A Complete Guide to Reading and Writing

the Deseret Alphabet

By

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PREFACE

When I was sixteen years old, my family traveled to Portland, Oregon to visit my Great Uncle Ted. While in Portland, I purchased Akira Nakanishi's book *Writing Systems of the World: Alphabets, Syllabaries, Pictograms*.[1] The book became a constant companion for me throughout the rest of the trip. Upon return to our home in California, I read the book more closely. On page 110, toward the end of the book, I found the following entry:

MORMON SCRIPT. The writing of Mormonism in North America. From the 19th century. (Author's collection)

I was shocked. I had been born and raised LDS, how could there be a "Mormon script" without my having heard of it? I brought the book with me to church the following Sunday and asked my teachers if they knew anything about the enigmatic symbols. Not one of them had heard of a "Mormon Script" before. I decided to set the mystery aside and moved the questions to the back of my mind. In the meantime, I studied several of the world's writing systems including Arabic, Hebrew, Khmer and Georgian.

Shortly after beginning college, I obtained a copy of *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Writing Systems* by Florian Coulmas.[2] On page 347 I found the following

(mis)information above a chart which ostensibly gave the sound values of these mysterious symbols:

> **Mormon alphabet** A script created in the 1830s for English by Joseph Smith (1805-44), founder of the Mormon sect, who claimed that it was revealed to him in 1823 on golden plates by an angel. The characters are arbitrarily designed, although some of them resemble alphabetic letters (table 22). The script represents an attempt at designing a writing system for English which approximates a one-to-one mapping relation between sounds and symbols independent of traditional orthography.

The symbols in the chart were hand-drawn and the phonetic symbols used next to them as a key did not correspond to any accepted system[3]. No source was cited for the table. In other words, the entry was useless. When I tried to use the chart to decode the sample in Nakanishi's book, I found almost no correspondence between the two. It would be years before I learned that the script's true name was the Deseret Alphabet and that Brigham Young had commissioned it the decade after Joseph Smith's death (and it therefore had absolutely nothing to do with visions or gold plates).

About three years after returning from a mission to England, I began studying linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley. While there, I took advantage of the Bancroft library and its superb collection of early Mormon books. I will never forget the first time I held the 1869 Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon. The book was made of fine materials and truly beautiful. As I leaved through page after page of strange

characters, it struck me how much effort must have been put forth in transcribing the entire Book of Mormon text into this new script and how expensive the whole endeavor must have been for a struggling religious community. I left the experience determined to learn to read and understand the Deseret Alphabet. This book is the product of that experience.

The Purpose of this Book

This book provides all the information a student will need in order to read the classic 1869 version of the Deseret Alphabet properly and to write with it today. It also intends to dispel misinformation about the Deseret Alphabet's origin and purpose. The first chapter gives a brief overview of the origins and purpose of this peculiar Mormon script. Chapter 2 explains the reasons behind the standardized 1869 Deseret spellings and spares no details in introducing the English sound system. Chapter 3 is a complete internal workbook which reintroduces the letters and structure of the 1869 Deseret Alphabet spellings in a hands-on manner. Chapter 4 briefly introduces archaic alternate characters for advanced study. Chapter 5 gives guidelines for using the Deseret script today and proposes resurrecting the alphabet.

The more time I spend studying the Deseret Alphabet, the more I am struck by its hidden beauty and great potential. The ultimate purpose of this book is to share that feeling with the world.

What this Book is Not

This book does not pretend to give a detailed history of the origin and demise of the nineteenth-century Deseret Alphabet. Kenneth R. Beesley has already written about that in *The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode*.[4] The history of the Deseret Alphabet deserves to be written and I look forward to seeing a full account of this remarkable script published in book form. However, I will not be the one to write such a book, as my skills are in linguistics and are not those of a historian.

Using this Book

The student needs to narrow down his goals prior to using this book. If the desire is to read the Deseret Alphabet for research purposes, then the first three chapters are all that is needed. Furthermore, the student who is not familiar with linguistics can skim over chapter 2 and go straight to chapter 3 for the quickest route to Deseret reading competency. If that course is chosen, chapter 2 should be used as a reference to chapter 3 in the event that certain spellings do not make sense. If the student desires to read and compose modern Deseret Alphabet documents, and to do it properly, he should focus on chapters 5 while referring back to chapter 2 for clarifications on English sounds.

I sincerely hope this work will inspire a new generation and help them to respect and cherish this amazing script given us by our forefathers.

CHAPTER 1

An Alphabet is Born

1.1 Background

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints was founded in New York state on April 6, 1830 by the Prophet Joseph Smith. As a youth, Joseph had seen a vision of God the Father and Jesus Christ wherein he was told not to join any other church. Later, as a young man, he was visited by an angel named Moroni who told him of an ancient record on plates of gold hidden in the hill Cumorah. The record, he was told, contained an account of extinguished peoples who once inhabited the New World and their dealings with God. Years after this experience, Joseph Smith was allowed to go to the hill Cumorah and obtain the plates of gold. The Prophet labored for weeks and translated the record by the gift and power of God. The translation, published in Palmyra, New York in 1830, was entitled *The Book of Mormon*.

The remarkable story of Joseph Smith and his strange new book of scripture attracted a great deal of interest and many converts. They also attracted enemies. By the 1840s, Joseph Smith and the members of the church he had founded had been driven across the American states of New York, Ohio, and Missouri to the swampy shores of the Mississippi in Illinois.

Along the great river, the Mormons, as the members of the Church had come to be known because of their belief in the Book of Mormon, erected a city of brick and stone they named Nauvoo (based on a Hebrew word meaning beautiful). Nauvoo had a population of thousands and became one of the most important cities in Illinois. The Mormons built a beautiful temple of carved stone atop a hill and had farms and

businesses. The Prophet's beautiful city was not to last. Angry and jealous neighbors organized themselves into mobs and began to attack the Mormons. Eventually, Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum, were brutally killed in Carthage jail while awaiting trial on false charges. With the prophet's death, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints was expected to dissolve.[1]

Rather than dissolve, the church continued to grow. Before his martyrdom, the Prophet had organized a quorum of twelve apostles. Brigham Young was the president of this quorum and took control of the church. President Young realized that its persecutors would not allow the church to continue in Illinois or anywhere frequented by others. He led the main body of the church on a long and difficult journey of over 1,000 miles across the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains to the Great Basin in what is now Salt Lake City, Utah. Once established, Brigham Young sent groups of Mormon settlers throughout the west to strengthen the church's presence in the region. Eventually, President Young would personally order the establishment of more than 350 settlements from San Bernardino, California to Idaho.[2]

The LDS settlements were organized according to a pattern first set out by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Each town was to have streets laid out in a grid with a space set aside for a temple in the center. The Mormons supported themselves in the arid lands through the use of irrigation and hard work.[3]

At first, this collection of desert lands and small Mormon settlements was named the Territory of Deseret. President Young ruled Deseret as something of a theocracy for a time before congress rejected it as a territory and created the smaller territory of Utah (with Young as governor).[4]

1.2 Birth of the Deseret Alphabet

It was amid this unique social experiment that Brigham Young and his closest associates decided to create and promulgate a new alphabet for English. George D. Watt, the first English convert to the LDS church, had been a student of Pitman shorthand in his native England. He thus had a good understanding of the individual sounds (the phonemes) of spoken English. President Young chose him together with other leading churchmen to design a completely new alphabet for English which would have a letter for every single sound of the language. The alphabet went through many versions and revisions between 1854 and its eventual abandonment in the 1870s.[5] The total number of letters changed as did their shape. At first, the so-called short vowels were to be smaller than the other letters. Early examples of the Deseret Alphabet show it to be very fluid and appropriate for cursive script. Eventually, the Regents of the University of Deseret (now the University of Utah), who were responsible for promulgating the script, created a standard version with 38 letters. This version was used in four books: two reading primers (*The Deseret First Book* and *The Deseret Second Book*), a selection from the Book of Mormon (*The Book of Nephi*) and *The Book of Mormon* in its entirety. In addition to the four printed books, less polished versions of the alphabet were used on some gravestones, store signs, a gold coin issued by Young for use in the territory, in over 70 newspaper articles in the *Deseret News* (mainly scripture quotations) and in numerous personal journals (including a journal from a mission to the Hopi Indians).[6]

Contrary to the assumptions of outside critics, who have claimed that this alphabet was intended to cloak LDS writings from Gentile view and further isolate the Mormons in their mountain retreats, the Deseret Alphabet was intended solely to ease the

burden imposed upon students learning to read and write English.[7] Thousands of new converts were pouring into Deseret for whom English was a new language. A new alphabet with better sound to symbol correspondence could only help these new members learn the English language.

Observers at the time recognized that the new alphabet was in the same tradition as those of Pitman in England. Far from being an attempt to hide things, every appearance of the alphabet in print came with an accompanying table of letter values for all to see. Unfortunately, the members of the LDS church never fully accepted the new alphabet. Reasons given for the alphabet's failure include the oppressive cost of reprinting extant literature into a new script for an impoverished people and the esthetically poor shapes of the letters. In particular, the final version of the Deseret Alphabet has been criticized for lacking ascenders and descenders (letters which rise above or fall below the line like **b** and **p**). By the time of Brigham Young's death in 1877, the Deseret Alphabet had been abandoned.[8]

All told, the LDS church spent thousands of dollars (at 19th century prices) and man-hours trying to create and implement a new alphabet. Nevertheless, a new alphabet was created. The script has survived despite its failure as a practical medium of written communication. Brigham Young's Deseret Alphabet exists in the 21st century mainly as a historic curiosity for descendants of early Mormon pioneers and language aficionados. Recently the script has been included in Unicode and some internet sites. Interest in the script continues today and might be greater now than when it was actually in use in the nineteenth century.[9]

CHAPTER 2

The Structure of the Deseret Alphabet

2.1 The Sounds of English

There have been occasional attempts to make use of the Deseret Alphabet in recent years. The efforts, though commendable, have suffered from a complete misunderstanding of the script's structure. Part of the problem stems from the poor fit between sound and symbol in current English spelling which many would-be Deseret Alphabet users transfer to the script. The largest source of difficulty; however, comes from ignorance of different types of English pronunciation. In order to understand how to read and write in the Deseret alphabet one must pay very close attention to the information given about pronunciation differences.

Beyond these considerations, the Deseret Alphabet did not differ drastically in its premise from traditional English orthography. Both systems attempt to represent individual phonemes (speech sounds) with individual letters. The Deseret Alphabet comes much closer to this ideal than traditional English orthography which has far fewer letters than there are English sounds.

For example, in English there is a single sound, /k/ (letters between slashes indicate phonemes), which is represented by the letters **c**, **k**¸ **q**, **ck**, **ch**, **kk** and **kh** in traditional English spelling, as in the words *cot*, *kid*, *quick*, *school*, *trekker* and *khaki*. This state of confusion holds true for most English sounds. A related problem is the existence of multiple sound correspondences for one letter. For example, the digraph (two-letter combination) **ch** can be sounded in at least four ways as in ***church***, ***chorus***, ***champagne*** and *yacht*. As a result of this convoluted fit between sound and symbol, an

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English schoolchild must learn that /k/ can be spelled in no less than seven ways, five of them quite common, and that the letters **ch** can represent at least for sounds (or lack of sound). In stark contrast to the confusing situation of traditional English spelling, the Deseret Alphabet uses only one letter for the /k/ sound and has no letter with multiple sounds attached to it.

It is necessary to learn something about the articulation of English sounds and how they differ from speaker to speaker over time in order to understand classic Deseret spellings like those used in the Deseret Alphabet edition of the Book of Mormon. English, like all languages, is communicated through the arrangement of various individual sounds into various combinations to form words. All languages, including English, have a finite number of distinct sounds.

Standard English has around forty distinct sounds depending on the accent. Some varieties of English have more distinct sounds than others. American English, as spoken in the Southeast and Northeast of the United States, has more distinct sounds than Canadian and Western American English. Because the creators and promulgators of the Deseret Alphabet were from the Northeast, they chose a standard pronunciation very different from what one now finds in Utah and other western states. This has made it difficult for Utahans and other Westerners interested in the Deseret Alphabet to use and understand the script correctly. To avoid further confusion, and to aid in teaching the relationship of English sounds to one another, the International Phonetic Alphabet will be used in describing the sounds of English as represented by the Deseret Alphabet throughout this book.

2.1.1 The International Phonetic Alphabet

The International Phonetic Alphabet (hereafter IPA) is a set of symbols used by the majority of linguists to represent every sound of the world's languages. Each symbol represents a single sound and each sound is represented by a single symbol (or digraph). It is customary to enclose phonemes (distinct sounds) in / /. (Phonetic transcriptions are enclosed in [ ], but this is beyond the scope of this book.)

Table 1 lists all of the sounds of English using the IPA and example words written in regular orthography. It is important to notice that how words are spoken and how they are written differ wildly in regular English. Do not be too worried about memorizing all of these new symbols. All that matters is that the concept of one symbol for one sound be mastered. The examples below can always be consulted, but they are of no use if their premise is misunderstood.

