

Name _____

Contractions and Negatives

A **contraction** is a shortened form of two words. An **apostrophe** is used to show where one or more letters have been left out. Some contractions are made by combining pronouns and verbs: *I + have = I've; you + are = you're*. Other contractions are formed by joining a verb and *not*: *should + not = shouldn't; were + not = weren't*.

- *Won't* and *can't* are formed in special ways (*can + not = can't; will + not = won't*).

Negatives are words that mean “no” or “not”: *no, not, never, none, nothing*. Contractions with *n't* are negatives too. To make a negative statement, use only one negative word.

No: Don't never ask about his leg. There won't be none left.

Yes: Don't ever ask about his leg. There won't be any left.

- Use positive words instead of the negative in a sentence with *not*:

Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive
nobody	anybody, somebody	nothing	anything, something
no one	anyone, someone	nowhere	anywhere, somewhere
none	any, all, some	never	ever, always

Directions Write the letter of the two words used to form each contraction.

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| _____ 1. what's | A has not |
| _____ 2. that'll | B that will |
| _____ 3. didn't | C they are |
| _____ 4. hasn't | D could not |
| _____ 5. they're | E did not |
| _____ 6. couldn't | F what has |

Directions Write the contraction for each pair of words.

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 7. would + have = _____ | 8. it + is = _____ |
| 9. she + will = _____ | 10. will + not = _____ |

Directions Circle the word in () that correctly completes each sentence.

- You can't (never, ever) tell what those boys will do.
- There wasn't (nobody, anything) in the hole.



Directions

Brady Barr is a scientist who studies crocodiles. He has captured all 23 species of crocodiles in order to gather scientific information. Often, he attaches devices on them so they can be tracked and protected. Read this article about Brady's latest method of catching "croc." Then answer questions 1 through 4.

Will My Toy Car Survive a Croc Attack?

by Brady Barr
as told to Maggie Zackowitz

My name is Brady Barr, and part of my job as a scientist is catching crocodiles. Crocs are big, fast, good at hiding, and always alert. They're not easy to catch, but I need to get hold of them to attach tracking tags and to gather scientific data such as measurements.

Recently, as I talked with a creative group of kids, they gave me a few great ideas to help me catch crocs. All their ideas involved using toys!

So on my very next trip, I head off to Africa with my scientific equipment and a box of toys—a remote-control car and boat and some rubber crocodile masks. I rig the car and boat with poles that dangle rope snares to loop around a crocodile's neck. My plan is to maneuver the rope over the animal's head to capture it.

I'm helping wildlife biologists put radio-tracking tags on a threatened population of Nile crocodiles. From our boat we spot a cluster of crocs dozing on the sand by the river. I set a toy car on the beach and steer it around tufts of grass toward the basking crocs. I speed the car right up to one, but *chomp!* Uh-oh. The croc's teeth just miss the car, and it's not giving up! It chases the car while I work the joystick as if my life depends on it.



It's a good thing my life *doesn't* depend on it because I'm not a very good driver. And even at top speed, my little car is no match for a Nile crocodile, which can run almost 30 miles an hour. I zig when I should zag.

The croc's jaws close over my toy—and, temporarily, over my plans.

The size and quick movements of the toy car must trigger a crocodile's predatory instinct. Conclusion: Use a faster car and improve my driving skills!

It's time to test the kids' second idea: to disguise myself as a croc. I get into the water wearing a big rubber croc mask. My goal: Get close enough to wrestle a croc into our boat for tagging. The plan seems to be working as a group of small crocs approaches me. Suddenly a giant 16-foot male appears and starts toward me. I raise the snout of my mask, which in

“croc talk” lets him know I’m not looking for trouble. But he’s angry and his answer is aggressive. He arches his back and slaps the water with his chin. He thinks I’m a rival! At first, I stand my ground, but as he comes closer, it gets too dangerous. I get out of the water . . . fast! Conclusion: The disguise works, but getting into the water myself is just too risky.

Using what I’ve learned with the car and disguise, I move on to idea number three. I steer

the toy boat, fitted with a small rubber croc head and a snare, toward the real crocs. Success! They act as if the boat’s one of them and ignore it. Unfortunately, just as the boat’s in position to snare one, the batteries die! Conclusion: The boat works, but next time I’ve got to remember to change the batteries!

A field test involves a lot of trial and error. What I learned this time will mean success the next time.

- 1** Why does Brady want to catch Nile crocodiles?
- A** He wants to put them in zoos and wildlife parks.
 - B** He is working to protect a threatened group of animals.
 - C** He enjoys the thrill of being chased by dangerous animals.
 - D** He is trying to make the area safer for other animals that live there.

- 2** Which statement is true about the ideas suggested by the kids?
- A** Each toy was disguised to look like a crocodile.
 - B** Each idea provided safety from a crocodile attack.
 - C** Each idea involved a trick to get close to the crocodiles.
 - D** Each toy was designed in colorful patterns to attract crocodiles.

- 3** Read this sentence about the crocodile from the article.

But he’s angry and his answer is aggressive.

In this sentence, the word “aggressive” means the crocodile is

- A** trying to rest
- B** trying to hide
- C** ready to fight
- D** ready to leave

- 4** Which idea will probably be **most** useful in helping Brady catch crocodiles?

