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PDF Date: 16 February 2021

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, consisting of various symbols and abbreviations.

Football Game

I have just accidentally watched some football. The semi-final was in progress on the television as we were eating our evening meal, so I was a captive* audience. With white and red England flags fluttering from house windows in my area, I hardly dare say it but my interest in football is zero, unlike millions of fans around the world with their eyes focused* and their

attention fixed* on every twist and turn in the World Cup games.

* "captive" One might expect full P and T with F hook, but it is written thus to enable derivatives "captivate/d/tion" etc

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

Series of horizontal lines for writing practice.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, continuing the notes from page A.

Football Game

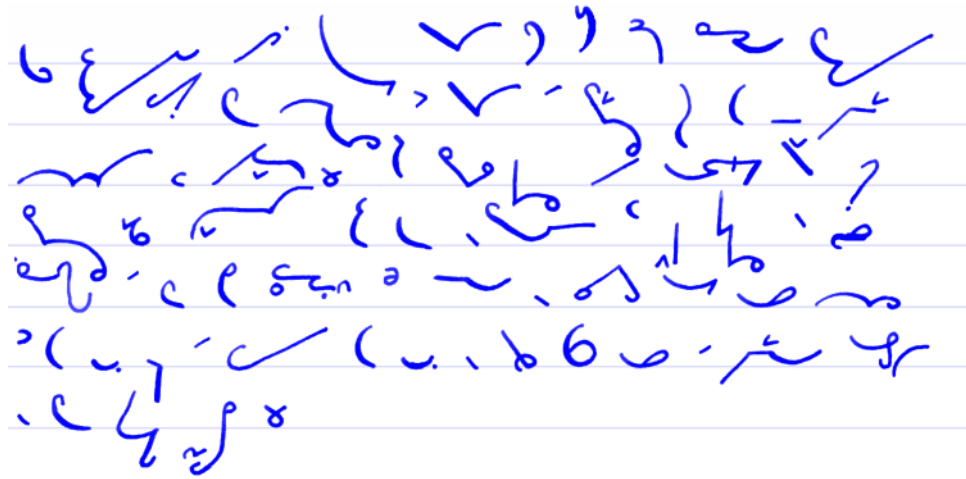
In between the bird's-eye views of the field and players, there were the close-ups, zooming in on the expressions on their faces, the elation, the puzzlement, the pain of the awkward landing and long slide over the grass, and the displeasure when the referee has called them out on some misdemeanour*. What struck me most was the look of concentration, determination and unshakable resolve to get control of the ball and kick it in the right direction. Nothing could put them off, distract or discourage. What wonderful shorthand writers* they would make, if they took it up and gave it the same laser-sharp focus and attention. They have chosen to commit

themselves, their time and energy to the necessary training and dedication, building up swift and confident reactions to the rapidly changing circumstances on the field, as well as sufficient stamina to keep going for an hour and a half of mental and physical exertion.

* "misdemeanour" There is an optional contraction for this M + Circle S + D, but it is not going to occur often enough to be worth learning unless doing legal work or similar

* Omission phrase "short(hand) writers"

Series of horizontal lines for writing practice.



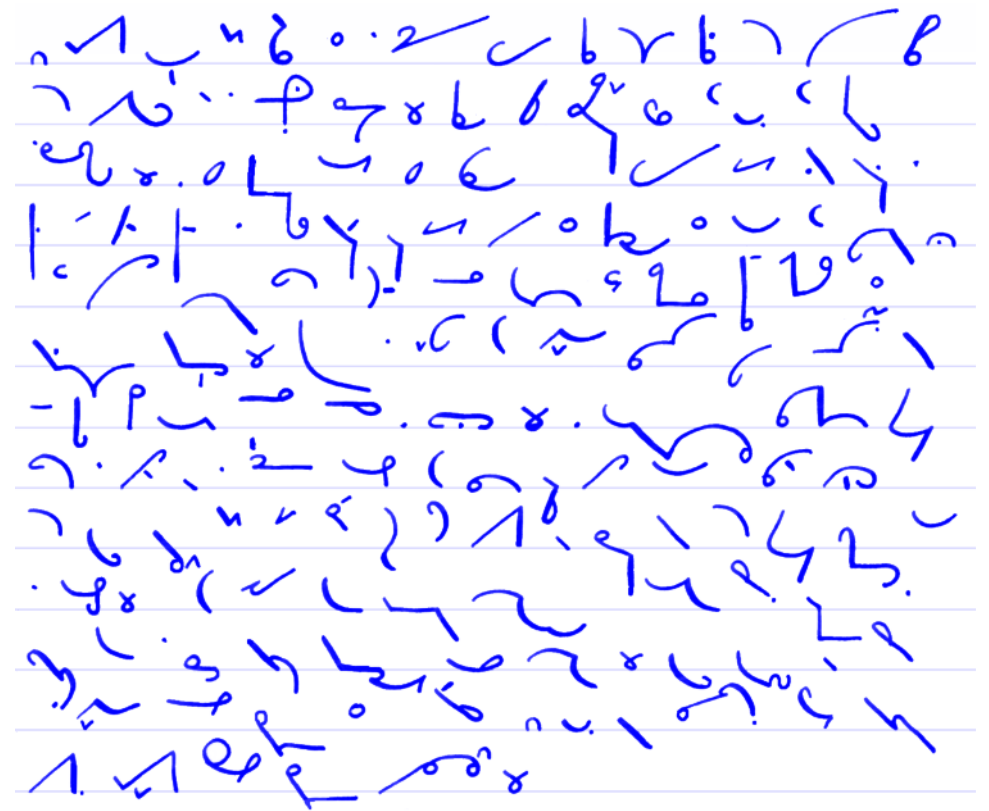
Football Game

Even when they were not running after the ball, their eyes were scanning everywhere, watching every movement of the ball and players, so that they could react immediately when required. Although sports teams are encouraged by cheering supporters, I think it is likely that they have to blank that out at the times of greatest* concentration and effort, as they

calculate what is going to happen in the next moment, what they need to do and where they need to position themselves next, and reacting instantly to every change of situation.

* "greatest" Optional contraction based on the short form "great"

Blank lined paper for writing notes.