As can be seen from Table 1, the symbols of the IPA differ somewhat in their values from the letters of the regular English alphabet. Notice, for instance, that the IPA /i/ sounds like **ee** as in *see* not as in *sit*. Also, it is important to notice new symbols representing sounds for which English currently has no letters. For example, the IPA uses the symbol /θ/ for the sound spelled **th** in English in words like *thigh*, *thin*, *ethe*r, *author*, *teeth*, *sheath*. This is a single sound, not a combination of two different sounds. English **th** actually represents another sound as well. Say the words *thy*, *then*, *either*, *other*, *teethe*, *sheathe* aloud and then read the first set of words given as examples for /θ/. The

Table 1: English phonemes using the IPA

IPA SYMBOL	TRADITIONAL LETTERS USED	EXAMPLE WORD
/h/	H, h, wh	**H**elp, a**h**ead, **wh**o
/k/	K, k, C, c, ck, ch, kk, kh, Q, q, qu	**K**id, **ch**aos, **k**i**ck**, mos**qu**ito, **kh**aki
/g/	G, g	**G**o, bi**g**
/ŋ/	ng, n	si**ng**er, thi**ng**, fi**n**ger
/j/	Y, y	**Y**ou, law**y**er
/tʃ/	Ch, ch, tch, tu, tsch	**Ch**urch, wi**tch**, na**tu**re, Deu**tsch**
/dʒ/	J,j G, g, dge, du	**J**udge, **g**em, proce**du**re
/ʃ/	Sh, sh, Ch, ch, sch, ti, si	**Sh**ip, **ch**ic, **Sch**uller, na**ti**on, man**si**on
/ʒ/	J, j, G, g, si, zi, zh, ge	**J**acques, **g**enre, vi**si**on, Fra**zi**er, bei**ge**
/t/	T, t, tw	**T**oo, **t**o, **tw**o
/d/	D, d	**D**o, **d**og
/n/	N, n, kn, gn	**N**o, **n**ew, **kn**ew, **gn**u
/s/	S, s, ss, C, ce, z	**S**ource, **s**i**ss**y, **c**iti**z**en
/z/	Z, z, X, x, s	**Z**oo, **X**erox, ri**s**e
/ɹ/	R, r, l	**R**are, co**l**onel
/l/	L, l	**L**u**ll**
/θ/	Th, th, chth, gh	**Th**igh, brea**th**, **chth**onic, Kei**gh**ley
/ð/	Th, th, the	**Th**y, brea**the**
/p/	P, p	**P**o**p**
/b/	B, b	**B**o**b**
/m/	M, m	**M**u**m**
/f/	F, f, ff, Ph, ph, gh, Pf	**F**i**f**th, sti**ff**, **ph**one, enou**gh**, **Pf**eiffer
/v/	V, v, f	**V**ery, bra**v**e, o**f**
/hw/	Wh, wh	**Wh**at, a**wh**ile
/w/	W, w, o	**W**ant, a**w**ay, **o**ne
/i/	E, e, ee, ea, ei, ie, i, y	**E**, b**e**, s**ee**, l**ea**f, th**ie**f
/ɪ/	I, i	**I**t, h**i**t
/ei/	A, a, ai, ay, ey, eig,	**A**, **a**te, f**ai**th, h**ay**, th**ey**, r**eig**n
/ɛ/	E, e, ea, a, ai	**E**d, m**e**t, d**ea**th, m**a**ny, ag**ai**n
/æ/	A, a, al	**A**t, h**a**t, s**al**mon
/ai/	I, i, y, ye	**I**, **i**ce, th**y**, d**ye**
/ɑ/	O, o, a,	**O**dd, h**o**t, wh**a**t, f**a**r
/ɔ/	A, a, aw, au, augh, ough, o	**A**ll, w**a**nt, s**aw**, th**ough**t, c**augh**t, **o**r
/o/	O, o, oa, oe, ow	**O**, g**o**, **oa**t, r**oe**, m**ow**, m**o**re
/ʊ/	u, oo	p**u**t, s**oo**t
/u/	oo, o	t**oo**, t**o**
/ʌ/	U, u	**U**nder, f**u**n
/aʊ/	Ou, ou, ow	**Ou**t, f**ou**l, n**ow**
/ə/	A,a, e, i, o, u	**A**bout, sof**a**, **e**nough, rectif**i**, reuni**o**n
/ɔi/	Oi, oi, oy	**Oi**l, c**oi**n, t**oy**

second set of words, though spelled with **th** just like the first, actually contains a different sound represented in the IPA with the symbol /ð/. These two English phonemes, /θ/ and /ð/, are both pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue between the teeth. They differ only in one respect; the phoneme /θ/ is voiceless whereas /ð/ is voiced. Voiceless sounds articulated with the vocal folds drawn close together. When the vocal folds are apart, the resultant sound is hissed or whispered. When the folds are drawn together, it creates something of a buzzing sound. Say *breath* and *breathe* aloud. Notice how the **th** in *breath* sounds hushed compared to the **th** in *breathe*. The **th** in *breath* is voiceless and the **th** in *breathe* is voiced. In the IPA, these two words could be written as /brɛθ/ and /brið/. This same relationship, that of voiceless to voiced consonant, is also true of the pairs /f/ **f** and /v/ **v**, /p/ **p** and /b/ **b**, /s/ **s** and /z/ **z**, /t/ **t** and /d/ **d**, /tʃ/ **ch** and /dʒ/ **j**, /ʃ/ **sh** and /ʒ/ **zh** (as in *vision*), /k/ **k** and /g/ **g**. Each of these pairs is articulated at the same point in the mouth in the same manner save for the position of the vocal folds. The concept of voiced versus voiceless consonants is not critical to understanding the Deseret Alphabet; however, it does play a small role in the canonical ordering of the script.

2.1.2 Practical Phonetic System

It is not necessary to learn the IPA in order to learn the Deseret Alphabet; however, it is necessary to learn to distinguish between each sound of English. Henceforth the IPA, together with a less accurate but more familiar practical system, will be used to explain the sounds of English as represented by the Deseret Alphabet. Table 2 displays the equivalencies between the IPA and the practical system.

Table 2: IPA and its equivalents in the practical system

h	k	g	ŋ	j	tʃ	dʒ	ʃ	ʒ	t	d	n	s	z	ɹ	l	θ	ð	p	b
h	k	g	ng	y	ch	j	sh	zh	t	d	n	s	z	r	l	th	dh	p	b
m	f	v	hw	w	i	ɪ	ei	ɛ	æ	ai	ɑ	ɔ	o	ʊ	u	ʌ	aʊ	ə	ɔi
m	f	v	wh	w	ee	ih	ey	eh	a	ie	ah	aw	oh	OO	oo	u	ou	uh	oy

Table 3 lists twenty-four English words in traditional orthography, the IPA and the practical system. One should at least learn the practical system (and how to refer back to its IPA equivalents) before moving on to descriptions of the Deseret Alphabet.

Table 3: English words in regular spelling, IPA and the practical system

1. head /hɛd/ **hehd**	2. king /kɪŋ/ **kihng**	3. gone /gɔn/ **gawn**
4. you /ju/ **yoo**	5. cheap /tʃip/ **cheep**	6. job /dʒɑb/ **jahb**
7. show /ʃo/ **shoh**	8. beige /beiʒ/ **beyzh**	9. rise /ɹaiz/ **riez**
10. thick /θɪk/ **thihk**	11. them /ðɛm/ **dhehm**	12. why /hwai/ **whie**
13. eat /it/ **eet**	14. fit /fɪt/ **fiht**	15. faith /feiθ/ **feyth**
16. left /lɛft/ **lehft**	17. cat /kæt/ **kat**	18. not /nɑt/ **naht**
19. nought /nɔt/ **nawt**	20. vote /vot/ **voht**	21. food /fud/ **food**
22. foot /fʊt/ **fOOt**	23. son /sʌn/ **sun**	24. sofa /sofə/ **sofuh**

2.1.3 Distinction between /ɔ/ and /ɑ/

At this point, some readers might be feeling overwhelmed by the variety of new symbols. Additionally, some might not recognize the distinctions that have been drawn between certain sounds. Due to dialectal differences, and the inadequacies of conventional English spelling, many English speakers are unaware of the sounds of (so-called) Standard

American English. Table 3 lists a pair of words, *not* and *nought*, which are pronounced differently in Standard American English (as spoken by newscasters, southerners and many in the northeast) but sounded the same in Canada and most of the American west. The vowel sound in *not* is represented by /ɑ/ (**ah** in the practical system) whereas the vowel sound in *nought* is represented by /ɔ/ (**aw** in the practical system). For speakers from Utah and elsewhere in the West (as well as many other states), these words sound the same; however, for the majority of English speakers in the world these two vowel sounds are as different as the /i/ **ee** and /ei/ **ey** in *see* and *they*.[1] The Deseret Alphabet had a separate letter for each of these two vowels and both vowels were consistently distinguished in the books printed in Deseret characters. Table 4 gives examples of words with both /ɑ/ **ah** and /ɔ/ **aw**. Speakers who are not familiar with this sound contrast should pay special attention.

Table 4: /ɑ/ ah versus /ɔ/ aw

Words with /ɑ/ ah	Words with /ɔ/ aw
Hot /hɑt/ **haht**	Hall /hɔl/ **hawl**
Not /nɑt/ **naht**	Nought /nɔt/ **nawt**
Lot /lɑt/ **laht**	Laud /lɔd/ **lawd**
Rock /ɹɑk/ **rahk**	Raw /ɹɔ/ **raw**
Wok /wɑk/ **wahk**	Walk /wɔk/ **wawk**
Sock /sɑk/ **sahk**	Saw /sɔ/ **saw**
Tot /tɑt/ **taht**	Taught /tɔt/ **tawt**
Hop /hɑp/ **hahp**	Hawk /hɔk/ **hawk**

Finally, before introducing each letter of the Deseret Alphabet and its sound value, try to complete the two exercises below. Exercise 1 focuses on IPA understanding. Only the IPA symbols and values used in this book are used. Exercise 2 deals with the practical system already introduced. Both exercises are designed to teach a beginning student with no background in linguistics how to segment the sounds of English. It is vital that the learner become familiar with at least one system before moving on to the description of the Deseret Alphabet.

Exercise 1: IPA practice

Try to read the words written in IPA then rewrite them in standard English spelling. Refer back to Table 1 if in doubt about a symbol. Remember, it is better to learn slowly and accurately than to rush through without understanding the material!

Example: /fæt/ *fat* /θɔt/ *thought*

1. /hɛlp/ _____	2. /kɑt/ _____	3. /gɔn/ _____
4. /sɪŋ/ _____	5. /juz/ _____	6. /tʃip/ _____
7. /tʃɪp/ _____	8. /dʒʌdʒ/ _____	9. /ʃɑp/ _____
10. /fɪʃ/ _____	11. /eiʒən/ _____	12. /vɪʒən/ _____
13. /tu/ _____	14. /dɪd/ _____	15. /nain/ _____
16. /sɔt/ _____	17. /zɪp/ _____	18. /lɪk/ _____
19. /ɹɑt/ _____	20. /ɹɔt/ _____	21. /θai/ _____
22. /bɹɛθ/ _____	23. /ðai/ _____	24. /θɪŋ/ _____
25. /pæk/ _____	26. /bɹɪŋ/ _____	27. /mæn/ _____
28. /fɔl/ _____	29. /væt/ _____	30. /hwɛn/ _____

Exercise 2: Practical System practice

Write the following English words in the practical system. Remember, if in doubt, to refer back to the previous examples.

Example:　　talk　*tawk*　　　　block　*blahk*

1. hat	_____	2. kick	_____	3. God	_____
4. long	_____	5. ewe	_____	6. chip	_____
7. jab	_____	8. shoot	_____	9. vision	_____
10. two	_____	11. dough	_____	12. knight	_____
13. night	_____	14. sock	_____	15. zip	_____
16. rope	_____	17. load	_____	18. thumb	_____
19. that	_____	20. death	_____	21. seethe	_____
22. smooth	_____	23. path	_____	24. breathe	_____
25. moth	_____	26. witch	_____	27. which	_____
28. fight	_____	29. of	_____	30. caught	_____
31. leaf	_____	32. say	_____	33. far	_____
34. saw	_____	35. so	_____	36. to	_____
37. sit	_____	38. met	_____	39. that	_____
40. not	_____	41. son	_____	42. book	_____
43. kite	_____	44. cow	_____	45. coil	_____

2.2 Deseret Alphabet Spelling Conventions

This section describes the structure of the Deseret Alphabet in its final, classic form as used in the 1869 printing of the Book of Mormon. Table 5 gives all thirty-eight letters of the Deseret Alphabet as used in 1869 together with their names and values in IPA and the practical system. Each letter is numbered to show the correct order of the alphabet.[2]

Table 5: Deseret Alphabet with letter names in the IPA and practical system

Deseret Letters 1-18	IPA Name	Value	Practical System Name	Value	Deseret Letters 19-38	IPA Name	Value	Practical System Name	Value
Ә	/i/	/i/	ee	ee	Ꮠ	/ti/	/t/	tee	t
Ɛ	/ei/	/ei/	ey	ey	Ꭾ	/di/	/d/	dee	d
ᘒ	/ɑ/	/ɑ/	ah	ah	Ϲ	/tʃi/	/tʃ/	chee	ch
Ѳ	/ɔ/	/ɔ/	aw	aw	৭	/dʒi/	/dʒ/	jee	j
Ο	/o/	/o/	oh	oh	ᗯ	/kei/	/k/	key	k
⓪	/u/	/u/	oo	oo	ᗺ	/gei/	/g/	gey	g
†		/ɪ/		ih	Ρ	/ɛf/	/f/	ehf	f
ᓄ		/ɛ/		eh	ᗺ	/vi/	/v/	vee	v
ᐱ	/æ/	/æ/	a	a	L	/ɛθ/	/θ/	ehth	th
ᐯ		/ɒ/		o	Ƴ	/ði/	/ð/	dhee	dh
ᖴ	/ʌ/	/ʌ/	u	u	୫	/ɛs/	/s/	ehs	s
٩		/ʊ/		OO	6	/zi/	/z/	zee	z
ᒉ	/ai/	/ai/	ie	ie	ᗞ	/ɛʃ/	/ʃ/	ehsh	sh
ᗝ	/aʊ/	/aʊ/	ou	ou	ᔑ	/ʒi/	/ʒ/	zhee	zh
ⱳ	/wu/	/w/	woo	w	ⴘ	/ɜɹ/	/ɹ/	ur	r
Ꮗ	/ji/	/j/	yee	y	ɭ	/ɛl/	/l/	ehl	l
Ϙ		/h/		h	ᖕ	/ɛm/	/m/	ehm	m
ᒏ	/pi/	/p/	pee	p	ᖾ	/ɛn/	/n/	ehn	n
ᙡ	/bi/	/b/	bee	b	И	/ɛŋ/	/ŋ/	ehng	ng

2.2.1 Deseret Letter Syllabic Values

Each letter of the Deseret Alphabet had a name except, perhaps, the short vowels ɪ ɹ ʌ ɑ and the consonant ɸ. Each consonant symbol had a specific name of one syllable. It is very important to know the name of each consonant. When a consonant symbol appears in isolation, it is to be read as its full name. Thus, the letter ʙ stands for /b/ in combination with other letters as in ʙɪʛ /bɪg/ *big*. However, if ʙ stands alone in a sentence it is to be read with its full name as /bi/ **bee** as in ʙ ʏəɸ ʈɸʜʌʈ /bi hir tunait/ *be here tonight*. In older versions of the Deseret Alphabet, this feature was true within words as well. An 1860 gold piece minted by Brigham Young for distribution in the territory had an inscription in the Deseret Alphabet which read ʏɒʟʜ𐐖 ʈɒ ʏ ʟɒɸʙ *Holiness to the Lord* where the first word, *Holiness*, is spelled **h-o-l-ih-n-(eh)s** with the letter 𐐖 being read as /ɛs/.[3] Thankfully, the 1869 version only uses the names of the letters as their value in monosyllabic words. In fact, only the letters ɒ ʏ ʙ ʏ ʙ, standing for the words *a*, *ye*, *be*, *the*, *gay* are commonly used in the printed Deseret Alphabet books. Exercise 3 offers practice.

Exercise 3: Deseret Alphabet Practice

Transcribe the following sentences from Deseret characters into traditional English spelling. Keep an eye out for syllabic letter values!

Example: 𐐖𐐯 𐑅 𐐺 𐐪 𐑀𐐳𐐼 𐑏𐐲𐑉   *May this be a good year*

1. 𐐺 𐑏 𐑀𐐯𐑇𐐲𐑉 𐑅𐐹𐑈𐑉𐑍.   _____

2. 𐑍𐐴 𐐼𐐲𐑅 𐑏𐑍 𐐼𐑉𐑅!   _____

3. 𐐺 𐐪 𐐼𐑉𐑇𐐼 𐑈𐑍 𐑍𐐳 𐑏𐐻𐑆.   _____

4. 𐐿 𐑍𐐼𐑊 𐑏 𐑏𐐻𐑈 𐐹𐐲𐑏 𐑏𐑈𐑍 𐐬𐑍 𐐺𐑏𐐼.   _____

5. 𐐿 𐑍𐐬𐑊𐐼 𐑏𐐻𐑆 𐐺𐐲 𐐼𐑉𐐻 𐐺 𐑊𐐯𐑍.   _____

Write the following words using Deseret letters.

