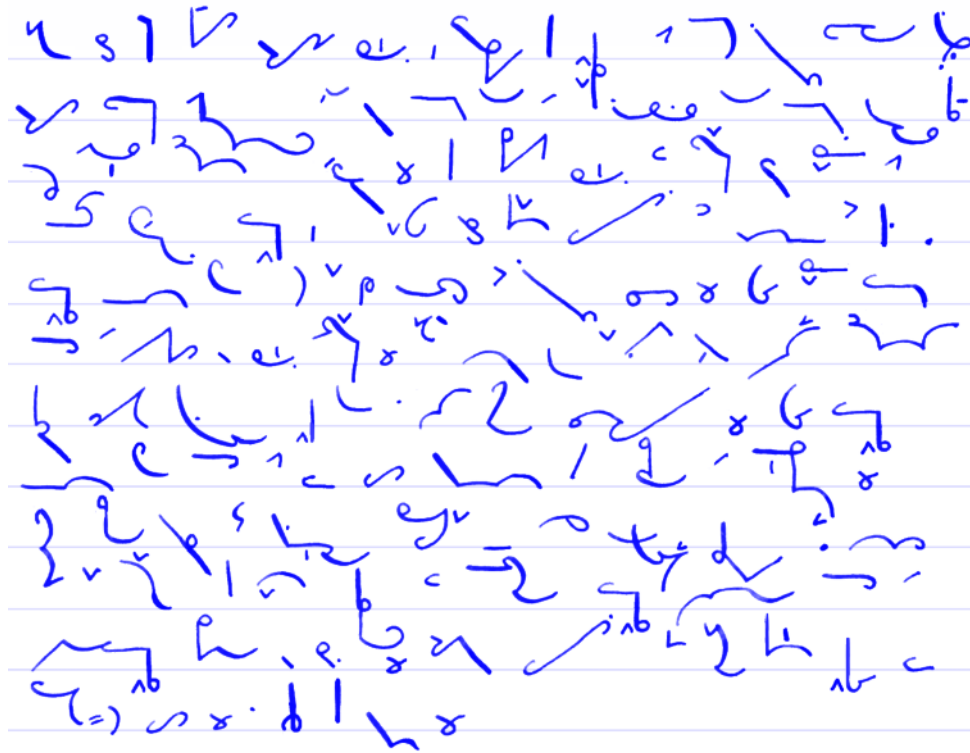
**Blogs - 2019 - March**

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PDF Date: 21 March 2025

Blank lined area for notes.

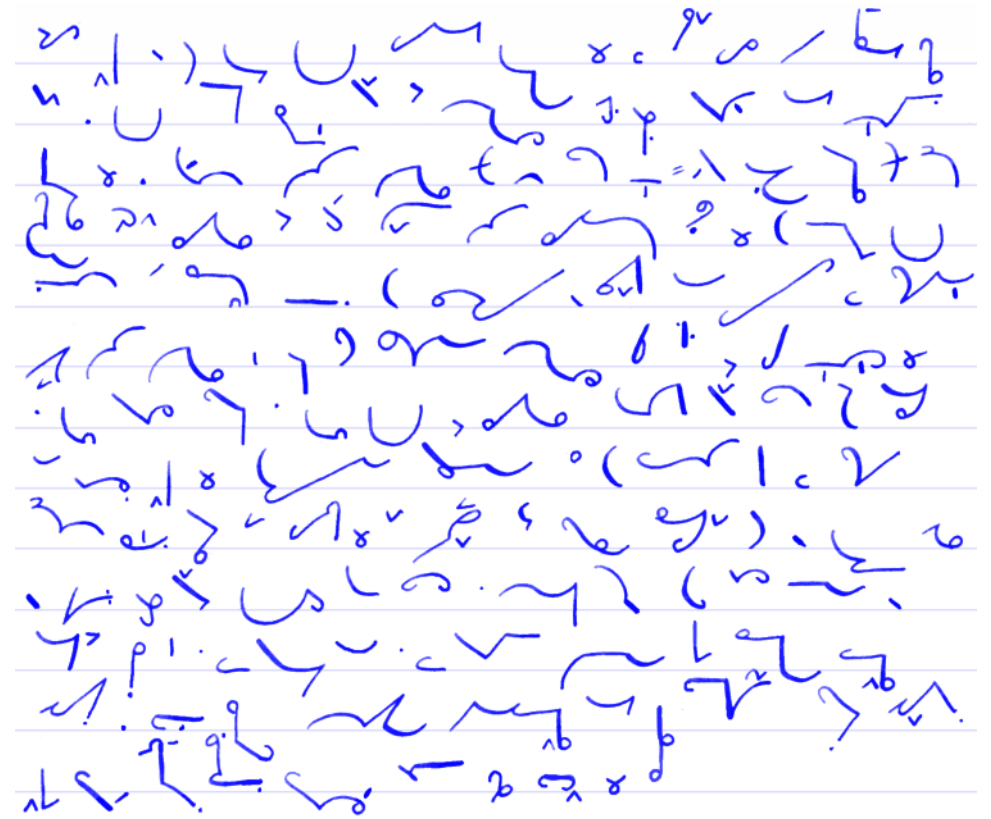


### Blustery Day

I have spent all day torn between the sunny but blustery day outside and the cosy computer corner, vacillating between grit and determination not to be kept in and common-sense in keeping fingers, toes, ears and nose warm and comfortable. It started sunny with bright blue sky and the occasional fluffy cloud, but while I spent time wondering what to make of the day, the clouds came over, so I settled in front of the computer screen. Then the sky cleared again and returned to sunny and bright. I thought maybe if I wrapped up really warmly it would be worth venturing

out for a little journey somewhere. Then the clouds came over again and the cold wind became much stronger and gustier. There was the strong possibility\* that the beckoning sunshine could most inconveniently disappear the moment I arrived at my destination, with gathering clouds looming again and rain clouds starting to spit. I would be wondering why I was not at home out of the cold north-east wind. A decision had to be made.

