CODE

from the International Code of Signals

Open Book
A Division of Station Hill Press
POEMS

for the Use of All Nations

Hannah Weiner
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Acknowledgements

MAGAZINES
S.M.S. The Letter Edged in Black; For Now; Chelsea Review; The Drama Review; Wastepaper Theater; Personal Injury; Poetry Chicago; 0-9; Bones; ROOF; Equal Time; Odda Thala; Cavalier; Poets for Peace; Diana’s BiMonthly; Hard Press (postcard); Dial-a-Poem (telephone)

ANTHOLOGY

FILM
Any Chance of War, Angry Arts Festival, New York University 1968

GALLERIES (WHEEL ONLY)
Dwan Gallery (1968); Gain Ground (1969)

COLLECTIONS
Sol LeWitt; John Perreault

PERFORMANCES
Friendship Event, Judson Church, 1966; Street Event, 1967, with semaphore flags, megaphones; Avant Garde Festival, 1967, 1968, flags and semaphore signalmen; Spring Gallery, 1968, performed with the aid of the U.S. Coast Guard, using semaphore signals, morse, visual poems; Central Park Poetry Events, 1968, performed with the aid of the U.S. Coast Guard, using alphabet flag hoists, semaphore signalmen, flashing light signals, megaphones, flares; Woodstock Poem Event, 1969; Wastepaper Theater, 1975

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Introduction

These poems and performance pieces are from the INTERNATIONAL CODE OF SIGNALS for the Use of All Nations, British Editions 1859, 1899 and American Edition, post-war, 1931, a visual signal system for ships at sea. Codes of signals for the use of mariners have been published in various countries since the early 19th century. The first International Code was drafted in 1855 by a committee set up by the British Board of Trade. Flags at that time numbered 18, which represented the consonants of the alphabet, with the exception of X and Z. A later version published in 1899 increased the letter flags to 26, plus an answering pennant. Flags, one for each letter of the alphabet, are hoisted on the mast, singly or in groups of two, three, four. Single and two flag hoists are distress signals, three flag hoists are general signals, four flag hoists geographical signals. In addition, each flag has a name; A, Alpha, B, Bravo, C, Charlie, etc. In combination, as CJD, “I was plundered by a pirate,” these signals comprise a complete volume of code signals. Messages can be transmitted also by two semaphore red signal flags, and by Morse code. Visual signaling is any method of above water communication, the transmission of which is capable of being seen (alphabet flags, semaphore flags, Morse flashing light). Sound signaling is any method of sending Morse signals by means of siren, whistle, foghorn, bell or other sound apparatus. Although Morse and light signals were used in performances, only visual signals are included (we omit radio) in this book.
# The Semaphore Alphabet

