

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

Language explained

Apostrophes are probably the trickiest punctuation mark in English. Three common reasons for their use are:

- to show that letters have been omitted in contractions; that is, when words are shortened

is not = *isn't*

would have = *would've*

you are = *you're*

rock and roll = *rock 'n' roll*

madam = *ma'am*

- to show that numbers have been omitted in dates

My team won the grand final in '14.

- when we want our readers to hear the language as it is written; this can be effective when we are writing dialogue or slang.

Tommy drawled, 'I reckon we might be bringin' the horses 'round the back paddock later.'

HINT

You can contract the verb *is* when it comes after a noun (e.g. *the teacher's angry = the teacher is angry*). But don't confuse this with the use of the apostrophe + s (-'s) to indicate possession (e.g. *the teacher's desk = the desk of the teacher*).

Language in use

- 1 Make contractions of these phrases and insert the apostrophe into the right place.

a she would _____

g let us _____

b where is _____

h of the clock _____

c we are _____

i had not _____

d you will _____

j could not _____

e I would _____

k is not _____

f they are _____

l are not _____

WRITER'S TOOLBOX

The word *not* can be shortened to *-n't* and added to a verb without changing the spelling of the verb. The exceptions to this rule are *will not*, which becomes *won't*, and *cannot*, which becomes *can't*.

- 2 Rewrite each sentence with contractions where appropriate.

- a Back in 2015 I had a terrible toothache. I went to the local dentist and hoped that he would be able to extract it.

- b She would have bought the jumper if it had been on sale.

17 Apostrophes (Part 1)

c Where is the peanut butter? It is in the cupboard!

d I would have studied for my Maths exam but I had lost my book and notes.

e She is sure they will show up for dinner.

3 Write the contraction of the italicised words in each sentence.



a *What is* _____ that extraordinary structure?

b *It is* _____ Stonehenge. *It is* _____ one of the most famous structures in the United Kingdom.

c *You will* _____ find it in the south of England.

d *Who is* _____ responsible for building it?

e No-one is entirely sure. *It is* _____ believed that druids may have built it nearly 5000 years ago.

f *You would not* _____ believe how massive those stones are. *They are* _____ quite extraordinary.

g *What is* _____ even more amazing is that the stone *is not* _____ from any of the local areas. It means that they *must have* _____ carried it hundreds of miles over land and sea.

h *You must have* _____ spent hours exploring it.

i *It is* _____ funny, because I really *did not* _____ want to go. I thought it was just some stupid old rocks.

j *What is* _____ it like in the centre of it?

k I was disappointed that I *did not* _____ get to go into the middle. You can only go there if you book it in advance.

HINT

When completing activity 3, look for the pronouns *I, you, he, she, it, we, they* and *what*, which can all form part of a contraction.

17 Apostrophes (Part 1)

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Building on language

4 Read the extract and complete the exercises on the next page.

England, June to August 1768

The boy knew danger was coming.

He could hear it, sitting at the prow of his ferryboat on the broad river Thames ... a deep growl of angry water that grew louder as they neared London Bridge.

He could feel it, for the boat began to kick and strain as it caught the edges of the rip, where the pent-up river gushed into narrow channels between the piers.

And then he could see it. A white, foaming cascade as the water swirled through the arches, like a rapids.

Danger. And the boy Isaac knew what he would do.

'Will you get out and walk round, young sir, as I shoot the bridge?' asked the ferryman, rowing towards the riverbank stairs. 'I'll pick ye up on the other side.'

Young Isaac Manley shook his head. 'I'm shooting the bridge with you.'

'Most unwise.' The man squinted. 'Your father wouldn't like it.'

'I don't care.'

'He give me a silver half crown to deliver you safe down river, to the ship *Endeavour* what's being fitted out for the South Seas. He won't want you drowned before you've even reached Deptford.'

'My father's not here. He'll never know.'

'He's a lawyer, matey. And lawyers know everything.'

'Please!' The boy turned to the ferryman, seeking his own justice. 'I've never been allowed. It's the first time. Before I board that ship, I must know if I dare ...'

'You know what they say: London Bridge is for wise men to cross and fools to go under.'

'I can add a sixpence to your fare.' Isaac felt for his purse.

'Ah, so that's where the wind lies. How old are ye?'

'Thirteen.'

The man bared his yellow teeth and blinked at Isaac's coin.

'Then I'll be a wise fool and take the young master's money, too.' He spat on his hands. 'I've been a seafaring man myself.

Let's see what sort of sailor you'll make.'

And bracing his feet on the boards, he pulled the boat into midstream.