Example: *be*   𐐺

6. ye   _____   7. gay   _____

8. the   _____   9. a   _____

10. thee   _____

2.2.2 Distinction between 𐐱, 𐐪 and 𐐬

A great deal of detail concerning English sounds has been omitted up to this point to ease

the burden of coping with too much new information. However, before going further, it is

necessary to delve deeper into the nuances of English sounds and dialectal differences.

Table 5 has one Deseret character which represents a sound that has not been mentioned

yet. This character, 𐐱, is represented as /ɒ/ in the IPA and **o** in the practical system. This

sound is found in British pronunciations of the words *not*, *got*, *Tom*, *off* and *what*. It is not

a sound of Standard American English.[4] In England, where this is a common sound, the sole difference between the words *pot*, *port* and *part* is the nature of the vowel because /ɹ/ is not pronounced after a vowel in British English. These three words, in an English accent, can be written as /pɒt/, /pɔt/ and /pɑt/ in the IPA. In Standard American English, the same three words can be written as /pɑt/, /pɔrt/ and /pɑrt/. The situation between /ɒ/ and /ɑ/ is not the same as that between /ɔ/ and /ɑ/. There is not a single word in American English that has become homophonous with another because American English lacks the sound /ɒ/. This is true because, unlike in British English, American English speakers pronounce /ɹ/ in all positions. Compare this to the situation with /ɔ/ where those dialects of American English which have lost the sound now have a large number of homophonous words.

In some dialects of American English, spoken in parts of New England and Virginia, these three words, *pot, port* and *part*, could be written as /pɑt/, /pɔt/ and /pat/ in the IPA. The creator of the Deseret Alphabet was an Englishman who no doubt sounded the letter ꚫ as /ɒ/. Nevertheless, the pronunciation style chosen was not an English one; rather, it seems to have been based along the lines of a New England standard such as would have been familiar to Brigham Young and Noah Webster. If this is the case, then perhaps ꚙ and ꚫ would be more appropriately transcribed as /a/ and /ɑ/ rather than /ɑ/ and /ɒ/. In this book, however, the current American standard will be used.[5]

Table 6 gives example words containing these vowels together with their British, Standard American and Western American (Utahan) pronunciations written in the IPA.

Table 6: Words with 𐐘, 𐐙 and 𐐉 with IPA transcriptions

Deseret Letters →	𐐘	𐐙	𐐉	IPA Transcription of *cot, cart, caught, court*
British Accent	/ɑ/	/ɒ/	/ɔ/	/kɒt/ /kɑt/ **/kɔt/ /kɔt/***
Standard American	/ɑ/	/ɑ/	/ɔ/	/kɑt/ /kɑɹt/ /kɔt/ /kɔɹt/
Western American (Canadian)	/ɑ/	/ɑ/	/ɑ/	**/kɑt/** /kɑɹt/ **/kɑt/** /kɔɹt/

* homophonous pairs are in bold

2.2.3 Distribution of /ɑ/ /æ/ /ɔ/ and /ɒ/ in American and British English

As can be seen in Table 6, though British English has an extra vowel sound, Standard American English is the only one without any homophonous pairs. In fact, were in not for one other dialectal quirk, the creators of the Deseret Alphabet might not have bothered with creating the letter 𐐙 in the first place. Historically, the vowel in words like *last*, *path* and *ask* had the same vowel as in *lack*, *pat* and *at*. In England, the vowel in these words shifted to become like the sound in *lark*, *part* and *art*. In most of America, outside of coastal Virginia and parts of New England, the older pronunciation remained. The creators of the Deseret Alphabet were from England and New England. The speech style they chose included the shift of /æ/ **a** to /ɑ/ **ah** in these words. Consequently, familiar Book of Mormon phrases like "and it came to pass" are sounded out as *and it came to pahss*. The same dialects that underwent this change also experienced another one. Words like *often*, *soft* and *lost* were traditionally pronounced with an /ɔ/ **aw** vowel. In England, these words have changed the vowel from /ɔ/ **aw** to /ɒ/ **o**. In British English, because of these changes, the only difference between the words *last* and *lost* is the distinction

between /ɑ/ **ah** and /ɒ/ **o**. In American English, this distinction is unnecessary because words like *last* retain the older /æ/ **a** vowel and words like *lost* retain the older /ɔ/ **aw** vowel. Thus, solely because they chose a speech style which had undergone these changes, the designers of the Deseret Alphabet were obliged to include the letter ꚙ in their spellings. In this book, and for all practical purposes, this letter should be treated as just another way to spell /ɑ/ **ah**. However, British and Australian readers should keep the original pronunciation of this letter in mind.[6]

Table 7 gives examples of English words that are pronounced differently in England and America. Each word is given in traditional orthography, IPA, the practical system and the Deseret Alphabet as used in the publication of the Book of Mormon. The table makes clear how important the distinction between /ɔ/ and /ɒ/ is for British English and how unnecessary it is for Standard American English.

Table 7: Words which differ between England and America in pronunciation

Traditional Orthography	*orphan*	*often*	*lost*	*last*	*off*
Deseret Alphabet	𐐃𐐻𐑁𐐲𐑌	𐐶𐑁𐑌	𐐢𐐶𐑈𐐻	𐐢𐐩𐐻	𐐶𐑁
Standard American	/ɔɹfən/ **awrfuhn**	/ɔfən/ **awfuhn**	/lɔst/ **lawst**	/læst/ **last**	/ɔf/ **awf**
Western American (Canadian)	/ɔɹfən/ **awrfuhn**	/ɑfən/ **ahfuhn**	/lɑst/ **lahst**	/læst/ **last**	/ɑf/ **ahf**
British English	/ɔfən/ **awfuhn**	/ɒfən/ **ofuhn**	/lɒst/ **lost**	/lɑst/ **lahst**	/ɒf/ **of**

2.2.4 Distinction between /ə/ and /ʌ/

Astute readers will have already noticed another unexpected feature of the Deseret Alphabet, namely, it does not have a symbol for the vowel /ə/ **uh** as in *sofa*. This vowel, often called the schwa or reduced vowel, is the commonest vowel sound in the English language. It is, at the same time, one of the most problematic ones. It is possible that the creators of the Deseret Alphabet left out a /ə/ **uh** symbol through mistake or misjudgment. It is also possible that they avoided creating a symbol for the unreduced vowel in order to avoid deciding when it was present and when it was not. Many words with a schwa in normal speech have a fuller vowel in careful pronunciation. One can pronounce the word *pronounce* as /pɹənaʊns/ **pruhnouns** or as /pɹonaʊns/ **prohnouns**. Which pronunciation is more correct? The first (with a schwa) is more natural but the second is perfectly acceptable in a formal setting (and writing is necessarily formal). The problem with the reduced vowel extends beyond matters of formality. The schwa is yet another vowel that is different things to different people based upon their dialect of English. In most of the United States (especially the West), the sound of a schwa in the word *sofa* /sofə/ **sohfuh** is identical to the sound of the vowel /ʌ/ **u** in the word *fun* /fʌn/ **fun**. This causes considerable confusion for Americans trying to understand Deseret spellings. The same speakers who merge /ʌ/ **u** and /ə/ **uh** have an additional pronunciation peculiarity. For these speakers, the phoneme /ə/ **uh** has two allophones (variant realizations of what is, underlyingly, a single sound): /ə/ **uh** at the beginning and end of a syllable and /ɪ/ **ih** in a closed syllable (one that begins and ends with consonants). (Phonetically this second sound is really more like the high central

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unrounded vowel [ɨ]; however, native speakers are more likely to analyze it as /ɪ/ **ih** when

sounding words out.) The concept of phonemes and allophones is too complicated for this

book. Suffice it say that the reduced vowel, at least for most Americans, is a difficult

vowel to pin down.

In Britain, Australia, New Zealand and some parts of America the sound of schwa

in a word like *sofa* and the sound of the vowel in a word like *but* are very different. In

northern England the /ʌ/ **u** sound in *but* sounds more like the /ʊ/ **OO** of American English

book. In Southern England the sound of /ʌ/ **u** in *but* sounds more like a Chicago

pronunciation of *not*. For these reasons, the choice of the symbol /ʌ/ is somewhat

arbitrary. British linguists favor the symbol /ɐ/ for this sound because it reflects Southern

British English more accurately. This book uses /ʌ/ because it is a more appropriate

placeholder for a World English sound. The Deseret Alphabet uses the symbol ⱱ

expressly for /ʌ/ **u** and not for /ə/ **uh** (the minor exceptions to this rule will be discussed

later). It is important that Americans do not attempt to use ⱱ for schwa. Table 8 displays

a sample of words with schwa or /ʌ/ **u** and their spellings in the Deseret Alphabet

together with variant regional pronunciations.[7]

Table 8: Examples of /ə/ and /ʌ/ and their realizations in different accents

Traditional Orthography	*buck*	*above*	*idea*	*Jesus*	*loveable*
Deseret Alphabet	𐐺𐐲𐐿	𐐲𐐺𐐲𐐶	𐐪𐐼𐐰𐐲	𐐾𐐨𐑉𐐲𐑅	𐐲𐑉𐑀𐐻𐐲𐐺𐐲𐑊
Standard American	/bʌk/	/əbʌv/	/aidiə/	/dʒizəs/	/lʌvəbəl/
Western American	/bək/	/əbəv/	/aidiə/	/dʒizɪs/	/ləvɪbəl/
British	/bɐk/	/əbɐv/	/aidiə/	/dʒizəs/	/lɐvəbəl/

2.2.5 Deseret Representation of /ə/

How then does the Deseret Alphabet handle /ə/ **uh**? It would be untrue to say that there is an official method of spelling the sound. However, a careful analysis of the preferences shown by those who transcribed the Book of Mormon into Deseret characters reveals a method to the madness. In general, if schwa occurs word finally it is written with the letter 𐐩 (which is otherwise to be sounded as /ɑ/ **ah**). This poses no problem for reading because there are no polysyllabic words which end in /ɑ/ **ah** in the dialect represented. If the schwa is word initial, it is written with the so-called short vowel which most closely approximates a hypothetical unreduced form. For example, *about* /əbaʊt/ **uhbout** is written as 𐐰𐐺𐐵 with the letter 𐐰 being chosen because the schwa here was presumably considered to be a blurred /æ/ **a**. Most common English words with an initial schwa begin with a written *a* so most instances of initial schwa in Deseret are written with 𐐰. A word like *enough* /ənʌf/ **uhnuf**, however, would never be written with an initial 𐐰. In such a case, the spelling would likely be with 𐐩 and reflect the much more formal /inʌf/ **eenuf**. Some scholars have assumed that these spelling quirks reflect the Deseret Alphabet's reliance on traditional English orthography to come up with spellings for schwa.[8] This is not entirely true. It is true in as much as traditional English orthography had a huge impact on the Deseret Alphabet's creators and their perception of what might be the fuller form of a reduced vowel. Nevertheless, the reduced vowel is not uniformly represented by symbols corresponding to traditional English orthography. When schwa occurs word internally, as in words like *patience* /peiʃəns/ **peyshuhns** or *Mormon* /mɔɹmən/ **mawrmuhn**, the sound is usually represented by the letter 𐐰 or 𐐲. In general, the letter 𐐲

is only used for /ə/ **uh** word internally in an unstressed syllable which ends in /m/ **m** or /n/

n. The letter ⨌ is used in the same environment as well, but more commonly it is used to

symbolize schwa before other consonants and especially before /ɹ/ **r**. Exercise 4 offers

more practice.

Exercise 4: Reading and Writing /ə/

This exercise uses Deseret spellings of proper names from The Book of Mormon and LDS history. Focus on reading the names in Deseret. Remember, the schwa does not have its own letter.
Transcribe the following names from Deseret letters to traditional spellings.

1. 𐐘𐐩𐑉𐐲   _____   2. 𐑊𐐲𐐽𐐪   _____

3. 𐐚𐐬𐑁𐐬𐑅𐑇   _____   4. 𐐚𐐬𐑁𐐬𐑉𐑍   _____

5. 𐐘𐐬𐐺𐑉𐐹   _____   6. 𐐩𐑊𐑊𐑉𐑁   _____

Write out the following names, which are written in the IPA or practical system, using Deseret letters.

1. /iθəɹ/   _____   2. almuh   _____

3. muhrohnie   _____   4. /dʒizəs/   _____

5. /dʒozəf/   _____   6. /noə/   _____

2.2.6 Rhotic and Non-Rhotic English

Another complexity of Deseret spelling needs explanation. The sound /ɹ/ **r** is pronounced

differently after vowels than before vowels. In most of England and many parts of

America, the sound is completely lost after a vowel. In most of America, Ireland and

Scotland, the /ɹ/ **r** remains after a vowel though it might differ in quality. Linguists term those accents of English which keep postvocalic (after-vowel) /ɹ/ **r** as rhotic and those which do not as non-rhotic. The Deseret Alphabet designers probably spoke a non-rhotic accent; however, the style of speech they chose to represent preserves all postvocalic /ɹ/ **r** sounds. In doing so, they created a sort of speech compromise. Their chosen standard kept /ɹ/ **r** in all positions yet used the vowels of a typical non-rhotic accent with one exception. Those vowels which derive from the loss of postvocalic **r** were almost entirely ignored. In most of England and many parts of America, new vowel sounds were created in those positions where **r** was lost. Table 9 gives examples of the new vowel sounds created in Southern British English after the loss of postvocalic **r**.

Table 9: New vowels created in British English after loss of postvocalic r

Example Words	*fear*	*fair**	*poor*	*fur*
Southern British English	/fɪə/	/feə/	/pʊə/	/fɜ/

*In the speech of most young English people only the vowels in *fear* and *fur* are still pronounced as shown in this table. The vowel in *fair* is now generally /ɛː/ and the vowel in *poor* has merged with /ɔ/.

