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## Blogs - 2019 - October

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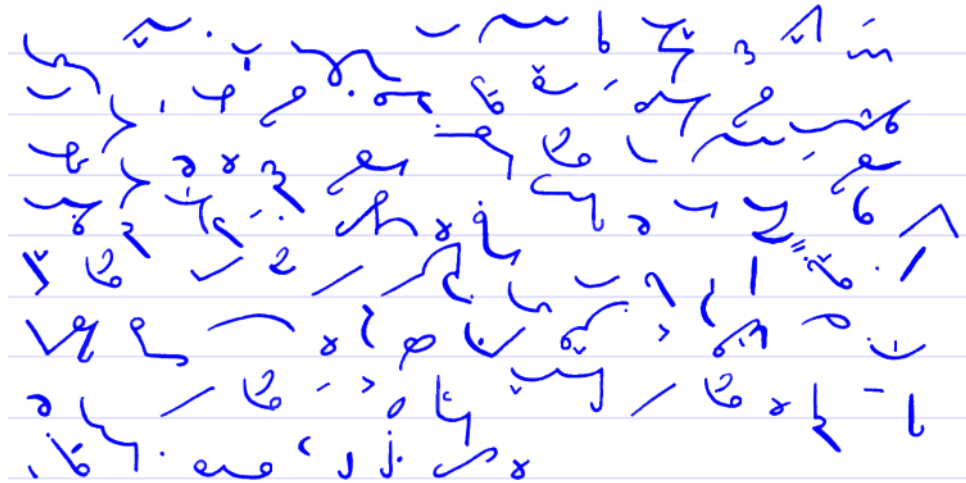
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PDF Date: 28 February 2025



### Short Form Sets Part 1

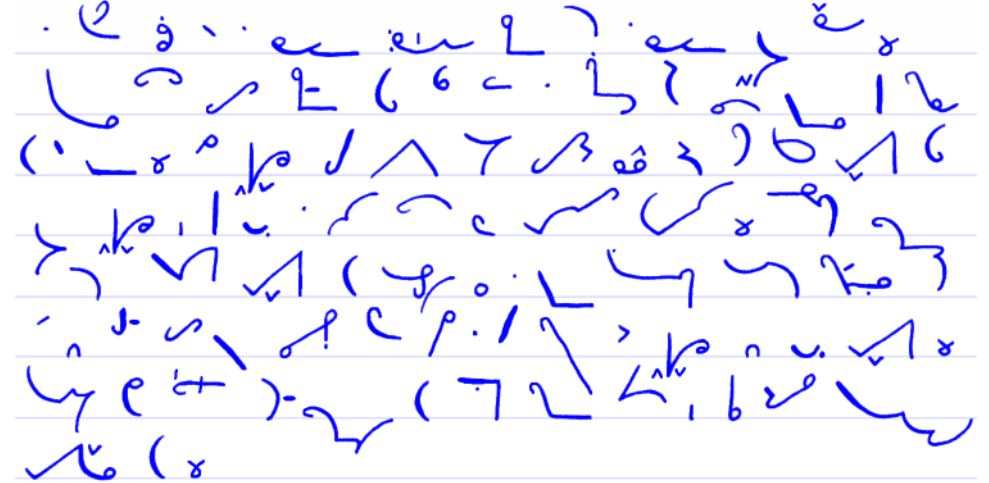
**See also the blogs for January and February 2013 for a similar short form revision.**

If you were writing a note to yourself in longhand, it is unlikely you would write "and" in full but instead use a scribbled plus sign, and certainly use numerals instead of the full words. You would be using the accepted short forms for longhand, and using anything else would be unthinkable and a waste of time\*. Considering the quantity of words in the English language, those represented by the short forms of our shorthand are relatively few in number, but

they do comprise\* a large percentage of spoken matter. Although lists vary slightly, of the hundred most common words, 50 are short forms, and of the first 20, 19 are short forms. It would be quite difficult to compose a sentence that did not contain one.

\* Omission phrase "was(te of) time"

\* "comprise" Not to be confused with "consists of" (as in the next paragraph) which has the preposition after it, but has the same meaning



### Short Form Sets Part 1

A short form consists of a single consonant stroke or a single vowel sign. If there is\* more than\* one stroke, then that is called a contraction, although some books do present them all together\*. As the outlines generally represent only one of the sounds of the word, they are faster to write than full outlines, but do need a little more effort to learn thoroughly. Because of their frequency, your ability to write them instantly is a big factor in your progress, and you don't want to be hesitating over such a large proportion of the\* outlines you need to write. Fortunately as they occur so

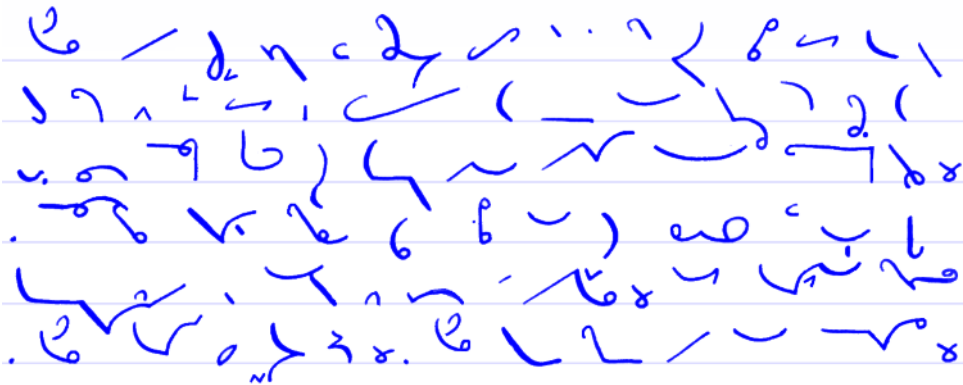
frequently, they get practised much more\* but it is always beneficial to revise them.

\* "If there is" Doubling to represent "there"

\* Omission phrases "more (tha)n" "much m(ore)"

\* "all together" This means "in a group". The single word "altogether" means "wholly, completely"

\* "large proportion of the" Not phrased, as it would look too much like "large number of the"

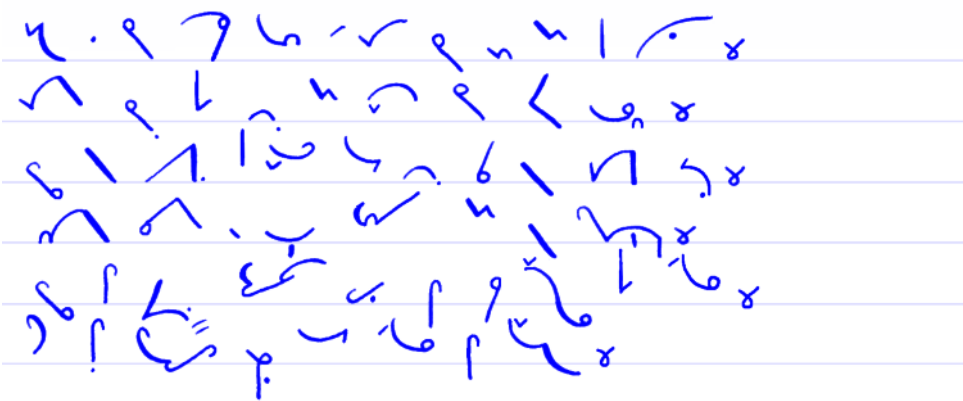


Short Form Sets Part 1

Short forms are easiest to remember when there is only one of a particular shape, such as "have, put, been, from, how, why" but where they come in pairs or threes, they need some extra attention, so that they can be written rapidly in their correct position. The examples below present these

sets in easy sentences, with no difficult vocabulary, to enable you to improve and revise. In the following paragraphs the short forms follow the first vowel of the word. The short forms being practised are in capitals.