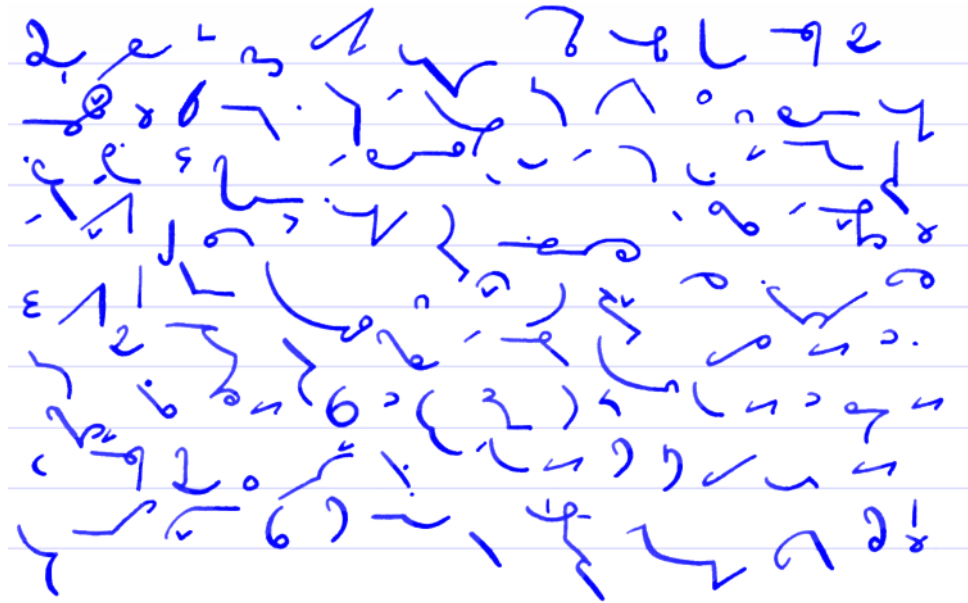
Football Game

You already know about all this as a shorthand writer*, whether it is early days or later stages, or revision of an existing skill. It is not just high speed efforts that need that type of concentration. The first dictations in the first lesson, where "Abe paid a debt" and "Joe towed a boat today", are as demanding as any that will be met with later on, maybe more so because familiarity with the strokes, dots and dashes has barely begun. After a while, though, writing slowly will actually be quite difficult, as it now goes against the grain. The footballers seldom change from a run

to a walk, instead they seem to just run in slow motion, or even bounce about on the spot, so that they are ready to speed up or change direction in an instant. They and we have to keep moving, never stopping to take a breather for a second before beginning the next move. Even if you have to stop writing, because the speaker has paused, you need to be hovering over the paper ready to write as soon as the speaker resumes.

* Omission phrase "short(hand) writer"

Blank lined paper for writing notes.

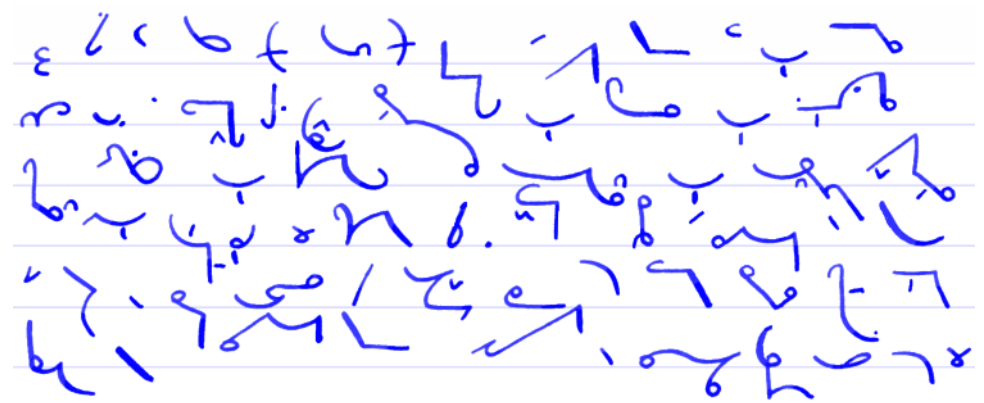


Football Game

There is no reason why you cannot watch the football matches instead of doing extra shorthand exercises. Just keep a pad and pencil on your lap, as you sink into the comfortable sofa with the drink and snacks to hand and your feet on the coffee table, and write down some of the commentary, especially the exclamations of surprise and excitement. When you read it back

afterwards, you might wish to apply the most complimentary remarks to your shorthand accomplishments, both present and expected future ones: "What a brilliant pass, this is what they have worked so hard for, what skill, that extra training is really paying off, they are on their way now, if they carry on like this they are going to be unstoppable and victory will be theirs!"

Blank lined paper for writing practice.



Football Game

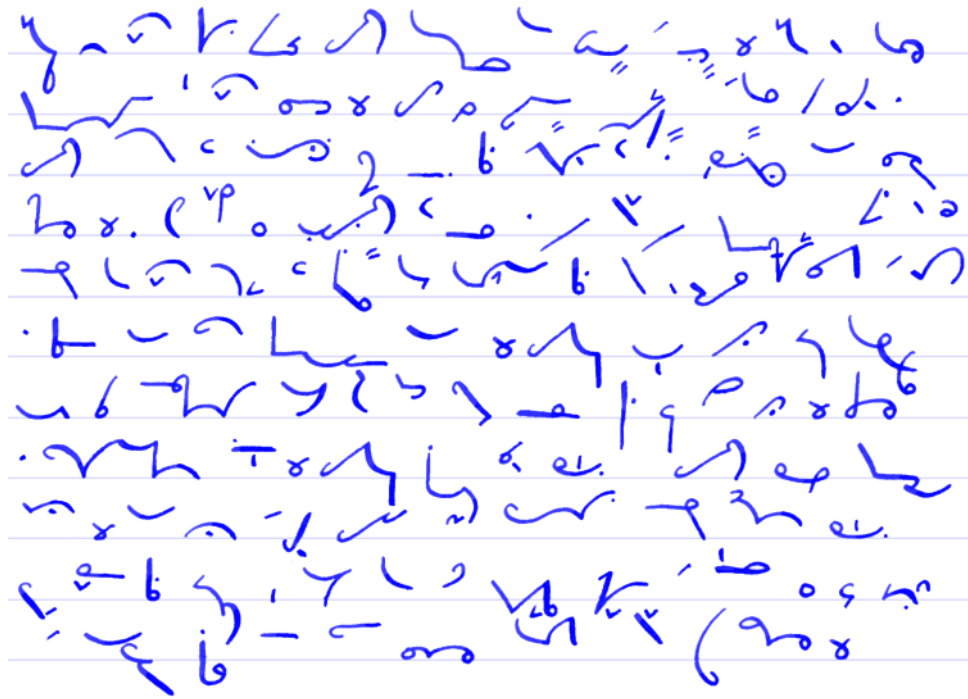
When you achieve that fast (for you) dictation and read back with no gaps, you will not need a crowd of ten* thousand supporters, no flags, no accolades, tributes and praises*, no television interviews, no newspaper write-ups and no photo-shoots. There will be just the quiet satisfaction and certainty of being on the path to speed increase, which, unlike the school or club sports trophy cup, does not have to be