\* "possibility" Optional contraction



### Blustery Day

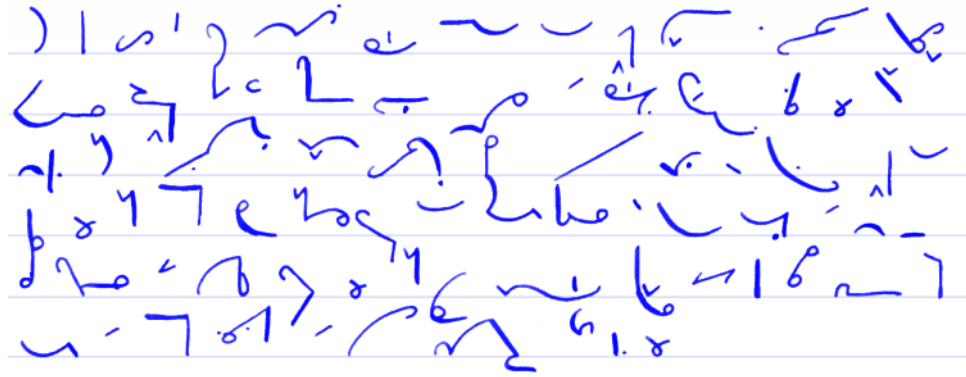
I went out to see if the fish wanted feeding. When high winds are tossing the trees about, the fish get spooked by all the movement and tend to stay below in the murky depths. The foam lily leaves (made from cut-up kneeling pads) were travelling around the surface of the pond like little circular rafts. They keep the fish calm and secure, giving them somewhere to hide in winter when there are no real lily leaves, but today their swirling movements just added to the general commotion\*. A few pellets brought a few fish to the surface, followed by more of them anxious\* not to miss out. They were not basking as they normally do when there are warm sunny patches on the water. I realised that the present sunshine was too fickle and if it is

too chilly to stand by the fishpond for more than a minute or two, then I am not going to enjoy sitting on a cold bench in a cold park looking at the scudding clouds and watching the grey strip of merging rain clouds in the distance gradually\* approaching and wiping out the blue, and dropping straggly plumes of grey towards the ground.

\* "commotion" Not using the Con Dot, as this makes a better outline

\* "anxious" Omits the lightly-sounded K

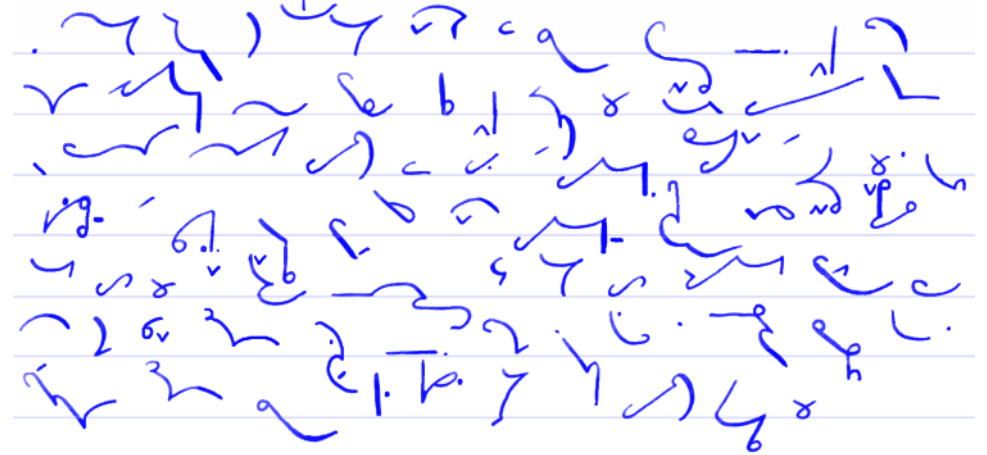
\* "gradually" Full strokes, to distinguish it from "greatly"



## Blustery Day

So it went on throughout the morning, sun going in and out like a yoyo behind chunks of cloud with dark grey middles and sunlit fluffy edges. By midday I was relieved of my wavering, as it was now rather too late to venture out any distance. I had got

several items completed in advance of being needed, and made good progress on the latest project. I had listened to my own advice: do as much as you can of it now and get ahead, and later on you will be glad that you did.



## Blustery Day

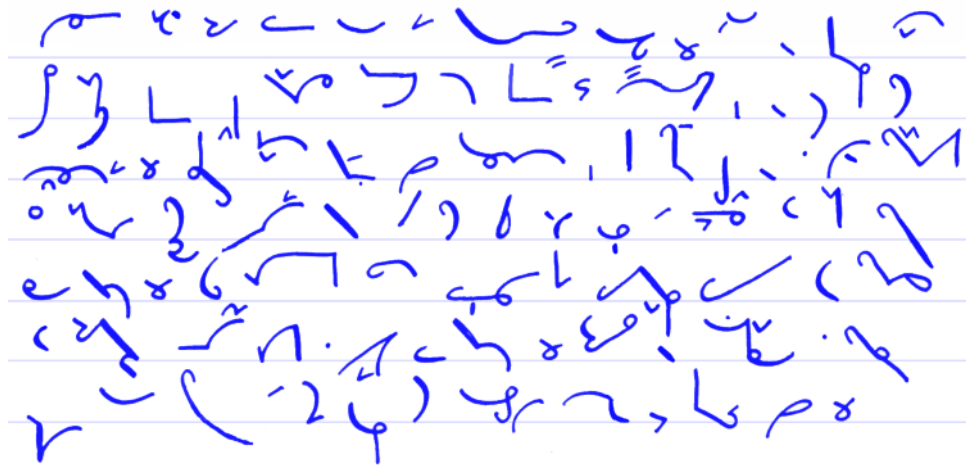
The month of February was uncommonly mild, with spring flowers coming out very early, and we have had many pleasant days out here and there\*. Now we are back to normal March weather, cold, wet and windy, sunshine and showers. A few hailstones and sleety bits blew past my window, travelling almost sideways in the wind. I finally came to the conclusion\* that the only wind I wanted blowing near me was the slight warm airflow coming from the computer fan, an acceptable

substitute\* for a properly\* warm spring  
day, at least until the weather changes.  
(571 words)

\* Omission phrases "here (and) there"  
"came (to the con)clusion"

\* "substitute" Omits the first T sound

\* "properly " Always insert the first vowel, and the diphone in "appropriately" as they are similar in outline and meaning