Handwriting practice lines for the first paragraph.



Short Form Sets Part 1

I have a SPECIAL message for you and I will SPEAK to you about it later.

I will be SPEAKING at the meeting about my SPECIAL job news.

Please BE ready at nine for the meeting which is TO BE held here.

You will BE happy to know that you are about TO BE promoted\*.

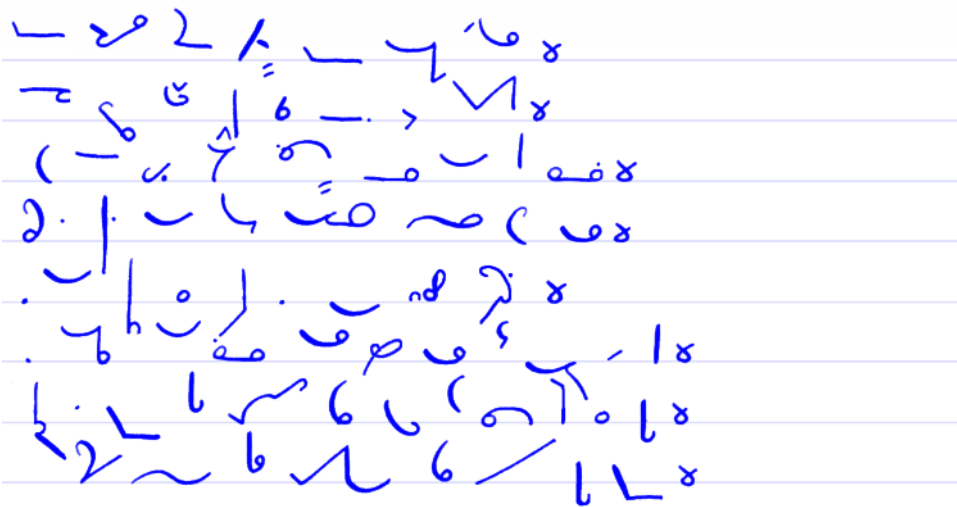
Please TELL Jim that we will wait TILL he arrives at the office.

They are TELLING everyone to stay\* in the office TILL five.

\* "promoted" Insert the second vowel in this, and in "permitted" to differentiate

\* "stay" Insert the vowel in "stay, set, sit" as they are similar in outline and meaning

Handwriting practice lines for the second paragraph.



Short Form Sets Part 1

I CAN always ask Joe to COME into the office.

\*CAN you please find out who is COMING to the party.

They CAN wait until Sam COMES in at six.

There is a debt OWING for the LANGUAGE classes, amongst other THINGS.

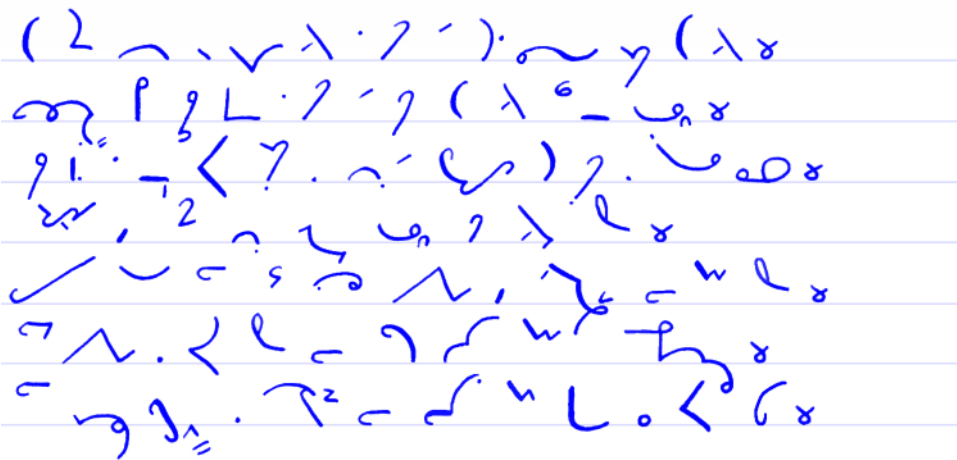
The LANGUAGE tutor is teaching the YOUNG students French.

The notice in six LANGUAGES lists THINGS that the YOUNG people should do.

It would be a big ADVANTAGE to learn this, even though some of it is DIFFICULT.

There are many ADVANTAGES to reading this rather DIFFICULT book.

\* "Can you please ..." No question mark, as this is a request rather than a question



Short Form Sets Part 1

They asked him to pull up a CHAIR and say something to CHEER them up.

Mr Smith said he would take a CHAIR and CHEER them up with his good news.

He did a good job of CHAIRING the meeting and everyone was CHEERING the company's success.

I wondered who CHAIRED\* the meeting and if the news CHEERED up the staff.

We are in ACCORD with the man's report who obviously CARED about the staff.

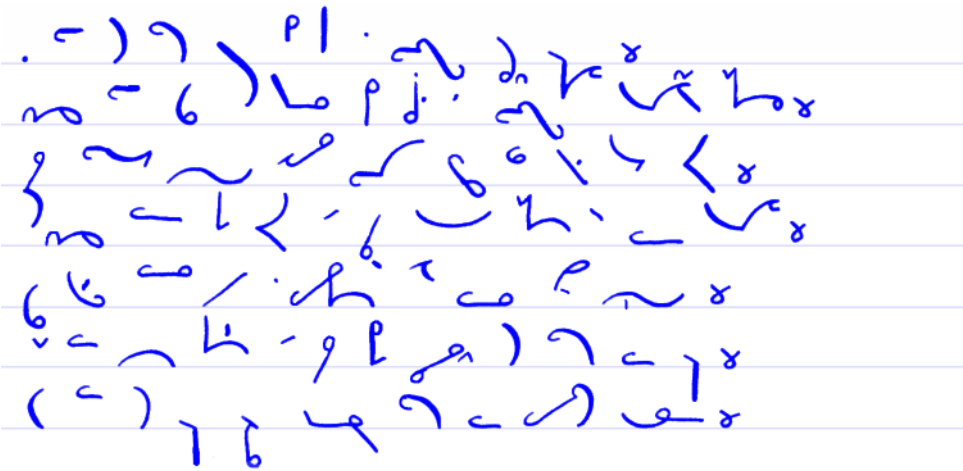
ACCORDING to the\* report, the shop staff CARED very little about the customers.