2.2.7 British /ɜ/ and American /ɹ/

In most of America, the /ɹ/ **r** sound changed to become a vowel sound itself. This is hard to explain and understand so do not expect to grasp it completely on the first try. Think about the fact that no foreign language has an 'r' sound like American English. The Spanish roll their 'r' with the tip of the tongue, the Germans and French roll it with the back of the tongue. Even the Scots tap or roll their 'r' with the tip of the tongue. In American English, there is no contact whatsoever between the tongue and the roof of the mouth during the production of the /ɹ/ **r** sound. This is why the IPA symbol is /ɹ/ and not

/r/. Like all vowels, American /ɹ/ **r** is produced by modifying the shape of the vocal tract with the tongue and lips without constricting the escaping air. Consider the words *her*, *fur* and *fir*. If one looks only at the traditional spellings, it appears that each of these words is made of three sounds: an initial consonant, a medial vowel and a final consonant. Actually, each of these words begins with one consonant and ends with only one vowel sound. Say each word aloud and try to separate a vowel sound from the /ɹ/ **r** sound. It should be quite impossible for an American English speaker to do such an exercise because, as has already been said, the only vowel in those words is /ɹ/ **r**. This sound, in Standard American English, can be symbolized in the IPA in a number of ways. In this book we will write this single sound with an IPA digraph /ɜɹ/ **ur**. In English non-rhotic accents the corresponding sound is IPA /ɜ/.[9]

2.2.8 British /ə/ and American /ɹ/

In American English, this rhotic vowel corresponds not only to British English /ɜ/ but also to British English /ə/ **uh**. Stressed rhotic vowels in American English correspond to the vowel /ɜ/ **uh** in British English and unstressed ones correspond to /ə/ **uh**. Thus a word like *learner* has two different vowels in British English and can be written in the IPA as /lɜnə/.[10] For British speakers, the difference between these two vowels is one of quality and stress whereas for Americans the difference is only one of stress. Though there is no real difference in quality for most (if not all) American English speakers, the unstressed rhotic vowel will be written with the IPA digraph /əɹ/ **uhr** to better symbolize its Deseret representation. The Deseret Alphabet symbolizes the stressed /ɜɹ/ **ur** vowel with the

combination ᛋᛏ and the unstressed /əɹ/ **uhr** with the combination ᛃᛏ. Table 10 gives

examples of the rhotic vowel and its representation in Deseret. (In England and some

parts of America there is a difference between the vowel sounds in the words *hurry* and

furry. This difference is ignored in the Deseret Alphabet spellings for good reason.

Words like *hurry* keep a vowel separate from the following **r** whereas words like *furry*

are formed by adding a suffix to word which already had a rhotic vowel. No two words

are distinguished solely by this difference.)

Table 10: Examples of /ɜɹ/ and /əɹ/ and their realizations in different accents

Traditional Orthography	*burn*	*burner*	*stir*	*stirrer*	*terminator*
Deseret Alphabet	𐐺𐐲𐑉𐑌	𐐺𐐲𐑉𐑌𐐲𐑉	𐑅𐐻𐐲𐑉	𐑅𐐻𐐲𐑉𐐲𐑉	𐐻𐐲𐑉𐑋𐐮𐑌𐐩𐐻𐐲𐑉
This Book's Standard	/bɜɹn/	/bɜɹnəɹ/	/stɜɹ/	/stɜɹəɹ/	/tɜɹmɪneitəɹ/
General American	/bɹn/	/bɹnɹ/	/stɹ/	/stɹɹ/	/tɹmɪneitɹ/
British English	/bɜn/	/bɜnə/	/stɜ/	/stɜɹə/	/tɜmɪneitə/

2.2.9 Distinguishing /æ/ /ɛ/ and /ei/ before /ɹ/

The creators of the Deseret Alphabet also contrasted the vowels /æ/ /ɛ/ and /e/ before /ɹ/.[11]

These contrasts are still found in Great Britain, parts of the South and Northeast.

Westerners do not have this contrast, though they might be aware of it from exposure to

newscasters. Table 11 gives examples of words with these contrasting sounds.

Table 11: Examples of /æ/ /ɛ/ and /e/ before /ɹ/

Traditional Orthography	*Harry*	*hairy*	*very*	*fairy*	*Sarah*
Deseret Alphabet	𐐏𐐾𐐰𐐻	𐐗𐐇𐐰𐐻	𐐒𐐾𐐰𐐻	𐐙𐐇𐐰𐐻	𐐝𐐇𐐰𐐏
Standard American	/hæɹɪ/	/heiɹɪ/	/vɛɹɪ/	/feiɹɪ/	/seiɹə/
Western American	/hɛɹi/	/hɛɹi/	/vɛɹi/	/fɛɹi/	/sɛɹə/

2.2.10 Distinguishing /ju/ and /u/ after Coronal Consonants

Finally, before moving on to more intense practice with the Deseret Alphabet, there is one more major dialectal difference that must be discussed. Most Americans pronounce the letters *u* and *ew* as /ju/ **yoo** after consonants that do not involve the tip of the tongue (coronal consonants). Thus, the words *few*, *cute*, *muse*, *hew* and *puke* are always pronounced as /fju/ **fyoo**, /kjut/ **kyoot**, /mjuz/ **myooz**, /hju/ **hyoo** and /pjuk/ **pyook** by most Americans whereas the words *tune*, *dew*, *sue*, *crew*, *lewd* and *new*, though spelled with the same vowels, are not pronounced as /ju/ **yoo** but as /u/ **oo**.[12] In the nineteenth century, when the Deseret Alphabet was created, the speech standard included a distinction between words like *dew* and *do*. To an extent, the official pronunciation of American newscasters and most British speakers still maintains this contrast. However, at the time the Deseret Alphabet was being used such contrasts extended to more environments than they do in any standard. For example, today an Englishman might chide an American for pronouncing *toon* and *tune* both as /tun/ **toon** rather than as /tun/ **toon** and /tjun/ **tyoon** as is the standard in England. However, few Englishmen today would pronounce *Jew* as /dʒju/ **jyoo** or *blue* as /blju/ **blyoo** as was standard in the nineteenth century. In the Deseret Alphabet, the digraph 𐐆𐐬 was used to represent this /ju/ **yoo** sound. The classic

Deseret spellings include this distinction. Table 12 gives more examples of such pronunciation differences.

Table 12: Examples of /ju/ after coronal consonants

Traditional Orthography	*dew*	*new*	*Luke*	*sue*	*screw*
Deseret Alphabet	𐐼𐐷𐐭	𐑌𐐷𐐭	𐑊𐐷𐐭𐐿	𐑈𐐷𐐭	𐑅𐐿𐑉𐐷𐐭
This Book's Standard	/dju/	/nju/	/luk/	/su/	/skɹu/
General American	/du/	/nu/	/luk/	/su/	/skɹu/
British English	/dju/	/nju/	/luk/ ~ /ljuk/	/su/ ~ /sju/	/skɹu/

2.2.11 Distinguishing /ɔ/ and /o/ before /ɹ/

Nineteenth century English, and the English of a minority of Southern speakers, contrasts words like *for*, *morning*, *bored* from *four*, *mourning* and *board*. Though this contrast is no longer common in modern English dialects, it is rigorously maintained in the nineteenth century Deseret spellings. Maintaining this contrast is actually quite useful in Deseret spellings as it keeps words like *for* and *four* from being spelled the same. Table 13 gives some examples of words with this contrast.[13]

Table 13: Examples of /ɔ/ and /o/ before /ɹ/

Traditional Orthography	*four*	*for*	*morning*	*mourning*	*more*
Deseret Alphabet	𐑁𐐬𐑉	𐑁𐐲𐑉	𐌼𐐲𐑉𐑌𐐮𐑋	𐌼𐐬𐑉𐑌𐐮𐑋	𐌼𐐲𐑉
This Book's Standard	/foɹ/	/fɔɹ/	/mɔɹnɪŋ/	/moɹnɪŋ/	/moɹ/
General American	/foɹ/	/foɹ/	/moɹnɪŋ/	/moɹnɪŋ/	/moɹ/
British English	/fɔ/	/fɔ/	/mɔnɪŋ/	/mɔnɪŋ/	/mɔ/

CHAPTER 3

Deseret Alphabet Workbook

3.1 About this Chapter

This chapter is not explanatory like the previous two; rather, it is based on a workbook which was used in a student-initiated linguistics class at the University of California at Berkeley in the spring of 2004.[1] A number of students, none of whom were LDS, learned to read and write the Deseret Alphabet in less than two months with the workbook as their principal guide.[2] This version of the workbook incorporates more material into each page and is truer to the 1869 spellings.

3.1.1 Using this Workbook

Every page of this internal workbook introduces a small number of Deseret consonants and vowels, gives examples and provides a number of words spelled out in the Deseret letters which the student must rewrite into traditional English orthography. The Deseret letters have their names written out in IPA next to them. Each page builds upon the preceding page. Thus, once a student reaches the third page it is assumed that that student has mastered the material of the previous two pages. Work carefully through each page and do not proceed to the next until all the material is fully mastered.

Once this chapter is completed, it should be quite easy to read the Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon and other publications. However, this workbook does not teach one to write competently in the Deseret Alphabet (that is reserved for another chapter).

3.2 Deseret Alphabet Exercises

If skipping chapter 2, focus on the example words given for each set of letters.

Remember, unless otherwise noted, each Deseret letter represents only one sound.

3.2.1 𐐚, 𐑀, 𐑀, 𐑀 and 𐑎

𐐚 /kei/ as in _ki_ck   𐑀 /ti/ as in _tot_   𐑀 /pi/ as in _pipe_

𐑀 /ɪ/ as in _it_   𐑎 /ɑ/ as in _hot_ (British /ɒ/)

Examples

𐐚𐑀𐑀   𐐚𐑀𐐚   𐑀𐑀𐑀   𐑀𐑎𐑀   𐑀𐑎𐑀   𐐚𐑎𐑀

kit   _kick_   _tip_   _top_   _pot_   _cop_

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks.

𐑀𐑎𐑀 _____   𐑀𐑎𐑀 _____   𐑀𐑎𐑀 _____   𐐚𐑎𐑀 _____

𐐚𐑎𐑀 _____   𐐚𐑎𐐚 _____   𐑀𐑎𐐚 _____   𐑀𐑎𐑀 _____

𐑎𐑀𐑀 _____   𐑀𐑀𐐚 _____   𐐚𐑀𐑀 _____   𐑀𐑀𐑀 _____

𐐚𐑀𐐚 _____   𐑀𐑀 _____   𐑀𐑀𐐚 _____   𐑀𐑀𐐚𐑀 _____

Notes

The letters 𐑀 and 𐑀 look very similar. A useful mnemonic aid to distinguishing them is "𐑀 is pointed and 𐑀 is turned". The vowel 𐑎, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, is not a sound of American English.

3.2.2 ଡ, ଘ, ঘ, ə and ଠ

ଡ /gei/ as in *go*   ଘ /di/ as in <u>do</u>   ঘ /bi/ as in <u>bee</u>

ə /i/ as in <u>see</u>   ଠ /ɔ/ as in <u>saw</u>

Examples

ଘəଘ   ঘəଘ   ঘəๅ   ଡଠๅ   ๅଠଡ   ๅଠๅ

deed   *bead*   *beet*   *caught*   *talk*   *taught*

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks

ঘəଘ   _____   ঘↈଘ   _____   ଘঘ   _____   ଘↈଘ   _____

ଠↅ   _____   ଘəↅ   _____   ↅଠଡ   _____   ঘↈↅ   _____

ଡଠↅ   _____   ↅଠଡ   _____   �ↈଘ   _____   ଘↈↅ   _____

ↅଠↅ   _____   ↅↈ   _____   ↈଘ   _____   ଡↈଘ   _____

ଘↈଡ   _____   ଘↈↈ   _____   ঘↈↈ   _____   ঽↈଘ   _____

Notes

The letters ଡ, ঘ, ঘ are the voiced counterparts of ଡ, ๅ, ↅ. Say *bagger* and *packer* aloud.
The *b* and *gg* in *bagger* are produced in the same part of the mouth as the *p* and *ck* of
packer. The only difference between them is that the vocal folds are drawn together and
vibrating for *b* and *g*. The letters ଡ and ଡ look the same except for a little hook in ଡ (the
voiced one). Words like *cot* and *caught*, which would be written ଡↈๅ and ଡଠๅ, are
distinguished in the South and Northeast but not the West.

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3.2.3 и, ч, ɔ, ⅃ and ɷ

И /εŋ/ as in s*ing*　　　ч /εn/ as in *nine*　　　ɔ /εm/ as in *my*

⅃ /ε/ as in r*e*d　　　𝟬 /u/ as in f*oo*d

Examples

ɷΤИ　　　　ɷΤч　　　　ɑΤɔ　　　　ɑ⅃ч　　　　ɷɷ⅂　　　　ɔ𝟬ч

king　　　*kin*　　　*dim*　　　*den*　　　*coot*　　　*moon*

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks.

ɷ⅃ɷ　_____　　　ɑ⅃𝟬　_____　　　ɑ𝟬ɷ　_____　　　ɑ⅂ч　_____

ɑ⅃⅂　_____　　　⅂ɷɑ　_____　　　ɑΤИ　_____　　　ɷΤИ　_____

ɑɷɔ　_____　　　ɔɷɑ　_____　　　ч⅂ɔ　_____　　　ɔɑч　_____

чΤɷ　_____　　　⅂ɔч　_____　　　ɔ⅃⅂　_____　　　ɑɷИ　_____

Notes

The letter и represents a single sound which is written in traditional orthography with the digraph *ng*. These two letters do not represent two sounds as some pedantic speakers often think. This sound, found in words like *sing* or *wrong*, is a voiced velar nasal and bears the same relationship to *k* and *g* as *n* does to *t* and *d*. The sounds *k*, *g* and *ng* are made with the body of the tongue pressed against the palate and only differ in that *k* is voiceless, *g* is voiced and *ng* is voiced with the air escaping through the nose. The same is true of *t*, *d* and *n* but with the tip of the tongue touching behind the teeth.

3.2.4 ᴄ, ȣ, ʟ, ᴩ, ɛ and ٩

ᴄ /tʃi/ as in _church_   ȣ /ɛs/ as in _sit_   ʟ /ɛθ/ as in _thigh_   ᴩ /ɛf/ as in _five_

ɛ /ei/ as in _faith_   ٩ /ʊ/ as in _put_

Examples

ʟ†ⱳ	ᴩ†ᴘʟ	٦٩٦	ȣϴȣ	ᴄəᴨ	ᴄɛȣ
thick	_fifth_	_put_	_sauce_	_cheap_	_chase_

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks

ᴩ٩٦	_____	٦٩ⱳ	_____	ȣϴʟ	_____	ʟ†ʜ	_____
ʟ†ᴎ	_____	ⱳ†ȣ	_____	ᴄᴧȣ٦	_____	ᴩɛȣ	_____
ᴩɛʟ	_____	ᴩᴧᴄ	_____	Ͻ†ʟ	_____	ʟəᴩ	_____
ᴩϴⱳ	_____	ȣɛȣ	_____	ȣᴧʟ	_____	ⱳ٩ⱳ	_____

Notes

The letter ᴄ stands for a single sound, not a combination of sounds. The letter ʟ also represents a single sound, called a voiceless interdental fricative, which is found in words like _think_ and _breath_ and is different from the _th_ sound in words like _thy_ or _breathe_.

3.2.5 𐐾, 𐐞, 𐐟, 𐐚, 𐐈 and 𐐉

𐐾 /dʒi/ as in _judge_   𐐞 /zi/ as in _zoo_   𐐟 /ði/ as in _breathe_   𐐚 /vi/ as in _very_

𐐈 /æ/ as in _ax_   𐐉 /o/ as in _oat_

Examples

𐐟𐐉𐐞	𐐞𐐂	𐐾𐐩𐐔	𐐚𐐈𐐓	𐐟𐐈𐐓	𐐚𐐉𐐓
those	_zoo_	_jade_	_vat_	_that_	_vote_

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks.

