

Ventura College
Directed Learning Activity (Writing)
Designed by: Sumita Lall

Student Name: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____
Length of Session: _____
Tutor/Instructor: _____

Apostrophes: Review and Practice

SLO: Students will be able to **review** and **practice** using apostrophes for possessive forms and contracted verbs.

Objective: Many students have difficulty understanding when and how to use an apostrophe, often confusing possessive forms and contracted verbs with plural nouns.

Activity: (20-25 min)

The following steps of the exercise require interaction with a tutor or instructor.

- 1.) Working with your tutor/instructor, read the following paragraph together and circle any word that looks strange or causes you to pause as you're reading.

My Typical Evening at Home

Im not cooking dinner tonight because my daughters teacher assigned her too much homework. Weve been sitting here for hours, and were only through half of it! Its amazing how much work teachers assign their students these day's, a trend that is so different from when I was in grade three. When I was eight, girl's and boy's used to play outside right after school, sometimes even ignoring their parents' announcements down the block that dinner was ready. I remember my own mothers desperately repeated cry, "Dinner's ready!" whenever I decided to ignore her because I was halfway up a tree or playing hopscotch with my friend's. Dinner felt like punishment because I was having too much fun. Now, eight-year old's have nothing recreational to look forward to after school. Homework, like dinner, just becomes another punishment in a long line of task's before bed. I guess well be having fast food again tonight.

- 2.) With your tutor/instructor, review the examples of plural versus possessive nouns (persons, places, or things) in the box below. Using **three different colors** (a pen, pencil, and highlighter would be fine),

circle all the **plural** nouns in one color, **possessive** nouns in another, and **plural + possessive** nouns in another:

- a.) The bananas were expensive.
- b.) I don't like the banana's texture.
- c.) The bananas are priced too high.
- d.) The bananas' prices were high in all three supermarkets.
- e.) The banana's peel was slippery.
- f.) I slipped on the bananas' peels.

Discuss any examples that are giving you trouble. If the examples are still not making sense, work with a tutor to review "Plurals and Possessives" at <http://www.meredith.edu/grammar/plural.htm>.

- 3.) With your tutor/instructor, review the examples of contracted verbs (words that are joined by taking away letters) in the box below. For each example, **write the full words** that have been contracted in the spaces provided.

- a.) Don't worry because I'm not tired. _____ and _____
- b.) You're working with me and we're both awake. _____ and _____
- c.) She'd join us but she's leaving soon. _____ and _____
- d.) Who's going to report my work to my teacher? _____
- e.) Let's tell my teacher that I made progress on apostrophes and it's time to move on ! _____ and _____

Discuss any examples that are giving you trouble. If the examples are still not making sense, work with a tutor review "Apostrophes with Verb Contractions" at <http://englishplus.com/grammar/00000136.htm>

- 4.) With your tutor/instructor, re-read each sentence in the paragraph "My Typical Evening at Home" and circle any more words that look incorrect for apostrophe use in each sentence. Using **three different colors** (a pen, pencil, and highlighter would be fine), circle all the **plural** nouns in one color, **possessive** nouns in another, and **plural + possessive** nouns in another. It may help to read each sentence out loud and color-code the first two errors together.

Assignment: (10-20 min)

The following steps of the exercise require students to work independently, and they may complete as many of the exercises as they wish:

- 1.) Read the lessons on “Possessive Forms” at <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/possessives.htm>
- 2.) Take the quiz on “Contracted Verbs” at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/apps/ift/skillswise/gigaquiz?path=words/grammar/punctuation/apostrophes/&infile=simplequiz1>
- 3.) Read the lessons on both “Possessives Versus Plurals” and “Contracted Verbs” at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/621/01/> and <http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/possessive.html>
- 4.) For a final review, look through the **PowerPoint** slide presentation called “**When to Use Apostrophes**” installed on one of the Reading and Writing Center computers. A tutor can help you access this presentation, so don’t be afraid to ask for help.

Review: (10 min)

The following steps of the exercise require interaction with a tutor or instructor.

- 1.) Explain what you learned about apostrophes to the tutor/instructor working with you.
- 2.) How might you apply what you have learned to writing essays?

Tutor/Instructor Feedback and Reflection:

- _____ Student seemed engaged during “Activity.”
- _____ Student seemed engaged during “Assignment.”
- _____ Student completed the DLA.
- _____ Student needs more practice with apostrophes.
- _____ Student worked well independently.

Space for notes by tutor/instructor:

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