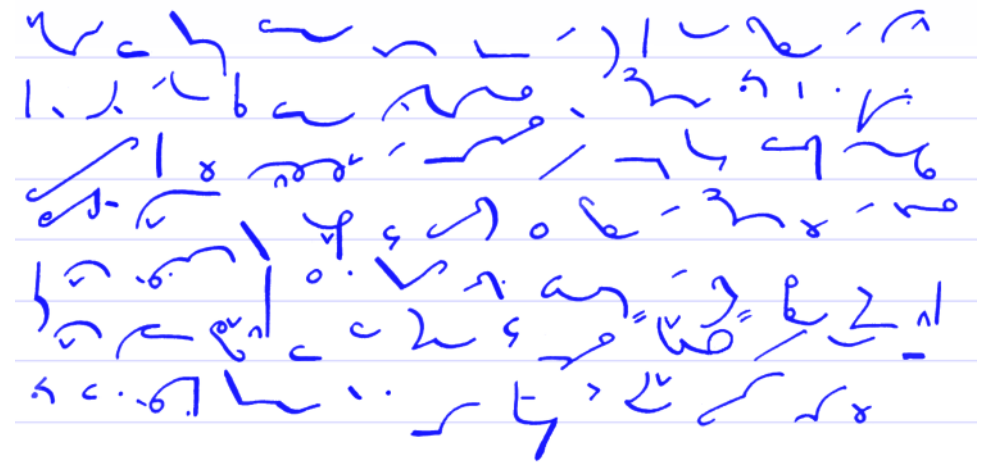
### Bank Of England

Last week I thought I would call in on the Bank of England. Not to deposit my stash\* of treasure, take out piles of cash or talk with the manager, but to see their museum. It has been on my bucket list for some time\*, but had dropped down to a low priority, as I felt there would not really be much there, just old notes and coins that I had probably seen before. Then I looked more closely at the website where they promised that I would be able to actually

hold a real gold bar. That was too enticing a prospect to delay any further and so the visit was instantly moved to the top of the list.

\* "stash" Stee Loop is not used before Ish stroke

\* "for some time" Halving to represent the T of "time"



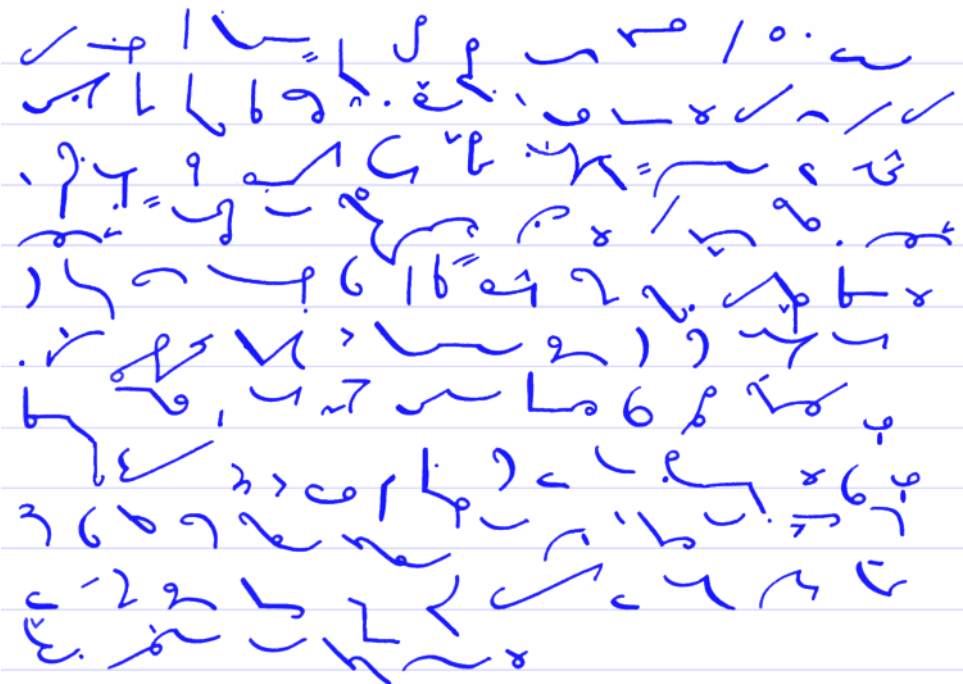
### Bank Of England

I felt the gold bar calling to me, to come and see it in person and allow it to show off its golden loveliness\*, to warm the heart on a chilly winter day. Museums and galleries are kept for the colder months, as we don't like to be inside when the weather is pleasant and warm. And of course it was my solemn duty, as a born and bred Londoner and British citizen, to check out

my local supply of gold, in order to\* ascertain that the country's finances are in good heart, with a solid backing of a goodly tonnage of the shiny yellow metal.

\* "loveliness" Helpful to insert the vowel, so it is not misread as "liveliness"

\* Omission phrase "in ord(er to)"

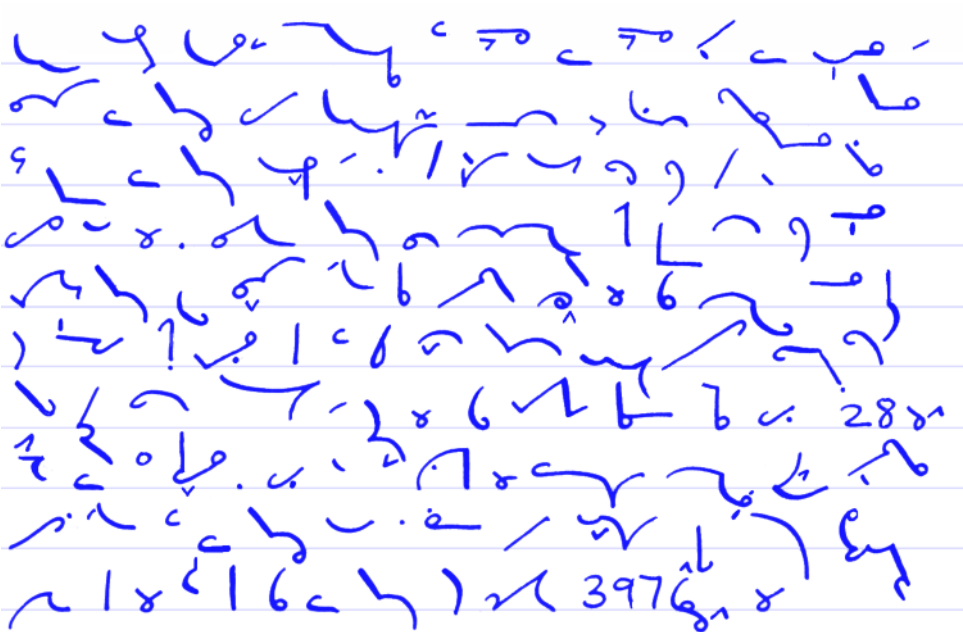


Bank Of England

We exited at Bank tube station, suitably named of course, which has a golden handrail at the top of its stairs, a sign of things to come. We made our way to Threadneedle Street, skirted along the side of the unassailable-looking building, and found the museum entrance in Bartholomew Lane. Much to my surprise, the museum was far more interesting than it at first\* sounded from the brief\* website description. The whole history of the birth of the banking system was there, not only in the descriptive captions, but in the actual handwritten\* documents themselves, such as the promissory notes that were issued to the owners, who had deposited their gold

for safekeeping. These notes were then passed from person to person in lieu of payment in coin or gold, and so the system began to take shape where the gold never left the vault, finally resulting in paper money.