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<thead>
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<th>Character</th>
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<td><strong>RJ</strong></td>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
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<td><strong>LZT</strong></td>
<td>Mike: I have received the following message from agents.</td>
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<td><strong>TCD</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: Party?</td>
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<td><strong>VHX</strong></td>
<td>Mike: Saturday night</td>
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<td><strong>OAR</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: Happy to hear it or that</td>
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<td><strong>FS</strong></td>
<td>Mike: Be very careful in your intercourse with strangers</td>
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<td><strong>YCG</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: I do not trust too much to my _____</td>
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<td><strong>EZF</strong></td>
<td>Mike: Article indicated can be supplied, but it will require fitting. I will lend what is required</td>
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<td><strong>QNA</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: All precautions have been taken</td>
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<td><strong>TCD</strong></td>
<td>Mike: Proceed to rendezvous</td>
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<td><strong>FY</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: Hot bearings</td>
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<td><strong>TIV</strong></td>
<td>Mike: By no means plain</td>
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<td><strong>SDQ</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: What is her name?</td>
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<td><strong>SDL</strong></td>
<td>Juliet: My name is Juliet</td>
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<td><strong>J</strong></td>
<td>Juliet</td>
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<td><strong>ENC</strong></td>
<td>dazzling, am, is, are</td>
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<td><strong>SDT</strong></td>
<td>What is your name?</td>
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<td><strong>SLD</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: My name is Romeo</td>
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<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td>Juliet: Your name is not on my list; spell it alphabetically</td>
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<td><strong>EBQ</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: I wish to have personal communication with you</td>
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<td><strong>JG</strong></td>
<td>Juliet: Unless your communication is very important, I must be excused</td>
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<td><strong>IJ</strong></td>
<td>Mike: Stranger is suspicious</td>
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<td><strong>MYX</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: Fine day</td>
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<td><strong>EBL</strong></td>
<td>Juliet: I beg to be excused</td>
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<td><strong>PCF</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: The ice is so solid I cannot break through; send help</td>
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<td><strong>YCS</strong></td>
<td>Mike: Try again</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: Stop, heave to, or come nearer, I have something to communicate</td>
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<td><strong>USX</strong></td>
<td>Juliet: Sorry, I am unable to comply with your request</td>
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<td><strong>AGS</strong></td>
<td>Romeo: The following is plain language</td>
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<td>TQB</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>I doubt if it is possible</td>
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<td>RIC</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>Cannot make it out</td>
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<td>EQO</td>
<td>Mike:</td>
<td>I decline to have anything further to say or do in the matter.</td>
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<td>KUM</td>
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<td>Nothing to be depended upon beyond your own resources</td>
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<td>DJX</td>
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<td>Farewell. Adieu (Mike leaves)</td>
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<td>NM</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>I am on fire</td>
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<td>MLI</td>
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<td>You must not or cannot make any excuse</td>
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<td>Shall I have the pleasure to or of</td>
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<td>Foxtrot</td>
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<td>FBX</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>As you please</td>
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<td>QRA</td>
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<td>I am willing to</td>
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<td>Tango</td>
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<td>QAW</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>It is very kind of you</td>
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<td>At last</td>
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<td>OYP</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>Horny</td>
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<td>Idiot</td>
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<td>IVL</td>
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<td>You are too close. Keep farther off.</td>
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<td>DN</td>
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<td>I have orders for you not to touch</td>
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<td>HFL</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>Will you breakfast with me?</td>
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<td>LS</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>It is not safe to go so fast</td>
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<td>LAX</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>Will you dine with me?</td>
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<td>MIL</td>
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<td>Tommorrow evening</td>
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<td>TQB</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>I doubt if it is possible</td>
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<td>MIK</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>This evening?</td>
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<td>LAW</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>What time is dinner or when will dinner be ready?</td>
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<td>FBM</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>As soon as it is dark</td>
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<td>DCA</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>With pleasure. I will accept.</td>
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<td>MHL</td>
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<td>A small establishment</td>
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<td>HAJ</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>Cafe. Restaurant</td>
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<td>DOQ</td>
<td>Juliet:</td>
<td>What would you recommend?</td>
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<td>TUN</td>
<td>Romeo:</td>
<td>Preserved soup</td>
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<td>GDC</td>
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<td>Fresh beef and vegetables</td>
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</table>
STJ  Potato
IOG  Cheese
ISD  Ale, beer
BSU  Juliet: We shall have
WVR  Sherry
SYR  Are any oysters to be had?
LMT  Half dozen
QXT  Lobster
ZGE  Rhine wine
OEZ  Goose
UWS  Rice
SCN  Mushroom
ZGB  Burgundy wine
TUJ  Preserved fruit
KC  Champagne
WIZ  Romeo: Bicarbonate of soda
DZI  Have been short on allowance for some time
GKI  Can I get a bill cashed here?
IVK  Will you keep close to me during the night?
OXY  Hope you will
OXW  Juliet: Hope you can
IP  Romeo: Shall we keep company?
ITY  Juliet: A visit from a Protestant clergyman would be much valued
GHI  Romeo: Will you lead into or point out a good berth?
IHL  Juliet: When do lay days commence?
DQU  Romeo: After dinner
ZMD  Juliet: Your zeal has been particularly noted by _____
MIR  Romeo: Have you ever?
MIG  Juliet: Every evening
KIQ  Every day. Daily
MJA  Every opportunity
NWC  Have you a proper certificate of competency?
TU  Romeo: Have you a clean bill of health?
GHI  You are in a very fair berth
GIA Juliet: This is my best point
SHJ Romeo: Some swell
XOR Romeo: Thank you
GDS Juliet: May I begin to?
GIT Juliet: The sooner the better
MFO Romeo: Entrance is difficult
MFD Juliet: Try to enter
KZU Romeo: I am in difficulties; direct me how to steer
OOX Juliet: You should swing and enter stern first
HBK Romeo: What is the nature of the bottom or what kind of bottom have you?
HAY Juliet: Double bottom
FHR Romeo: Stern way. Going astern
LK Juliet: Go astern easy. Easy astern
ODI Romeo: I am going full speed
HC Juliet: It is not safe to go so fast
KZY Romeo: It is difficult to extricate
BK Juliet: Is anything the matter
VLA Romeo: Cock broken or damaged
EHR Juliet: What do the cost of repairs amount to?
DF Romeo: With some assistance I shall be able to set things to rights
AN Juliet: Are you in a condition to proceed?
CCQ Romeo: If it comes on to blow
NZ Juliet: Blowing hard
CCO Romeo: Blowing too hard
DIR Juliet: Can you renew the action?
PEO Romeo: According to the usual practice?
BKS Romeo: I shall, or will if I can
VKE Juliet: Can you lift your screw?
MIV Romeo: Every exertion has been made
SPG Operations have commenced
CWY Juliet: You
ERH Romeo: Screw well
JCG Romeo: Are you coming?
JDG  Juliet:  I shall come off by and by or at the time indicated
OWT  Romeo:  I fear I cannot hold out much longer
X  Juliet:  Stop carrying out your intentions and wait for my signals
MZJ  Romeo:  When will you or it be finished?
JDH  Juliet:  I will come
JCQ  Romeo:  Come directly, immediately
JDC  Juliet:  Coming at once
LCO  Romeo:  Discharging
ZHC  Shall or will be withdrawn
DIR  Juliet:  Can you renew the action?
AI  Romeo:  I will not abandon you. I will remain by you
WGD  Juliet:  Sleep, sleepy, sleeping, slept
DXY  Romeo:  All snug
EDQ    ANY CHANCE OF WAR?

