

5 Contractions in non-standard language

Activity A

Writers sometimes use non-standard contractions in order to reflect informal speech. Match each of the contractions below with a full form.

'nother ain't doncha dunno gonna gotcha gotta innit wanna ya yer

- 1 isn't/aren't _____
- 2 your _____
- 3 I don't know _____
- 4 another _____
- 5 isn't it / hasn't he / don't they, etc. (used to emphasize a sentence) _____
- 6 I've got you _____
- 7 don't you _____
- 8 you _____
- 9 (am/are/is) going to _____
- 10 want to _____

Activity B

Complete the informal conversation with the contractions in A.

A: Where you off?

B: Sam's house. _____¹ come?

A: Yeah, I'll come for half an hour.

B: Half an hour? No, it's a party!

A: A party? Well that's a whole _____² story. What time will it finish?

B: _____³, but it's a party, so it's _____⁴ be late, innit! Come on, then.
You like parties _____⁵?

A: Yeah, but sorry, mate — _____⁶ get up early to revise.

B: Got an exam?

A: Yeah, and he's gonna kill me if I don't pass!

B: Who? _____⁷ old man?

A: Yeah, who else!

B: OK, _____⁸ (= I understand you). See _____⁹ tomorrow then.

A: See _____¹⁰.

Activity C

Discuss the questions with a partner.

- 1 Which, if any, of the contractions in A would it be appropriate for a foreign learner of English to use?
- 2 Do you use spoken contractions in your language? If so, tell your partner the most common examples.
- 3 Are written contractions used? If so, show your partner the most common examples.
- 4 What are three of the main differences between informal and formal speech in your language?