

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #70

FOCUS Apostrophes (Contractions)

A **contraction** is a shortened form of one or two words (one of which is usually a verb). In a contraction, the apostrophe takes the place of the missing letter or letters.

CONNECT TO WRITING+

Contractions may be used in informal writing; however, avoid using contractions in formal essay writing. These are the most common contractions:

<i>is</i> (she's, it's, there's, where's, here's)	<i>are</i> (they're, we're, you're)	<i>am</i> (I'm)	<i>us</i> (let's)
<i>had</i> (I'd, he'd, they'd, we'd)	<i>have</i> (could've, they've, might've, should've)		
<i>will</i> (I'll, they'll, we'll, she'll, it'll)	<i>not</i> (isn't, can't, shouldn't, wouldn't, hasn't, doesn't, aren't, won't)		

Examples: They could've asked, but they've always wondered if they'll find out anyway.
 They should've known that they didn't have a chance.

PRACTICE

Place apostrophes in the appropriate places in the following story.

For all of their talk, they've rarely come to see whos playing at the club. They havent shown up in over three weeks, and so they cant really comment on what they dont know. I will say theyre in for a treat when they do come. Theres a band that isnt afraid to let loose. They didnt hold back during their set Friday night and they wont tonight.

Change each of the underlined words to contractions in the parentheses which follow.

1. It is (_____) a shame that they never listen to their parents.
2. You are (_____) sure that you have (_____) never seen them?
3. Where is (_____) she going? They are (_____) not exactly saying.
4. She is (_____) happy that they had (_____) left directions.

WRITE

Compose your own sentence or two with at least two contractions.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet Answers

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #68 Practice Answers

1. In *Twice-Told Tales*, Nathaniel Hawthorne tells many short stories such as “The Great Carbuncle,” “The Gray Champion,” “The Wedding Knell,” and “The May-Pole of Merry Mount.”
2. Richard Adams has a wonderful collection of his favorite animal stories including his own “The Rabbit’s Ghost Story.”
3. James Herriot’s short story, “Monty the Bull,” tells the entertaining story of a bull that gets the best of a veterinarian.
4. Doris Summers finished her “Lake Tahoe Water Conditions” report last week.
5. The school board prepared a document titled “State of the District” and printed 200 copies.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #69 Practice Answers

1. “I’m anxious to leave,” commented Zelda.
2. “What just took place?” asked Robert.
3. “What a terrific ending to that story!” exclaimed Anthony.
4. “Did you hear the speaker say, ‘things will never be the same?’” asked Billy.
5. “I know,” replied Max, “but do you really want to make a big deal out of this?”

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #70 Practice Answers

For all of their talk, they’ve rarely come to see who’s playing at the club. They haven’t shown up in over three weeks, and so they can’t really comment on what they don’t know. I will say they’re in for a treat when they do come. There’s a band that isn’t afraid to let loose. They didn’t hold back during their set Friday night and they won’t tonight.

1. It is (It’s) a shame that they never listen to their parents.
2. You are (You’re) sure that you have (you’ve) never seen them?
3. Where is (Where’s) she going? They are not (They’re) not exactly saying.
4. She is (she’s) happy that they had (they’d) left directions.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #71 Practice Answers

1. Samuel went shopping; then he went out to dinner.
2. The album includes: the heart-throbbing rhythm, rock, and blues “Sawmill”; the surprisingly speedy, yet soulful “Ol’ Dog Blues”; and the highlight of the CD, “Mama’s Return.”
3. I was taught Spanish at home by a tutor; that’s how I learned the language.
4. The Revolutionary War was fought against the British; the War of 1812 was also fought against them.
5. Many died in the Civil War; it was a horrible tragedy.
6. Ellen did not prepare at all; she appeared not to care what would happen as a result.
7. Through many long days of looking; after many attempts and failures; despite many questions left unanswered, they finally decided to buy a home of their own.