handed back and awarded to someone else this time next year. (726 words)

* "ten" "eighteen" Insert the vowels when using the outline rather than numerals as the consonant outline is the same for both

* "praises" Insert the vowel, so it is not misread as "prizes"

Blank lined paper for writing practice.

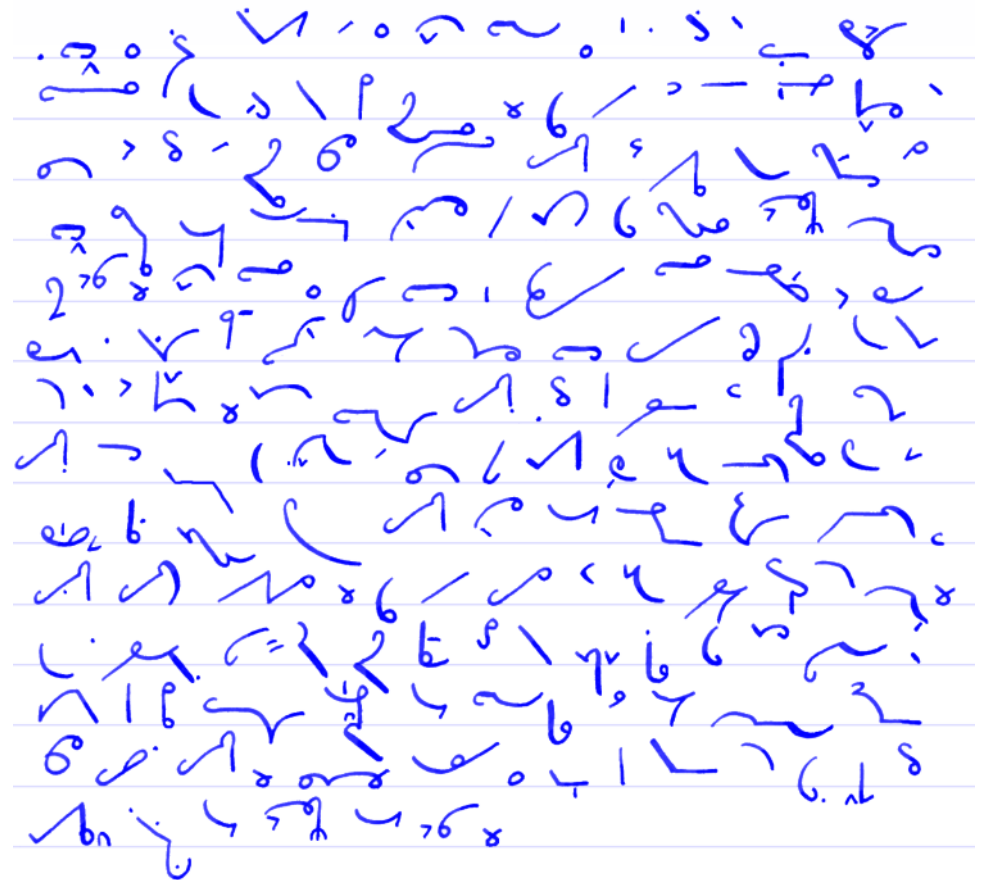


No Rain

I have just made my daily check of the weather forecast for London and Kent. I have two favourites* bookmarked on my screen. One is the UK Meteorological Office which shows a weather map with animation through the coming days and below that a synopsis in simple terms. The other site is Netweather that gives an hour-by-hour pictorial chart of what is expected for my area, with tabs for the following days, up to two weeks* ahead, and also a description* in more technical language. We have had no rain here for several months now, which is extremely unusual, although I cannot remember the exact date when it last rained. It seems a very long time ago. We have had continuous hot sunny weather since the beginning of May. In May and June we would normally expect warm, sunny*, blue sky days here and there* but

only for short periods, and July and August is when the humid and uncomfortable conditions can occur, sometimes followed by thunderstorms.

- * "favourites" Note that "favoured" is written with a left VR stroke
- * Omission phrases "two wee(k)s" "here (and) there"
- * "description" Note that the plural is a full outline; adding a Circle S onto the contraction would make it similar to "discourse"
- * "sunny" "snowy" Generally best to add the vowel to these, but not likely to be confused in this article's context

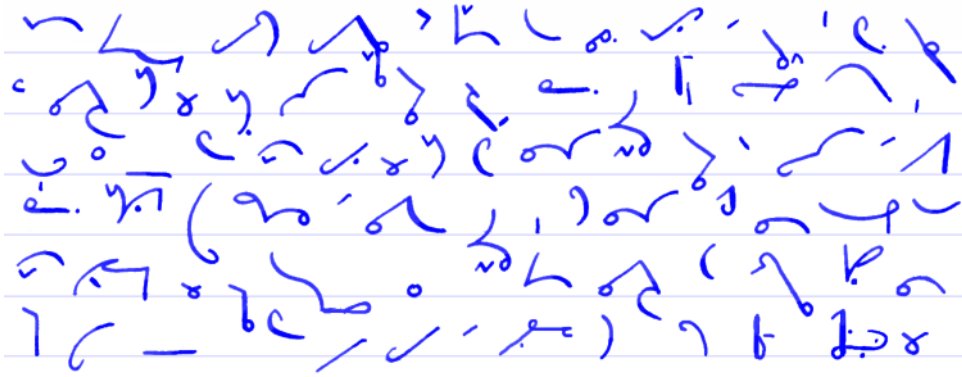


No Rain

The ground is completely parched, and, as my garden is on a band of clay subsoil, cracks have opened up as it shrinks. These are what can cause the demise of some of the plants and shrubs, as well as lack of water, with the roots being broken as the soil separates into unconnected lumps, which also then prevents moisture movement through the soil. My grass is still green but elsewhere grass exposed to the sun is now a pale straw yellow, and only remains green where there is shade* for part or all of the time. I am carefully watering the plants at risk with dribbles from the watering can to keep them alive, and some which have already suffered I have covered over on the sunniest days to prevent further water loss, in the expectation that they will recover when

