

**1920**, *The Course of Instruction for the Primary Schools: with notes and appendices*, Education Department, South Australia. Pp.10-19, 57-67.

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In 1920 the course of instruction for the primary schools underwent major revision and was published as a separate volume. For the subject English the curriculum material was organised into the *course of instruction* by grades and additional *notes on the course of primary instruction* with separate notes now included for each subject component. These are transcribed below:

## **The Course of Instruction for Primary Schools**

**1920**

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### **Course A**

(For Schools with more than one assistant).

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### **ENGLISH**

GRADE I.- AGES 6 TO 7 YEARS.

*Reading.*-Adelaide Primer I., and Primer II. To page 29, and easy sentences based on the words contained in the lessons, and written on the blackboard in script characters.

*Poetry.*-Nursery rhymes, jingles, and short simple poems correlated with nature lessons, etc., to be recited with suitable actions; at least 24 lines per quarter to be memorised. The poems should be illustrated by pictures or drawings.

(Recitation is recommended as a welcome break at the change of lessons.)

*Language (Oral).*-Encouragement of free conversation between teacher and children upon subjects familiar to them-their homes, meals, pets, gardens, games, pictures, and nature lessons, etc. The conversation should be conducted chiefly in a series of simple sentences. Care should be taken to prevent the frequent repetition of "and" "and so," "and then," "so," etc.

Simple nursery stories, fairy tales, myths, and legends, told by the teacher to the children, and re-told by them.

*Spelling.*-To make words, using sounds dealt with in Primer I. Spelling of eight words per week chosen by the teacher from the lessons read in Primer II. (during the second half-year only). Transcription of words.

*Writing.*-To write with chalk or lead pencil from the teacher's copy. NO thickening of the down-stroke is to be attempted; loops should be used from the beginning.

NOTE.-The use of sandpaper letters is strongly recommended in the teaching of writing.

## GRADE II. – AGES 7 TO 8 YEARS.

*Reading.* -To read with reasonable fluency and expression the Adelaide Primer II., the Introductory Reader, and one approved story book.

Free choice reading from the class library, and from free reading material.

Drill to ensure clear enunciation and correct pronunciation.

*Poetry.* -Nursery rhymes, jingles, and short simple poems correlated with nature lessons, etc., to be recited with suitable actions; at least 24 lines per quarter to be memorised. The poems should be illustrated by pictures or drawings.

(Recitation is recommended as a welcome break at the change of lessons.)

*Language (Oral).* – Encouragement of free conversation between teacher and children upon subjects familiar to them – their homes, meals, pets, gardens, games, pictures, and nature lessons, &c. The conversation should be conducted chiefly in a series of simple sentences. Care should be taken to prevent the frequent repetition of “and,” “and so,” “and then,” “so,” etc.

Simple nursery stories, fairy tales, myths, and legends, told by the teacher to the children, and re-told by them.

The children should be trained to express their thoughts clearly, distinctly, and in complete sentences.

Attention should be paid to the correction of errors in ordinary speech.

Phonic exercises.

*Language (Written).* – After a language lesson or nature lesson, the children should be allowed to express one or two thoughts on paper in writing.

*Spelling.* – Twelve words per week chosen by the teacher from the lessons read.

Transcription of words and short sentences.

Dictation exercises commencing with sentences of four or five words, and working up to three lines of print from the lessons read. (These exercises are intended to train the child to write from dictation, so that he may successfully meet the tests that may be set in higher classes; they are not intended as a spelling test.)

*Writing.* – To write with lead pencil on paper from the teacher’s copy; the height of the small letters should be about three-sixteenths of an inch.

No thickening of the down-stroke is to be attempted.

Transcription in books of short sentences and of lists of words taken from the reading lessons, the copies being set on the blackboard; capital letters.

## GRADE III. – AGES 8 TO 9 YEARS.

*Reading.* – To read with reasonable fluency and expression the Adelaide Illustrated Reader I., or an approved substitute, and two approved story books.

Silent reading, for short periods, to enable the pupils to grasp the thought content of the lesson; this must be done under the direct supervision of the teacher.

Free choice reading from the class library.

Drill to ensure clear enunciation and correct pronunciation.

*Poetry.* – Short poetical selections correlated with nature and moral lessons, etc., at least 30 lines per quarter to be memorised. Care is to be taken that the

pupils grasp the meaning of the poem, and that the enunciation and pronunciation are clear and distinct.

*Language (Oral).* – Careful instruction at every lesson in the art of speaking correctly. Further special oral instruction by means of picture talks, observation talks, and discussions on the subject-matter of reading lessons, etc., as prescribed for this grade.

