

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!