EDQ    Any chance of war?
ODV    Good chance
IKF    No chance of peace
YU     Has war commenced?
YX     War has commenced
YW     War between _____ and _____ has commenced
KDX    How is the crop?
KDW    Crops have suffered severely
KDV    Crops destroyed
TN     Are you in want of provisions?
LHE    Distressed for want of food
YU     Want food immediately
NV     Unable for want of
YZ     Are you in want of water?
LHF    Distressed for want of water
NRC    Fresh water
YVH    No water to be had
NF     Dying from want of water
FJX    Have you been attacked?
NJ     I am attacked. I want assistance. Help, I am attacked
FO     Are you in danger?
NL     I am in danger
KLF    Much danger
KLE    In great danger
DNE    Enemy is advancing
DNA    Army is advancing
EQB    Is anyone wounded?
RKN    Many wounded
ZIN    How many wounded?
PKN    No. of killed and wounded not yet known
ZIM    How are the wounded?
YGJ    Without arms
FGX    Without assistance
YL     Want immediate medical assistance
CP     Cannot assist
NC  In distress. Want immediate assistance
CX  No assistance can be rendered. Do the best you can for yourselves.
GBT I shall bear up
GBV May I, or can I bear up?
YE  Want assistance
GLN Want bread
RZX Want more support
LHI How long have you been in such distress?
KNG How many days?
RKD Many
RKQ So many
RKS Too many
KLD How many have you dangerously ill?
LQN Dying at the rate of _____ a day
ZIE Could, or might be worse
ZIF It will be worse
ZIG Much worse
MSK Is my family well?
ZBM Not so well
FZB When was the battle fought?
KBN Daylight. At daylight
KOY When was the last death?
FIB Daybreak. Dawn. At dawn
KOM How many dead?
KON Who is dead?
KOU Dearer, dearest
KOV Too dear
RPJ WANT MEN

RJE man
DWS alderman
GVL boatman
IFD cattleman
TUO chairman
ITX clergyman, parson or minister
MDK have you men enough?
NAB fireman
NBS fisherman
NJX foreman
OTR helmsman
RKI how many men?
QIB landsman
QIL leadsman
QPJ liberty man
RAE look-out man look out!
NSX he, or she is full of men
RPH newly raised man
SIT STILL nobleman
TQO postman
UXF rifleman
VLG seaman
WDH signalman
YZM tradesman
YWH waterman
ZIA workman
MDK have you men enough?
RPJ want men
RPK your men
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LRG</td>
<td>Will you carry a light?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPD</td>
<td>Will you make the land tonight?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRM</td>
<td>I will carry a light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDW</td>
<td>I see the land, land in sight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDV</td>
<td>I have just lost sight of the land or light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MQC</td>
<td>Anything in sight?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHW      Pirates

CJD      I was plundered by a pirate
CJF      Describe the pirate
CJN      She is armed
CJP      How is she armed?
CJS      She has long guns
CJW      I have no long guns
BLD      I am a complete wreck
Persons Indicated Present Their Compliments to

