

C.K.L. SS B.Sc.

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Semantography—Blissymbolics
Publications (non-profit)

P.O. Box 222, Coogee,
Sydney, Australia 2034

Residing at present in Toronto,
Strathcona Hotel, 60 York St.,
Ontario, Canada M5J 1S8

PLEASE ADDRESS TELEGRAMS TO
665 5140 SYDNEY (AUSTRALIA)

Telephone: Sydney 665 5140
Residence: 2 Vicar Street, Coogee

Paper 15 of the Schools Commission Grant for the Correspondence Course on
Blissymbolics

Written Without Prejudice in every sense of these words-Toronto, 28 September, 1978.

Dear Friends and Participants of the Correspondence Course:

I, Charles Bliss am at present in Canada on a tour of important discussions and lectures on Blissymbolics encompassing Canada, the U.S.A. and Great Britain, lasting 3 months. A few weeks ago I celebrated with my devoted assistants and friends in Sydney my 81st birthday. I am in good health and spirit, though my heart is heavy with my responsibility for my work for all the children of the world.

Seventy-three years ago, when I was a little boy of 8, I decided to devote my life to helping humanity without any personal gain for myself. In the first edition of my book SEMANTOGRAPHY published in 1949 (29 years ago) I declared that I gave my work for all humanity free to use under one condition: that my symbols are not to be perverted by illogical falsifications by which my work will be ruined to the detriment of humanity. This would create a new Babel of symbols and to prevent this I have copyrighted my symbols.

Now open up page 63 of the second edition of my book which you have received free, thanks to the grant I have received from the Schools Commission in Canberra. For this I am indebted to the enlightened action of the Federal Minister of Education, the Honourable Senator J. L. Carrick and the leading men and women of the Schools Commission.

On page 63 to 66 you will find the very first lines which I handtyped with a typewriter 32 years ago and which my good wife Claire duplicated on a hand-operated duplicating machine. And there on page 66 you can read that I still give my work free to those who do not make any personal gain. Read the symbols displayed underneath and especially the words and explanations underneath the symbols and see how I want my symbols displayed so that even little children will be able to understand them.

Turn back a few pages to page 61 and 62 and read the tribute to my good wife Claire who died on 14th August, 1961. I wanted to die too. Life had no meaning for me. But I began to work on the second edition (the book before you) and added 182 pages, the most important ones containing about 20,000 combinations of my 100 basic symbol elements. This my dictionary of ENGLISH-SYMBOLS, you will find on pages 827 to 867.

And as you are so far out in my book just turn to page 813 and read in the following pages the story of the last days of my beloved wife Claire and realise that we made a wonderful pair, both devoted to helping humanity.

Forgive me my Friends, that I had to write all this to you, but I had to unburden my heavy heart and soul to you. Though I am in good health, I am over 81 and my life is coming to an end. I rely on you my friends to study my work and to stand up and fight for it because my work gives the children of humanity, be they handicapped or healthy, a new and wonderful tool for a better life.

Now you have before you Paper 17, the list of all papers, circular letters, lessons, books and printed matter. And actually, this paper before you is Paper 15 titled A List of Questions to be answered in writing.

These questions you will receive on the following pages. You have already received Paper 11, a special exercise book with ruled squares and how to use it to teach yourself and answer questions.

Take the following pages and paste them into this exercise book on a left page. The right page and the next left page are blank to hide the answers. I do hope that you have already bought some ruled sheets, the same ruling as in the exercise book of Paper 11. These sheets you will find in the better stationary shops. Try now to write the correct answers and when you believe that you have found the best answers, in your opinion, write them down and send them in to me in Sydney at the address: Charles Bliss, P.O. Box 222, Coogee, N.S.W., 2034.

The following pages containing the questions are of a smaller size, the size of your exercise book, and the first thing for you to do is to paste them into the exercise book on a left page. Leave the right page empty on both sides which means page 3. Page 4 should then contain the correct answer. But leave page 4 empty also, because you don't yet know the correct answers. This is the first test for you to show yourself and me whether you can correctly answer my questions (which follow). Take the square ruled sheets which are your "scribble paper" and try to put your answers to my questions on it. Then when you believe that you have found your answers to the best of your knowledge, type them neatly on such a sheet and send these sheets to me. You will then receive my Paper 16 which will

contain the correct answers and will indeed be also Lesson 2.

Now, as someone used to say "Knowledge is of two kinds. The knowledge we know, and the second knowledge is where to find the knowledge we don't yet know". And this means a great lightening of your task. Because you can answer all my following questions simply by looking up my textbook which you have already received as Paper 9. There you will find a dictionary at the end of the book which will guide you to the correct page on which to find the answers to my questions. So, it's actually easy for you IF YOU WANT THE EASY WAY OUT. But don't go the easy way. First try the difficult way, that is, if you have already studied some of the pages of the textbook (Paper 9 and the Tourist Folder which is Paper 14). But if you have studied nothing yet, then try to find the answers to my questions which follow by looking up my dictionary and find the pages where you will find the correct answers to my questions. These correct answers please type or hand print (not longhand which may be difficult to read) what you think are the correct answers and send them to me.