- \* Omission phrase "at (fir)st"
- \* "brief" Advisable to insert the vowel, as it is similar to "number of"
- \* "handwritten" Note that "written" and "writing" are special outlines, other variations of these sounds e.g. rotting, rating, etc, have full Ray and T strokes

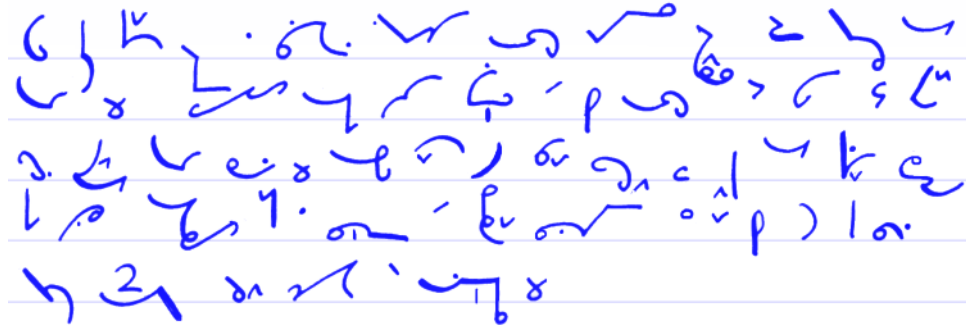


Bank Of England

Having inspected the various cabinets with coins, gold coins, raw gold nuggets\* and small gold bars, we eventually came to the famed perspex box with the big gold bar inside, and a large hole in the front through which to pass one's hand. The heavy bar seemed immovable\* and it took me three goes\* to lift the bar even slightly off its rubber mounts. This may have been because it was so awkward trying to raise it with just my palm underneath, rather than gripping from above which would be more natural and easier. Then I read the description of its weight, 28 pounds, and the fact that\* gold has twice the weight of lead. Clearly, movies showing robbers running off with gold bars in a sack are entirely out of order, as they would not be

able to lift it. On that day this gold bar was worth 397 thousand pounds.

- \* "nuggets" Distinguishing outlines: "nuggets" has halved stroke, "ingots" has full stroke T
- \* "immovable" Has an extra M stroke, so that it does not rely on a vowel sign to indicate that it is a negative
- \* "goes" Does not need a vowel as it is a short form, but helpful to insert it here because it is being used in an unusual way, as a noun
- \* Omission phrase "and the (f)act that"



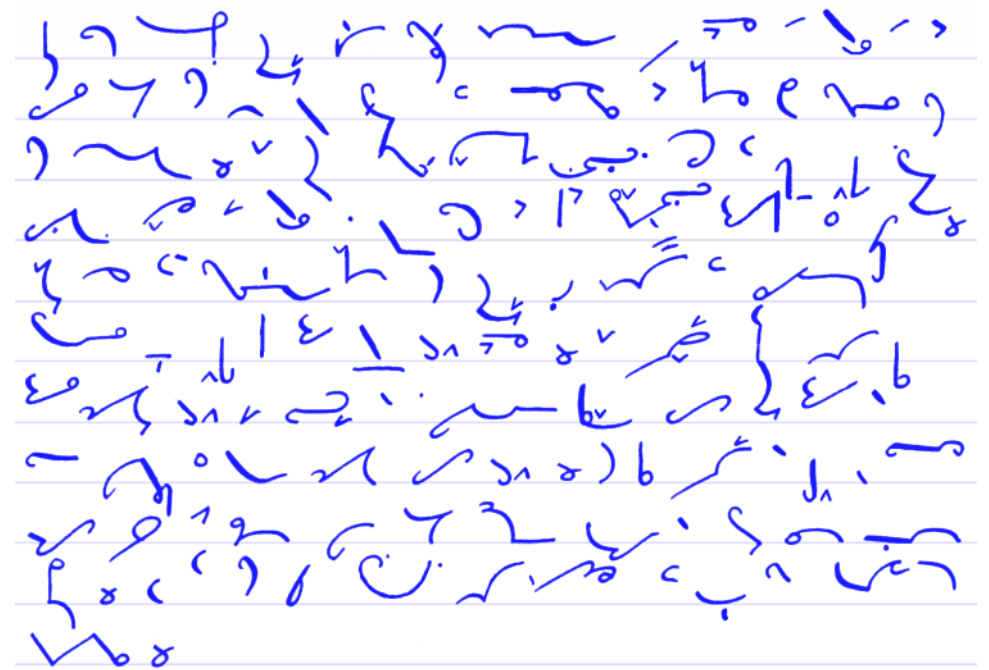
### Bank Of England

Then it was time to take a selfie, apparently in front of racks of thousands of gold bars in the vault. We went into the little alcove and stood in front of the wall with the giant print showing the vault scene. Instead of my usual slight frown when out in the daylight, squinting at the lens\*, in this one I had a smug and satisfied smirk, as I stood, so it seemed, before 200 billion pounds worth of ingots\*.

\* "giant" Generally full stroke after a triphone. This fuller outline distinguishes it from "gentleman" which is halved

\* "lens" The plural "lenses" has stroke N and S Circle

\* "ingots" Distinguishing outlines: "nuggets" has halved stroke, "ingots" has full stroke T

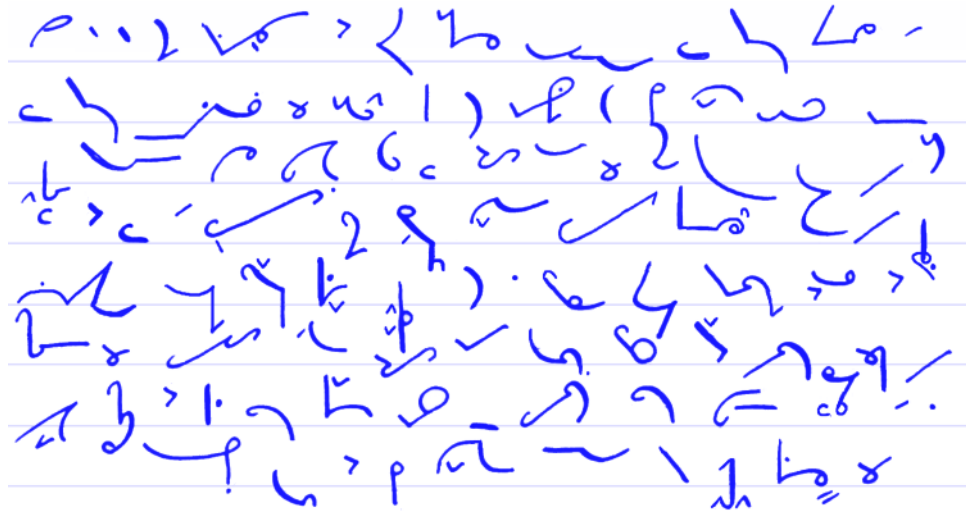


### Bank Of England

It was very interesting seeing the whole process of making our coins and banknotes, and all the ways in which they are made to be forge-proof, with examples of the items as they progress through their manufacture. I especially liked the engraving machine that drew out the converging wavy lines on the bank notes, a big version of the toy Spirograph that we had as children. I think the most thought-provoking item was seeing the sheet of metal with circular blanks cut out of it, that would become pound coins. I realised that it was not the

