APOSTROPHES

Showing Possession and Creating Contractions
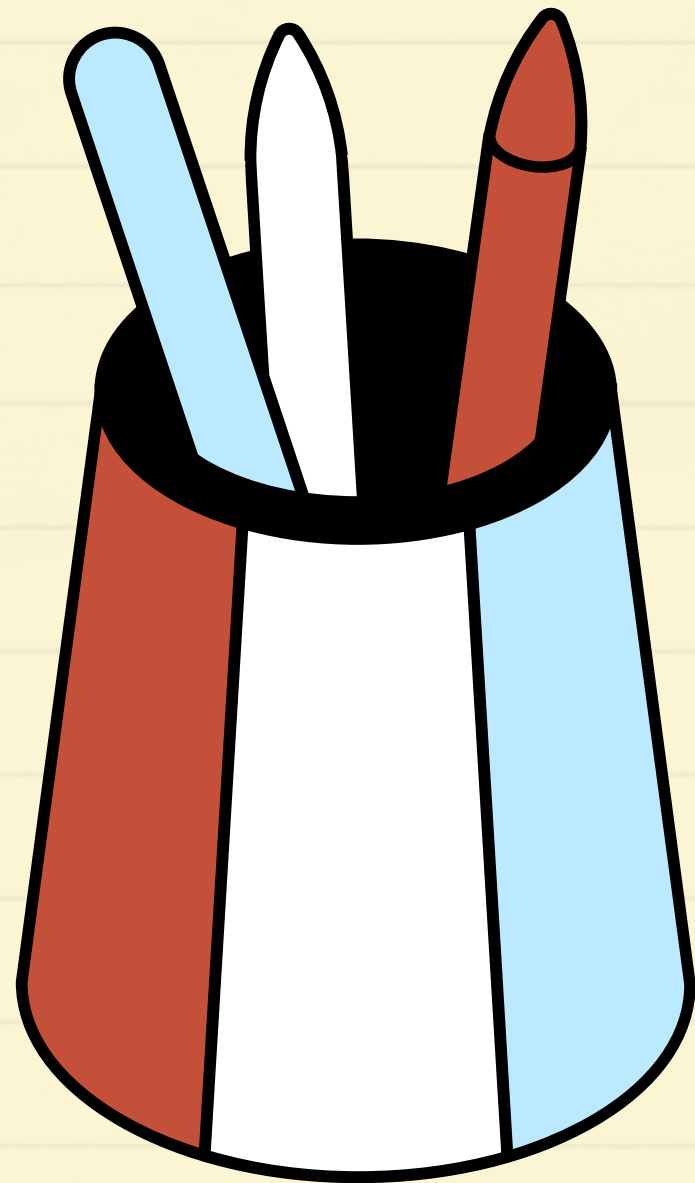
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Identify apostrophes and understand the purpose of using them to increase writing clarity

