

Memorizing Ring-Writer Word-Shapes

This paper explains how an expert user of Ring-Writer can increase his/her writing speed by a relatively modest effort in memorising the word-shapes corresponding to very frequently used words.

First, the eight single-stroke word-shapes include seven of the twenty most common English words. The stroke (or tap) in sector [tuv] is redefined as an abbreviation in order to give “the”, which is by far the most common word in the English language. The eight single-stroke words are as follows:

- [abc] = “a”
- [def] = “do”
- [ghi] = “I”
- [jkl] = “Ia”
- [mno] = “of”
- [pqrs] = “so”
- [tuv] = “the” (abbreviation)
- [wxyz] = “we”

30 more words from the top 150 are given by strokes joining just two sectors, or returning to the same sector (seven as alternates). The following table shows these words, with their approximate place in the frequency list. The words in bold are those already included in the single-sector list.

	[abc]	[def]	[ghi]	[jkl]	[mno]	[pqrs]	[tuv]	[wxyz]
[abc]	can (56)	be (3)		all (47)	an / am (39)	as (21)	at (23)	by (22)
[def]	day (143)				do			
[ghi]		he / if (7)		I'll (-)	in / go (11)	is (15)	it (14)	
[jkl]								
[mno]		of / me	oh (139)	OK (-)	on / no (18)	or / Mr (36)	out (129)	my (133)
[pqrs]	PC (-)				so		put (150)	
[tuv]					to (10)	up / us (64)		
[wxyz]	was (16)	we	who (61)		you (8)			

Note that the top twenty words represent about 30% of written text, and that around half of the words in normal text are in the top one hundred most common. These figures are even higher for email messages, which tend more to resemble conversational speech.

The sheets that follow show the word-shapes of roughly the 100 most common words (in some cases the word is an alternate). It is worth memorising as many of these shapes as possible, in order to be able to write the word in a single rapid movement.

The effort of memorisation is made easier by the fact that the starting points of the shapes are almost automatic, since all users will in a relatively short time know by heart the positions of the 26 letters of the alphabet. In addition, many 2-letter combinations committed to memory (double letters, “ed”, “re”, “on”, etc), will help by simplifying the shape to be remembered..

Most of the words are fairly short, only three to five letters, and the corresponding shapes are usually quite simple, rarely requiring lifting the pen, except perhaps on occasion for greater ease of execution. The judicious utilisation of loops and curves gives shapes that are easier to write and easier to remember, as well as being more aesthetically pleasing.

In some cases, a whole set of words having the memorised word as a common root, become available as alternates: “with” gives “within”, “without”, “withheld” and so on, while “think” gives “thinks”, “thinker”, and “thinking”.

A certain number of compound words can be built from memorised words. Thus, “another” is “an” and “other”, “however” is “how” and “ever”, “almost” is “al” (also the shape for “all”) and “most”, “something” is “some” and “thing”, and so on. In this way, the number of memorised words is considerably extended without any further effort.

Finally, it is also worthwhile to learn a few letter groupings, or common syllables, like “com”, “int”, “ight” (for might, night, right and many others, and “ould” (for could, would, should).

Contrast the task of memorising Ring-Writer shapes, with the effort required of Chinese and Japanese children, who learn to write some 150 Kanji characters in their first two years at school. These characters, containing on average six strokes, are considerably more complex than the Ring-Writer word-shapes, and of course have no underlying rationale in their construction.



and



that



for



her / he's



being



with



have



this



not



but



had



his



they



from



she



which



there / these



doing



were



would



been



its / it's



their



has



would



will



what



can't



when



said