wetter weather returns. These are ones that I have recently planted or moved. If a reasonably well-established shrub doesn't* stand up to dry conditions, then I am not willing to help it, as it is clearly unsuitable* for the garden conditions, and is only making work as well as wasting water. Sometimes the answer is to cut it back, or thin out the plants, to reduce competition for the moisture in the soil.

- * "shade" Insert the vowel in this, and the second vowel in "shadow", as they could be read for each other
- * "doesn't" Apostrophied versions must always have the vowels inserted
- * "unsuitable" Insert the diphthong, so it is not misread as "unstable"



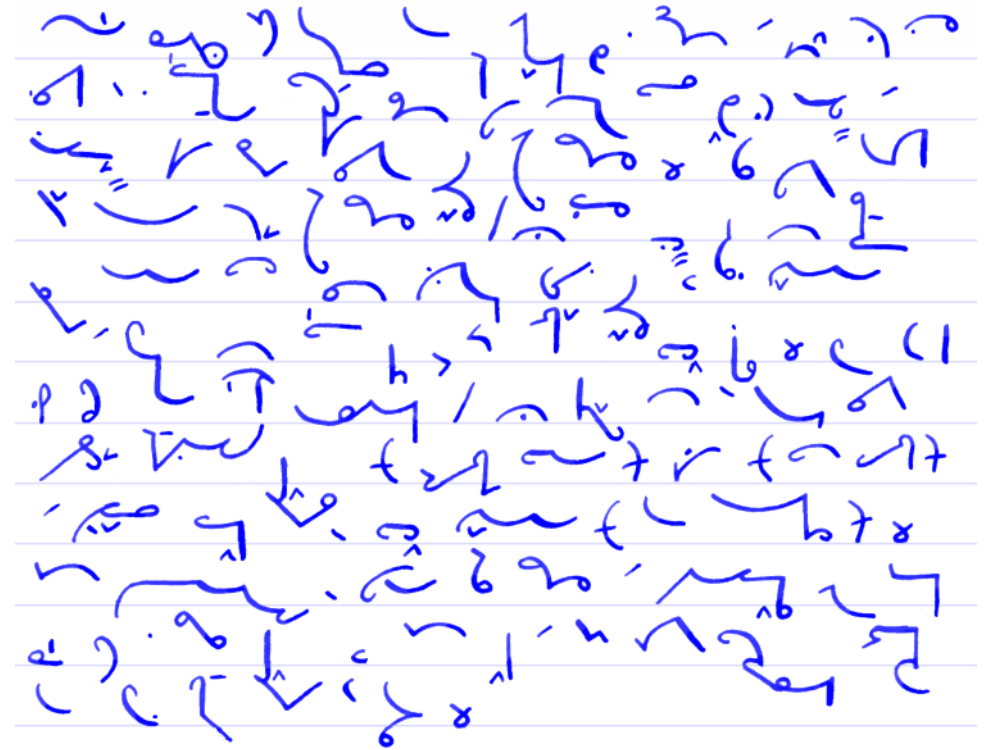
No Rain

I am checking the weather websites all the time for hints of rain and pounce on every possibility with hopeful eyes. I see little patches of blue, signifying showers, dotted across the map, but none has come over my way. I see other small patches of yellow and red, signifying isolated thunderstorms and heavy showers, but they are small and

do not seem interested in my locality. Today's forecast is much more hopeful though and perhaps at last* some of it will come over our way and rescue us from dust and desiccation.

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

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No Rain

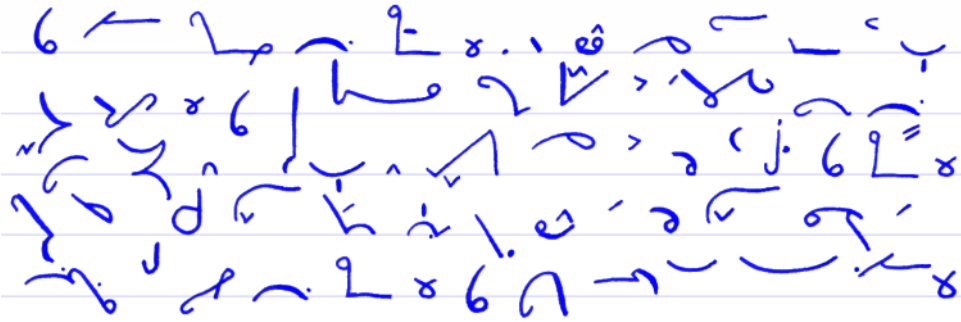
My own synopsis of their forecast for today and tonight is that a warm and humid air mass ahead of an occluding frontal system will move across south east England and Anglia, which will support heavy showers and thunderstorms. This will be followed by another area of thunderstorms which may glance Kent, but these* may struggle to support anything more than some elevated thundery showers with lightning, and flooding may occur due to the hard and dry ground conditions. However, they do state there is "model uncertainty" which may deprive me of being the happy recipient of torrential downpours (to water the garden),

hail (more water) and localised cloud-to-ground lightning (for entertainment). I am looking forward* to welcoming all those storms and rainclouds, and if I get soaked through a surprise downpour when I am out and about, I will be very pleased indeed* and grateful for every drop that falls. (626 words)

* "but these" Always insert the vowel in "those" and "these" when they are out of position in a phrase

* Omission phrases "looking fo(r)ward" "very please(d) indeed"

Horizontal lines for writing on page B.