metal itself that was worth the pound, but the creation of a unique design, one that we all agree will be considered\* as being worth one pound. So it is really all down to agreement between ourselves and the system will only work if we all play the same game, as it were\*. Without that, they are just flashy metal ornaments with no particular value or purpose.

\* Omission phrases "will be (con)sidered" "as it (w)ere"



### Bank Of England

Last of all was the perusal of the shop items, including gold bar chocolates and gold bar keyrings. I found it easy to resist them, as it was not my intention to come out of the bank less wealthy than when I went in. After filling our eyes with all the gold and wandering through the subdued lighting where the documents are displayed, emerging into the bright daylight outside was a pleasant change, apart from the noise of the traffic. We went off to one of

our favourite\* places by the river to consider\* our real treasures of the day, free time to ourselves, good weather, very welcome sandwiches and an interesting view of the city life going up and down the Thames. (895 words)

\* "favourite" Note that "favoured" has a left VR stroke, to distinguish it

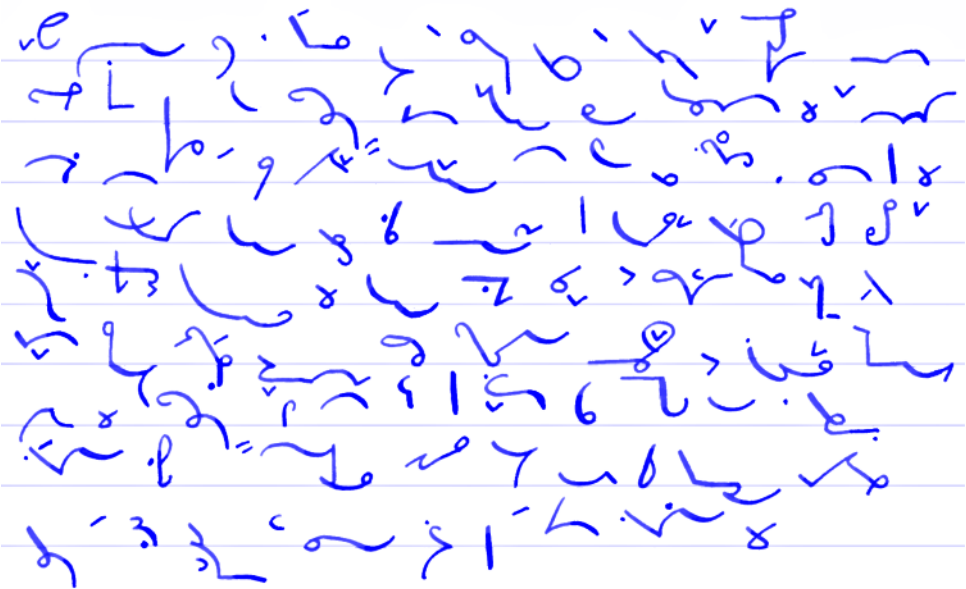
\* Omission phrase "to (con)sider"



### Misspellings 5

Our friend Mr Speller is a dictionary worm. Not a bookworm but a dictionary worm. A dictionary worm cannot resist grabbing the nearest dictionary and opening it at random, for the excitement of discovering new words, new meanings, or derivations that help a word or its spelling make more sense. Mr Speller does all this because he

writes his diary and other notes in pen and ink, and so he gets annoyed with himself if he has to cross out mistakes. Here is his diary entry where he met up with our other friendly wordsmith Fraser and discovered a strange new dictionary that he had never seen before.

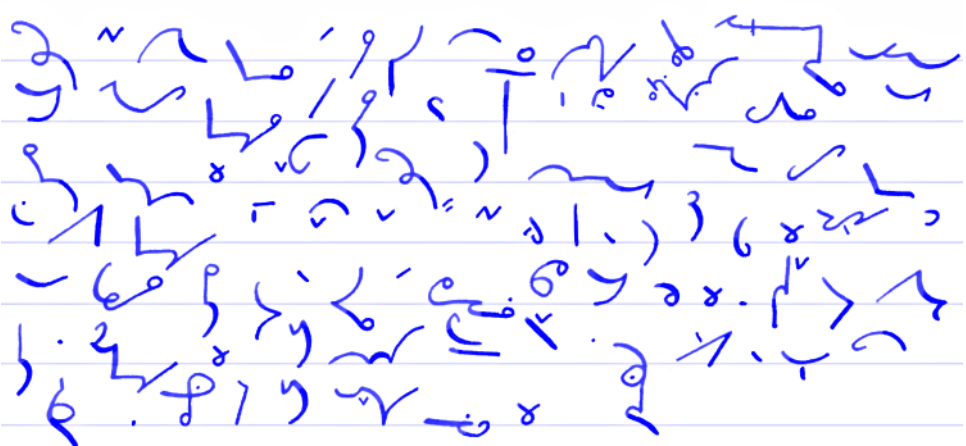


Misspellings 5

Whilst looking through a box\* full of SEPARATE PIECES of paper, I ACCIDENTALLY came across the contact details for Fraser, whom I have not seen for some time. I IMMEDIATELY emailed\* him and he replied, inviting me over to his APARTMENT the same day. After UNFORTUNATELY having to spend ages QUEUING at various bus stops\* and train stations, I arrived at the BEGINNING of the afternoon. Having GAUGED the HEIGHT of the stairwell\*, I drew up all my STRENGTH and PROCEEDED to climb the stairs, PREFERRING EXERCISE to the CONVENIENCE of taking the lift. Fraser told me that he had acquired this ACCOMMODATION in a BASICALLY APPALLING\* state of MAINTENANCE and was only now just BEGINNING to replace

the BIZARRE and WEIRD paintwork with something COMPLETELY different and much more APPEALING\*.