ACCORDING to\* Mrs Brown, the employee CARED greatly about doing his job well.

\* "chaired" Not following its vowel in the past tense, to keep it different from "cheered"

\* Omission phrase "according (to) the"

\* "according to" The short form is only used to make an omission phrase if there are further words in the phrase, as in the line above, similarly "according (to) me" "according (to) them" etc.



Short Form Sets Part 1

The GUARD was very busy as he had a GREAT number of issues to deal with.

You must GUARD this box as it contains a GREAT number of valuable items.

He was GUARDING the money and was GREATLY pleased with his pay for the job.

You must CALL at the shop and choose another item of EQUAL value.

These phone CALLS are a waste of time\* and that EQUALS lost money.

I CALLED him at home\* and he said the house was very COLD today.

They CALLED us today to tell us to expect very COLD weather next week.

- \* Omission phrase "was(te of) time"
- \* "at home" Insert the vowel



Short Form Sets Part 1

Mr Green HAS said that the accounts report IS now finished.

The customer HAS chosen HIS item and the assistant HAS taken HIS payment.

AS a matter\* of interest, IS the sales manager\* still here?

You can do AS you please, AS long AS your homework IS done.

I kept the cake for MYSELF and he took the chocolates for HIMSELF.

I have made a meal for MYSELF, but he must make one for HIMSELF.

- \* Omission phrase "As (a) matter"
- \* "sales manager" You can also intersect M for "manager"



Short Form Sets Part 1

He REMARKED that a lot MORE work had appeared on his desk.

MR Jackson wrote down his REMARKS but they MERELY glanced at them.

MR Black asked MORE questions\* but the staff MERELY ignored him.

It is QUITE warm today and I COULD\* probably leave my coat at home.

This list is not QUITE what I wanted, \*COULD you please do it again.

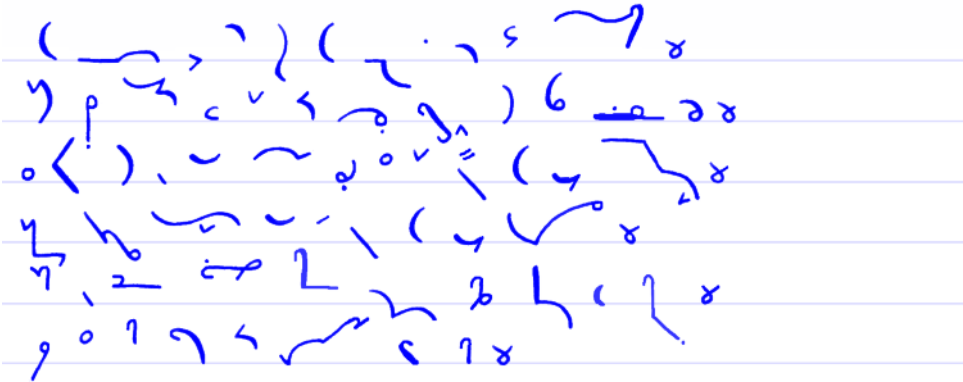
THAT is a very difficult question and one WITHOUT an easy answer.

THAT person standing over there is the one WITHOUT a car.

\* "questions" Optional contraction

\* "I could" Not phrased, so it does not look like "I can"

" ... could you please ... " No question mark, as this is a request rather than a question



Short Form Sets Part 1

They came to the YARD so that they could have a WORD with the manager.

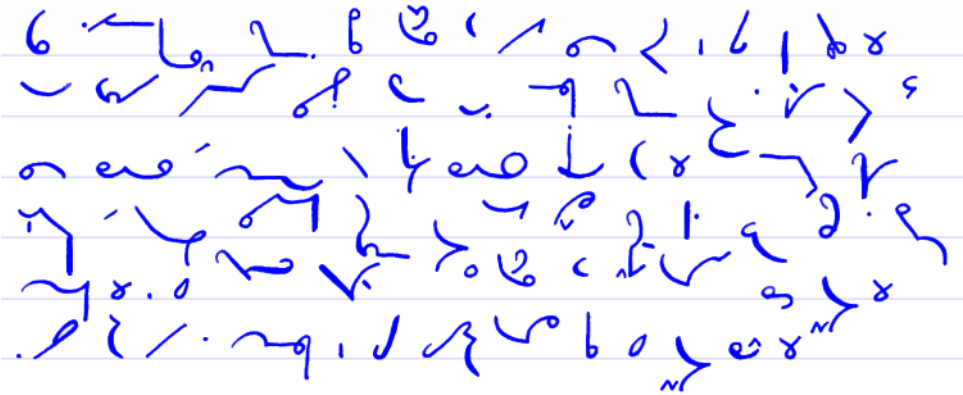
I was sitting in the YARD when I heard Miss Brown say those exact WORDS.

His job was to HAND me the sheets as I put them UNDER the copier.

I took the papers in my HAND and put them UNDER the folders.

I TRIED to walk across the dark room TOWARDS the door without tripping.

He has TRIED very hard to learn the building TRADE. (949 words)



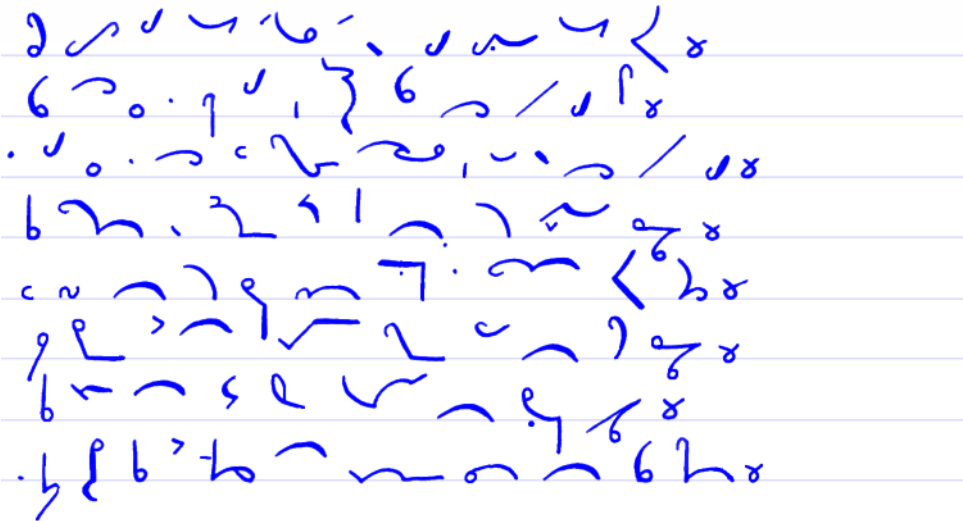
Short Form Sets Part 2

See also the blogs for January and February 2013 for a similar short form revision.