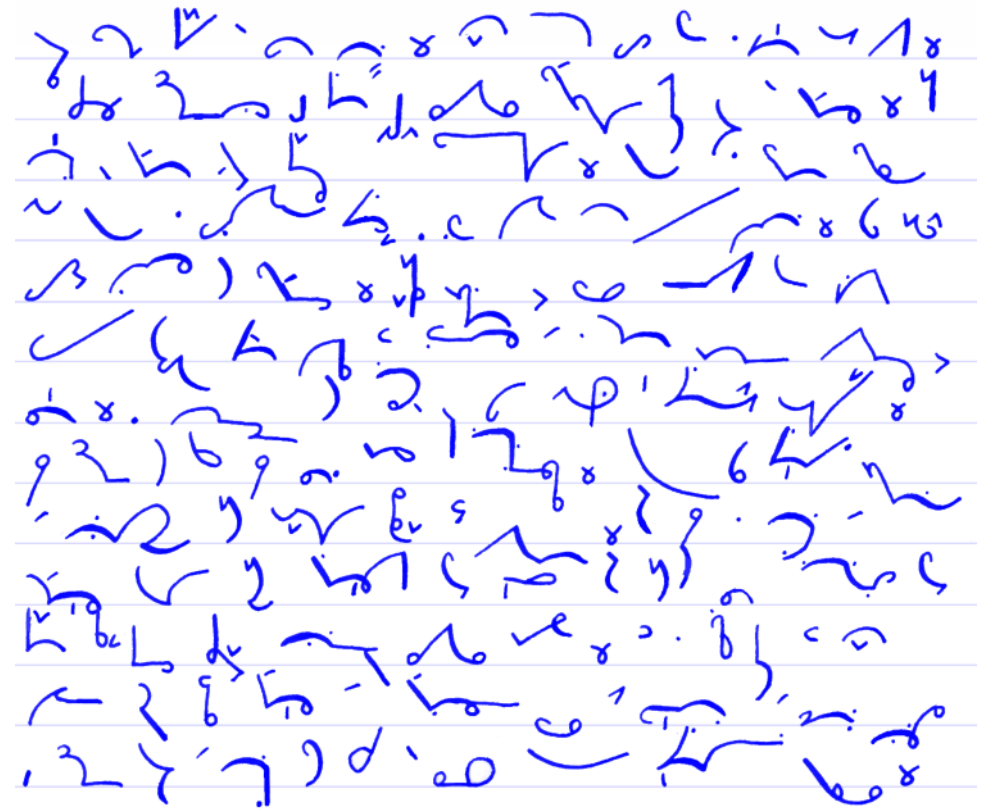


Mr Imp's Diary

This article practises the Imp stroke. The two sounds must occur together, with no vowel between. These detailed adventures from the diary of the observant Mr Imp will ensure you know how to write most of the

Horizontal lines for writing practice.

words that contain this stroke. Remember that past tenses like "pumped" omit the P sound and words like "simple" and "impress" do not use the Imp stroke. These will be covered in another article.

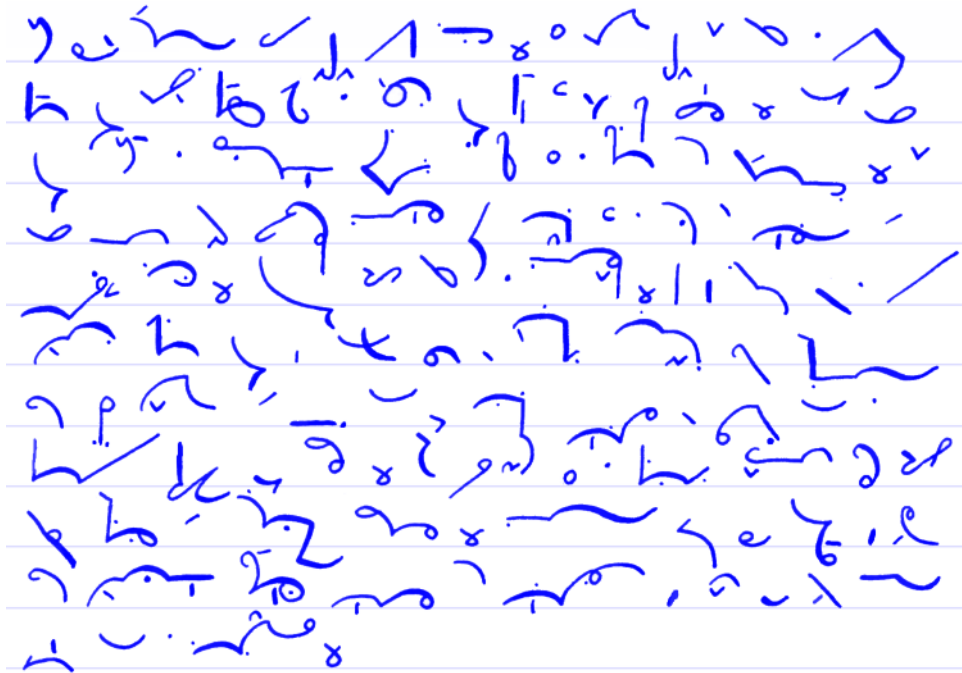


Mr Imp's Diary

Pages from the diary of Mr Imp. My car went over a hump in the road. It seems the workmen did not tamp down the surface properly* and it was full of bumps. I had omitted to pump up the tyres correctly. Being a plump person and not being a weightlifting champion, the effort left me rather limp. Then I found one of the lamps was broken. I decided to tramp to the nearest garage for help, where they would have jump leads with clamps, and a ramp to make repairs to the sump. The mechanic was ambitious to do well, and insisted on shampooing the interior. He worked so fast he seemed almost ambidextrous. After this jamboree of primping and embellishing, I

was entirely satisfied with the revamp. Although he was an impish and rumbustious fellow, I was not bamboozled over the cost, although I was somewhat ambivalent over the time taken, despite the impeccable service I received. What a contrast it was with my local establishment with its pompous and bombastic owners and the grumpy and wimpy imbeciles who work for them and impede their chance of success in their shambolic business.

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



Mr Imp's Diary

I was soon romping away down the road again. As I left town I passed a rubbish dump, full of rusting dumpsters, and then a swampy field dotted with old tree stumps. In the next field I saw a scarecrow shabbily dressed as a tramp or bumpkin. I next came upon the University campus which was imbued with an air of imposing and imperious ambition. After that I went past a camp site. It did appear to be a rather lumpy and damp field, but nevertheless seemed to embody the empowering

principle of decamping from city life and giving in to the impetuous impulse to sleep in a temporary dwelling under the stars. Although ours is a temperate climate, there is always the possibility* of tempest and rampaging storms. Camping here is not for those who suffer from lumbago, thrombosis, mumps or embolism who might end up going home in an ambulance.