𐐾𐐈𐐔	_____	𐐔𐐪𐐸𐐾	_____	𐐾𐐉𐐂	_____	𐐞𐐂	_____
𐐞𐐈𐐓	_____	𐐔𐐂𐐚𐐞	_____	𐐚𐐈𐐓	_____	𐐚𐐀𐐚	_____
𐐟𐐈𐐓	_____	𐐓𐐀𐐾	_____	𐐚𐐀𐐥	_____	𐑁𐐉𐐟	_____
𐐟𐐩𐐞	_____	𐐚𐐉	_____	𐐟𐐉	_____	𐐚𐐉𐐢	_____
𐐂𐐉𐐚	_____	𐐔𐐈𐐾	_____	𐐾𐐈𐐞	_____	𐐢𐐈𐐕	_____

Notes

The letters 𐐾, 𐐞, 𐐟 and 𐐚 are the voiced counterparts of 𐐕, 𐑅, 𐑆 and 𐑁. It is important to understand the difference between 𐐟 and 𐑆. The letter 𐐟 only stands for the voiced interdental fricative found in words like _thy_, _the_, _that_, _brother_, _either_, _breathe_ and _seethe_. The letter 𐑆 only stands for the voiceless interdental fricative found in words like _thigh_, _thought_, _author_, _ether_, _breath_ and _sloth_. The easiest way to learn to distinguish these sounds is to say _thy thigh_ (𐐟𐐴 𐑆𐐴 in Deseret) a few times.

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3.2.6 Ŀ, ᗡ, Ϙ, Ρ and ᒐ

Ŀ /ɛl/ as in _lull_   ᗡ /ɛʃ/ as in _ship_   Ϙ /h/ as in _help_

Ρ /ʌ/ as in _up_   ᒐ /ai/ as in _ice_

Examples

ᗡᵻꟼ	ꟼŁᏒᗡ	ϘᏒŁ	Łᒐ	Ϙᒐᗡ	ŁᏒᗡ
ship	_flush_	_hull_	_lie_	_hash_	_lush_

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks.

Ϙᒐᗺ	_____	Ꮢᵻᗡ	_____	ᗡᒐᗺ	_____	ᗡᗡᴎ	_____
Ϙᒐᗺ	_____	Łᵻᵻᗒ	_____	ŁᒐᴎŁ	_____	ꟼŁᏫᵻ	_____
Ϙᵻᗺ	_____	ᵻꟼᗡ	_____	ᵻᵻŁ	_____	Ꮢᒐᵻ	_____
Łᒐᵻ	_____	ᗡᒐŁ	_____	ᗒᏒᴎ	_____	ᵻᏒᴎ	_____
ꟼŁᒐ	_____	ᵻᒐY	_____	ᗺŁᒐY	_____	ŁᒐY	_____
ŁᏫY	_____	ŁᏒᗺ	_____	ŁᏒᗺ	_____	ᗡəŁ	_____

Notes

The letter ᗡ stands for a single sound not a combination of two sounds. The letter Ϙ might have had the name /heitʃ/. In the original readers, Ϙ was glossed simply as _h_. Some Britons pronounce _h_ as /heitʃ/ and the creators of the Deseret Alphabet were careful to give each letter a name that included the sound it represented. It is unlikely that Ϙ would be named /eitʃ/ and more likely it was named /heitʃ/ or another unknown name.

3.2.7 ⴸ, 𐐚, Ⴔ, Ⴞ, 𐐙 and 𐐚

ⴸ /ji/ as in _you_   𐐚 /ʒi/ as in _vision_   Ⴔ /ɜɹ/ as in _run_   𐐙 /wu/ as in _we_

𐐚 /ɑ/ as in _father_   𐐚 /aʊ/ as in _out_

Examples

ꝢƏⴔ	ƏƐꝢ	ⴸꝠL	Yꝁ	ⴸƏⴔꝁ	𐐙Ɛⴸ
far	_beige_	_youth_	_thou_	_yard_	_wage_

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks.

ႴꝁL	_____	ⴸƏⴔL	_____	ⴔꝠꝁ	_____	Ⴞꝁ	_____
Ꝣꝁⴔ	_____	Ꝡⴈⴤ	_____	ꝁⴔꝁꝉ	_____	Ⴞⴔⴔ	_____
ꝁⴔ	_____	ꝉꝁⴔ	_____	ⴸƏⴔꝉ	_____	ꝁⴔꝉ	_____
𐐙ꝁⴔ	_____	𐐙ꝁꝀꝁ	_____	𐐙ꝠꝀꝁ	_____	𐐙ꝁꝠ	_____

Notes

The letter ɑ will cause the Western American student quite a bit of trouble in reading nineteenth century publications. Because the dialect represented in those publications is a New England/Southern England compromise, the letter ɑ is only used before Ⴔ and in positions where American English would use ɹ like in ꝉꝁⴤꝉ and ⴤꝁⴤꝉ for _past_ and _last_. In fact, the word _father_ is the only word with ɑ not before Ⴔ which is actually pronounced as ɑ by Americans.

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3.2.8 Digraphs ᏇᎳ, ᖀᏇ, ᒚᏇ, ᎳᏏ and ᏏᏬ

ᏇᎳ /hw/ as in _white_   ᖀᏇ /ɜɹ/ as in b_ur_ner   ᒚᏇ /əɹ/ as in burn_er_

ᎳᏏ /ɔi/ as in b_oy_   ᏏᏬ /ju/ as in f_ew_

Examples

ᏇᎳᏂᎷ   ᒪᖀᏇᏂᒚᏇ   ᎷᎳᏏ   ᏬᏏᏬᎷ   ᎳᖀᏇᏆᏏ   ᏴᏏᏬᒚᏇ

white   _learner_   _toy_   _cute_   _worthy_   _bigger_

Figure out the following words and write them in the blanks.

ᒪᒚᎷᒚᏇ _____   ᏇᎳᏂᒪ _____   ᏇᎳᏏᏟ _____   ᏇᎳᒪᒪ _____

ᏬᒚᏏᒪ _____   ᎷᖀᏇᏂᒚᏇ _____   ᎳᖀᏇᒪ _____   ᎳᖀᏇᏆᏏ _____

ᏴᒚᏏ _____   ᎷᏏᏬᏂ _____   ᖀᏏᏬ _____   ᏴᏏᏬᏂ _____

ᏂᏏᏬ _____   ᏇᏏᏬ _____   ᏴᖀᏇᒪ _____   ᏇᎳᏋᏇ _____

Notes

The digraph ᒚᏇ only represents /əɹ/ in unstressed syllables otherwise it represents /ɛɹ/ as in _very_ /vɛɹɪ/. The digraph ᖀᏇ represents both /ɜɹ/ and /ʌɹ/ as in _furry_ and _hurry_ (as pronounced by the British and some Americans). The digraph ᏏᏬ only represents /ju/ after a consonant. Thus _you_ is ᏬᏬ but _hew_ is ᏇᏏᏬ. (The spelling ᏬᏏᏬᏂᏴᒚᏇᏋᏂᏟᏏ is, however, seen for _university_.)

3.3 Book of Mormon Reading Exercise

What follows is an excerpt from the 1869 Deseret Book of Mormon, Ether 1:6. Though this is only one verse, the student should find it quite challenging and rewarding. Actually, Ether 1:6 in the 1869 Deseret Book of Mormon corresponds to Ether 2:18-25! The original versification, wording and spelling of the 1869 edition are preserved in this excerpt. Modern verse correspondences are provided in brackets, as are corrections. Remember, many words will not be spelled the way an American (particularly from the West) of today would pronounce them.[3]

𐐞𐑊𐐲𐑉 1:6

[2:18] 𐐀𐑌𐐼 𐐮𐐻 𐐿𐐱𐑋 𐐻𐐮 𐐑𐐪𐑅 𐑄𐐰𐐻 𐑄 𐐺𐑉𐐱𐑄𐐲𐑉 𐐳𐑂 𐐖𐐯𐑉𐐯𐐼 𐐽𐑉𐐴𐐼 𐐲𐑌𐐻𐐲 𐑄 𐐢𐐱𐑉𐐼, 𐑅𐐩𐐮𐑍, O 𐐢𐐱𐑉𐐼 ... [modern editions do not have *thereof*]; ... [modern editions do not have *thereof*], ... 𐐀𐑌𐐼 𐐮𐑁 𐐮𐐻 𐐺𐐨 𐑅𐐬 𐐪 [modern editions have *And if it be so*] ... [modern editions do not have *thereof*], ... [21] ... [22] ...

[23]

[spelling error, should be spelled **annoy**]

[24]

[25] ... [probably meant to be *howbeit*, not found in modern editions of the Book of Mormon] ...

CHAPTER 4

Archaic and Alternate Deseret Characters

4.1 Early Forms of Deseret Letters

The first versions of the Deseret Alphabet did not have all the same letter shapes as the version used in the 1860s. Originally, the so-called short vowels were to be smaller than the long vowels and other letters.[1] Many of the consonants had slightly different shapes than they would in the printed type of the 1860s. These early versions of the Deseret Alphabet were more conducive to cursive writing than later ones.[2] These early variants, with the exception of the variant for ε used in the Deseret News, were not used in print, but were exclusively handwritten. Table 14 lists early variants together with their equivalents in the final font of the late 1860s.

Table 14: Early Deseret letters with equivalents

1869 form	early form	1869 form	early form
ε	3	c	(
╁	∂	L	∠
⅃	V or √	Y	℣
√	ⱨ	ⱷ	⊬
⊬	∿ or ⅃	∋	ʔ
�٩	�ɣ	ⱨ	│
ⱸ	₰	ⱠⓄ	? or ⊕
⌐	⌐	Ɑ╁	ⱹ or ⊕

4.1.1 Symbol for /ə/

Though the final printed version of the Deseret Alphabet did not have a single character for /ə/, some handwritten manuscripts employed a separate symbol for the sound.[3] This character, ı, has the same shape as the older form of ᴎ. Table 15 lists two possible spellings of the same word, one in the 1869 standard and one with the alternate character for /ə/.

Table 15: Alternate spelling with /ə/ together with standard spelling

alternate spelling	standard spelling	traditional orthography
𐐓𐑇𐑈𐐲𐐻𐑄	𐐓𐑇𐑈𐐴𐑄	*probably*

4.2 Cursive Deseret Script

Some early handwritten documents show a cursive hand. Such documents are nearly illegible and cannot be dealt with satisfactorily in this book. However, there are some tips which can aid in decoding such writing. The principle of syllabic readings for consonants is often taken to extremes. Thus, a word might seem to be lacking vowels when in fact the reader is expected to supply the vowel found in the consonant's name. Also, the letters ⊦ ⊿ ↲ ⊿ ⊩ ⊣, the so-called short vowels, are written smaller and deformed to join strokes between consonants (if they are written at all). Some letters are written as descenders, ⊣ for example, and many others have the older shapes listed in Table 14.[4]

CHAPTER 5

The Modern Deseret Alphabet

5.1 Revival of Deseret Alphabet

This book is part of an uncoordinated, but very real, revival of interest in the Deseret Alphabet. In recent years, a number of individuals have studied Deseret Alphabet documents and there has been some limited use of the script in a modern setting.[1] Sadly, few people understand the script well and perhaps no one views it as a viable script for English.

This chapter is based on two positive experiences that, I think, counter negative feelings toward the Deseret script and offer a glimpse at its potential. The first involved teaching college students, none of whom was LDS, the Deseret Alphabet in a school setting. The second experience took place within the context of my own family.

In the spring of 2004, I facilitated a student-run linguistics class at the University of California at Berkeley. The class, titled *Alternate English Orthographies*, had the Deseret Alphabet as the principal focus of study. In less than two months, the majority of the students were able to read and write in the script. Students were asked to learn the 1869 spelling standard only. Though the students had little trouble reading the old spellings, I found that their own spellings tended to be different from the 1869 standard but unusually similar to each other's.

Keeping this experience in mind, I helped my wife to learn the script. She also learned to read and write in about two months and her spellings were nearly identical to those of the Berkeley students. Whereas I had drilled the students in a classroom setting, my wife largely learned through reading and writing little notes with the aid of a key.

I have drawn upon the natural spelling trends of the students and my wife to create the spelling standard taught in this chapter. Rather than being an attempt to force a way of spelling upon those interested in the Deseret Alphabet, the spelling guidelines given hereafter offer a standard for future literary use and an easy way for personal writing to remain true to the script's original character. In a way, the Deseret Alphabet came back to life when the students in that Berkeley class wrote brief stories about their families in the script. The revival has truly begun.

5.1.1 Objectives

This venerable script has endless potential. I imagine novels, children's books, poetry, newspapers, plaques, calligraphy, personal correspondence and monuments in the Deseret Alphabet. All are possible. First, however, it is necessary to create a community of interested people capable of creating and enjoying Deseret Alphabet texts. Spreading interest and knowledge of the script must be the principal objective.

5.1.2 How to Use this Chapter

This chapter has been written for two kinds of readers. Those readers who have read and understood all previous chapters will find the explanations and drills that follow quite easy. Readers who have read only the first chapter, thereby skipping the descriptions of the nineteenth-century Deseret Alphabet spellings, must focus a little harder on the examples and explanations that follow. If the reader has not mastered the IPA, those strange symbols enclosed in //, he should ignore them and focus on the examples in the drills.

5.2 Structure of the Modern Deseret Alphabet

For historical continuity, all thirty-eight letters of the original have been kept in their canonical ordering. Table 16 lists all individual letters in order followed by the digraphs (two letter combinations).

Table 16: Modern Deseret Alphabet

The 38 modern letters in order from left to right and top to bottom								
Ə	ee	*feed*	Ɛ	ai	*faith*	Ə	ah	*far*
Ө	aw	*fawn*	О	oh	*foal*	Ⓜ	oo	*fool*
†	ih	*fit*	⊣	eh	*fed*	Ɉ	a	*fat*
⇃	o	*fond*	Ⱶ	u	*fun*	૧	OO	*foot*
Ⴑ	ie	*fly*	Ə	ou	*fowl*	Ш	woo	*went*
Ɐ	yee	*you*	Ϥ	h	*help*	⅂	pee	*pike*
Ɛ	bee	*bike*	Ꞃ	tee	*tip*	ᘓ	dee	*dip*
C	chee	*chew*	૬	jee	*Jew*	Ⓜ	kai	*car*
ꙩ	gai	*gar*	Ρ	ehf	*fat*	ß	vee	*vat*
L	ehth	*thigh*	Y	dhee	*thy*	8	ehs	*sip*
6	zee	*zip*	D	ehsh	*Confucian*	Ꙅ	zhee	*confusion*
Ϥ	ur	*rare*	Ⴑ	ehl	*law*	Ɔ	ehm	*Mormon*
Ꜧ	ehn	*night*	И	ehng	*singer*			
The modern digraphs								
Ө†	oi	*boy*	ⱵϤ	ur	*burner*	†Ⓜ	yoo	*few*
ϤШ	hw	*why*						

5.2.1 The Letter 𐐡 in the Modern Deseret Alphabet

The letter 𐐡 is retained in the canonical ordering but is not utilized in any of the new spellings. In most cases, 𐐡 is replaced by 𐐪. The justification for dropping this letter is two-fold. As discussed in chapter 4, throughout the history of the Deseret Alphabet there have been letters dropped and created to suit the time. The letter 𐐡 stood for a sound which is specifically British and only needs to be distinguished if the sound /ɹ/ is not sounded after vowels. Americans, together with Irish, Scottish, and Canadian speakers generally preserve /ɹ/ in all positions. Thus, it is unnecessary to maintain the letter in spellings. (Section 2.2.2 gives a more complete explanation of the sound originally represented by 𐐡.)