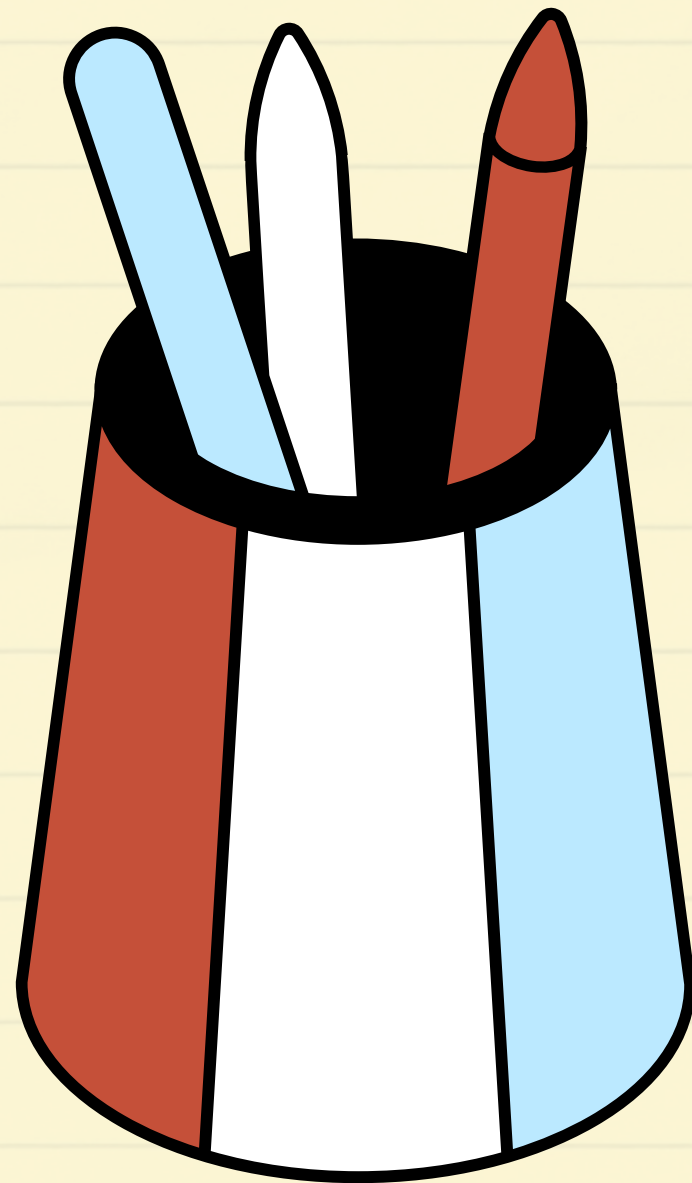Understand how to use apostrophes to show possession for both singular and plural nouns

Recognize how and when to use apostrophes to create contractions

WHAT IS AN APOSTROPHE AND HOW IS IT USED?

An apostrophe (') is a punctuation mark used to show possession and to indicate missing letters in contractions.

POSSESSION

A possession shows that something belongs to someone or something.

POSSESSION FOR SINGULAR NOUNS

To indicate possession for a singular noun, add an apostrophe ('s) at the end of the word.

Example:

Sarah**'s** bag (The bag belongs to Sarah)
The teacher**'s** desk (The desk belongs to the teacher)

POSSESSION FOR SINGULAR NOUNS

More examples:

- The boy's toy (The toy belongs to the boy)
- cat's tail (the tail belongs to the cat)
- My mother's phone (the phone belongs to the mother)

POSSESSION FOR PLURAL NOUNS

***Most plural nouns end in "s."

To indicate possession, add only an apostrophe (') to the end of the word

Example:

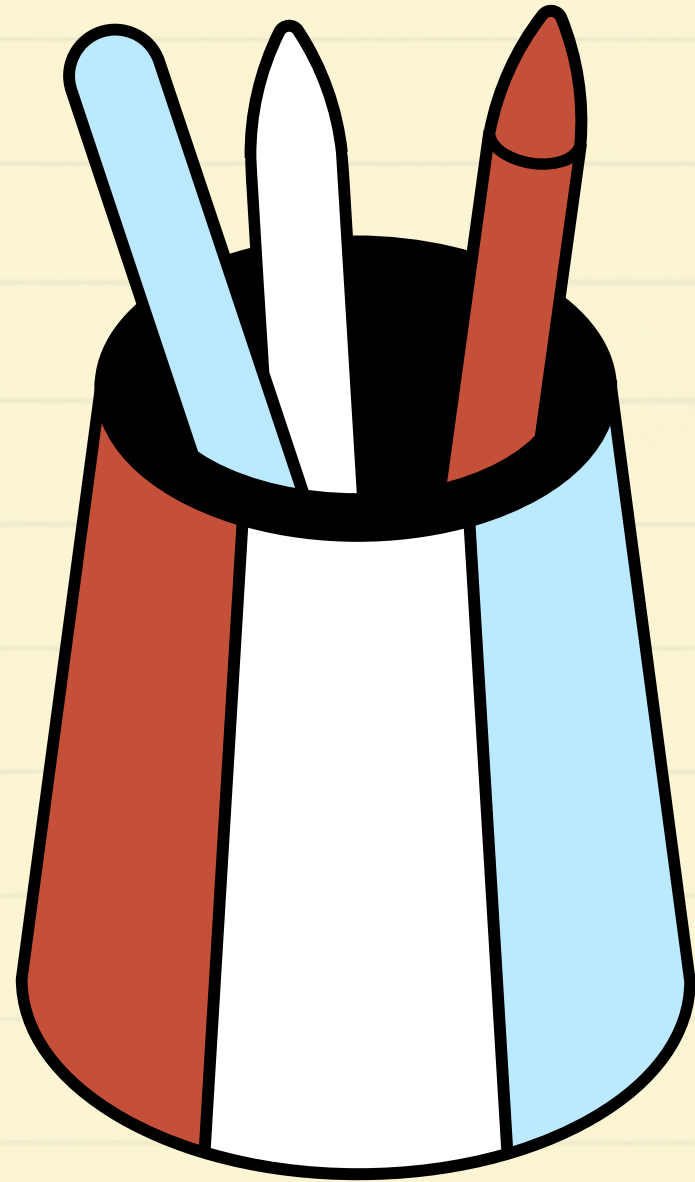The students' books are here (The books belong to the student)
The players' uniforms (uniforms belong to the players)

POSSESSION FOR PLURAL NOUNS

More examples:

- The farmers' fields (fields belong to the farmers)
- artists' paintings (paintings belong to the artists)
- singers' songs (songs belong to the singers)

CONTRACTIONS

A contraction is a short form of two words.
We use an apostrophe (') to replace the missing letters.

CONTRACTIONS

With **is**

Replace the **i** with **'s**.

Examples:

She is → She's

That is → That's

With **are**

Replace the **a** with **'re**.

Examples:

You are → You're

We are → We're

With **will**

Replace **wi** with **'ll**.

Examples:

I will → I'll

You will → You'll

CONTRACTIONS

With **have**

Replace **ha** with **'ve**.

Examples:

They have → They've

We have → We've

With **not**

Remove the **o** from not and add **n't**. (Except "will not")

Examples:

