

'Didactic'

Our #SolveItDickens challenge for February 2023 comes from the notebooks of Dickens's shorthand pupil, Arthur Stone, at the [Free Library of Philadelphia](#). It is titled 'Didactic', meaning 'intended to instruct'. We think it is likely to be a teaching exercise that Dickens set for his pupil, but in terms of content this means that the text could be anything – a piece dictated from a source text, or a prepared or improvised passage about any topic. Potentially it might not be one coherent text, but a string of separate practice sentences. Given that the title suggests an explicit pedagogic context, is this reflected in the choice of words? Did Dickens think that Arthur needed to practice particular shorthand skills? We'll have to transcribe the symbols to find out.

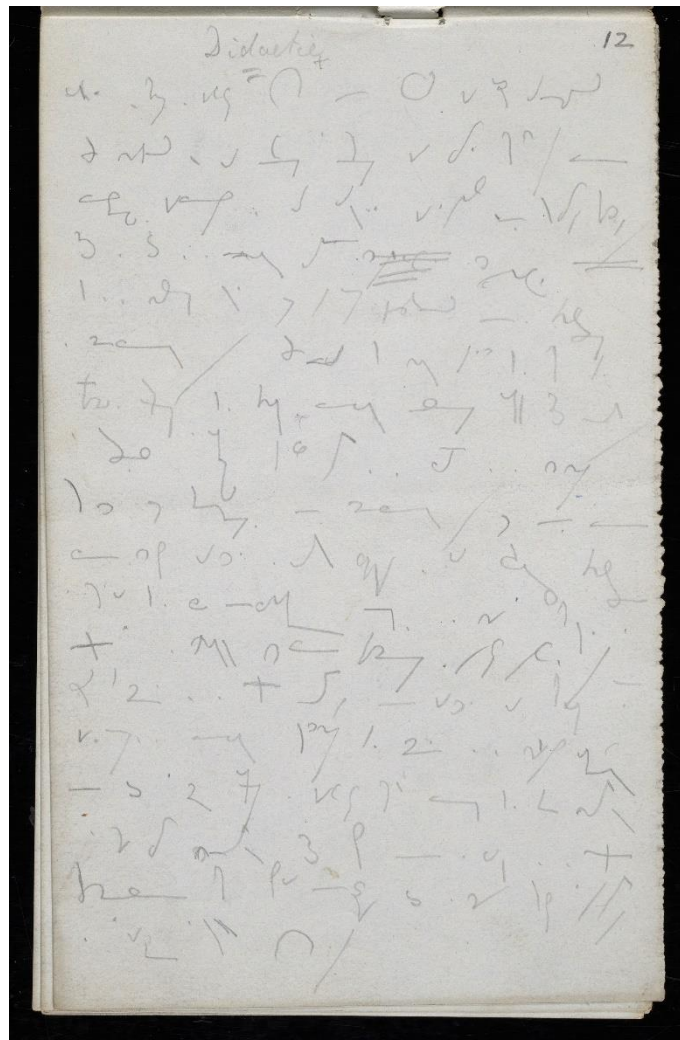


Figure 1: A shorthand exercise titled 'Didactic'. Image © The Free Library of Philadelphia.