5.2.2 The Names of the Letters

As discussed in section 2.2.1, each Deseret letter has a monosyllabic name which may double as its full sound value in rare cases. In the modern spellings, this feature is continued. The only change being that the letter 𐐸, whose original name has not survived, now has the name /hɑ/.

5.2.3 The Modern Deseret Alphabet Representation of /ɔi/

The diphthong 𐐡𐐮, which represented the sound **oi** as in *boil* has been replaced by 𐐬𐐮 to avoid the letter 𐐡 and to be truer to actual pronunciation.

5.2.4 Representation of /ə/ in the Modern Deseret Alphabet

As explained in 2.2.4 and 2.2.5, the 1869 spellings lacked a single way to represent the sound /ə/ as in *sofa*. The modern spellings use only �𐐲 for all instances. Similarly, the sounds /ɔɹ/ and /ɜɹ/ are both now spelled 𐐲𐑉.

5.2.5 The Digraph 𐐸𐐶

Most young speakers of American English no longer distinguish words like *whale*/*wail* or *where*/*wear*. For those who do, or those who would like to in print, the digraph 𐐸𐐶 has been retained.

5.2.6 Distinguishing 𐐱 and 𐐪 in Modern Deseret Spellings

Many Americans (and all Canadians) do not distinguish words like *cot*/*caught* or *tot*/*taught* in their speech. If one does not distinguish these sounds, by which is meant that the aforementioned pairs sound *exactly* the same in one's speech, only the letter 𐐪 should be used in personal spellings. This is a difficult point to explain. Table 17 gives examples of choosing the proper letter.

Table 17: How to Choose 𐐱 or 𐐪

Do you pronounce *cot* and *caught* differently?	
Yes ↓	No ↓
Use 𐐱 for the sound in *caught*. Use 𐐪 for the sound in *cot*.	Use 𐐪 for the sound in both.

5.3 The Exercises

Each exercise should be done in one day. Plenty of blank space has been left on each page for additional writing practice or notes.

Exercise 1

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
ə	ee	**ee** *as in* f<u>ee</u>t	ɒəꞁ *sheet*
ꞇ	ih	**ih** *as in* f<u>i</u>t	ꞇꞁ *it*
ꞁ	tee	**t** *as in* <u>t</u>oo	ꞁə *tea*
ꓷ	ehsh	**sh** *as in* <u>sh</u>ip	ꓷə *she*
ꓥ	ehth	**th** as in <u>th</u>igh	ꞁəꓥ *teeth*

Read the Following Words

ꓷə ꓷəꓥ ꓷəꞁ ꞇꞁ ꞁəꓥ

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

TEA _____   SHE _____

TEETH _____   SHEATH _____

SHEET _____   IT _____

EAT _____   TEAT _____

Exercise 2

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
𐐇	ai	**ai** *as in* f<u>ai</u>th	𐐼𐐇𐑉 *beige*
ᴧ	eh	**eh** *as in* f<u>e</u>d	𐐿𐐾ᴧ *breath*
𐐒	bee	**b** *as in* <u>b</u>oot	𐐒𐐼 *bee*
𐐑	zhee	**zh** *as in* bei<u>g</u>e	𐐒𐐇𐐑 *beige*
𐐏	dhee	**dh** as in <u>th</u>y	𐐿𐐾𐐏 *breathe*
𐐙	ur	**r** *as in* <u>r</u>un	𐐙𐐼𐐾 *wreath*

Read the Following Words

𐐒𐐼   𐐒𐐼𐐾   𐐙𐐼𐐏   𐐒𐐇𐐑   𐐙𐐇𐐾   𐐒𐐇𐐙   𐐒𐐼𐑉

𐐿𐑉   𐑉𐐼𐐾   𐐏𐐇𐐙   𐐒𐐇𐑉   𐐏𐐇

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

BET   _____   SHE   _____

TEETH   _____   SHEATH   _____

THEY   _____   BREATHE   _____

BEIGE   _____   TREAT   _____

Exercise 3

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
𐐻	ah	**ah** *as in* f<u>ar</u>	𐐻𐐲𐑉𐐹 *tarp*
𐐰	a	**a** *as in* f<u>a</u>t	𐑅𐐰𐐻 *that*
𐐔	dee	**d** *as in* <u>d</u>o	𐐼𐐮𐑇 *dish*
𐐹	pee	**p** *as in* <u>p</u>ike	𐑇𐐨𐐹 *sheep*
𐑌	ehn	**n** as in <u>n</u>ight	𐑃𐐮𐑌 *thin*

Read the Following Words

𐐹𐐻𐑌   𐐔𐐻𐐰𐑉𐐹   𐐔𐐰𐑅   𐐹𐐻𐑌   𐐹𐐰𐑌𐑇

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

ART   _____   SHEEP   _____

TENTH   _____   SHEATHE   _____

DASH   _____   DRAPE   _____

DEN   _____   PIN   _____

Exercise 4

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
𐐉	aw	**aw** *as in* f**a**ll	𐐙𐐉𐑊 *ball*
𐐱*	o	**o** *as in* f**o**nd	𐐓𐐱𐐑 *top*
𐐕	chee	**ch** *as in* **ch**oose	𐐕𐐨𐐑 *cheap*
𐐝	ehs	**s** *as in* ba**s**e	𐐝𐐻𐐮𐐕 *stitch*
𐐢	ehl	**l** as *in* **l**ike	𐐢𐐩𐑁 *lathe*
𐐣	ehm	**m** *as in* **m**onth	𐐣𐐰𐑇 *mash*

*This letter is obsolete and will not be used further. It should be replaced by 𐐉.

Read the Following Words

𐐣𐐉𐑊   𐐕𐐨𐐑   𐐢𐐱𐐕   𐐝𐐩𐐝   𐐿𐐩𐑊   𐐣𐐩𐐣   𐑉𐐩𐐑

𐑉𐐉𐑊   𐐝𐑊𐐩   𐐣𐐩𐑊   𐐙𐐩𐐑   𐐝𐐩𐑂

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

AWL   _____   CHASE   _____

LATCH   _____   MATCH   _____

LAW   _____   TEETHE   _____

BEIGE   _____   TEETH   _____

Exercise 5

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
𐐉	oh	**oh** *as in* f**oa**m	𐐻𐐬𐐼 *toad*
𐐲	uh	**uh** *as in* f**u**n	𐑇𐐲𐐻 *shut*
𐐾	jee	**j** *as in* **j**ob	𐐺𐐰𐐾 *badge*
𐐿	kai	**k** *as in* **k**ick	𐐿𐐨𐐹 *keep*
𐑍	ehng	**ng** as in si**ng**er	𐑃𐐮𐑍 *thing*
𐑇	ou	**ou** as in **ou**t	𐑄𐐵 *thou*

Read the Following Words

𐐾𐐲𐐼𐐾   𐐼𐐬   𐑍𐐬𐑍   𐐿𐐬𐐿   𐑇𐐻𐐲𐑌𐐹   𐐹𐐬𐐲

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

CART   _____   SHORE   _____

STING   _____   THUMP   _____

COW   _____   DREDGE   _____

JUDGE   _____   THING   _____

Exercise 6

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
𐐭	oo	**oo** *as in* f<u>oo</u>d	𐐁𐐭𐐓 *boot*
�	OO	**OO** *as in* f<u>oo</u>t	𐐓𐐭𐐗 *took*
𐐌	ie	**ie** *as in* sk<u>y</u>	𐐢𐐌 *lie*
6	zee	**z** *as in* <u>z</u>oo	6𐐭 *zoo*
𐐘	gai	**g** *as in* <u>g</u>o	𐐘𐐭𐐆 *good*
P	ehf	**f** *as in* <u>f</u>ix	P𐐲𐐤 *fun*
ß	vee	**v** *as in* <u>v</u>ixen	ß𐐲𐐓 *vat*

Read the Following Words

𐐔𐐭𐐓   𐐓𐐙𐐓   𐐘𐐯𐐢   𐐘𐐢𐐓   6𐐯𐐢   𐐘𐐯𐐗   P𐐲𐐓

ß𐐯𐐘   P𐐝𐐢   𐐘𐐭𐐑   𐐘𐐙𐐭   𐑁𐐯ß

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

FOOD   _____   CHOOSE   _____

LOOK   _____   MIGHT   _____

LAWS   _____   GET   _____

VERY   _____   TOOK   _____

Exercise 7

Deseret Letter	Letter Name	Sound	Examples
Ш	woo	**w** *as in* <u>w</u>ar	шth *win*
Ѵ	yee	**y** *as in* <u>y</u>ou	ѵ0L *youth*
Ф	h	**h** *as in* <u>h</u>old	ФＬ *hi*

Read the Following Words

Шth   Ѵ0Ф0   ФＬLL   Ѵ0L   Ф0ФL   Ш0ФϽL

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

HEART   _____   WEED   _____

YELL   _____   WITH   _____

HASH   _____   DWELL   _____

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Exercise 8

Deseret Letter*	Sound	Examples
𐐷𐐶	**hw** *as in* <u>wh</u>y	𐐶𐐴𐑊 *while*
𐐷𐐭	**yoo** *as in* f<u>ew</u>	𐐸𐐷𐐭 *hew*
𐐄𐐷	**oi** *as in* <u>oi</u>l	𐐺𐐄𐐷 *boy*
𐐲𐑉	**ur** *as in* b<u>ur</u>n	𐐲𐑉𐑊 *earth*

*These are not letters; rather, they are *digraphs* (two-letter combinations which stand for a single phoneme) which must be learned as single units.

Read the Following Words

𐐃𐑉𐐷𐐻   𐐷𐐶𐐩𐑊   𐐾𐐻𐐲𐐼𐐻𐐭   𐑉𐐄𐐻𐑊

Write the Following Words in the Deseret Alphabet

EARL   _____   WHALE   _____

PEW   _____   HUGE   _____

LEARN   _____   TOY   _____

WHY   _____   WHIRL   _____

Exercise 9

This exercise requires the student to use all the letters he has learned. It is a poem titled *The Summer*. Difficult words have been marked and explained. Work slowly through the poem and read it aloud. The lines have been numbered to mark the order in which they should be read. The rhyming scheme of the poem is given using numbers and letters. For example, the numbers and letters 12345A 12345A mean that there are two lines of six syllables and that both syllables marked A have rhyming vowel sounds.

<div align="center">

12345A   12345B

12345B   12345A

12345C

12345D   12345E

12345E   12345D

12345C

</div>

Ꙗ ꙅꝆꙅꞍꝸ

1. Ꙗ ꙅꝆꙅꞍꝸ, ꝸ�6ꞁ ꝆꚕꙪ ꙩꝸꚕ
2. ꙶꞁꙪꙎ Ꙏꙩꝋꙩꝸꙑꞁ, ꙎꝸꝆꙎꞁ ꝆꚕꙪ ꙩꝸꙢ
3. ꚕ'ꙩ Ꙛꙩꙅꞁ, ꙎꝆꚕꙪ ꙩꚕ ꙺ꙯
4. ꙶꙶꚕꙩꝆ Ꙗ ꙅꙺꙩꝆꚕꙪ ꙅꙩꚕ
5. ꚕ ꙅꙩꝸꙩ Ꙗ ꞁꝆ꙯ꚕ ꝆꚕꙪ ꝸꝆꝸꚕ

6. ꞁꝆꙛꞁ ꙩꙶꚕ Ꝇꙶꙛꙩ Ꙗ ꙩꝸꙩꚕ
7. Ꙗ ꙚꝸꙎ ꙯ꝸ ꙅꙶ꙯ꙩ ꙩꚕ ꙅꙩꚕꚕ
8. ꙅꝆꝸꙩꚕꙩꝸꙩ ꙶꚕ ꙩꚕ Ꙏꝸꚕ
9. ꚕ ꙩꝸꝆꝊꝸꙩ ꙩꝎ ꞁꙎ ꙩꝸꙩꙎ
10. ꙶꙛ ꞁ꙯ꙅꝸ ꙖꝆꝸ ꚕꙪꙛꝆꝸ ꙺꝆꝸꚕ

11. ꙶꙪꙺꝸ Ꙗ ꙜꙎꙩꞁꙅ ꙎꝊꞁ*
12. Ꙗꙓ'ꙩ ꙅꙪꙩ ꙶꙅꝆꙩꝸ ꚕ'ꙩ Ꙛ꙯ꝶꞁ
13. ꝸꙚꙩ Ꙫꙛ ꝆꚕꙪ Ꝇꚕꝸꝸ Ꝇꙩꝸ ꙶꝸꚕꙚ
14. ꙶꝶꞁ Ꝇꙩꝸ Ꝇꙩꝸ ꙩꙩꝸ ꙖꙪꚕ ꙖꙪꞁ
15. Ꙗ ꙶꙅꙅꞁ ꙝꝸꝶ ꙅꞁꙩꝶ ꝸꙩꝸ ꙩꝶꚕꙩ

16. Ꝇꙛꙩꚕ ꝸꚕꙅꙪꙩ Ꙗ ꞁꝸꝸꙎ
17. ꚕ ꙩꝸꙩꙛ ꞁꙎꙝꙩꝸꙩ Ꙗ ꞁꝸꙩꙛ
18. ꞁ꙯ꙛꙪꞁꙩꙛ ꙶꝸꝆꙎ ꙩꚕ ꚕꙎꙛ
19. ꙶ ꝸꚕꝶꝸ Ꝇꙩꝸ ꙩꙅꙩ ꝶꝆꙎ
20. ꚕ ꝶ꙯ꝶꞁ Ꙗ ꝶꚕꞁ ꙶꙩꝸꚕꙪꙩ

21. ꙶꙩꝸꙎ ꝸꙝꝸꙅꝸꝸ6 ꙩꝶ Ꝇꝸꙩꚕꙩ
22. ꚕ ꙅꙩ ꝶꞁ ꝸꝆꙎꚕ ꙶꚕ
23. ꝸꚕ Ꙏ꙯ꙩꙛꙛ ꝸꝆꝸꙩ ꝶꞁ ꙩꝸꚕ
24. ꙶ ꙅꙩꝆꝸꙩ, ꝶꙛꚕꝸꙩ ꙅꙩꚕꙩ
25. "ꚕ ꙜꙩꚕꙩꝆꝸ ꝸꚕ ꙩꝸꙅꞁꝸꝸ"