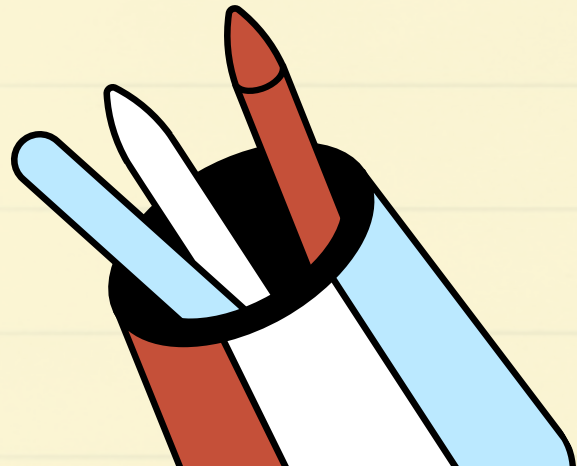Does not → Doesn't
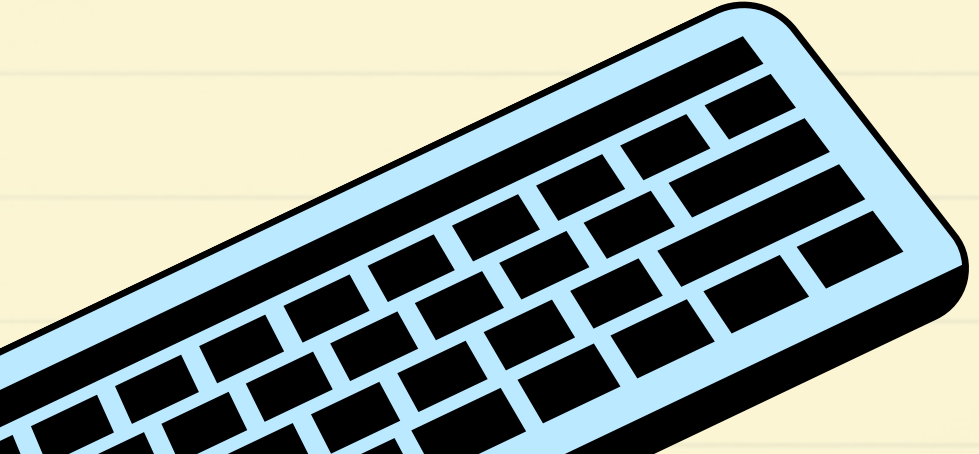
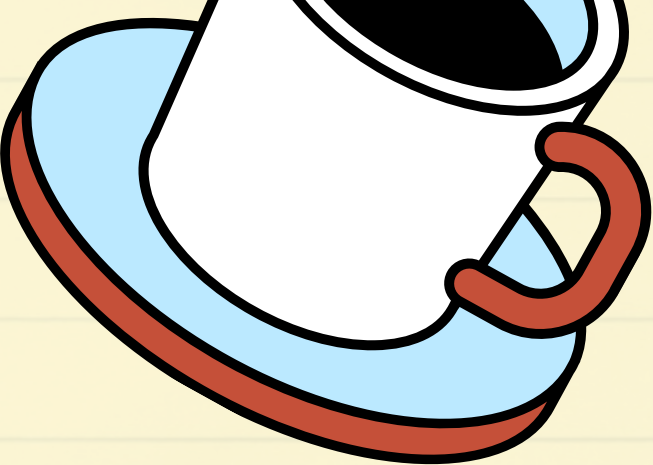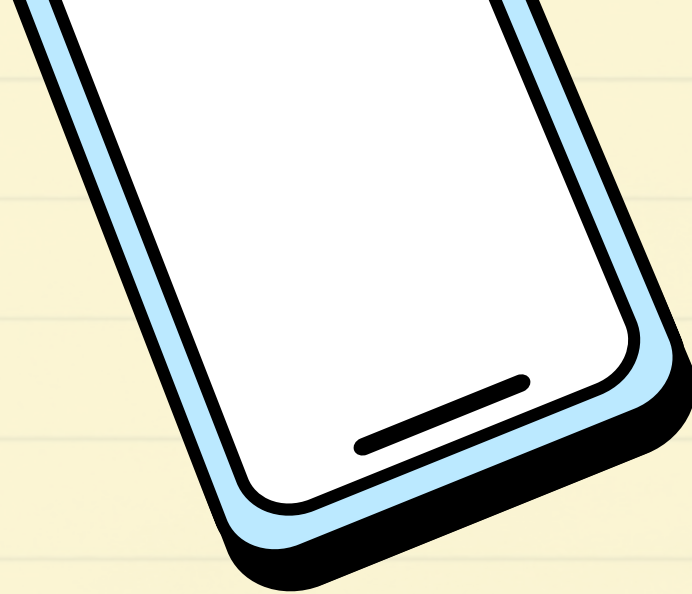Cannot → Can't