If you please
Do you wish to?
As you please
If you wish
It is my wish
Will person please?
I or persons indicated wish to see you
Wish to speak to you
Will you please?
Wish you would
Request the pleasure of
With pleasure. I will accept
Shall I have the pleasure to or of?
Very acceptable
Will you give me the pleasure?
With much pleasure
Will you write?
Yes, I will
Will you stay or wait?
Yes, I can
Will you accompany?
I will accompany
Will you give me the pleasure of your company at?
Very glad of your company
The pleasure of your company
I or persons indicated gratefully accept
QGC      Another — some other
QGD      Any person or thing
QGF      Some
QGH      The
QGJ      Both
QGK      Each
QGL      Every. Every one. All
QGM      Nothing
QGN      More
QGP      Much. Many
QGR      Not so much. Less
QGS      From
QGT      On
QGV      On the _____
QGW      On me
QHB      On you
QHC      On (person-s indicated)
QHD      With
QHF      And
QHG      For
QHJ      For me
QHK      For you
QHL      For (persons indicated)
QHM      In. Into
QHN      To
QHP      To be
QHR      Why?
QHS      How?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEC</th>
<th>Am I?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BED</td>
<td>Am I not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEF</td>
<td>Am I to?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYG</td>
<td>How am I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUY</td>
<td>Why am I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUA</td>
<td>Why are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUZ</td>
<td>Why are (or is)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUX</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPV</td>
<td>What, or Which am I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSQ</td>
<td>Where am I (or, are we)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COT</td>
<td>Was I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COU</td>
<td>Was I not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFR</td>
<td>Had, or Have I been?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFH</td>
<td>Can, or May have been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHC</td>
<td>Shall, or Will I be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHG</td>
<td>Shall, or Will we be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIX</td>
<td>Will it be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHE</td>
<td>Shall, or Will there be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFP</td>
<td>Could, or Might there be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFI</td>
<td>Can, or May there be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BKH</td>
<td>Can, or May I be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFC</td>
<td>Am, Are, or Is to be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFE</td>
<td>Be the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGY</td>
<td>Let us be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RAT CAN (ABLE TO)

HJM I can
HJN I can be
CSB He, She, It or _____, can be
CSR They, or _____s, can be
CSJ Can he, she, it or _____? be?
CSK Can I?
CLS Can I be?
CSM Can I do anything for you?
LWC FOLLOW ME

LWC Follow me
LWF Will you lead?
LWG Will you follow?
LWJ Shall I follow?
LWK I will follow
LWC Follow me
LWF Will you lead?
LWG Will you follow?
LWJ Shall I follow?
LWK I will follow
LWC Follow me
LWF Will you lead?
LWG Will you follow?
LWJ Shall I follow?
LWK I will follow
LWC Follow me
LWF Will you lead?
LWG Will you follow?
LWJ Shall I follow?
LWK I will follow
LWC Follow me
LWF Will you lead?
LWG Will you follow?
LWJ Shall I follow?
LWK I will follow
LWC Follow me
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>As it is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>As it was</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAS</td>
<td>As it was not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAU</td>
<td>As it will be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDF</td>
<td>Is it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTN</td>
<td>It is as</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGR</td>
<td>It ought to be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGT</td>
<td>It shall (or will) be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGU</td>
<td>It shall (or will) not be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNV</td>
<td>It will do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIX</td>
<td>Will it be?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOU</td>
<td>Will it do?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQG</td>
<td>What or which is it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDY</td>
<td>Its-self (see also he, she, it or person-s or thing-s indicated)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TQB</td>
<td>I doubt if it is possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRW</td>
<td>Barely possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TQD</td>
<td>Is it possible?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TQE</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TQF</td>
<td>Quite possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBJ</td>
<td>As slow as possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBG</td>
<td>As quick as possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAI</td>
<td>As fast as possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBO</td>
<td>As soon as possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAY</td>
<td>As much (or, many) as possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TQC</td>
<td>If possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOU</td>
<td>Avoid, if possible (impossible)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFB</td>
<td>Not possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CME     THE

BEN     Are, or Is the _____?
BFE     Be the _____
BJU     By the _____
HUE     Can, or may the _____?
BLF     Could, or Might the _____?
BMK     Do, Does or Did the _____?
BPG     For the _____
BPS     From the _____
BQX     Had, Has or Have the _____?
BZY     If the _____
CDN     In the _____
CEY     Must the _____?
CGA     Not the _____
CGR     Of the _____
CHD     On the _____
CHV     Ought the _____?
CJT     Should, or would the _____?
CSQ    WHERE AM I (OR, ARE WE)?

CSQ    Where am I (or, are we)?
WJV    Somewhere
CST    Where are they?
DQR    Anywhere
CSR    Where are (or, is)?
MJc    Everywhere
SI     Where are you from?
Eqs    Anywhere else
SH     Where are you bound?
Lvs    Elsewhere
CSR    Where is?
CSP    Whereabouts