* "possibility" Optional contraction

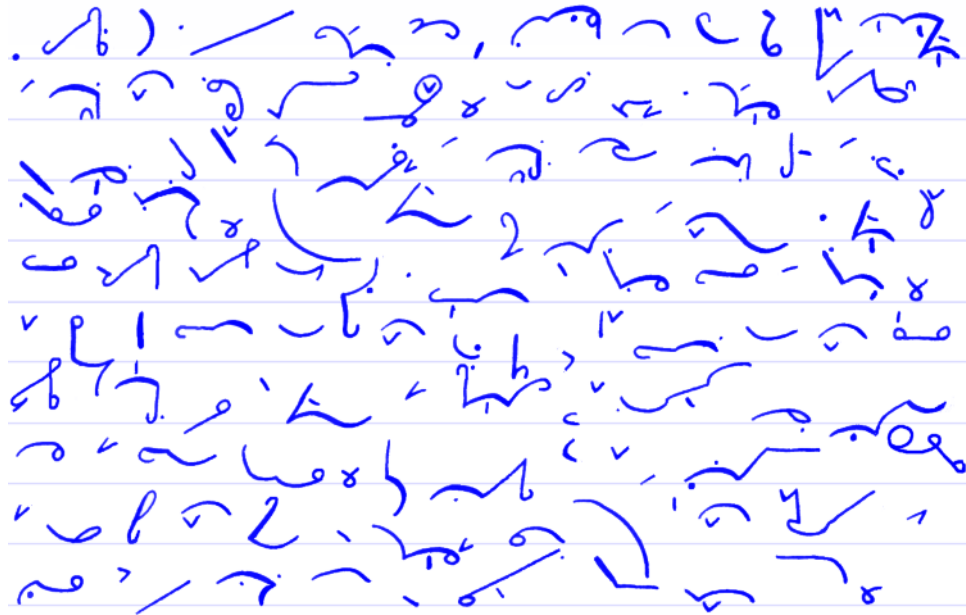


Mr Imp's Diary

I stopped off at the garden centre nursery where I bought some campanula plants, a large basket made of hemp rope and some hempseed for the bird table. By now my stomach was running on empty*, so I headed to the restaurant and ordered pumpkin soup with dumplings, scampi and shrimp. I chose gumbo instead of rump steak and I did not skimp on a portion of flambé plum pudding. However I knew this would impinge upon my health and I would get no sympathy for impairing and

imperilling my weight loss regime, and there was nothing for it but to amputate the chocolate filling from it. Otherwise I would be left in limbo after the embarrassing impact that the extra calories would have on me. It was important to restore some temperance to the meal and improve its healthful qualities.

* "empty" Omits the P, therefore M stroke not Imp



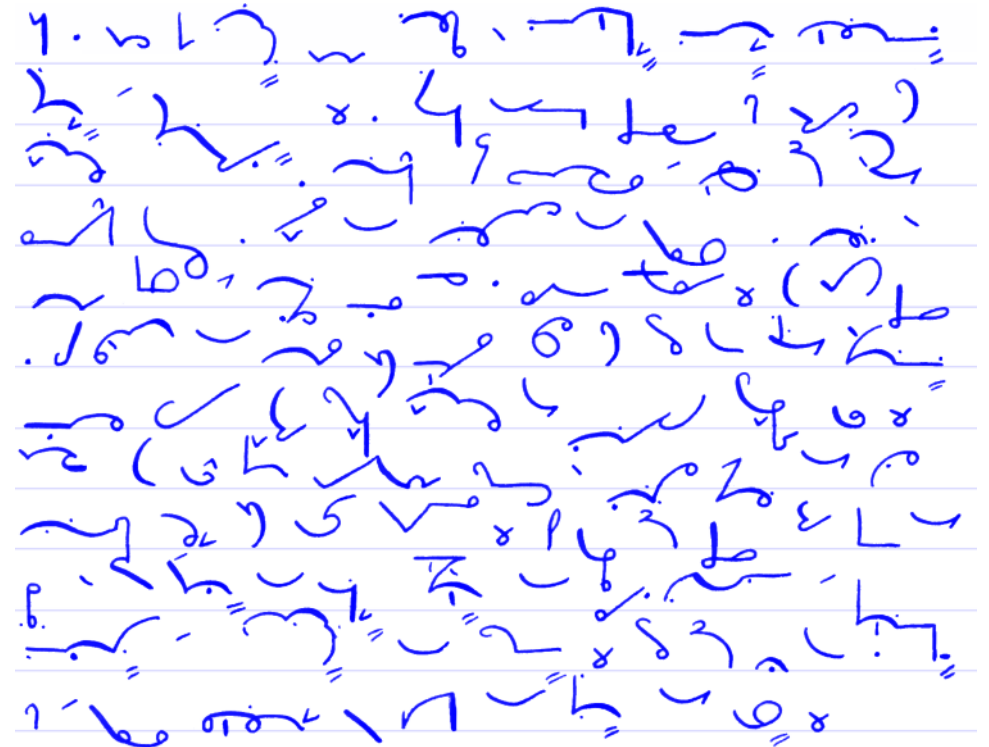
Mr Imp's Diary

The waitress was a rather frumpy woman who lambasted me over all this dietary mumbo-jumbo and imputed my concerns to lack of exercise. Not wanting to create a rumpus, I refused to be imposed upon by her imperious and impudent manner, embittered tone and complete absence of empathy. After chomping through the meal and imbibing* a jumbo sized glass of water, I rested in the shade of a clump of pampas grass and bamboo. I suddenly had cramp in my feet due to the tight crimp in my socks and yesterday's umpteenth hours of

jumping on the trampoline, when I narrowly missed impaling myself on the garden fence. It was imperative that I should embark as soon as possible* on the next stage of my journey, to reimpose some order on my itinerary, and the lateness of the hour impelled me to hurry back to my car.