This article continues practising sets of short forms that are the same shape but which have different positions. Any that you are regularly hesitating over need extra practice, filling a whole page with the

same sentence, and making up additional sentences containing them. Keep the drill notepad and pencil handy, so that you can fill in the lines regularly throughout the day whenever there is a spare minute. The first paragraph below has short forms that follow the second vowel. The rest of them are a mixture but generally one of them follows its first vowel sound.

Handwriting practice lines for the first paragraph of the text.



Short Form Sets Part 2

There is one GENTLEMAN in the office and two GENTLEMEN waiting in the shop.

This man is a true GENTLEMAN, but I cannot say that those men are GENTLEMEN at all.

A GENTLEMAN is a man with perfect manners, but not all men are GENTLEMEN.

It is very IMPORTANT to work hard at IMPROVING your writing skills.

When you have IMPROVED your speed, you may get a more IMPORTANT job assignment.

He spoke of the IMPORTANCE of regular practice, in order to\* IMPROVE their skills.

It is of great IMPORTANCE that the staff follow the IMPROVED safety rules.

The teacher said that it is of the utmost IMPORTANCE to make some IMPROVEMENT this term.

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

Handwriting practice lines for the second paragraph of the text.



Short Form Sets Part 2

This PARTICULAR book has given me a very good OPPORTUNITY to learn the subject.

I wrote\* down all the PARTICULARS so that I did not miss these exciting job OPPORTUNITIES.

I PARTICULARLY wanted to write and tell you about this great job OPPORTUNITY.

Every MEMBER is given a card with their personal NUMBER on it.

You must REMEMBER to NUMBER all the pages of the report before you print it.

He had not REMEMBERED to check it and so the pages were not\* NUMBERED.

I have taken the LIBERTY\* of writing to the MEMBERS of our club.

\* "I wrote" Insert the vowel for clarity

\* "were not" N Hook and Halving to represent "not"

\* "had not" Separate outlines are quicker than the phrased version (D with N Hook, halved) which needs the two dots adding, to differentiate it from "do not"

\* "liberty" Only use the short form for the noun, not for a name or place name



Short Form Sets Part 2

Please GO to the office and GIVE this letter to the accounts department manager.

Do not GO to that shop as they will not\* GIVE you good service.

I am GOING on holiday and they will be GIVING me two weeks\* pay.

THOSE people are the ones who came to THIS office last week\*.

THOSE are the lists of people that I want THIS information to be sent to.

THOSE are the jobs to do this morning, and THESE are the ones for tomorrow.

\* "they will not" N Hook and Halving to represent "not"

\* Omission phrases "two wee(k)s" "las(t w)eeek"





## Short Form Sets Part 2

I HAD a letter to write and a report to DO before tomorrow.

I HAD no idea what I should DO, to make a DIFFERENCE to this problem.

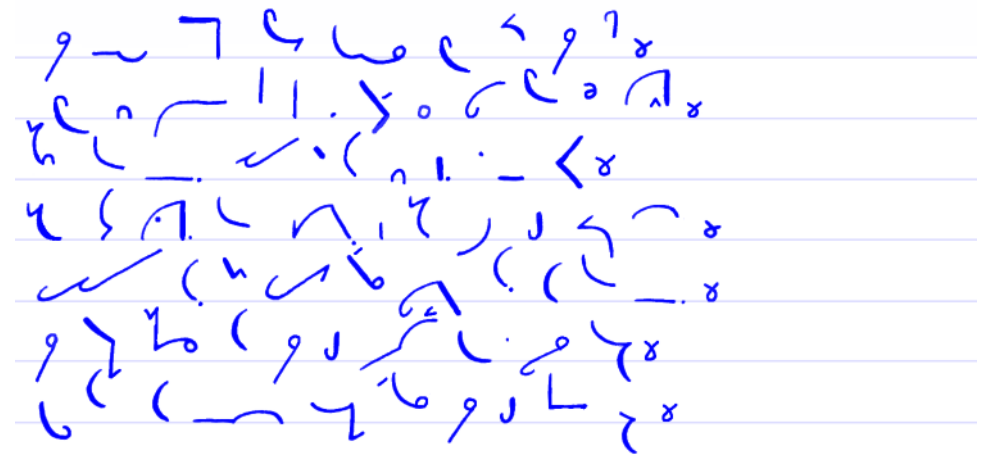
DR Jones was a DEAR friend whom I met DURING the conference.

He wants to be a DOCTOR but the course fees are much too DEAR.

The speaker had MUCH to say, WHICH was hard to do in only ten minutes.

Is there MUCH work to do this morning,  
and WHICH should I do first?

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## Short Form Sets Part 2

He could not get OVER the fence,  
HOWEVER hard he tried.

HOWEVER you look at it, the\* budget is well OVER what is allowed.

I THANK you for coming and we all THINK you did a good job.

I have THANKED the lady\* for helping but I THINK she did not hear me.

We were THINKING about whether the boss  
will be THANKING them for coming.

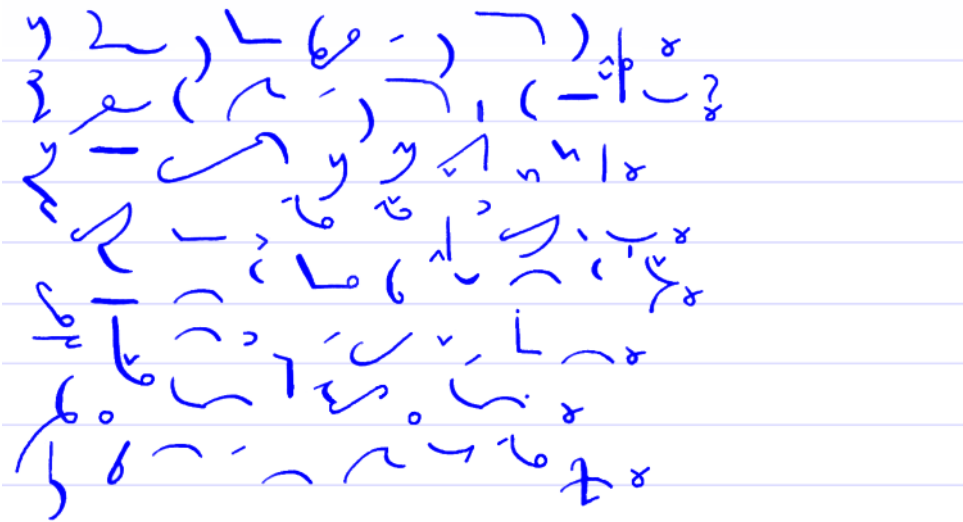
He bought the items **THOUGH** he did not really have a use for **THEM**.

Even **THOUGH** they came into the office, he did not talk to **THEM**.

\* "the" Not using Tick The, as there is a pause before it

\* "lady" Insert the vowels in this, and in "lad" "laddie", to prevent misreading

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Short Form Sets Part 2

I was asking WHOSE bag this WAS and WHOSE car WAS outside.

What WAS the reason they left and WHOSE car did they go in?

I SHALL be able to go wherever I WISH and I SHALL write to you about it.

We SHALL have to come to the office and find out what we WISH\* to know.

Please give HIM that box and then hand ME that file.