The answers of the pupils should be expressed clearly, distinctly, and in complete sentences.

*Language (Written).* – Writing short sentences in answer to a question, or upon a simple topic. The use of capital letters, the period, the mark of interrogation.

*Spelling.* – Words from the reading lessons.

The Australian Progressive Spelling Book, as prescribed for Grade IV. (Until this book is recast, every alternate word only, commencing with the first, need be taught).

Dictation exercises of three lines of print from the reader, and four words selected from the work covered in the spelling book.

*Writing.* – In Adelaide Copy Books, Nos. 3 and 3A.

Transcription of passages and words from the reading lessons.

Carefully written work in Dictation books and work books.

(All written work excepting that in the work books is to be done in ink.)

#### GRADE IV. – AGES 9 TO 10 YEARS.

*Reading.* – To read with fluency and expression the *Children's House*, Grade IV., and two approved story books.

Silent reading, for short periods, to enable the pupils to grasp the thought content of the lesson; this must be done under the direct supervision of the teacher.

Free choice reading from the class library.

Reading by the teacher for short periods of suitable poems and stories.

Drill to ensure clear enunciation and correct pronunciation.

*Poetry.* – Short poems, single stanzas, detached couplets, and choice prose passages; not less than 30 lines per quarter to be memorised.

Care is to be taken that the pupils grasp the meaning of the poem, and that the enunciation and pronunciation are clear and distinct.

*Language (Oral).* – Oral expression of the subject matter of reading and other lessons.

Practice in continuous statement, in narration, and in description, of events within the experience of the child.

Expanding simple sentences by the use of adjectives and adverbs.

Correction of common errors of speech.

Phonic exercises.

*Language (Written).* – Short exercises on common topics, and the reproduction of the substance of stories.

The use of the comma, inverted commas, and the apostrophe as a sign of the possessive.

Abbreviations – "Mr.", "Mrs.", "Dr.", "Rev.", etc.

*Grammar.* – Recognition of the subject and predicate in the simple sentence; the functions of verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, and adverb.

(Teachers are recommended to use "The Model Classbooks of English," Book II., by Chambers and Ker (Blackie & Son, Ltd.), as an aid to the teaching of language and grammar. This book should not be placed in the hands of the pupils.)

*Spelling.* – Words from the reading lessons in the *Children's Hour*.

The Australian Progressive Spelling Book, as prescribed for Grade V. (Until this book is recast, every alternate word only, commencing with the first, need be taught.)

Lists of words which have been found to present special difficulty in dictation, composition, and other lessons.

Dictation lessons of four lines of print from lessons read in the *Children's Hour*, and six words selected from the work covered in the spelling book.

*Writing.* – In Adelaide Copy Books, Nos. 4 and 4A.

Transcription of passages and words from the reading lessons.

At this stage children should be trained to rule all lines.

All written work excepting that in the work books is to be done in ink.)

#### GRADE V. – AGES 10 TO 11 YEARS.

*Reading.* – To read with fluency and expression the *Children's Hour*, Grade V. and VI., the Adelaide History Reader III., and an approved story book.

Silent reading for short periods, to enable the pupils to grasp the thought content of the lesson. This must be done under the direct supervision of the teacher.

Free choice reading from the class library.

Reading by the teacher for short periods of suitable poems and stories.

Drill to ensure clear enunciation and correct pronunciation.

*Poetry.* – Short poems, single stanzas, detached couplets, and choice prose passages; not less than 40 lines per quarter to be memorised.

Care is to be taken that the pupils grasp the meaning of the poem, etc., and that the enunciation and pronunciation are clear and distinct.

*Language (Oral).* – Oral expression of the subject matter of reading and other lessons.

Practice in continuous statement, in narration, and in description, of events within the experience of the child.

Expanding simple sentences by the use of adjectives and adverbs.

Correction of common errors of speech.

Phonic exercises.

*Language (Written).* – Narrative composition.

Personal letters.

Fitting together of the elements of the simple sentence, *e.g.*, subjects to predicates, predicates to subjects.

Conversion of simple sentences from singular to plural form.

Expanding sentences by the addition of phrases and clauses.

How to quote dates, names of months, etc.

Abbreviations.

*Grammar.* – Construction of simple sentences with qualifying and modifying words and phrases.

Construction of complex sentences showing the position of the adjectival clause. Easy exercises on the adverbial clause.

General analysis up to the state indicated by the synthesis above.

The functions of connectives in these sentences.