- \* "box" Advisable to insert vowels in "box, bags, buckets, pockets" as they are all similar in outline and meaning
- \* "emailed" Insert the vowel, so it does not look like "mailed"
- \* "bus-stops" Using the large circle for the two S's to help with reading back
- \* "stairwell" Insert the W sign for this less common word
- \* "appalling" "appealing" Essential to insert second vowel sign, to differentiate



Misspellings 5

Fraser and I love books, and he showed me his literary POSSESSIONS and COLLECTIBLES, including English and foreign dictionaries, which he was able to ACCOMMODATE on lots\* of PARALLEL shelves in the spare bedroom. While Fraser was making the coffee, one big fat red dictionary caught my eye and I opened it to see what was within. I wondered what language this was, as it was full of shapes

and squiggles, as well as English words. The title page revealed it was a shorthand dictionary. I was IMMEDIATELY overcome by an IRRESISTIBLE urge to know more on this subject, the EXISTENCE of which I was entirely ignorant.

\* "lots" "masses" Insert the first vowel, as they are similar in outline and meaning



### Misspellings 5

Fraser returned with the coffee and cake\*, and, with a MISCHIEVOUS twinkle in his eye, he said, "Oh, you have found my favourite\* book. I believe you are DEFINITELY going to like this one." He explained that the shorthand was invented by someone who had trouble with English spellings versus their PRONUNCIATION\*, and to avoid future EMBARRASSMENT with this, he had given himself the lifetime COMMISSION of creating a system of writing entirely by sound. His system was PRECEDED by many others, which he found most unsatisfactory due to their unscientific and HAPHAZARD\* nature. His efforts were PUBLICLY acclaimed throughout his lifetime

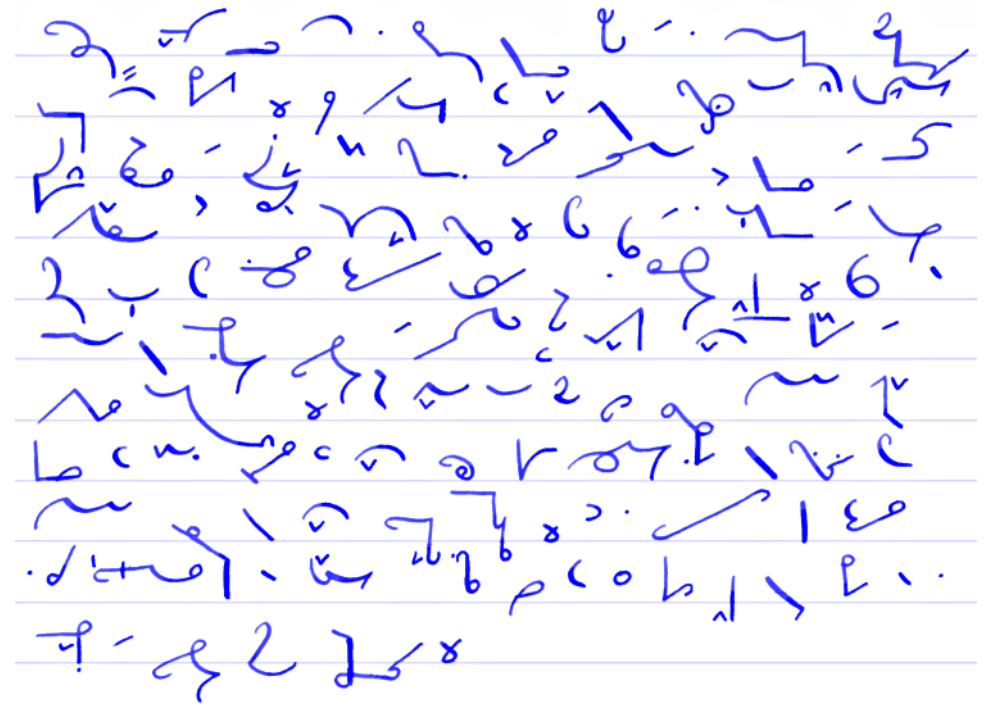
and towards the end of his life he RECEIVED a knighthood for his ACHIEVEMENTS.

\* "cake" "cookie" Insert the vowel to differentiate

\* "favourite" Note that "favoured" uses a left VR stroke, to differentiate

\* "pronunciation" One of the few words where the vowel sign is written to an attachment

\* "haphazard" Optional contraction



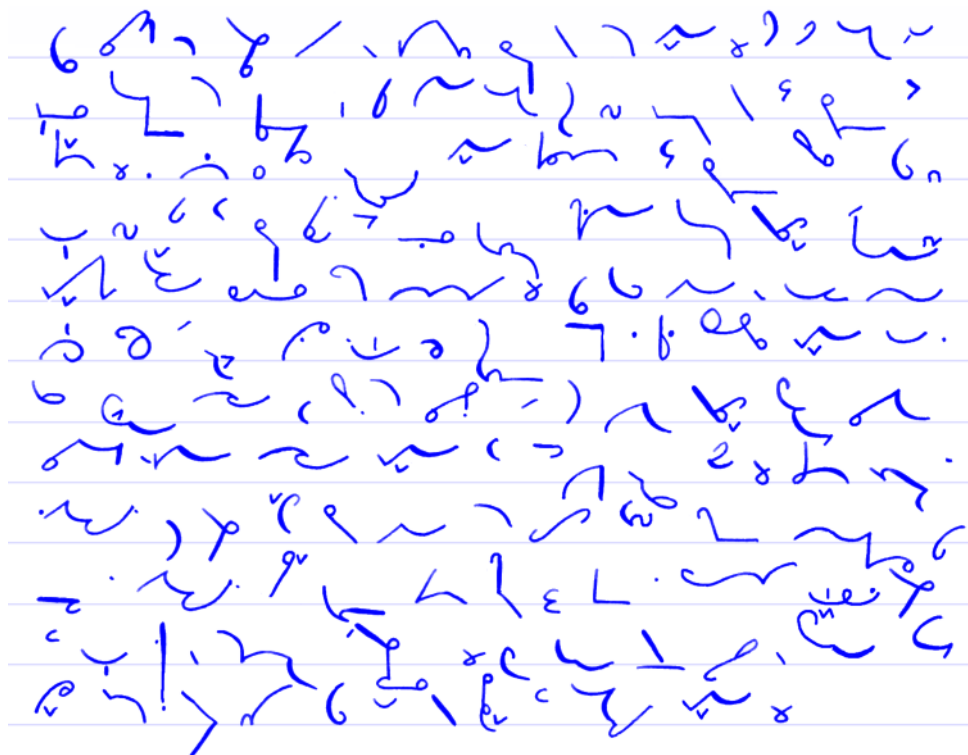
### Misspellings 5

Fraser kindly gave me a spare book of instruction and a MINIATURE shorthand dictionary to get me started. He RECOMMENDED that I should be PERSISTENT in following the SCHEDULE of lessons and CONSCIENTIOUS about PRACTISING, always REFERRING to the books, and OCCASIONALLY revising all the earlier PRINCIPLES. Other than these and a notebook\* and pencil, there were no other ACCESSORIES that were NECESSARY to ACHIEVE a SUCCESSFUL outcome. This is all going to be EXCEEDINGLY useful and RELEVANT when I write my diary and reports in future. Although writing in

shorthand will not SUPERSEDE the longhand and typed text that I need to use with my FRIENDS, it will most certainly\* be PREFERRED over longhand to speed up my creative activities. What a wonderful day that was, a chance OCCURRENCE of finding the address list, that has turned out to be the start of an exciting and useful journey of discovery. (613 words)

