Apostrophes in Contractions

1. Focus

Explain Apostrophes in Contractions

Say: A contraction is a shortened form of a word or pair of words. The apostrophe in a contraction shows where letters have been left out. In the sentence “I’d like an apple,” the word I’d is a contraction. It stands for I would. In I’d, the apostrophe replaces the letters woul in would. In everyday speech, we tend to run words together. Using contractions makes your writing sound more natural, like the way we speak. Today we will learn about contractions.

Model Using Apostrophes in Contractions

Display the modeling text (without revisions) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, and read it aloud to students.

Modeling Text

1. There is There’s a princess.
2. “The Princess and the Pea” is not isn’t your typical fairy tale.

After sentence 1. Say: In the first sentence, the words There is are underlined. I can use a contraction for a shortened version of these words. If I take out the letter i in is and add an apostrophe, I make There’s. Cross out There is and replace it with There’s in the first sentence.

After sentence 2. Say: Now look at the second sentence. I can make the words is not into a contraction. I take out the letter o in not and add an apostrophe to make the contraction isn’t. (Cross out is not and replace it with isn’t in the second sentence.) Contractions can make writing sound more casual, so it is okay to use them in informal writing. However, when you are writing something more formal, you should not use them.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Apostrophes in Contractions

Display the practice text (without revisions) on chart paper or use the interactive whiteboard resources.

Ask students to work with a partner to decide how to form the contraction of each pair of underlined words. (Students do not need to copy the sentences.)

1. In fact, you could even say it is it’s goofy.
2. He is He’s obviously having fun with the fairy tale genre.
3. This prince does not doesn’t have a successful shopping spree.
4. He did not didn’t know what to look for.

Practice Text

If your class includes English language learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences with Apostrophes in Contractions

Bring students together and discuss their responses. Ask the following questions:
• What contraction did you form?
• What letters did the apostrophe replace?
• Does the sentence sound different when you read it aloud with the contractions? In what way?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that contractions are a shortened version of a word or pair of words. The apostrophe in a contraction shows where one or more letters have been left out. Remember to use apostrophes in contractions. Using contractions in your persuasive book reviews will make your writing sound more casual and conversational, which is appealing to readers in this genre.

If you would like to give students additional practice using apostrophes in contractions, have them complete BLM 8.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud their answers to BLM 8. Use students’ answers to provide corrective feedback.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Use simple sentences to help beginning ELs understand the use of apostrophes in contractions. Write the following sentences on chart paper and read them aloud, using gestures to help students understand the sentences’ meanings:

I am a teacher.
You are a student.
He is a boy.
She is a girl.

Then show how you combine the word pairs and add apostrophes to make contractions in each sentence. Write the contraction above each word pair on the chart paper. Have students read both versions of the sentences with you.

Intermediate and Advanced

Have ELs use the sample sentences from the Beginning EL activity to practice using apostrophes in contractions.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: apostrophe/el apóstrofo; contraction/la contracción.