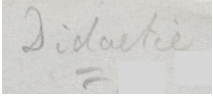
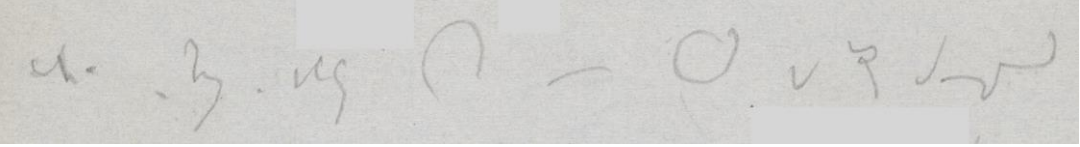
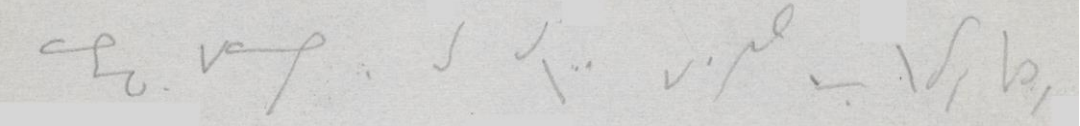
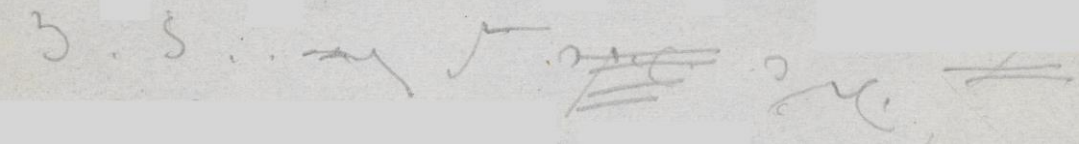
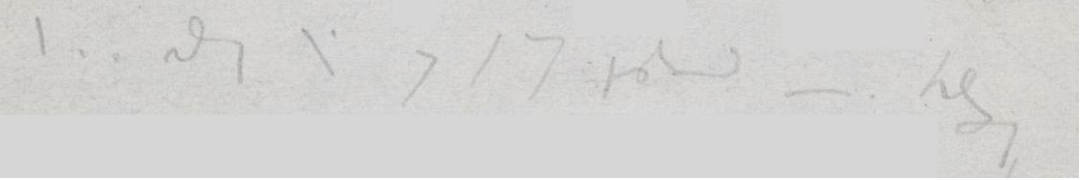
Use our [Resources](#) to help you decipher the text, look out for repeat symbols, and consider searching distinctive words/phrases to see if you can find a source text to