Can you advise ME what to do and whether I should contact HIM.

This letter is for ME and that one is for HIM.

It was just ME and HIM\* left in the office during the morning.

\* "we wish" The Way stroke is written more shallowly, so that the Ish stroke goes through the line for "wish"

\* "me and him" Informal use of the accusative forms



Short Form Sets Part 2

You can come IN and work for us on ANY day of the week.

The accounts staff will not be IN the office on ANY day this week\*.

When I am IN town, I will visit you if I have ANY time.

The sales staff do not have ANY office space of their OWN\*.

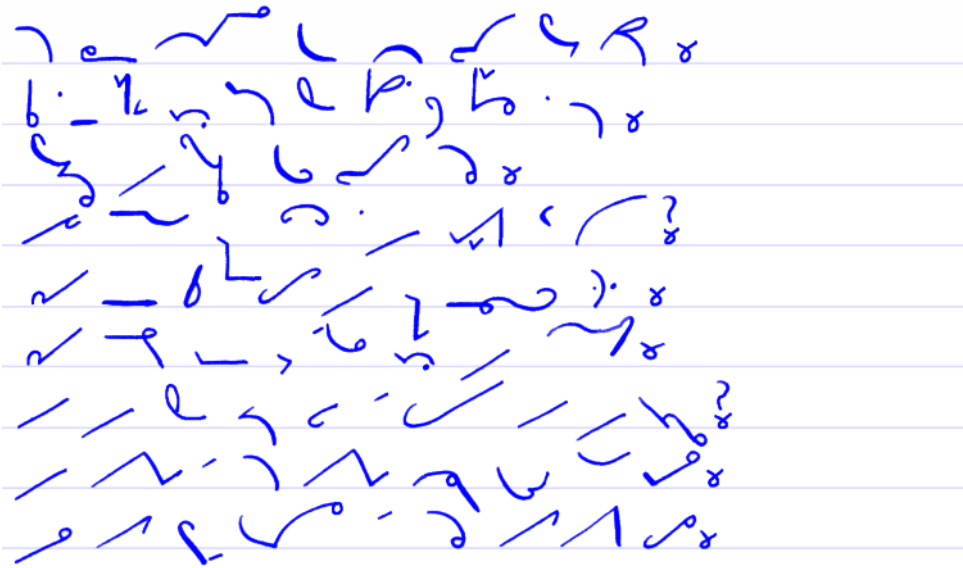
Mr Smith OWNS this company and you can see him IN his office.

The people will no doubt be INFLUENCED by the NEXT speaker.

My choice of work was INFLUENCED by the book I read NEXT.

\* Omission phrase "this (w)EEK"

\* "their own" You can also write this with N Hook for "own"



Short Form Sets Part 2

YOUR school marks have improved greatly over the last YEAR.

It is a good idea to meet all YOUR staff at least\* three times a YEAR.

Over the YEARS, our profits have been greater than YOURS.

ARE you going to take more than an HOUR to write that letter?

You ARE given just one HOUR to do the examination essay.

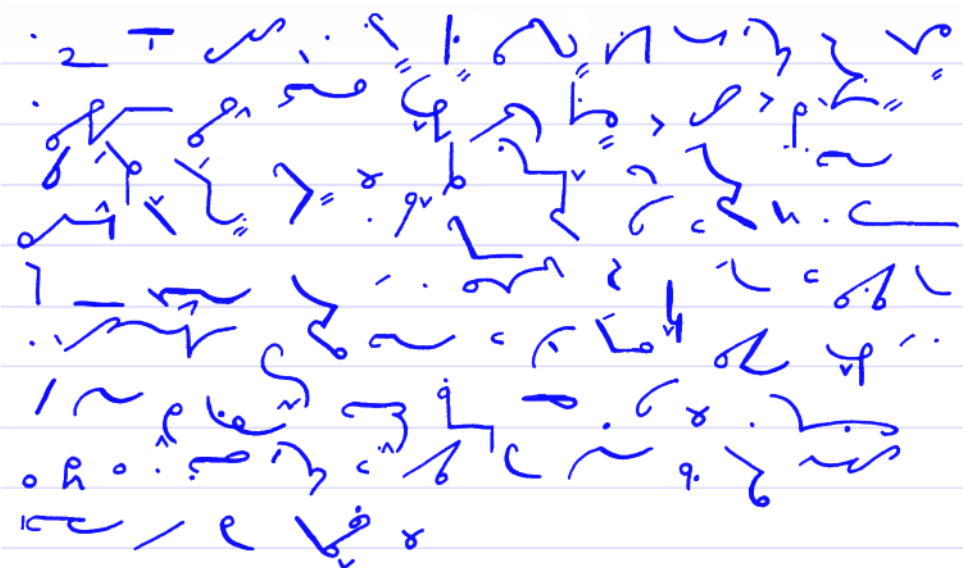
You ARE expected to come to the office to meet OUR manager.

ARE OUR staff here yet and where ARE OUR papers?

OUR report and YOUR report must be finished in two HOURS.

OURS are the blue folders and YOURS are the red ones. (868 words)

\* "at least" "at last" Always insert the vowel to differentiate



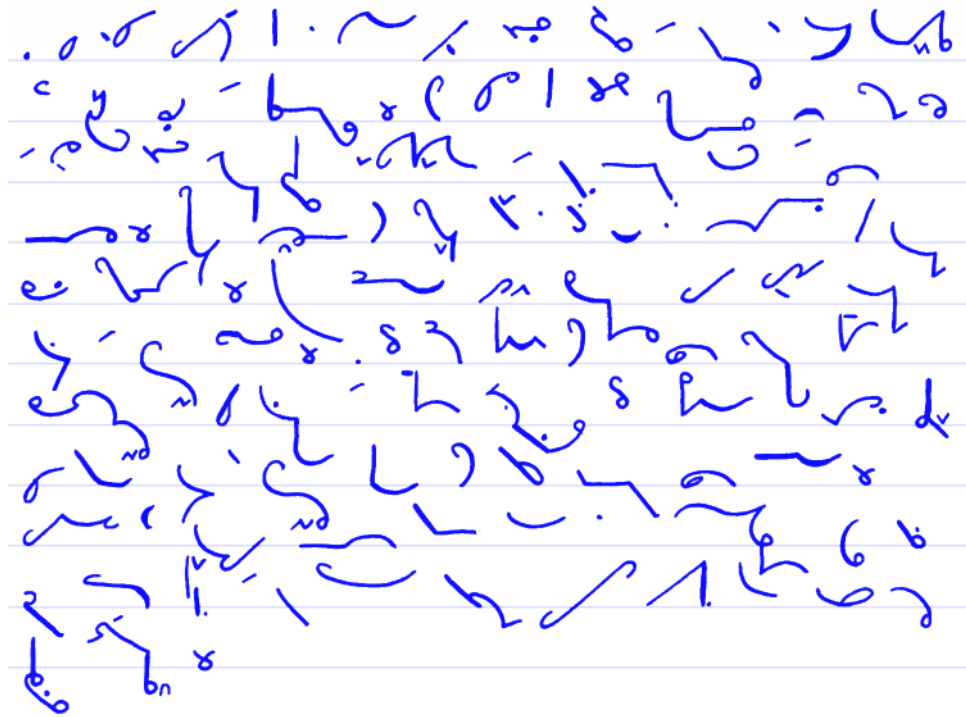
Apple Celebration

A week ago we went to an Apple Day Celebration held in the orchard of Fulham Palace, an historic house and gardens alongside the river Thames to the west of the city, just opposite Putney Bridge. It is the archetypal fruit and vegetable garden, surrounded by a high brick wall, with about a quarter\* of it given to growing vegetables, and a small part of that divided off with hedges for an ornamental flower garden, with low box hedging inside and a large

long south-facing greenhouse constructed against the wall. The remainder is set out\* as a grassed orchard with arches over long straight paths, and in one corner are several bee hives.