26. ꚕ ꞁꝸꙓꝶꙩ ꝸꝸꙅ ꙅꙩꙶꝸꚕ Ꙛꙩꝸꙅ
27. ꝶꝸꙝ ꙜꙪꙅꙛ ꝆꚕꙪ Ꙏꙩꝸꝸꚕꙩ ꝶꙶꙛꙛ
28. ꞁꝸꝶ ꙩꙶꞁꝸꝸ ꝸꚕ Ꙗ ꞁꝸꙩꙛ
29. ꚕ ꝸ꙯ꙶ ꙎꝎ Ꙏꙅꙶ Ꙗ Ꙛꙩꝸꙅ
30. ꞁꙎ Ꝇꚕꚕꙩ ꝸꞁ ꝸꚕ ꝸꝸꙅ ꝶꙅꝸ

31. ꙯ꞁ ꝸꝆꚕꙅ ꙝꙩ ꙶꙩꝶ ꝶꙩꙎꙩ Ꙫꙛ
32. ꝸꝸꙅ ꙶꙩꙶꙩ ꝶꝸꙗ ꝆꚕꙪ ꙅꝸꝸꙩꚕ
33. ꙶꝶ Ꙏꙩꝸꝸꙅ ꝸꚕ ꙩꙅ Ꙏꙩꚕ
34. "ꙶꙎ ꚕꙶꝸ ꙶꙪꝶꙛꙶ Ꙗ ꝶꚕꙶ"
35. ꝸꞁ ꙅꚕꙎ ꝸꝶꝶ ꞁꙝꝶꙶ ꙅꙎꚕꝶ

36. ꚕ ꙅꝸꝆꙶꝶꝶꙛꙩ ꝆꝸꙩꙎ Ꙗ Ꙝꞁꙩ
37. ꙜꝶꚕꙎꙩ ꙶꝸꙩ ꙶꙩꝸꚕꙪꙩ Ꙗ ꝸꙝꙶꙛ
38. ꙶꙩꝸ꙯ꝶꞁ** ꙶꙛ ꝸꝸꚕꙎꝸꝸ6 Ꙛꙩꙛ
39. ꚕ ꝶꝸꙶ Ꙗ ꙶꙅꙅꞁ Ꝇꙩꝸ ꙩꙎꙩ
40. ꝆꚕꙪ ꝸ꙯ꞁ, ꙩꝸꙅꞁꝸꞁ Ꙗ Ꙏꙅꝶꙛ

41. ꙶꙛ ꚕꙅꞁ ꝸꚕ ꙩꝸꙩꙛꙛ ꚕ ꙅꙩ
42. ꝸꚕꙅꙪꙩ Ꙗ ꙅꝆ꙯Ꝇꝸꚕ Ꙏꙅꙶ
43. Ꙝꝸꝶ Ꙏꙛꙛꙛ ꝶꚕꙎ ꙎꙩꝸꝸꚕꙪꙩ ꙶꙛꙅꙩꙛꙛ
44. ꝆꚕꙪ Ꙏꚕꝶꝸꚕ, ꙶꙛꝶꙩ ꙅꞁꙛꚕꙩ ꞁꙩꙛ
45. Ꙗ ꙜꙎꙩꞁꙅ ꙎꝊꞁ ꙩꙎꙛ ꙛꙩ

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* *Wampus Cat*, a mythical creature of the American South. The origin of this term is not definitely known. The Wampus Cat is often described as some kind of were-cat or monster.

** Bereft

Exercise 10

Cut these words out and affix them to the items they describe.

ΨʅΘ	⍵ΘՇ	ꓶƐꓮՇ
⊂ƐΨ	ΘΟΨ	ꓣՇΟΨ
⍵ꓕꓦΘΟ	ꓛꓕΨʅΨ	ꓮꓘΘ
ꓶΠՇ	ΘƐꓶ	ꓣꓕꓦꓧ
ՇΘꓦ	ꓧꓕꓰ⍵	ꓮꓕՇ
ꓶΟΨ⊂	⍵ꓮ⊂	ꓶꓰꓨꓰ

Exercise 11

Transcribe the following song into the Deseret Alphabet. Remember, if you do not contrast the vowels 𐐪 and 𐐬, use only 𐐪.

Stockton

Northbound on I-5
I can hardly wait to get home
To my kids and wife
Loading trucks all day long

I can see the ship's lights
In the port by the freeway
I'd give all that I might
To get on board and get away

But I'm stuck in this town
I'm trapped in this town
I'm stuck in this town
And I'm going down
I'm going down
I'm going down

I wasn't born here
But my mother was
And it's where I met my wife
But this place ain't for us

The winter's full of fog
I keep promising we're going to leave
The summer's choked with smog
Our little one can't hardly breathe

But we're stuck in this town
We're trapped in this town
We're stuck in this town
And I'm going down
I'm going down
I'm going down

Southbound on I-5
I'm driving past the warehouse
With my kids and wife
On our way to a new house

I can see the city's lights
Disappearing behind me
I ain't never coming back
But part of me will always be

Stuck in this town
Trapped in this town
Stuck in this town
And going down
Going down
Going down

APPENDIX I

An 1869 Deseret-Roman Spelling Wordlist

A number of the most common words in the 1869 Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon were spelled differently than most modern Americans would have spelled them. What follows is a small list of some of the more prevalent words. Chapter 2 explains the principles underlying many of these apparent aberrations. However, if a picture is worth a thousand words, some clear examples should prove to be of similar worth. Every word from the reading exercise in 3.3 has also been included.

𐐪

𐐪𐐶𐑉	even
𐐪𐑊𐑉𐑀	Ether
𐐴𐑉𐑀	either

𐐰

𐐰𐑉	air

𐐩

𐐩	a
𐐩𐑉𐑁𐑉	after
𐐩𐑉	are

𐐬

𐐬𐑉	ought
𐐬𐑉	or
𐐬𐑊	all
𐐬𐑊𐑅𐐬	also

𐐄

𐐄	O
𐐄𐐶𐑉	over
𐐄𐑉	ore
𐐄𐑊𐐼	old
𐐄𐑌	own

𐐆

𐐆𐐻	it
𐐆𐑁	if
𐐆𐑆	is
𐐆𐑌	in

𐐁

𐐁𐑌𐐻𐑉	enter
𐐁𐑌𐐼	end

𐐈

𐐈𐐻	at
𐐈𐐺𐐬𐑉𐐼𐐮𐑍	according
𐐈𐑀𐐯𐑌	again
𐐈𐑀𐐯𐑌𐑅𐐻	against
𐐈𐑆	as
𐐈𐑉𐐬	arrow
𐐈𐑌𐐼	and

𐐉

𐐉𐑁	off
𐐉𐑁𐐻	oft
𐐉𐑁𐑌	often
𐐉𐑂	of
𐐉𐑌	on

𐐊

𐐊𐐹	up
𐐊𐐹𐐬𐑌	upon
𐐊𐑄𐑉	other
𐐊𐑌𐐻𐐭	unto
𐐊𐑌𐑅𐐻𐐬𐐹	unstop

𐐌

𐐌	I
𐐌	eye

𐐎

𐐎𐐻	out
𐐎𐑁	our

𐐏

𐐏𐐩	we
𐐏𐐯𐑂𐑆	waves
𐐏𐐬𐐻𐑉	water
𐐏𐑉𐐿	work
𐐏𐐮𐑃	with
𐐏𐐮𐑊	will
𐐏𐐮𐑊𐐻	wilt
𐐏𐐮𐑌𐐼𐐬𐑆	windows
𐐏𐐮𐑌𐐼𐑆	winds

ꟽꟽꜱ was
ꟽꝼꜱꞇ wouldst

Ᏸ

Ᏸ ye
Ᏸꟶ you
Ᏸꟶꝼ your

Ꝼ

Ꝼꝺ he
Ꝼꝺꞁ hole; whole
Ꝼꝺꞇ have
Ꝼꝺꞇꜱ hast
ꝼꟽꜱꞁ whale
ꝼꟽꞇꝼꞃꝼ whither
ꝼꟽꞇc which
ꝼꟽꟽꜱ what
ꝼꟽꝺꞃ when

ᒪ

ᒪꝺꞇꞁ people
ᒪꝺꞱꝺꜱ pieces
ᒪꝺꞱ pass
ᒪꝺꞱꜱ past
ᒪꝼꞇꝺ perish
ᒪꝼꝼꝺꝼꝺꝺ performed
ᒪꝼꝺᒪꜱꝼ prepare
ᒪꝼꝺᒪꜱꝼꝺ prepared

Ᏸ

Ᏸ be
Ᏸꝺꝼꝺꞁꝺ behold
Ᏸꝺꝼꝼ barge
Ᏸꝺꝼꝼꝺꜱ barges
Ᏸꝺ bow
Ᏸꟽꞇꞃꝺ bottom
Ᏸꝺꝺ book
Ᏸꝼ by; bye, buy
Ᏸꝼꝺᏸ breathe
Ᏸꝼꞇꝼ bring
Ᏸꝼꞇꝼꝼꝼ brother
Ᏸꞁꝼꝺ black

ᒪ

ᒪꝺꝺ take
ᒪꝺꝺꝼ taught
ᒪꝺꝺ to; too; two
ᒪꟽꝺ top
ᒪꝼꝺꞁ truth

ꝺ

ꝺꝺꝼ deep
ꝺꝺꝼꝺꟽꞃꝼꜱ darkness
ꝺꝺ do
ꝺꝼꝺ did
ꝺꝼꝼꝺꟽꝼꝺ directed
ꝺꝼꞇꞁꜱ depths
ꝺꝼꝺ dash
ꝺꞃꞃ done

C

Cꝺꞇꝼꞃ chosen
Cꟽꝺ choose
Cꟽꞇꜱ choice
Cꞃꝼc church

Ꝯ

Ꝯꝺꝼꞃꜱ Jesus
Ꝯꝺꝼꝼꝺ Jared
Ꝯꞇꟽ Jew

ꟽ

ꟽꝼꝺ came
ꟽꞇꞁ kill
ꟽꞄꝼꟽꝼ cannot
ꟽꞃꝺ come
ꟽꞃꝺꟽꝼꝺꝼꝺ commanded
ꟽꝼꟽꞁ cross
ꟽꝼꝼꝺ cried

ꟽ

ꟽꝺꟽ gone
ꟽꝺ go
ꟽꝺꜱꝼ ghost
ꟽꝼꝺꝼ great

Ꝑ

Ꝑꝺꝼ for
Ꝑꝺꝼ -fore
Ꝑꝺꝼꞁ forth
Ꝑꞃꝼ fire
Ꝑꞁꝼꝺ flood
Ꝑꞁꝼꝺꜱ floods

Ꮟ

Ꮟꞃꞁꞇꞁꜱ vessels
Ꮟꞃꝼꞇꞁꞇ verily
Ꮟꞃꝼꞃꜱꞃ virgin

ᒪ

ᒪꞇꞃ thing
ᒪꞇꞃꝺ think
ᒪꞇꞃꜱ things
ᒪꝺꝼ thought

Ᏻ

Ᏻ the; thee
Ᏻꝺꜱ these
Ᏻꞇ they
Ᏻꞇꝼ there; their
Ᏻꞇꝼꟽꝺ thereof
Ᏻꞇꝼꝼꝺꝼ therefore
Ᏻꞇꜱ this
Ᏻꞁꝺ them
Ᏻꟽꝺ that
Ᏻꝺ thou

ꞃ

ꞃꝺ see; sea
ꞃꞇꞇꞃ saying
ꞃꞇꝺ save
ꞃꝺ so; sew
ꞃꝼꝺ said
ꞃꝼꞃ sent
ꞃꝼꝼꝼꞇ suffer
ꞃꟽꟽꞁꝺꝺ swallowed
ꞃꝺꝺꝼ steer
ꞃꝺꟽꝺ stop

G

G⅃ꝠＵꞍ Zerin

Ꝺ

Ꝺ⅃ꝷＴꝺ Chemish
Ꝺꝡꞁ shall
Ꝺꝡꞁꞁ shalt
Ꝺꝯꝭ should

Φ

Φꝺꙅꝺꝺ receive
ΦꜫꞍꝺ rains
ΦꝜꞁ right; rite; write
ΦꝊꞁ wrought

Ｌ

Ｌꝺꙅꞁ last
ＬꝊΦꝭ Lord
Ｌꝡꙅꞁ lost
ＬꝜꝺ love
ＬꝜꞁ light

ɔ

ɔꝺ me
ɔꜫ may
ɔꜫꝭ made
ɔꜫꝡ make
ɔꞁꝺꙅꞁ midst
ɔꝜ my
ɔꝜꞁ might
ɔꝺꞁ mouth
ɔꝺꞍꞁꝷꞍ mountain

Ɥ

ꞍꝺꝬꝷΦ neither
Ɥꝺ no
ꞍꝷꝺΦꝺꝬꞁꝷ nevertheless
Ɥꝡꞁ not

APPENDIX II

Deseret Alphabet Resources

The Deseret Alphabet continues to attract interest among diverse groups of people. The internet, in particular, has a multitude of sites with a wealth of information on the script. Not all such sites are wholly accurate and care must be taken in researching anything with only internet resources. Below I have listed several links which should prove worthwhile to anyone interested in the contents of this book.

Undoubtedly, the archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints possess the most materials. However, I have not used them and cannot comment on the ease or difficulty of accessing the Church's holdings.

http://homepage.mac.com/jhjenkins/

John H. Jenkins home page has a link to his Deseret kit for Mac users.

http://www.omniglot.com/writing/deseret.htm

The textual sample at this site includes many errors. However, the creator is open to suggestions and has already corrected two errors after being informed.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Deseret_AB

This group is a good place to start if interested in communicating with others who are interested in the Deseret Alphabet. It also includes links.

http://home.earthlink.net/~sbartok1632/index.htm.

The Huneybee font (utilized throughout this book) is available here for free download. It is freeware and, to date, the most accessible Deseret Alphabet font.

http://www.geocities.com/knochengerechtigkeit/deseret/index.html

This site contains original material in the Deseret Alphabet (much of it tongue in cheek). The creator appears to be English and has therefore had little trouble using the letters ꞷ, ꝋ and ꝋ appropriately.

http://std.dkuug.dk/jtc1/sc2/wg2/docs/n2474.pdf

Kenneth Beesley has done a tremendous amount of work on the Deseret Alphabet. This link, at the time of writing, provides access to a PDF version of his proposal to add two archaic Deseret characters to Unicode.

http://www.DeseretAlphabet.com

This site has links to almost every important Deseret Alphabet resource as well as summaries of relevant information. It also has scanned images of the nineteenth century Deseret readers and is to add more material in the future.

Great libraries are always a good source of information for any subject and this holds true for the Deseret Alphabet. The Bancroft library of the University of California at Berkeley is an excellent resource. It houses more than one copy of the rare 1869 Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon (only 500 published) as well as additional materials.

The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000

(510) 642-3781 Administration office
(510) 642-7589 Fax
(510) 642-6481 Reference desk

Reference email: bancref@library.berkeley.edu

.