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Question 1: What are the different symbols for a door, a gate and a portal?

Question 2: What are the different symbols for happiness and joy?

Question 3: Could you find distinct words to better describe the different symbols for happiness and joy?

Question 4: What are the different symbols for sadness and sorrow?

Question 5: Could you better describe the different symbols for sadness and sorrow with "distinct" words.

Question 6: Could you show my symbol for those "distinct words" mentioned in questions 3 and 5. To help you answer better or easier my tricky question 5, I will give away part of the answer by saying that those "distinct words" are not more than 1 to 2 words.

Question 7: Once you have guessed or found my symbols for those "distinct words", can you describe to me in symbols and words how I arrived at my symbol for those "distinct words"? It's all described in my book. Your task is to search and think until you have found the correct answer to my questions which are very mischievous to bewilder you!

Question 8: Be careful, I am putting tricky questions to you maybe to fool you a bit for no other reason than to make you think hard. Beware, I am a jester, and some of my questions may turn out a joke. First you may be upset, but eventually you will laugh once you get Paper 16 with all the correct answers. Now here is Question 8. What is your symbol for sadness? Can it be written in only one way, or in two different ways, or perhaps in three different ways?

Question 9: What is the symbol for delight and what is the symbol for jubilant? And can these two meanings be written in two different symbols?

Question 10: Can you describe that symbol to be added? You should be able to do it because you have handled this symbol untold times in primary school.

Question 11: What are the different symbols for much and for many?

Question 12: When should we use the symbol for much and when for many? To answer this question, you don't need my book.

Question 13: What are the different symbols for bliss and for rapture?

Question 14: Suppose you want to describe a feeling which is even beyond bliss and rapture. Suppose you want to say that you are on "cloud 9" and "the heavens are opening up" for you. How can you symbolise these tremendous emotions, these overwhelming feelings? Well, of course, such delirious jubilations such bliss, such raptures are all caused by one certain ecstasy. What is the word for it?

Question 15: There is a word for it and I have even a symbol for it and it is not my symbol, and you surely have used this symbol many times when you were a teenager and had a crush on one of your teachers or on a boy or girl of your age. What is the word and what is the symbol for it?

Question 16: I do hope that you have answered Question 15 already. From my Paper 8 you have learned the most important rule of how to teach and examine yourself and this rule is NEVER PROCEED TO THE NEXT QUESTION BEFORE YOU HAVE ANSWERED THE FOREGOING QUESTION. But I will make an exemption here and will reveal to you that word, knowing that you have guessed it already from my mischievous wordings of the foregoing questions. The answer to Question 15 is "Love, LOVE, L O V E" which brings up the experience of happiness, of joy, of jubilation and of delight, of rapture and of bliss, cloud 9, and "the heavens opening up". And you know already the symbol for love. Please describe it as best you can.

Question 17: Well, you surely have experienced that wonderful feeling for the first time in your life (and later too, I hope) when your beloved one just turned the corner and came into your view. Do you know the meaning of Eros (hence erotic) Amor (what does this word mean? or Cupid? You surely have seen these three fellows (or are they only one?) thousands of times. What do these little fellows do with your poor heart, torn by the sweetest, but sometimes painful emotions?

Question 18: In Question 8 I have asked you whether the symbols for certain emotions like happiness and sorrow can be written in one way, or perhaps in two ways. Have you guessed already the 2 different symbols? In this question, I want to help you, having pity for you, because my questions (I am a jester you know) are brainteasers. The second different symbol you will find in a different chapter of my book and it deals with two arrows drawn together into one curious arrow. Can you find the chapter and the meaning of my quasi-arrow symbol? Then please draw the second symbol for happiness and sorrow.

Question 19: Now that you have found that quasi-arrow (it looks like a fishhook) and what it means and in what way it should be used for many meanings in all languages, can you show me your symbol for hate. Alas, it is a cruel symbol, indicating indeed how your heart is "torn" by the unhappy emotion of hate.

Intermission: As you already know, I have developed my symbol system for healthy children of all nations. To my intense happiness it was found that also speech-paralysed cerebral palsied children can use it to communicate with their family and friends. But fortunately there are only few such brain-damaged children. In Canada there may be only 2000 against the millions of healthy children. But there are many more children who are somehow mentally retarded (or so their teachers think, and my language teachers thought that I too was mentally retarded when I refused to try to understand their dreadful grammar). There are millions of children who are at best described as "slow learners". They are sensitive and unhappy with life and all its difficulties which they simply cannot grasp. And there are may millions of healthy and intelligent children who are so sensitive that their days are filled with unhappiness. For them and for all the healthy children my symbol system will open up a new and happy life. I won't say any more about this. I wrote it only to tell you that you, by learning my symbols, will not only help your braindamaged children in the school for handicapped, you will also help all other children to a better life, and even your own children and even you yourself will be able to find better and more happiness in life through my work. I describe my work as containing four different parts. I say that my symbols contain a simple graphic, a simple logic, a simple semantics and a great ethics. Alas, the mis-teachers of Toronto are still after 7 years making a massacre of many of my symbols. As for the logic, the semantics and the ethics, they are still ignorant and they have not been able to teach these wonderful parts of my symbols to themselves and to their children. Now let's go on with more questions.