\* "quarter" Optional contraction

\* "set out" Halving to represent the T of "out"



### Apple Celebration

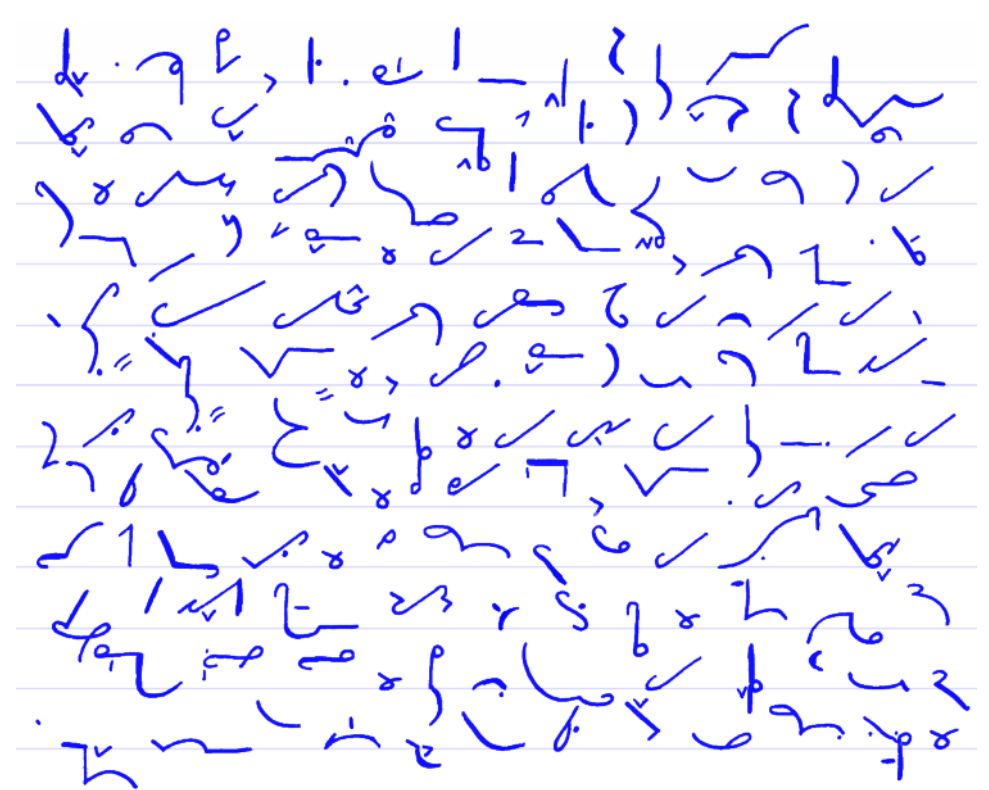
The first stall we saw had a long row of crates of apples and pears of unusual varieties, with identification sheets and descriptions\*. Other stalls had all sorts of drinks made from the fruits, and lots\* of craft and food tables, wildlife and bee-keeping information, and some games. Traditional music was provided by a band under a marquee, which fitted the scene perfectly. After walking round several times, we wandered into the veg and flower gardens. The plants were at the end of their summer production, tall sunflowers\* just fading, and autumn herbaceous plants starting to lean, despite still being full of flowers, doing their best to keep summer

going. We knew that if we came back in a month's time, these beds would be cleared, tidied and put in order before the winter, ready for next year's displays and produce.

\* "descriptions" The contraction is only used for the singular. If it were used for the plural, it would look too much like "discourse"

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

\* "sunflowers" Using reversed FL stroke in order to make the join



### Apple Celebration

Despite a misty start to the day, the sun\* had come out, although it was regularly disappearing behind some white cumulus clouds, and the day was mild although somewhat breezy. We knew the weather forecast had heavy showers in store so we kept our eyes on the sky. We walked back to the river and took a bus to Chelsea, where we found the river once again\*, and then we made our way to Battersea Park. To the west the sky was now very dark and we could\* see the rain plumes falling in the distance. We wondered whether it was coming our way or just passing by. As we got to the park, the wind increased greatly, and it began to rain. As the storm blew over us, we sheltered behind the generously large and wide trunk of one of the old plane trees. Autumn leaves were

scudding across the grass. As it was mid-afternoon, we decided that now would be a good time to make for home, to avoid\* being chased by the next stormy\* episode.

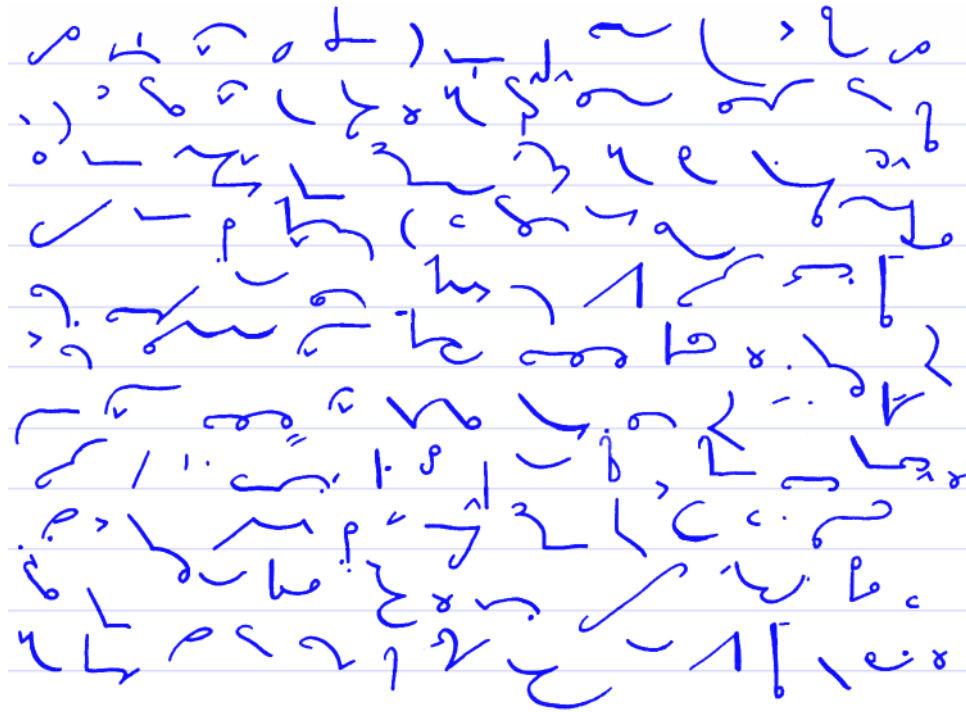
\* "sun" Generally advisable to vocalised "sun/snow, sunny/snowy"