Will not → Won't
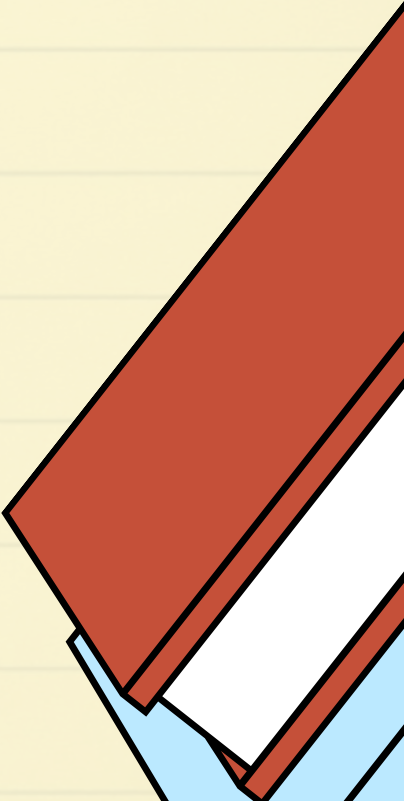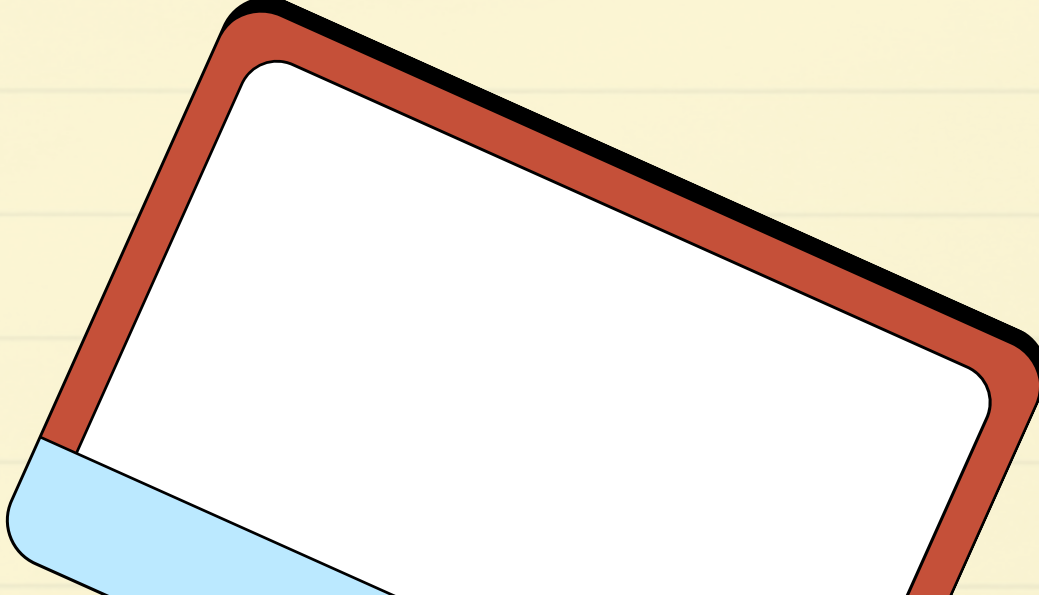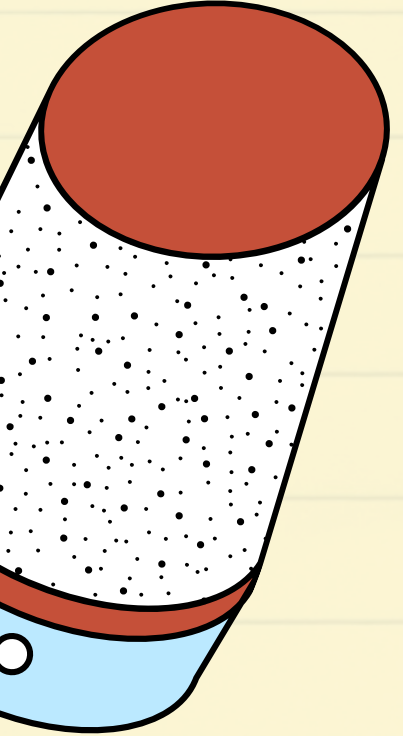
With **would**

Replace **woul** with **'d**

Examples:

He would → He'd

They would → They'd

Applying apostrophes in the appropriate ways and contexts will help the overall clarity of your writing.