Recognition of all parts of speech.

(Teachers are recommended to use "The Model Classbooks of English," Books II. And III., by Chambers & Ker (Blackie and Son., Ltd.) as an aid to the teaching of language and grammar. These books should not be placed in the hands of the pupils.)

*Spelling.* – Words from the reading lessons in the *Children's Hour*.

The Australian Progressive Spelling Book, as prescribed for Grade VI. (Until this book is recast, every alternate word only, commencing with the first, need be taught.)

Lists of words which have been found to present special difficulty in dictation, composition, and other lessons.

Dictation lessons of six lines of print from lessons read in the *Children's Hour*, and eight words selected from the work covered in the spelling book.

*Writing.* – In Adelaide Copy Books, Nos. 5 and 5A.

Transcription of prose and poetry with due regard to punctuation marks.

Careful writing, neat ruling, and methodical arrangement of work in all books.

Letter drill.

(All written work excepting that in the work books is to be done in ink.)

#### GRADE VI. – AGES 11 TO 12 YEARS.

*Reading.* – To read with fluency and expression the *Children's Hour*, Grades V. and VI., and two approved story books.

Silent reading, for short periods, to enable the pupils to grasp the thought content of the lesson. This must be done under the direct supervision of the teacher.

Free choice reading from the class library. Each pupil should keep a record of the books he has read.

Reading by the teacher, for short periods, of suitable poems and stories.

Drill to ensure clear enunciation and correct pronunciation.

*Poetry.* – Poems, single stanzas, detached couplets, proverbs, notable sayings and choice prose passages; not less than 40 lines per quarter to be memorised.

The pupils to have a good knowledge of the thought content of the poem, and some knowledge of the author.

*Language (Oral).* – Conversations on current events and on the subject-matter of the reading lessons. Emphasis should be laid on the order of words and phrases and on the correct word and phrase for the thought.

The structure of the sentence in accordance with the work prescribed for this grade under "Grammar"; correction and improvement of the faulty sentences of the pupils in their written exercises; references to passages of merit in the literature read.

*Language (Written).* – Writing and addressing private and business letters, writing stories, both real and imaginary. Reproduction of lessons. The paragraph. Punctuation in full.

*Grammar.* – Further treatment of the adjectival and adverbial phrases and clauses.

General analysis corresponding to the synthesis above; analysis of clauses into subject, predicate, and object.

The verb – Kind, voice, mood, tense. Full parsing of noun, pronoun, adjective, and adverb.

(Teachers are recommended to use "The Model Classbooks of English," Books III. And IV., by Chambers and Ker) Blackie and Son., Ltd.), as an aid to the teaching of language and grammar. These books should not be placed in the hands of the pupils.)

*Spelling.* – Words from the reading lessons in the *Children's Hour*.

The Australian Progressive Spelling Book, as prescribed for Grade VII. (Until this book has been recast, every alternate word only, commencing with the first, need be taught.)

Lists of words which have been found to present special difficulty in dictation, composition, and other lessons.

Dictation lessons or eight lines of print from lessons read in the *Children's Hour*, and eight words selected from the work covered in the spelling book.

*Writing.* – In Adelaide Copy Books Nos. 6 and 6A.

Careful writing, neat ruling, and methodical arrangement of work in all books. Letter drill.

Exercises for slope, height, and junction.

(All written work excepting that in the work books is to be done in ink.)

#### GRADE VII. – AGES 12 TO 13 YEARS

*Reading.* – To read with fluency and expression the *Children's Hour*, Grade VII., and two simple English classics in prose or poetry.

Free choice reading from the class library. Each pupil should keep a record of the books he has read.

Exercises in the use of the dictionary.

*Poetry.* – Poems, single stanzas, detached couplets, proverbs, notable sayings and choice prose passages; not less than 50 lines per quarter to be memorised.

The pupils to have a good knowledge of the thought content of the poem, and some knowledge of the author.

*Language (Oral).* – Conversations on current events and on the subject-matter of the reading lessons. Emphasis should be laid on the order of words and phrases, and on the correct word and phrase for the thought.

The structure of the sentence in accordance with the work prescribed for this grade under "Grammar; correction and improvement of the faulty sentences of the pupils in their written exercises; reference to passages of merit in the literature read.

*Language (Written).* – Short essays on subjects coming within the children's experience. Letter writing. Exercises in composition to cultivate the imagination. Exercises in the use of simple figures of speech, participial phrase, appositional phrase, absolute phrase, noun clause.