* "imbibing" The past tense "imbibed" adds a D stroke

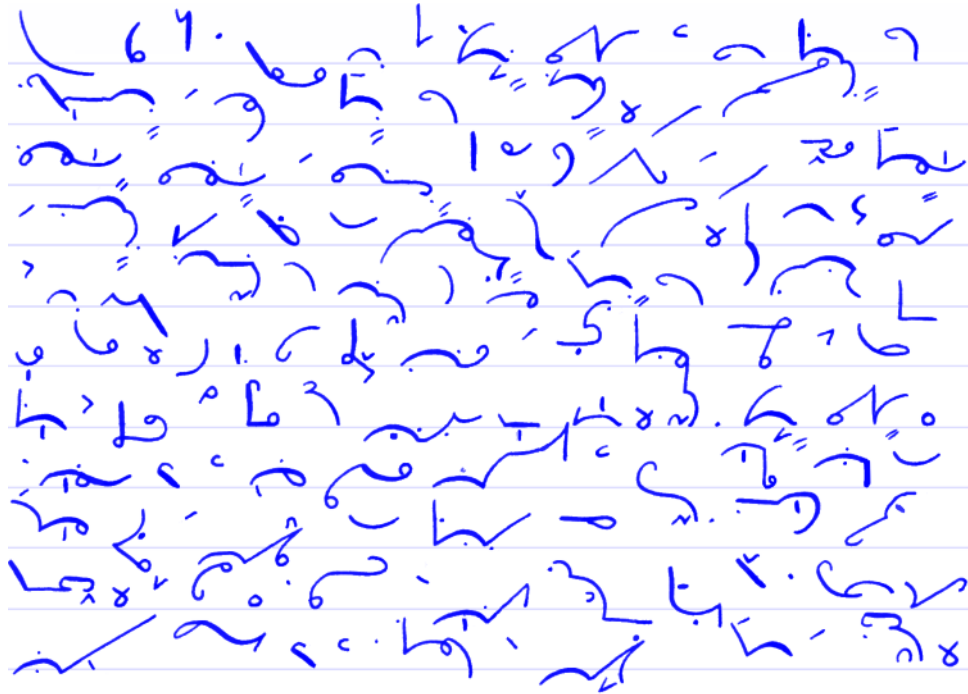
* Omission phrase "as soon as possible"



Mr Imp's Diary

I had an appointment at the Embassy to meet the Ambassadors of Cambodia, Gambia, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The agenda included discussing trade between their empires, the impunity with which criminals and impostors were ambushing the security forces, the rise in embezzlement in businesses, the imposition of import taxes, and the impeachment case against a certain government officer. They also discussed the general slump in imports to their countries, as well as their plans for

attending the Olympic Games where they would provide umpires for the impartial oversight of the events. I am glad they found time to review the protection of impalas and chimps in the less impenetrable areas of their national parks. State visits were discussed that would take in the cities of Bombay in India, Colombo in Sri Lanka, and Timbuktu, Kampala and Mombasa in Africa. Plans were made for a trade and business symposium to be held in Tampa in the United States.



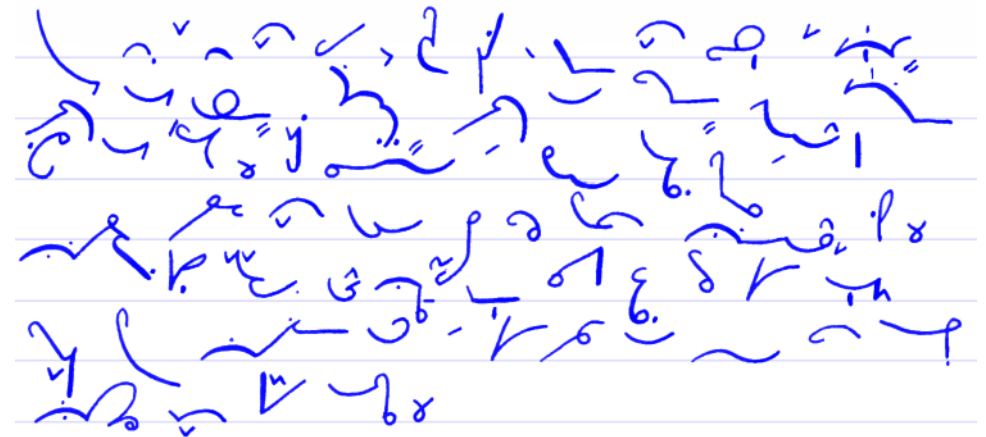
Mr Imp's Diary

After this, I had a business meeting at the Olympia Hotel with Mr Dempsey from Abercrombie and Mrs Dombey from Hampshire. Our lawyers Sampson, Simpson and Simpkin had sent their representative, and our accountants Thompson and Kempsey, who are based in Limpsfield, arrived later on. It was important that the summary of the meeting should not be ambiguous or impure, so Miss Pompey from Lambeth took notes for us. She did well despite the impassioned* and occasionally tempestuous exchanges and the fast tempo of the discussions, as the delegates were

impatient* to go home. The Olympia Hotel is an imposing building, with embossed ceilings embellished with flower motifs embedded in rhombus shapes, and murals in tempera against a gamboge yellow background. On the walls is a selection of imported artwork donated by a former Eastern emperor, stamping the building with an atmosphere of imperial pomp and grandeur.

* "impassioned" and "impatient" Note the distinguishing outlines for these. "impassion" has a Shun Hook as normal.

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Mr Imp's Diary

After the meeting I made my way to the travel agent* to book my cruises on the Humboldt River in the United States of America, the Zambezi River in Africa and viewing humpback whales in the north. I had been scrimping and saving for these trips, and had imperceptibly rescued my financial situation from its former impecunious state. At last* I finally found the impetus to go ahead with these plans which will no doubt provide further

empirical information, and which will result in many more interesting embellishments to my diary entries. (1101 words)

* "agent" Special outline to distinguish from "gentleman/men" (short forms) and "agency" (which has full stroke N)

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

Blank lined area for additional notes or exercises.



Rain At Last

We have had several months of heatwave in the UK. The word suggests a short period of unusually* high temperatures, but this was not a single wave, like a passing wave on the sea, but we were living at the bottom of a sea of hot humid air, with little movement to provide relief. Last week* we went to Hastings, a seaside town on the south coast. Despite the very hot weather, it was also very windy, with the grey foamy* waves whipped up, some with tops breaking before reaching the shore, and crashing on the steep shelving stony* beach. This meant I could not test the water with my finger or toe, but I am reasonably sure it would have been* as cold as it normally is, especially as the

water is not shallow there. Although the seafront was windy, in town it was still meltingly hot.