Isaac shivered a little, spray wet on his face, and drew his cloak around him. He hoped he'd be a good sailor and do his father proud, but he didn't know ...

prow (n.) the front end of a boat
gushed (v.) flowed with extreme force
cascade (n.) water flowing quickly downwards, like a waterfall
seafaring (adj.) often travelling by sea

DID YOU KNOW...

Isaac Manley really did sail on the *Endeavour* with Captain Cook. Anthony Hill has fictionalised his story, imagining what it must have been like for the young boy to be a part of this historic crew.

Anthony Hill, *Captain Cook's Apprentice*, Penguin Australia, 2008

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Language explained

Apostrophes are also used to show possession; that is, to show that someone (or something) owns something.

Anthony's favourite toy was his aeroplane.

(The toy *belongs* to Anthony; Anthony *owns* the toy.)

Sara's jokes were uproariously funny!

(The jokes *belong* to Sara; Sara *owns* the jokes.)

Singular nouns and apostrophes

Notice that, if it is a singular noun, we add an apostrophe and an *s* to show possession. However, when a noun ends with an *s*, we have two choices:

Charles's pen or *Charles' pen*

The princess's crown or *the princess' crown*

If the addition of an apostrophe and the letter *s* makes the word difficult to say, we do not normally add the letter *s* to the noun.

Plural nouns and apostrophes

When you want the plural word to show possession, write the plural form of the word and add an apostrophe at the end.

The boys' tickets were lost.

The men's hats were blown from their heads. (The plural of *man* is *men*.)

Many people overuse the apostrophe. They mistakenly think that every time they make a plural of a word that they need to place an apostrophe in the word. Compare these two examples:

*I went to the shop and bought a box of **chocolates**.*

*One of **chocolate's** greatest properties is that it can make you feel better.*

In the first example, the word *chocolates* does not require an apostrophe, it is simply a plural. It does not own anything; that is, it is not acting in a possessive way.

In the second example, however, an apostrophe *is* required because *chocolate owns* the properties.

Language in use

1 Using the models above and in the previous unit, explain why an apostrophe is used.

a I'm afraid Craig's not here. _____

b Natalie's patience was wearing thin. _____

c 'Harry, what are you doin'?' _____

18 Apostrophes (Part 2)

2 Where does the apostrophe go in these examples?

- a Mr Peters dog
- b Nicolas tablet

3 Rewrite each phrase using the possessive apostrophe.

- a a secret recipe belonging to a chef

- b a watch belonging to your grandfather

- c the nest of a bird (one bird)

- d the nest of the birds (more than one bird)

Building on language

4 Read the extract. When you read it for the second time, decide whether the apostrophes are used for possession (P) or contraction (C).

Arkin Westermarkin was a good, hardworking miller, even if he wasn't () very bright. His mill had once turned out bags of flour, which Arkin sold in the village of Farchbarden, in a part of Sweden where the mountains met the sea. The mill was on the banks of the mighty River Polg. This waterway flowed from the mountains and had for many years turned the mill's () big waterwheel that operated the grinding stones. But recently the River Polg had become a mere trickle, and the waterwheel no longer turned.

miller (n.) a person who works in a flour mill
trickle (n.) a slow stream of liquid
seldom (adv.) not very often

...
Because their mill no longer worked, the Westermarkins tried other ways to make money. Freda set up a little stall in the village square where she twisted long skinny balloons into animal shapes. The only thing she could make was a three-legged dog, so whatever you asked for, that's () what you got. Even if you asked for a monkey riding a giraffe you got a three-legged dog. It didn't () help that Freda couldn't () afford balloons and used old sausage skins from the butcher instead. When the animals exploded they stank. Not surprisingly Freda's () balloon animals were fairly unpopular.

Inga sang songs outside people's () windows. She had the loudest voice in Farchbarden and she rarely made money, although some people paid her to go away and sing outside someone else's () window. Karl went begging from door to door. Even though he was very polite, people seldom gave him anything. One old woman threw a rotten cabbage at him. But Karl was a mild-mannered boy and thanked her for the gift.

Doug McLeod, *Kevin the Troll*, Penguin Australia, 2007

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Language explained

We use **capital letters** in the following situations.