\* "notebook" Helpful to insert the vowel in "note", so it does not look like "handbook"

\* Omission phrase "mos(t) certainly"



## Short Letters 16

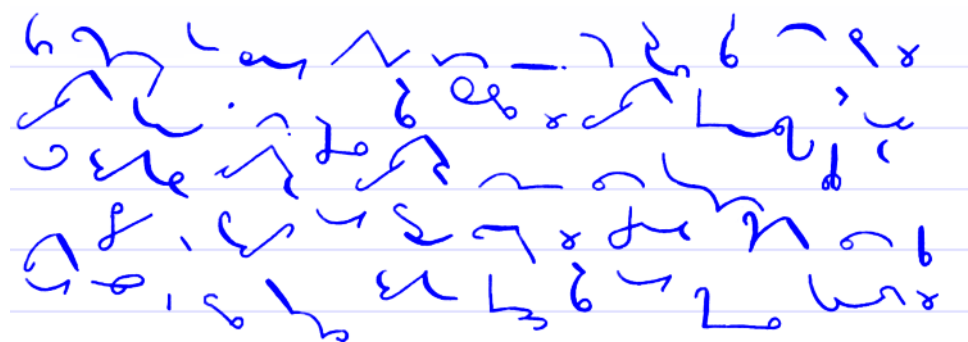
These hundred word passages are to help you speed up your writing. They are short enough not to cause fatigue or discouragement, but just long enough so that you have to keep up with the speaker all the time. The aim is to finish writing at the same time\* that the speaker stops, then you know you have achieved that speed, which is not quite the case if you were trailing far behind and continuing to write the final sentence from memory. These have been written to include many omission phrases and to avoid less common words, so that you can get a taste\* as soon as possible\* of writing in a fast flowing manner, without stopping or hesitating, and so leave behind forever the heavy-handed halting manner of writing that cannot lead to fast shorthand. It is

important to remember that an artificially easy passage, either specially written or one that you have practised many times, will give you an artificially high figure, which may drop when you take a normal unseen passage with no editing to remove obstacles. However, having become used to flying along the lines of your page, you will then not be satisfied with any other way\* of writing.

\* "at the same time" Halving to represent the T of "time"

\* "taste" Insert the vowel, as "test" could also make sense here

\* Omission phrases "as soon as poss(ible)"  
"any oth(er) way"



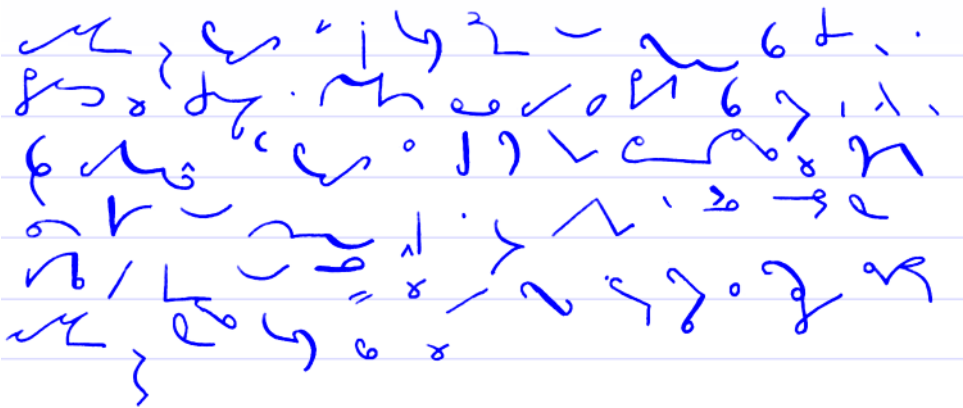
## Short Letters 16

Thank you very much\* for sending the report to me, giving your point of view\* on this important subject. We will be having a meeting to discuss all this as soon as possible\*. We will be taking into consideration\* all the new information that we have received\* and we hope\* that we will be able to make some firm decisions that will be satisfactory to everyone in the planning group. It is certain that there will be some differences in the costs but please bear in mind\* that we have taken into

account\* all this in the directors' financial  
report\*.

- \* "very much" It is faster to include the M stroke, than to lift the pen for separate outlines

\* Omission phrases "point (of) view" "as soon as poss(ible)" "taking (into con)sideration" "we have (re)ceived" "we (h)ope" "bear (in) mind" "financial (re)port"

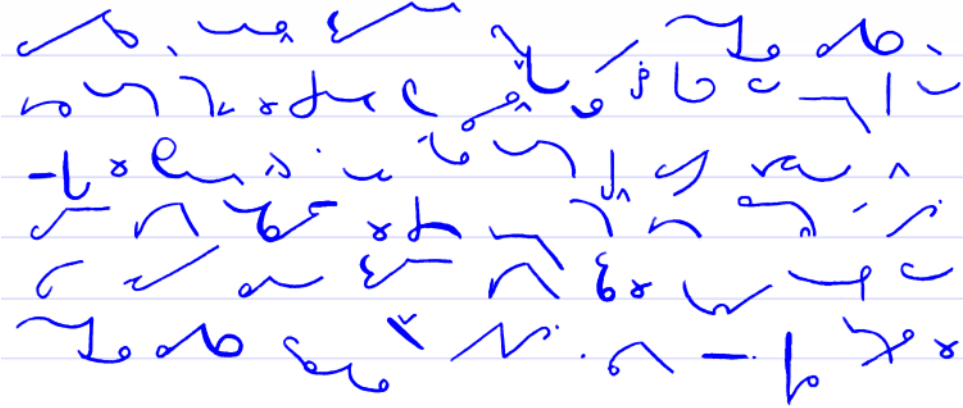


Short Letters 16

We would like to thank everyone on the committee for their work in bringing this task to a satisfactory conclusion. It has certainly been a long time since we first started this project but up to this month\* we have found that everyone has done their part as quickly as possible\*. There will be some delay in making out a full report of all the facts\* because of the staff holidays

which take place in August. Our number of completed projects is very satisfactory as compared with last year\*, and we would like to thank the staff for their efforts.