\* Omission phrase "wu(n)s again"

\* "we could" Not phrased, so it does not look like "we can"

\* "avoid" "evade" Always insert the second vowel, especially when out of position in a phrase, as here

\* "stormy" Insert the last vowel, as "storm episode" would also make sense

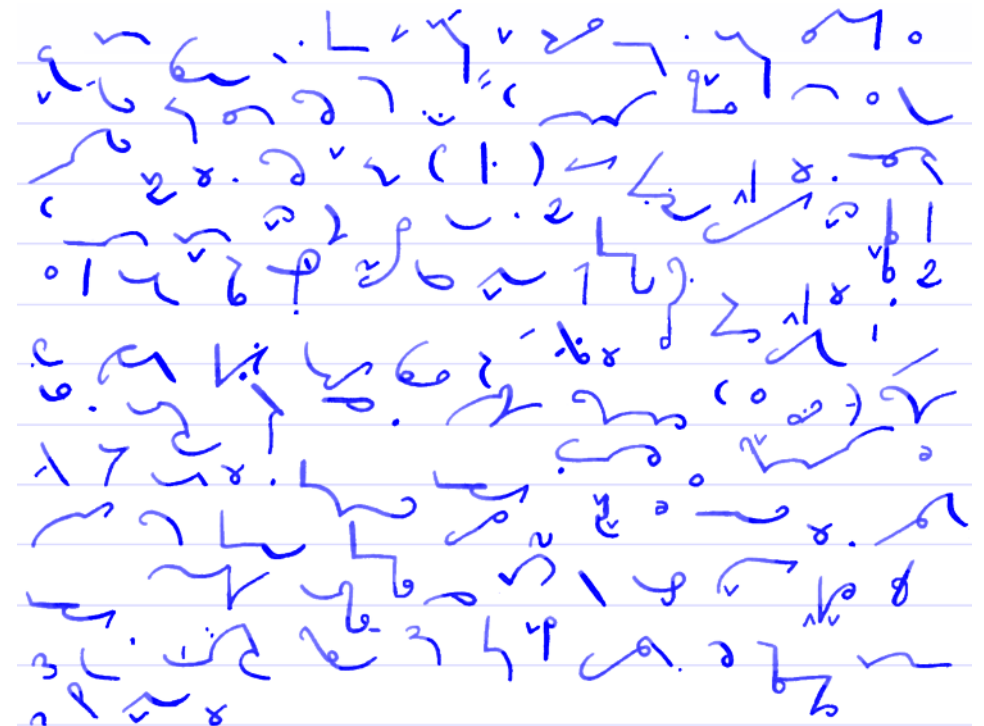


### Apple Celebration

Once home, my first task was to go down the garden, after all the strong winds, to see what apples might have fallen. I have planted as many small apple trees as I can, and, unlike the big working orchard, I have several benches around, where I can sit and admire them, with blossom in the spring, maintenance-free greenery in summer, and at the end of the year, red, yellow and green dots of the fruit hanging like autumnal Christmas decorations. The pears especially look like Christmas light bulbs, being the same shape and a dull

yellow, which on a gloomy day stand out in contrast to the dark green background. The last of the pears are now sitting\* on the kitchen worktop, along with a selection of apples picked in advance of falling. To me, winter officially starts when I have taken the last apple from the tree, and there are no longer any red dots to be seen. (592 words)

\* "sitting" Always vocalise "sit, seat, set" and derivatives, as they are similar in shape and meaning



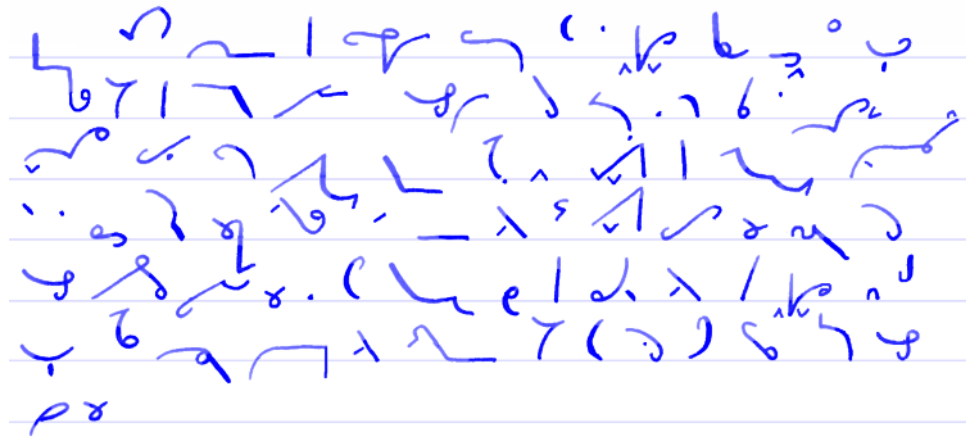
### Chickening Out

Whenever I am listening to a talk on the Ipod\*, I always keep a notepad handy, as I often hear some phrase or comment that immediately strikes me as being relevant to shorthand. The phrase I heard the other day was "chickening out". The example that came to my mind was the situation in a shorthand dictation where the mind decides it has had enough of this exhausting fast writing and it threatens to chicken out. The shorthand effort will only be derailed if one listens to that and obeys. We have on our hands an internal battle against the leisurely frame of mind\* that has served us very well\*, up until now. The determination

to ignore the qualms is primarily what is learned from taking dictations, once you have identified what is going on. The resolve to ignore the mental intrusions must also be instant, like the outlines, just as you would if an unhelpful person were at your side, whispering words of discouragement to make you stop writing.