Key to Exercises

Chapter 2

Exercise 1

1. help   2. cot   3. gone   4. sing   5. use   6. cheap
7. chip   8. judge   9. shop   10. fish   11. Asian   12. vision
13. to, too, two   14. did   15. nine   16. sought   17. zip
18. lick   19. rot   20. wrought   21. thigh   22. breath   23. thy
24. thing   25. pack   26. bring   27. man   28. fall   29. vat
30. when

Exercise 2

1. hat   2. kihk   3. gahd, god   4. lawng   5. yoo   6. chihp
7. jab   8. shoot   9. vihzhuhn   10. too   11. doh   12. niet
13. niet   14. sahk, sok   15. zihp   16. rohp   17. lohd   18. thum
19. dhat   20. dehth   21. seedh   22. smoodh   23. path   24. breedh
25. mawth   26. wihch   27. hwihch   28. fiet   29. ahv, ov   30. kawt
31. leef   32. sey   33. fahr   34. saw   35. soh   36. too
37. siht   38. meht   39. dhat   40. naht, not   41. sun   42. bOOk
43. kiet   44. kou   45. koil

Exercise 3

1. Be ye therefore perfect.   2. Put down that gun!
3. A gay bird sang to him.   4. I tell thee this for thine own good.
5. I told him she would be late.   6. ɤ
7. ɞ   8. ʏ
9. ə   10. ʏ

Exercise 4

Deseret Alphabet to Traditional Orthography
1. Jesus   2. Alma   3. Moroni   4. Mormon
5. Joseph   6. Ether
IPA or Practical System to Traditional Orthography
1. Ether   2. Alma   3. Moroni   4. Jesus
5. Joseph   6. Noah

Chapter 3

3.2.1

pot   pop   tot   cot
cop   cock   pock   pop
opt   tick   kit   pit
kick   it   pick   picked

3.2.2

bead	bid	deed	did
ought	deep	peek	bought
caught	talk	pod	dot
taught/taut	paw	odd	cod
dock	dig	big	God

3.2.3

keg	deck	bed	bet
debt	boot	ding	king
doom	mood	men	mean
nick	pawn	mop	gong

3.2.4

foot	took	booth	thin
thing	kiss	chest	face
faith	fetch	myth	thief
food	same	Seth	cook

3.2.5

job	binge	joke	zoo
zap	booths	vat	gave
that	page	vase	seethe
these	go	though	both
cove	badge	jazz	thatch

3.2.6

had	fish	shock	shone/shown
hog	lips	length	float
hood	push	pull	fight
light	shall	sun/son	ton
fly	tithe	blithe	lithe
loathe	love	thug	sheath

3.2.7

wreath	hearth	rouge	cow
for	witch	drought	crow
our	power	heart	art
war	wound	wound	walk

3.2.8

letter	while	which	wheel
coil	turner	worth	worthy
boy	tune	few	dune
new	Jew	birth/berth	where

3.3
Figure it out! (Look it up in the Book of Mormon)

Chapter 5

Exercise 1

she	sheath	sheet	it	teeth
𐐌ə	𐐱ə			
𐐌əʟ	𐐱əʟ			
𐐱ə𐐌	𐐻𐐌			
ə𐐌	𐐌ə𐐻			

Exercise 2

she	sheath	wreathe	beige	wreath	share	sheet
it	teeth	their/there	bait	they		
𐐭𐐌	𐐱ə					
𐐌əʟ	𐐱əʟ					
ɣɛ	𐐭𐐢əɣ	𐐭ɛ𐐻	𐐌𐐢ə𐐌			

Exercise 3

pin	sharp	death	tin	tenth
𐐮𐐢𐐌	𐐱ə𐐌			
𐐌𐐭𐐡ʟ	𐐱əɣ			
𐐭𐐭𐐱	𐐭𐐢ɛ𐐌			
𐐭𐐭𐐡	𐐌𐐻𐐡			

Exercise 4

shawl	cheat	thatch	base	reel/real	shame	meet/meat
tall	sleigh/slay	mail/male		bought	seethe	
⊖ʟ	cɛ𐐢					
ʟ𐐭c	ɔ𐐭c					
ʟ⊖	𐐌əɣ					
𐐭ɛ𐐢	𐐌əʟ					

Exercise 5

jump	show	long	kick	strength	fowl/foul
⊙𐐮𐐭𐐌	𐐱𐐭𐐭				
𐐢𐐌𐐻𐐡	ʟ𐐡ɔ𐐌				
⊙𐐮	𐐭𐐭𐐡9				
9𐐡9	ʟ𐐻𐐡				

Exercise 6

shoot	put	mouth	bite	zeal	game	feet
vague	fowl/foul	move	book	save		

ᏢᏬᏀ ᏟᏬᏣ

ᏞᏋᏀ ᎧᎯᏊ

ᏞᏬᏣ ᏈᏬᏊ *or* ᏈᏔᏊ

ᏀᏞᎮᎧ ᏋᏋᏀ

Exercise 7

win	yard	health	youth	hearth	warmth

ᏤᎦᏮᏊ ᏍᎧᏀ

ᎩᏞᏝ ᏍᏔᏝ *or* ᏍᏔᎩ

ᎩᏝᎠ ᏀᏍᏞᏝ

Exercise 8

shirt	wheat	music	foil

ᏂᏮᏝ ᏤᏍᎦᏝ

ᎮᏞᏬ ᏤᏞᏬᎿ

ᏞᏂᏮᏂ ᎮᏂᏞ

ᏤᏍᎮ ᏤᏍᏂᏮᏝ

Exercise 9

<center>The Summer</center>

1. The summer, hot and dry	2. Bleak concrete, cracked and gray
3. I'm lost, can't find my way	4. Beneath the sickened sky

5. I board the plane and yearn

6. Touched down amid the green	7. The thick air soothed my skin
8. Surrounded by my kin	9. I drifted off to dream

10. Of pasts that never were

11. Beward the Wampus Cat	12. They'd said before I'd left
13. Red eyes and fire for breath	14. But fear far more than that

15. The beast will steal your mind

16. Alone inside the truck	17. I drove toward the trees
18. Palmettos brushed my knees	19. A rifle for good luck

20. I left the light behind

21. Dark whispers all around	22. I saw it rushing by
23. In shadows heard it cry	24. A solemn, lonesome sound

25. "I wander in despair"

26. I trailed its sobbing voice	27. Through webs and sharpened leaves
28. Till deeper in the trees	29. I had to make the choice

30. To find it in its lair

31. At once we both locked eyes	32. Its body lithe and strong
33. All courage in me gone	34. "Do not believe the lies"

35. It said with toothy smile

36. I stumbled from the wood	37. Climbed back behind the wheel
38. Bereft of hunter's zeal	39. I left the beast for good

40. And yet, despite the miles

41. Each night in dreams I see	42. Inside the Southern shade
43. With claws like sharpened blades	44. And shining, blood-stained teeth

45. The Wampus Cat call me

Exercise 10

rug	wall	table
chair	door	floor
window	mirror	bed
pool	gate	fence
lawn	sink	bath
porch	couch	T.V.

Exercise 11

ᑲᐁᕓᒪᐃᓇ ᐅᕁ I-5, ᕑ ᕴᕁᕁ ᕴᐊᕴᕍᓕᐊ ᗯᐁᑊ ᑊᐍ ᐍᑊᑊ ᕴᐃᐃ

ᑊᐍ ᐍᕑ ᓂᑊᐊᑕ ᕁᕁᐊ ᗯᕑᗁ, ᒪᐃᐊᑊᕁ ᑊᕴᕍᐍᕝ ᐃᒪ ᑊᕝ ᒪᐃᕁ

ᕑ ᓂᕁᕁ ᕴᐊ ᕘ ᐃᑊᑊᕀ ᒪᕕᑊᕀᕀ, ᕒᕁ ᕘ ᑊᐃᕴᕘ ᐍᕑ ᕘ ᕘᕴᐍᗯᐃ

ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᑊᑕ ᐍᒪ ᕕᕙᕘ ᕑ ᐍᕕᕘᕀ, ᑊᐍ ᐍᑊᕘ ᐅᕁ ᐍᕍᕴᐍ ᕁᕁᐊ ᐍᑊᕘ ᕁᗯᕕ

ᕕᕒᕀ ᕑᐧᐍ ᐃᑊᕴᐍ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ, ᕑᐧᐍ ᑊᕴᕕᑊᑊ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ, ᕑᐧᐍ ᐃᑊᕴᐍ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ

ᕕᕁᐊ ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ, ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ, ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ

ᕑ ᗯᐍᑕᐍᑊ ᐍᕘᕴᐍ ᕴᐍᕴ, ᕕᕒᕀ ᐍᑊ ᐅᕀᕕᕴᕴ ᗯᐍᑕ

ᕕᕁᐊ ᕒᐧᑊ ᕴᗯᕍᕴ ᕑ ᐍᕕᕘ ᐍᑊ ᗯᕑᗁ, ᕕᕒᕀ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᒪᕀᑊ ᑕᕁᕘ ᕘᕴᕴ ᕕᐃ

ᕘ ᗯᑊᕁᑊᕴᐧᕕ ᕘᕀᒪ ᐍᕕ ᕘᕴᐍ, ᕑ ᐍᐍᐧ ᑊᕴᐍᑊᑕᐍᕁ ᗯᐍᐧᕴ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᑊᐍ ᒪᐍᕕ

ᕘ ᐃᕓᕕᐧᕕ ᕕᐍᐍᑊ ᗯᑊᒪ ᐃᕴᐍᐍ, ᐍᕴ ᒪᑊᐍᒪ ᗯᕕᕁ ᐍᕀᕁᑊ ᕴᐊᕴᕍᓕᐊ ᐍᕴᐍᕀ

ᕕᕒᕀ ᗯᐍᐧᕴ ᐃᑊᕴᐍ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ, ᗯᐍᐧᕴ ᑊᕴᕕᑊᑊ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ, ᗯᐍᐧᕴ ᐃᑊᕴᐍ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ

ᕕᕁᐊ ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ, ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ, ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ

ᐃᐍᒪᐍᓇ ᐅᕁ I-5, ᕑᐧᐍ ᐍᕴᕍᐍᑊᐃ ᑊᕴᐍᑊ ᕘ ᗯᕴᕴᕴᐍᕀ

ᗯᑊᒪ ᐅᕁ ᐍᑊᐊᑕ ᕁᕁᐊ ᗯᕑᗁ, ᐍᕁ ᐍᕴ ᗯᕍ ᑊᐍ ᐍ ᕁᑊᐍ ᕴᐍᕀ

ᕑ ᐍᕁᕁ ᕴᐊ ᕘ ᐃᑊᑊᐍᐧᕕ, ᕐᑊᐃᕘᕘᐍᕁ ᐍᐍᕴᕁᐊ ᐃᐍ

ᕑ ᕀᕁ ᕁᕕᐍᕴᕴ ᐍᕀᐃᕁ ᐍᕁᐍ, ᕕᕒᕀ ᑊᕴᕘ ᐍᕕ ᐃᐍ ᗯᑊᒪ ᐍᒪᗯᕀᕕ ᐍ

ᐃᑊᕴᐍ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ, ᑊᕴᕕᑊᑊ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ, ᐃᑊᕴᐍ ᑕᑦ ᕀᑊᐃ ᑊᐍᑊ

ᕕᕁᐊ ᐍᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ, ᗯᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ, ᗯᕘᑊᐃ ᐍᐍᑦ

(*can't* and *get* have been spelled according to a southern pronunciation style)

NOTES

Preface

1. Nakanishi, Akira. *Writing Systems of the World: Alphabets, Syllabaries, Pictograms*. (English language edition of *Sekai no Moji*). 4th printing. Singapore. Charles E. Tuttle Co. 1994.

2. Coulmas, Florian. "Mormon Writing". *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Writing Systems*. Blackwell Publishers. 1996.

3. The symbols given in this table, I later learned, were of an earlier version of the Deseret Alphabet which was never put into print. Many of these symbols bear little resemblance to those used in the 1860s. The phonetic transcription given alongside the symbols in the table does not correspond to the IPA or any Americanist system of which I am aware.

4. Beesley, Kenneth R. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 22nd International Unicode Conference. San Jose. August 14, 2002.

Chapter 1

1. Hamilton, C. Mark. *Nineteenth-Century Mormon Architecture and City Planning*. New York: Oxford UP. 1995. 3-8.

2. Hamilton 8-11.

3. Hamilton 14-19.

4. Johnson, Jefferey Ogden. "Deseret, State of." *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 1992.

5. Monson, Samuel C. "Deseret Alphabet." *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 1992

6. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 17-31.

7. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 35-37.

8. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 30-32.

9. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 37-39.

Chapter 2

1. Kenyon, John S. and Thomas A. Knott. *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*. Merriam-Webster Inc. 1953. xxxviii.

2. 𐐏 𐐀𐑊𐐲𐐺 𐐲𐐺 𐐖𐐬𐑉𐑋𐐲𐑌. (The Book of Mormon). trans. Joseph Smith Jr. New York. 1869. (The Deseret Alphabet edition of the Book of Mormon will hereafter be referred to as DBOM in the notes.)

3. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 27-28.

4. Kenyon and Knott xix.

5. Kenyon and Knott xli.

6. While on my mission in Northern England (1997-1999), this vowel difference between British and American standard pronunciations caused confusion on at least two occasions. First, while shopping I asked a store clerk for *floss*, which in America is pronounced as either /flɔs/ or /flɑs/, and the clerk thought I had asked for a *flask* which in England is pronounced as /flɑsk/. The second incident happened in a fish and chip shop. I requested *cod*, which in America is pronounced /kɑd/, and the employees of the shop looked puzzled and explained that they did not sell cards. In England *card* is pronounced as /kɑd/. I finally had to mimic a British accent and ask for /kɒd/ (the English pronunciation of *cod*) before I was able to get a sensible response.

7. Kenyon and Knott xx.

8. Monson. "Deseret Alphabet." *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 1992.

9. Kenyon and Knott xxi.

10. Kenyon and Knott xl.

11. Kenyon and Knott xxxix.

12. Kenyon and Knott xlii-xliii.

13. Kenyon and Knott xxxix.

Chapter 3

1. The class, titled Alternate English Orthographies, was a student-initiated, student-run upper division class sponsored by faculty. Students who initiate and conduct such classes are expressly forbidden from claiming to have taught at UC Berkeley. Ian Maddieson, a professor in Berkeley's linguistics department and a world-renowned expert on phonetics, sponsored this particular class.

2. The class had eight students with the following backgrounds (each student has been assigned an arbitrary number):

Students ↓	Origin	Native Language(s)	Major	Religion	Ethnicity
1	China	Mandarin	Linguistics	Unknown	Chinese
2	Malaysia	Indonesian Taiwanese Cantonese Mandarin	Linguistics	Unknown	Chinese
3	Japan	Japanese	Undeclared	Unknown	Japanese
4	California	English Visayan	Psychology (linguistics minor)	Roman Catholic	Filipino
5	New York	English	Unknown	Jewish	Chinese/Jewish
6	California	English	Linguistics	Unknown	White
7	California	English	Unknown	Jewish ?	White
8	California	English	Industrial Engineering	Protestant	White

3. DBOM 409.

Chapter 4

1. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 18-19

2. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 21

3. Beesley, Kenneth R. "M.J. Shelton to George A. Smith." unpublished manuscript.

According to Beesley, this variant character was peculiar to Marion Jackson Shelton.

4. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 20-21

Chapter 5

1. Beesley. "The Deseret Alphabet in Unicode." 37-40