- A** wearing a toy crocodile mask
- B** steering a toy boat next to a crocodile
- C** attaching crocodile snares to a toy car
- D** driving a toy car in front of a crocodile

Go On

Directions

This story about a family from Mexico contains some Spanish words, such as *hola*, which means “hello.” Read the story. Then answer questions 5 through 10.

A Tree Needs a Special Place

by Lyda Williamson

Oscar leaped up onto the porch and bounded into the house. He unzipped his backpack, pulled out a plastic bag, and ran to find Mamá.

“Mamá, look!” shouted Oscar. He opened the bag to reveal a baby tree, roots and all. “We got them at school for Arbor Day.”

“How exciting!” said Mamá.

Oscar looked at the tree. “But I don’t know where to plant it.”

Mamá smiled. “It needs a special place. When we moved here from Mexico, I was a little girl. I didn’t have any friends. Our new house had a big backyard with an oak tree. My father hung a swing from it, and I’d swing for hours. One day, a little girl came over and asked if she could swing with me. It was Claudia.”

Oscar nodded. Claudia was Mamá’s best friend. “Maybe someday this tree will grow big enough for a swing,” he said. “I’ll go show *Abuelito* and *Abuelita*!”

Oscar sprinted downstairs to his grandparents’ apartment.

Abuelito, Oscar’s grandfather, opened the door. “*Hola, Oscar!*”



“Look, Abuelito! I got a tree at school for Arbor Day,” Oscar said. “But I don’t know where to plant it. We don’t have a big backyard like Mamá did.”

Abuelito smoothed back his graying hair. “No, but we’ll find a place for it,” he said. He squatted down to look at the tree. “Back in Mexico, the sun is so strong at midday that everyone must take a break. A huge paloverde tree grew at the edge of our cornfield. I loved to rest in its shade.”

Abuelita laughed. “I can still picture you there!” She put her hand on Oscar’s shoulder. “Let me tell you about *my* favorite trees,” she said. “My mamá loved to make *agua de limón*. It’s like lemonade, but it’s made with limes. Lime trees grew everywhere in my town! Mamá would send me out to pick the limes, then she’d let me stir the water, juice, and sugar. We’d use colorful straws to sip our cool green drinks.”

“Mmmm, sounds good,” said Oscar.

“I’ll make it for you sometime,” said Abuelita. “Now go find a spot to plant *your* tree.”

“I will!” said Oscar. He raced up the steps and out the front door. Just as he stepped onto the porch, Papá pulled up in his car.

“What do you have there?” asked Papá.

Oscar showed him the tree.

Papá smiled. “When I was a boy in Michigan, my father would always make *guacamole* with avocados from the store.”

Oscar nodded. He liked the tasty green dip.

“He’d mix it up and talk about Mexico. One time he saved the avocado seed. We put it in water. Every day, I watched it. Soon a tiny green sprout appeared. It became a baby tree. We nursed it along, then planted it in the ground.”

“Did avocados grow on it, Papá?” asked Oscar.

“No, it couldn’t survive the cold winter,” Papá said. “But I’ll always remember that special time with my father.”

Oscar’s sister walked up the sidewalk toward them.

“Magdalena, look!” Oscar held up the tree. “But I need a place to plant it.”

“Let’s see,” said Magdalena. “At our old house, when you were a baby, a huge poplar tree grew near our sidewalk. It was taller than every other tree around. Wherever I was in town, I could always see our tree high above everything else.”

Oscar glanced at the wide strip of grass between their sidewalk and the street. It was the perfect place! “Thanks, Magdalena—I’m going to plant my tree right here.”

* * *

Papá dug a hole. Oscar held the tree in place as Magdalena, Abuelita, and Abuelito gently pushed dirt around it. When they were finished, Mamá sprinkled water on top.

Everyone stood back to admire the new tree. Oscar couldn’t wait to watch it grow.

- 5** What is Oscar's problem at the beginning of the story?
- A** He needs to find a place to plant his tree.
 - B** He does not know how to take care of his tree.
 - C** He does not know how large his tree will grow.
 - D** He needs to find someone to help him plant his tree.

- 6** Which word **best** describes Oscar when he arrives home from school?
- A** surprised
 - B** satisfied
 - C** curious
 - D** excited

- 7** Which statement is true about the people Oscar talks to in the story?
- A** Each asks Oscar questions about his tree.
 - B** Each tells Oscar a story about a special tree.
 - C** Each helps Oscar solve his problem with the tree.
 - D** Each encourages Oscar to learn more about trees.

- 8** Think about Oscar’s grandfather telling him about the huge tree that he used to rest under in Mexico. Now read this sentence from the story.

“I can still picture you there!”

In this sentence, the word “picture” means

- A** visit
 - B** draw
 - C** imagine
 - D** photograph
- 9** Based on the story, which statement is **most likely** true about the members of Oscar’s family?
- A** They often buy and plant trees.
 - B** They care for and help each other.
 - C** They wish they were living in Mexico.
 - D** They think fruit trees are the best trees.
- 10** “A Tree Needs a Special Place” is realistic fiction because it
- A** states a problem and how it is solved
 - B** teaches a lesson about how to live wisely
 - C** describes events that could actually happen
 - D** includes directions about how to make a fruit drink

Go On