\* "Ipod" Insert the vowel in this and in "Ipad" to differentiate

\* Omission phrases "frame (of) mind" "very (w)ell"

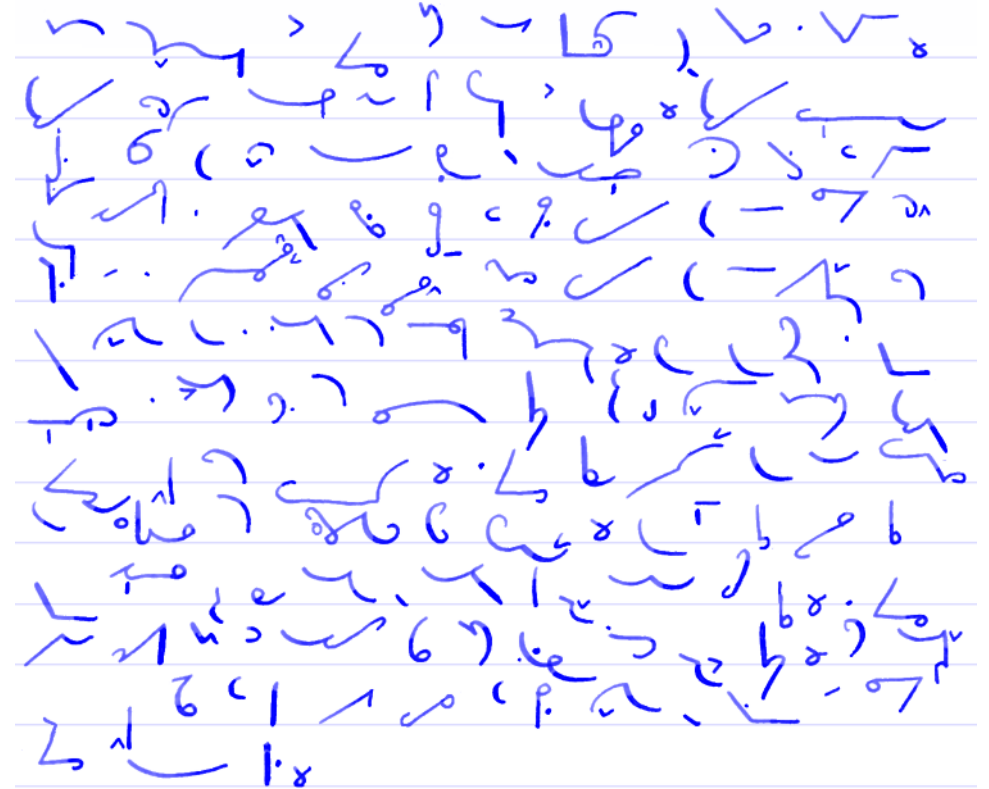


### Chickening Out

Dictations also make it crystal clear that an outline does not count as known until it can be recalled instantly upon hearing the word, which is a million miles away from reading the book and thinking how to write it, and having the luxury of a second or two to consider the\* options and come up with the right one. You have to be your own Instant

Response Unit. The other benefit is that it shows up which outlines you do not know, and those must be\* looked up and practised until they earn their place on your "instant" list.

\* Omission phrases "to (con)sider the"  
"mus(t) be"



### Chickening Out

I am reminded of the chickens I saw in the educational\* zoo part of a park. They were friendly, interested and not at all afraid of the visitors. They were clucking contentedly, as well they might in their safe all-enclosed mesh pen with regular food and water, a reasonable space strewn with hay where they can scratch around all day, and a luxurious hen house apartment where they can retire from public life for a nap or extra warmth. However, if there were\* a big commotion\*, a noisy threat or some other danger that they did not\* like, I am sure they would be chickening out very quickly. A chicken does not really have any equipment for self-defence or self-preservation other than fleeing. If caught it would use its beak and claws, but that is not enough to enable it to fight anything larger than itself. The chickens are not

worried about what anyone thinks of their evasive action to avoid danger. They are entitled to chicken out, and those that do are the ones that stay alive to peck and scratch another day.

\* "educational" Normally the diphthong sign would be written outside a Shun Hook, but here there is nowhere else it can be placed

\* Omission phrase "there (w)ere"

\* "commotion" Not using the Con Dot

\* \* "did not" Write separately, so it can main in position - compare "do not" which is above the line and "didn't" which would have the vowel written in



Chickening Out

Not long ago I was watching a wood pigeon eating some crumbs and a nervous young one was standing by, not sure if those bits were edible. At the slightest sound, or even the sudden movement of the adult bird, the young one's wings flipped upwards. I have not seen very small birds do that, they just take off, and maybe come back a little later, but with a pigeon it is a bigger commitment

to fly off, taking up energy and possibly losing that bit of food. It seems that the wings are directly wired to the eyes and ears, and just flap at the slightest hint of danger. It is like us blinking or cringing if we feel something is coming at our face, raindrops, snow or something unidentified, it happens automatically.

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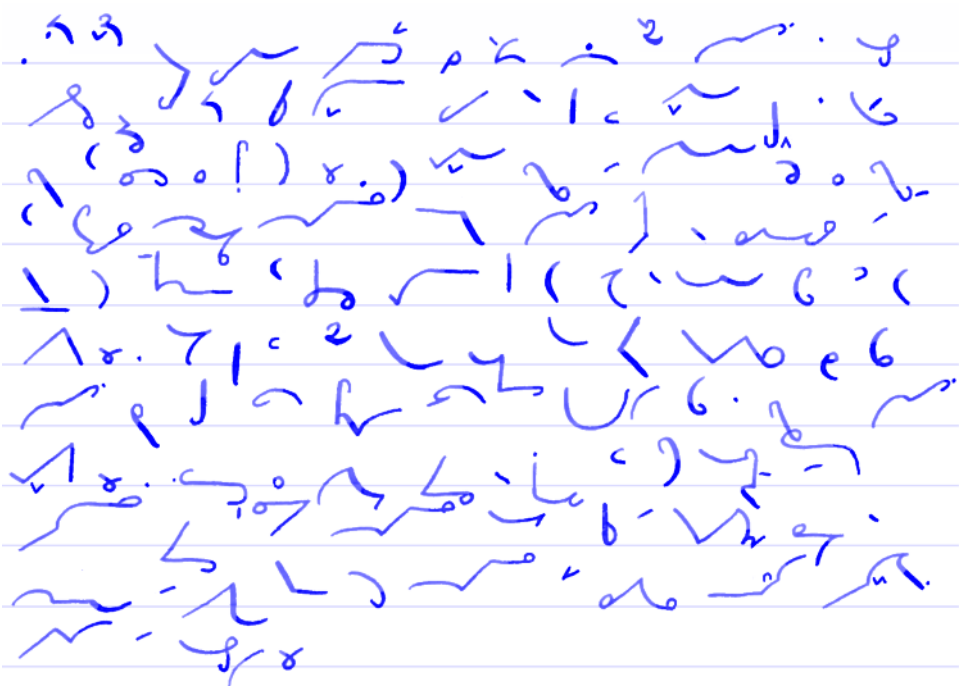
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Chickening Out

The hard-wired pigeon wing reaction is the ultimate aim of shorthand learning, an instant response to the words heard, just like we all do when writing down a phone number that someone is telling us. The ease of writing numbers and longhand words is proof that otherwise meaningless marks can be learned and attached to certain words\*, and become so automatic that it is impossible to look at them and think of anything other than what they represent. The only difference with shorthand being undertaken for job purposes is that this learning has to be done more deliberately and more

efficiently\* than a pre-schooler learning to write. The conclusion is, leave the chickens to continue with their untroubled and relaxed chicken scratch marks in the dust, and pursue the skill of making, and reading back, your own marks on the surface, accurately, reliably, rapidly and instantly. (734 words)

\* Omission phrase "certain wo(r)ds"

\* "efficiently" The short form includes the "-ly", but here it needs writing in for clarity

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