

Worksheet 1

The Dancing Men

Deciphering Hyphens

Hyphens are short horizontal lines used to link words and parts of words together. They are mainly used in compound words or for joining prefixes to other words.

Compound Words

Hyphens are used to show a connection between the words used to make up a compound word e.g. *sugar-free*, *road-train*, *on-line*, *two-year-old* and *make-up*.

Here are some different types of compound words that use hyphens:

Compound adjectives use a hyphen when they are positioned before a noun:

e.g. My brother likes wearing well-known brands of runners.

Compound verbs use a hyphen when two nouns are combined to form a verb:

e.g. Mia loves to ice-skate during the winter.

Compound nouns - use a hyphen to separate two nouns:

e.g. Sometimes using a chat-room can put you in danger.

Joining prefixes to other words

Hyphens are also used to join a prefix to another word e.g. *pre-historic*, *re-use*.

Did you know?

Hyphens are also used to break up a word that is too long to fit at the end of a line. Usually the word is broken into two parts at a logical place and the second part of the word is continued on the next line e.g. An increase in modern **tech-nology** has affected society in many ways.

Task: Rewrite these sentences from *The Dancing Men* by placing hyphens in their correct places: (HINT: One of the sentences needs two hyphens.)

1. A heavy step was heard...an instant later there entered a tall, red faced gentleman.
2. I found on one of the window sills a number of absurd little dancing figures.
3. I suggest that you return to Norfolk, keep a look out, and make an exact copy of any fresh messages which may appear.
4. They had been drawn in chalk upon the black wooden door of the tool house.
5. Three days later a message was placed under a pebble upon my sun dial.
6. My inclination is to put half a dozen of my farm lads in the shrubbery.
7. We had hardly alighted from the train when the station master hurried towards us.
8. The study was a small chamber with a writing table facing an ordinary window.
9. There was no powder marking either upon his dressing gown or on his hands.
10. It was a lady's hand bag which stood upon the study table.
11. A flower bed extended up to the study window.
12. The stable boy remembered that a farmer of that name lived some miles off.
13. If any visitor were to call he was to be shown at once to the drawing room.
14. A letter from America had been the starting point of all the trouble.

Extension Activity:

- Explain how a 'hyphen' is different to another horizontal line used in punctuation – a dash. Locate some examples of how dashes are used in the story of 'The Dancing Men'.