- 1 Starting a sentence: *It was a dark and stormy night.*
- 2 People's names and titles: *Mr Mark Bresciano, Ms Penny Chan, Sir Donald Bradman*
- 3 Days of the week and months of the year: *Tuesday, June*
- 4 Geographical locations: *Bondi, Taiwan*
- 5 The opening salutation of a letter or email: *Dear Ms Wright, My Loving Family*
- 6 The closing of a letter or email: *Yours sincerely, Yours truly*
- 7 Titles of books and films: *Great Expectations, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*
- 8 The personal pronoun I
- 9 The start of the first word of a conversation: *'Can I ask you a question?'*
- 10 Names of organisations, teams, institutions and government bodies: *the Western Bulldogs Football Club, the Ministry of Defence*
- 11 Names of historical events, eras, special events and holidays: *the Russian Revolution, the Bronze Age, Christmas*
- 12 Names of specific examples of transportation: *Boeing 747, the Ghan Train*
- 13 Names of buildings and structures: *the Sydney Opera House, the Empire State Building*
- 14 Monuments, memorials and awards: *the Australian War Memorial, the Nobel Peace Prize, the Academy Awards*
- 15 Names of religious institutions, people and texts: *Roman Catholics, Buddha, the Koran*
- 16 Names of planets, stars and other heavenly bodies: *Saturn, Halley's Comet*

DID YOU KNOW...

Another name for capital letters is *upper case*. This term is derived from the wooden cases that contained the metal type used on letterpresses. Typesetters stored capital letters in the 'upper case' because they were not used as often as the smaller type, which was stored in the more accessible 'lower case'.

WRITER'S

TOOLBOX

Rule 12 only applies to forms of transport that have been given *names*. This means that if we talk about *a ship* it remains in lower case, but if we discuss the *Titanic* we use a capital.

Language in use

- 1 Look at the sixteen rules relating to capital letters on the previous page. Then decide which of these rules apply to each sentence. (Hint: more than one rule may apply.) Write the rule numbers from page 51 in the right-hand column. Then rewrite the sentence in the space beneath, putting capital letters in the correct spots. The first one has been done for you.

aid (n.) assistance, help
classic (n.) a work of art that has gained recognition over time
astronomer (n.) a scientist who studies moons, planets, stars, etc.
pilgrimage (n.) a journey to a shrine or other place for spiritual reasons

a	now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party. Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the Party.	1 10
b	the wizard of oz	
c	yesterday i went to the cinema nova and saw the classic film the <i>sound of music</i> .	
d	'how are your mum and dad, tim?' simon asked as he lay on the floor.	
e	on boxing day we are going to see the australian cricket team play at the melbourne cricket ground.	
f	in the 1600s the astronomer galileo galilei discovered four of the moons of the planet jupiter.	
g	thank you for your assistance in this matter. yours truly, miranda nguyen.	
h	the largest state in australia is western australia.	
i	it is traditional for jewish people to make a pilgrimage to the wailing wall in jerusalem.	
j	australian actor cate blanchett won an academy award for her role in <i>the aviator</i> .	
k	i asked my travel agent if she could recommend a holiday package to france and she told me that rome would be a better choice than paris at this time of year.	

19 Capital letters

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l	my friend rebecca lives in winchester.	
m	the royal society for the prevention of cruelty to animals	
n	this year christmas falls on monday 25 december.	
o	the prime minister said that the change in policy would be put into action by the ministry of education.	
p	during the middle ages it was traditional to celebrate shrove tuesday by cooking pancakes and using up all the ingredients in your cupboards.	
q	dear mr anastasiou, i am writing to ask you to reconsider your position on the building of the new cini family memorial gymnasium at your school.	

Vocabulary builder

- 2 Tatiana emailed her grandmother about her stay in London. Unfortunately she left the 'caps lock' button on and the whole email was written in capital letters. Rewrite the email in the space provided over the page, using appropriate capital letters.

HINT

Before you read Tatiana's email, make a list of anything you know that relates to London. Then, as you rewrite the email, tick off any items in your list that also appear in the email.

DEAR GRANDMA,

I THOUGHT I WOULD WRITE TO YOU FROM LONDON TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I HAVE DONE ALL THE THINGS YOU ASKED ME TO AND MORE. AS SOON AS I GOT HERE I WENT DOWN TO BUCKINGHAM PALACE AND HAD MY PHOTO TAKEN IN FRONT OF THE BIG, BLACK GATES. THE NEXT DAY I WENT TO THE TOWER OF LONDON AND SAW THE RAVENS. THEN I WENT TO WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND SAW EDWARD I'S THRONE AND THE PLACE WHERE QUEEN ELIZABETH AND QUEEN MARY ARE BURIED TOGETHER. I ALSO WENT TO THE THEATRE IN THE WEST END OF LONDON AND SAW A PLAY CALLED *THE END OF THE SUMMER*. IT WAS GREAT BUT A BIT LONG.

MUCH LOVE,

TATIANA