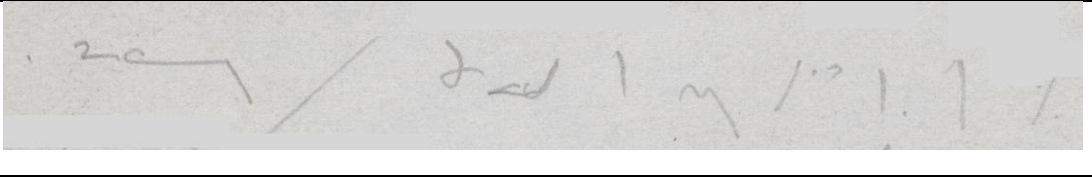
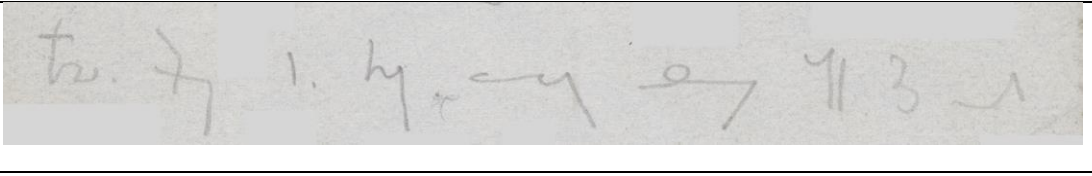
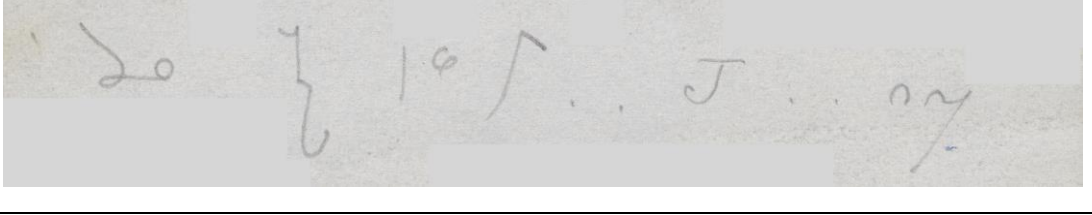
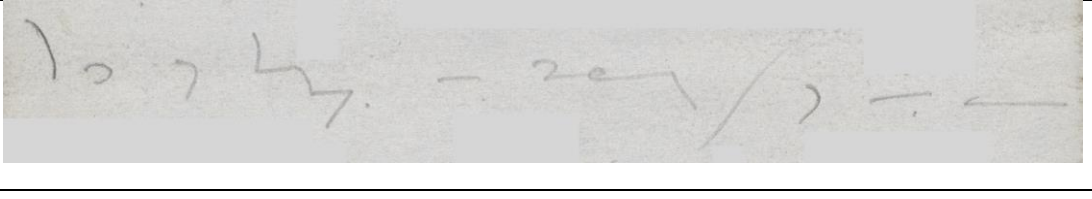
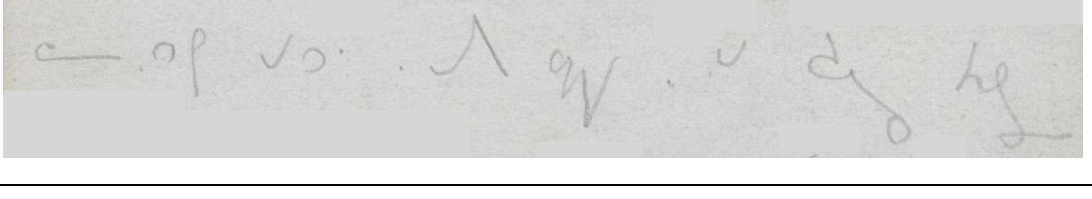
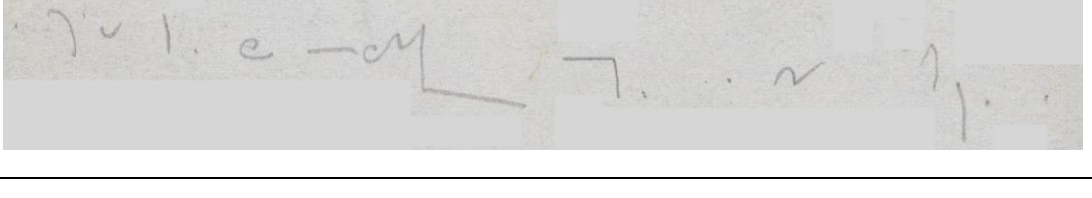
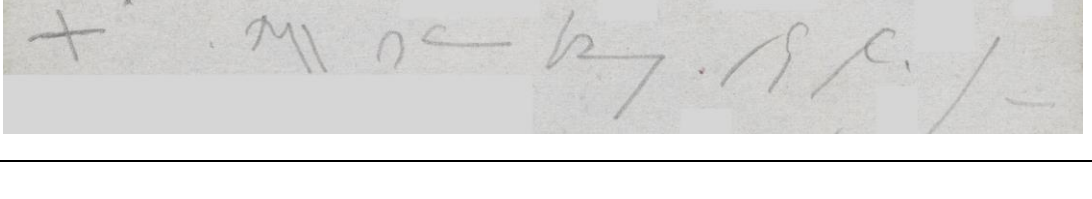
assist with your transcription. Remember that it is unlikely that you will be able to solve the whole text, but even one new symbol can be useful. Anyone who successfully describes a new symbol will be credited as its discoverer on our Roll of Honour.

Please complete the entry form and email us (claire.wood@leicester.ac.uk and bowleshugo@gmail.com) your solutions by **3 March 2023**. We will aim to publish the results on **20 March 2023**.

SOLUTION

Please decode as much of the text as you can, below, writing your solution for each character or group of characters under the appropriate line of shorthand script.

Line no.	
1	
2	
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Name:

Email:

Country of Residence (optional):

Do you consent to being credited for your efforts and as the discoverer of any new symbols on the Dickens Code Roll of Honour? (please tick)

Yes No

If 'yes', please state the name that you would like to be credited under (this could be your full name, your first name, a pseudonym, or a social media handle)

I wish to be credited as: _____

By signing this form and emailing in your competition entry, you agree to license your solution and report under a [Creative Commons CC BY-NC](#) license and grant permission for the 'Dickens Code' project website and related social media channels to reproduce your work, with appropriate credit. If you do not provide a signature, unfortunately we will be unable to process your competition entry.

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____



The Dickens Code is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council