* "unusually" The contraction includes the "-ly" version, but it is always in order to add a stroke L if there might be doubt when reading back

* Omission phrase "las(t w)eek" "it would (have) been"

* "foamy" "stony" Always add the last vowel when a noun is formed into an adjective, as often both make sense: foam/foamy waves, stone/stony beach



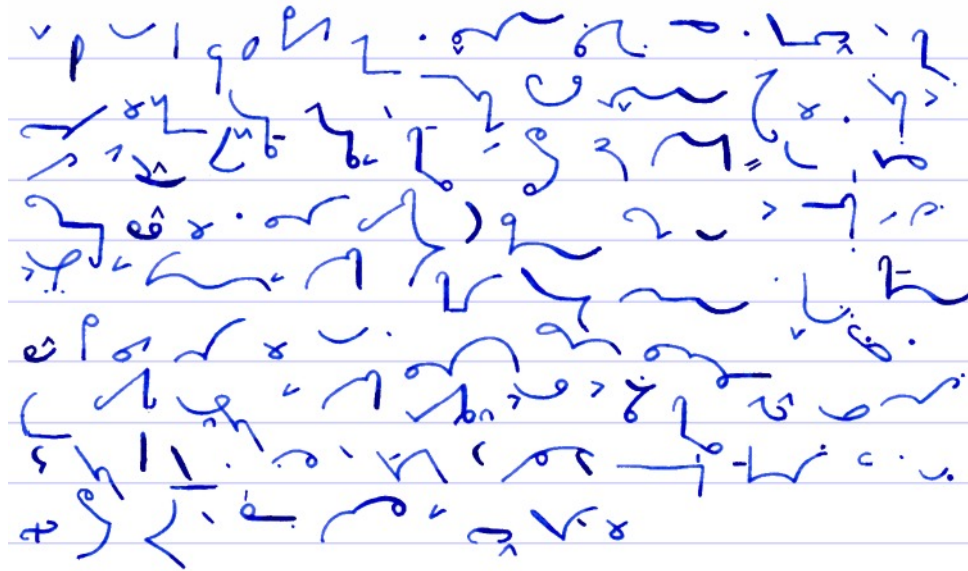
Rain At Last

Now the oppressive heat and humidity have come to an end, at least* for the time being. Two days ago we had the first rain in a long time. The wind freshened and the western horizon became darker and darker*. When I heard the distant rumblings of thunder, I put away the parasols and removed the shading covers from the at-risk plants. Circles began appearing on the pond, the first hint of rain when it is too light to be felt on the face. Within a few seconds they had become large drops dotting the paving, a very welcome decorative addition to the plain grey stones. Within a couple of minutes the rain was heavy and noisy, with lightning, thunder and strong gusty winds bending the trees. The downpour was soon

pounding on the roof and windows, and running in rivers down the garden path. The goldfish were darting around the pond, surprised by the sudden disturbance and also expecting a new supply of insects and flies to be washed in for them to eat. Water was rushing down the road gutters sweeping away the debris, and all the paths and cars suddenly became gleaming clean.

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

* "darker and darker" This method of repeating the first stroke can be used for a whole range of such phrases, see Phrasing4-Omission page on the main theory website



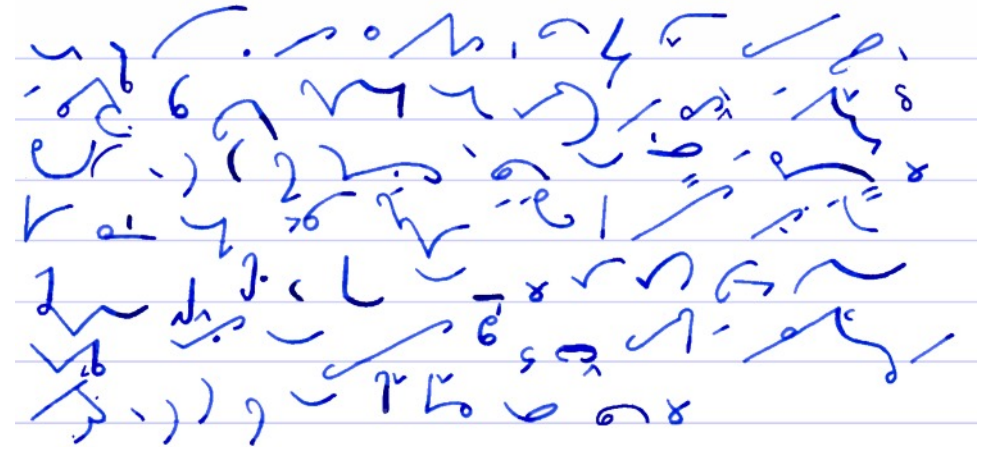
Rain At Last

I stood in it, when it first started, and took a smiling selfie against a background of dripping greenery. I took photos* and videos* to capture the flashes of lightning and thunder. The pattering of the rain and the pounding giant drops and splashes were longed-for but almost forgotten sounds. A small waterfall was streaming from the end of the guttering and landing noisily on the aluminium ladder directly beneath, making a tinny drumming sound as it hit the metal. In a similar storm some

years ago I placed a thick wad of newspaper on the ladder to reduce the noise of the endless drips, and found next morning that the paper had become a mass of pulp that resembled cooked oatmeal, with a neat curved splash shape of soggy lumps on the ground below.

* "photos" "videos" Advisable to insert the last vowel and diphone in these, as they are similar in outline and meaning

Blank lined paper for writing practice.



Rain At Last

Now, two days later, the rain has returned, but more gentle, like we are used to, and hopefully this will be prolonged enough to refresh our surroundings and revive the plants sufficiently* to see them through the remainder of summer in August and September. It will soak into the soil properly* and soften it, rather than running off and disappearing down the drain without doing any good. I will also welcome the longer periods of rain in winter as that is when the ground water and reservoirs

are replenished to see us through any dry times next summer. (577 words)

* "sufficiently" The contraction includes the "-ly" version, but it is always in order to add a stroke L if there might be doubt when reading back

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

Blank lined paper for writing practice.