
Here's an Instant Activity for January 20, 2003



STRATEGY FOR SPELLING SUCCESS

For most learners, spelling well doesn't just happen. It is the result of a conscientious spelling curriculum that:

1. provides a menu of skill-building activities that range in sophistication to teach critical concepts at a student's own level,
2. uses assessment to gather information to target word study to the specific words each student has not learned from among all previously introduced words in the program, as well as to identify skills not yet mastered,
3. equips teachers with guidelines for spelling expectations in everyday writing that increase as students develop as writers, making the classroom a rehearsal for real-world writing, and
4. proposes multiple opportunities to engage parents in the acquisition of spelling skills with their child.

This Instant Activity helps teachers achieve item number 1 above—it complements the skill-building component in the SPELLING SOURCEBOOK Series, Second Edition, 2002.



LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Approximately Grade 7



PURPOSE

Concept: A contraction is a combination of two or more words with an apostrophe replacing a letter or letters.

Skills: contractions, homographs, homophones, writing a definition, writing sentences, usage

This Instant Activity provides experience with contractions, a concept that is initiated in Level 1 of the Spelling Sourcebook Series and is reinforced throughout each level of the program.

The activity grows from the high-use Core Word *we're*, word 928 on a frequency-of-use list of writing words. The purpose of the activity is not to specifically teach or reinforce the spelling of *we're*, but to teach students skills and concepts that they can apply to innumerable words. Note that the activity grows many more words—the more words with which students have experiences, the better they are able to think, read, and write.



SUGGESTED USE

This Instant Activity can be used to coincide with the concept on contractions that is developed in Unit 16, page 137, in Level 7 of the Spelling Sourcebook Series, Second Edition.



TEACHING DIRECTIONS

Write *contract* on the chalkboard. Discuss the homograph's two pronunciations and meanings. Then ask students to write a definition of the word group called *contractions*. Ask students to include in their

response word examples, the role of the apostrophe, and how the literal meaning of the word *contraction* applies to this word group. Provide time for students to share their written responses with the class.

Next, have students work in pairs or small groups to brainstorm and write contractions—no fewer than fifty. Save the lists for the Instant Activity.

Print the Instant Activity and distribute a copy to each student. Ask students to silently read the directions, look at the activity, and determine what is expected. Then discuss the directions. Explain that students are to identify homophones, or words that often sound like homophones, among the contractions they collected (use contraction lists from the previous activity above). Then have students complete the Instant Activity.



FOLLOW-UP

Have students work in pairs to proofread their Instant Activities. Discuss the homophone contraction partners (e.g., *it's/its*). You may wish to compile the Instant Activities into a class book called "Homophone Contractions."

Answers:

he'd (heed); he'll (heal/heel); here's (hears); I'd (eyed); I'll (aisle/isle); it's (its); let's (lets); there's (theirs); they're (their/there); we'd (weed); we'll (wheel); we've (weave); where's (wears); who's (whose); you'll (yule); you're (your)



FOR MORE

For more activities to teach all the essential skills and concepts, and to develop a total spelling and language-related program, use the Spelling Sourcebook for your grade level.

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Homophone Contractions

- A contraction is a combination of two or more words with an apostrophe replacing a letter or letters.
- Homophones are words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings.

Identify fifteen homophone contractions and their partners. On another sheet of paper, write a sentence for each homophone set, but make a line for the homophones. Provide word choices to fill the blank. Then have a classmate complete the activity.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____