

# Grammar Basics:

## Compound Words, Contractions, and Abbreviations

**Compound word:** a word made up of two or more words.

**example:** flower + pot = **flowerpot**

**Abbreviation:** a shortened form of a word in place of a whole.

**example:** foot = **ft.**

**Contraction:** a shortened form of a word with the missing letters usually marked by an apostrophe.

**example:** do + not = **don't**

### In the paragraphs below:

**Circle** the compound words, **underline** the abbreviations, and **draw a box** around the contractions.

Never again will I ignore my mother's call to come in for dinner on time. I looked up as the sun's last rays flashed quickly over the top of the trees. I would soon be in the **doghouse** if I **didn't** make it across the field from where I have been playing all day to the back door before she calls again. I shivered a little and started walking toward the light coming out of the back door window. Then, I froze in my tracks as I heard a snap behind me.

My nine-year-old mind **couldn't** think of **anything** good that would be behind me at 9:30 pm on a dark night. The **goosebumps** rose on my arms as I listened in the darkness. The **fireflies** were blinking on and off quietly and I **didn't** hear another sound. So, I started off again, but with a little less **backbone** this time and at a quicker pace. As soon as I had taken a few steps, another snap of a twig broke the silence. Was it my **footsteps** or was it real? My eyes strained in the dark, but the **moonlight** was not out yet. I **didn't** wait around to think about it. I began to run and, to my horror, more snaps and crunches behind me sealed my fate. I was being stalked by **something** in the night!

In my entire **lifetime**, I have never run so fast. I **wouldn't** take my eyes off of the glow of the back door. To make it all worse, I was almost in reach of the **doorknob** when I tripped. I thought to **myself** that if only I could make it in and live, I would listen to my teacher **Mrs. Hardy** and never complain about a shot from **Dr. Watts** again! I grabbed the knob and pulled myself in, kicking the door shut as I layed on the floor. Then, nothing happened. All was quiet as if it just vanished before I reached the house.

**Somewhere** out there is a mysterious creature roaming the night waiting for me to be late for dinner. One thing is for sure, in the **meantime**, I will come in before dark!