Question 20: Now that we know the symbol for happiness and joy, let's Draw the symbols for happy, happier, and happiest. In previous questions I have already asked what additional symbol I use to express say jubilation and bliss and ecstasy. And I want to help you and say that the additional symbol is one which you have learned already in primary school and which you use even now in daily life. So, my new question is to ask you how to use that international symbol to describe happier and happiest. Show me how.

Question 21: Now that you know (or have found in my book) how to symbolise happier and happiest please explain what I mean with my symbols attached to the meaning of say much happiness, more and most happiness which include happier and happiest.

Question 22: Now in the foregoing question I have revealed to you where to find the answers to much, more and most. Now show me my symbols for many, more and most. Be careful, I am tricking you.

Question 23: Now draw the symbols for less, lesser and least.

Question 24: Now draw the symbols for few, fewer and fewest.

Question 25: Draw the symbols for happiness, much happiness and very much happiness.

Question 26: Draw the symbols for little happiness, less happiness, and least happiness.

Question 27: Draw the symbols for a tree, for many trees and for very many trees.

Question 28: Draw the symbols for a group of trees, for a grove and for a forest.

Question 29: Draw the symbols for many houses, for a village and for a town.

Question 30: Draw the symbols for much water, for a lake and for an ocean.

Question 31: Draw the symbols for much rain, a downpour and a cloudburst.

Question 32: Draw the symbols for many books, for a collection of books and for a library.

Question 33: Draw the symbols for much happiness, for jubilation and for bliss (my name incidentally, but I like it very much because I have given bliss to many children and bliss to myself).

Question 34: There is a little repetition in my questions, but you will find this rewarding. Now draw the symbols for many, very many, few and very few.

Question 35: Draw the symbols for much, very much, little and very little.

Question 36: Draw the symbols for a village, a town, a hamlet and an outpost.

Question 37: Draw the symbols for a lake, an ocean, a pond and a puddle.

Question 38: Draw the symbols for a downpour, a cloudburst, a shower and a drizzle.

Question 39: Draw the symbols for jubilation, for bliss, for little enjoyment and for very little enjoyment.

Question 40: Draw the symbols for happy, happier, and happiest.

Question 41: Draw the symbols for sad, sadder and saddest.

Question 42: Draw the symbols for high, higher and highest.

Question 43: Draw the symbols for low, lower and lowest.

Well my Friends and Students of my work, this is the end of the torture. Now it may well be a torture for you, but be of good cheer and think that if brain-damaged children and even mentally retarded children can grasp my symbols for the meanings mentioned in the foregoing 43 questions, then you will be able to grasp them ten times easier and more.

BUT, and here is the BUT. This my first torture will be a torture for you IF YOU JUST HAVEN'T MADE USE OF MY BOOK AND IF YOU HAVE NOT STUDIED A NUMBER OF CHAPTERS. But if you do not have this knowledge yet, then there is the second kind of knowledge, namely where to find that knowledge you need, and this means the correct use of my dictionary.

Now let me help you. Turn to page 827 of the textbook which carries the title DICTIONARY INDEX OF SYMBOLISED MEANINGS. Read this page and the next and then you come to the chapter on HOW TO USE THIS INDEX AND AVOID FRUSTRATION. This page and the next five pages to 833 - well, just don't read them. STUDY THEM EARNESTLY. And read these pages again and again until you know how to handle the dictionary and where to find the answers to my frustrating and exasperating questions.

AND THEN SUDDENLY ALL WILL BE VERY SIMPLE AND LOGICAL.

Now, I said in the beginning that you should paste all my questions printed on sheets as small, or a little smaller for better pasting them into your squared ruled exercise book. They must go on a left page, the next two pages are left blank to hide the answer which will be on the fourth page, a right page. BUT DON'T WRITE THE ANSWERS DOWN THERE. Your answers may be wrong. Write your answers down on scribble paper and then use the square ruled sheets (which you have bought in a better stationary shop) and type the answers to my 43 questions and draw the symbols neatly with the squares, and spend the few cents on a letter to me. Then you will receive Paper 16, the Lesson 2 which will contain all the correct answers as a lesson. Once you have received my Paper 16, you can find out which of your answers are correct and which are incorrect. Then, and only then write all the correct answers into the right (the fourth page) and then ask yourselves the same questions again and again and look up the fourth page and see whether you have mastered ALL CORRECT ANSWERS.

AND THEN GO ON AND STUDY MORE OF MY BOOK. God's speed to you my Friend and A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR 1979 to you, your family and friends. I close my question letter to you in Toronto, Saturday morning 30 September, and greet you.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Teale

Margaret Teale
Sydney Assistant to Charles
Bliss