\* Omission phrases "this (mon)th" "as quickly as poss(ible)" "all the (f)acts" "as (com)pared (with) last year"

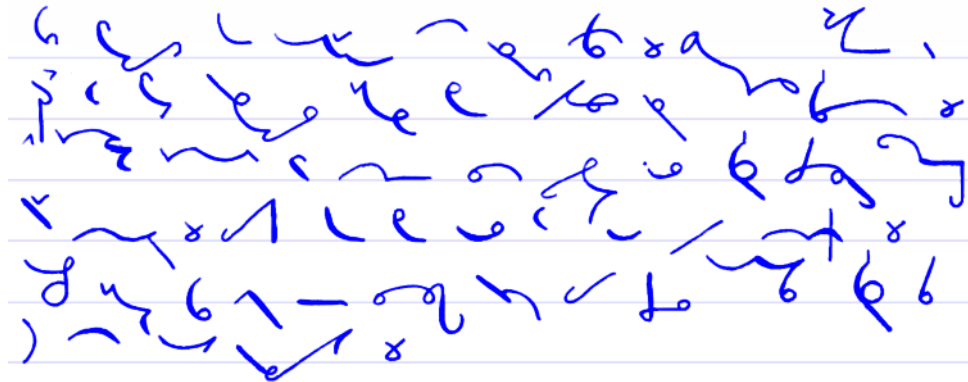


Short Letters 16

We are pleased to announce that we are now providing our maintenance services to homes in your area. It is certain that every house needs constant attention in order to\* keep it in good condition. As we have now opened a new office in your town, we wish\* to let you know how we can help in this regard. It is important to keep your home secure and running well, and we are certain that we can help with this. If you are interested in our\* maintenance services,

please inform us by returning the slip giving details of your requirements.

- \* Omission phrases "in ord(er to)"
- \* "we wish" Write the outline more shallowly to get the Ish through the line, and a little more steeply for "we shall" to keep it on the line
- \* "in our" R Hook to represent "our"

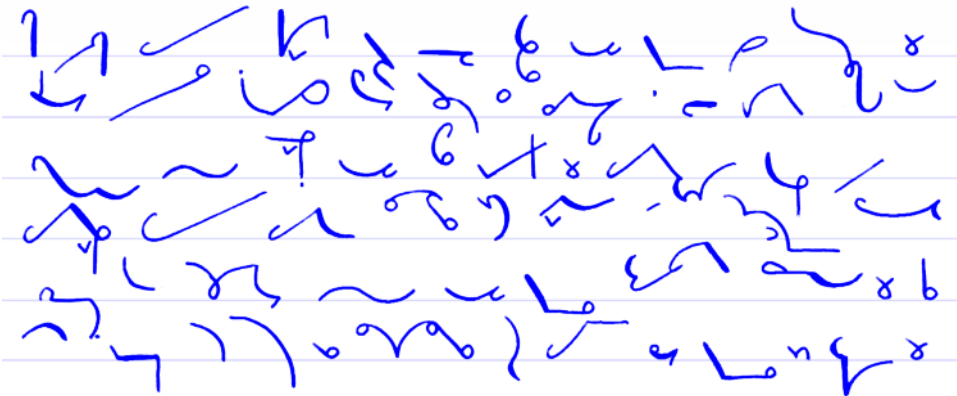


### Short Letters 16

Thank you everyone for inviting me to speak to you\* this morning. First and foremost\* I would like to point out that over the past few weeks\* I have received\* several requests to speak on this matter. I am glad that I am now able to make some useful comments on this subject which seems to have been\* forgotten by many people. We do have several things that need our immediate attention. In the

circumstances\*, I feel that\* these should be given some consideration\* before we discuss anything else on this subject which is so important in the business world.\*

\* Omission phrases "speak (to) you" "first (and) foremost" "pas(t) few wee(k)s" "I have (re)ceived" "which seems (to have) been" "in (the) circumstances" "I fee(l) that" "some (con)sideration" "biz(ness) world"

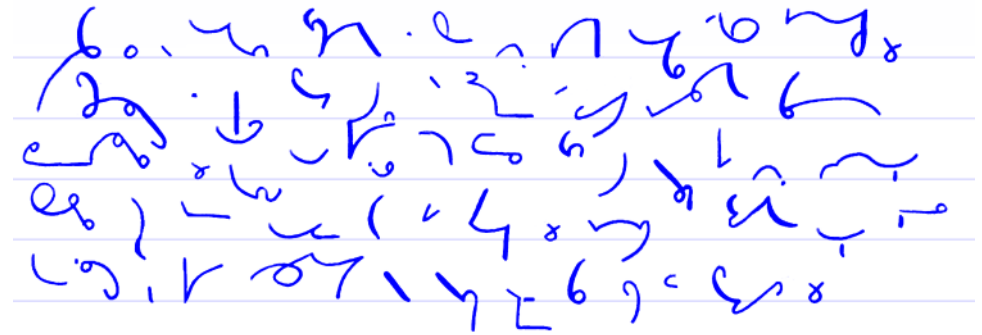


### Short Letters 16

Dear Reader, We are delighted to be able to give you this month's\* new book list for your consideration\*. Attending the Writers Conferences over the past year\* has certainly been a great help in bringing many exciting new authors to our attention. We hope that you will visit our website where we have samples of their writing and

artwork, in order that you can see for yourself the many new books that we will be stocking. It is important to get your order to us as early as possible\*, so that we can send the books to you without delay.

\* Omission phrases "this (mon)th's" "for your (con)sideration" "pas(t) year" "as early as poss(ible)"



### Short Letters 16

This letter is to inform you that there will be a staff meeting held in these offices on Monday next\*. There seems to have been\* a difference of opinion\* over the schedule of work and we wish\* to resolve this matter as quickly as possible\*. If you have any comments or questions\* that you wish to be considered\* at the meeting, let me know as soon as possible\*, so that I can include them on the agenda. I am sure that we have no cause for concern but it will most certainly\* be better to talk this through with everyone. (804 words)

\* Omission phrases "on Monday ne(k)st" "there seems (to have) been" "difference (of) opinion" "to be (con)sidered" "as soon as poss(ible)" "mos(t) certainly"

\* "we wish" Write the outline more shallowly to get the Ish through the line, and a little more steeply for "we shall" to keep it on the line

\* "questions" Optional contraction