*Grammar.* – Analysis of sentences as in Grade VI., to include adjuncts of subject and object and extension of the predicate. The noun clause in all its different relations in the sentence. The participial phrase, the appositional phrase, the absolute phrase.

Revision of common rules of syntax.

Full parsing of all parts of speech.

Simple figures of speech.

(Teachers are recommended to use "The Model Classbooks of English," Book V., by Chambers & Ker (Blackie & Son, Ltd.), as an aid to the teaching of language and grammar. This book should not be placed in the hands of the pupils.)

*Spelling.* – Words from the reading lessons in the *Children's Hour*.

The Australian Progressive Spelling Book, as prescribed for Grade VIII.

Lists of words which have been found to present special difficulty in dictation, composition, and other lessons.

Dictation lessons of 10 lines of print from lessons read in the *Children's Hour*, and 10 words selected from the work covered in the spelling book.

*Writing.* – Careful writing with increased speed, neat ruling, and methodical arrangement of work in all books.

Further exercises for slope, height, and junction.

# Notes on the Course of Primary Instruction

1920

## ENGLISH

### Reading

Reading is the means of unlocking for us the noble thoughts of the past, so that the great ideas that genius has created throughout the ages become our own. The work of the teacher is to see that children are taught both to read and to speak, so that these treasures may be theirs in fullest measure. Reading has been defined as the delivery of language from writing; speaking as the utterance of spontaneous composition; but both delivery and utterance need to be so guided that the best shall be the result. If, however, unintelligibly and unimpressedly delivered, reading of even the noblest thoughts becomes a purely mechanical process.

*Understanding Necessary.*—Unless the reader understands the subject matter, the process of reading is to him, so far as mental growth is concerned, flat stale and unprofitable. A striking example is furnished by the daughters of John Milton. The poet, with his strong views regarding the inferiority of the feminine intellect, had his daughters so trained that they were able to read to him passages from Hebrew, Latin, and Greek books. But although they were familiar with the pronunciation of the words, they were ignorant of their meaning. No wonder that the daughters rebelled at their being used as human phonographs, and that they displayed unfilial conduct. To read well involves a clear understanding of the matter read.

*Comprehension of Subject Matter.*—To read well, the thoughts of the author must first be received into the reader's mind and then delivered as the author would himself have uttered them. Set a child to read matter above his comprehension, and the art becomes at once a mechanical process. We see, then, that the first great consideration for good reading is a thorough grasp of the subject-matter beforehand, together with such command of the voice as will give to the words of the book the meaning which the author intended to convey. Each phrase, or cluster of words, has been aptly likened to a many-sided crystal which may be made to throw light from any of its facets, according as one or the other is presented uppermost. Emphasis, then, is essential to expression; good reading involves close thinking both as to the subject-matter and its delivery.

*Vocabulary.*—To instil these principles when a child begins to read from books, is the duty devolving upon every teacher. Naturally a child's vocabulary is very limited, how limited depends largely upon his home environment, for we must remember that the vocabularies of adults vary considerably. To enlarge the child's vocabulary and to give his words their true and full meaning is the task of the teacher, when the first steps are taken in reading and in expression. To do this effectively will require tact on the part of those who thus essay to overcome what may be faulty home-speech. It is not sufficient that the child should know how to speak, he must be trained to use correct pronunciation and expression. Nor must the teacher do too much himself; he is merely to set an example and then to direct the child's expression. Very young children do not need formal reading to enlarge their minds, language lessons will develop the power that subsequently enables them to master the reading lessons. The fact that the

teacher is seen to use a book as a storehouse from which she brings out the story or the picture that enthral, will lead the children, at length, to desire also to read.

#### LOWER SCHOOL.

The reading lesson, in all stages, is only one means of training the child in English, but it is a very important means. In the lowest grades, it must be supplemented by the telling and re-telling of stories. From this the child gathers, not only beautiful thoughts, but good English, provided the stories are told in simple, pure language. The telling of any story conveys much of the teller's own personality and affords scope for dramatic touches which never fail to arrest the child's attention.

The stories should be simple and bright, and anything approaching either gruesomeness or sadness should be avoided. A child should be happy in its school-life; therefore while listening to a story, too much insistence need not be placed upon a child's bodily posture; an easy attitude of body will help the mental process.

In re-telling, the child should give complete statements with proper pronunciation and clear enunciation. This applies, indeed, to all oral work. Thus every oral lesson will become a lesson in English.

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL.

At this stage of school-life, the reading lesson requires more strenuous application. Its main object is to train the pupil's voice and ear, so that he shall be able to read aloud so distinctly and expressively that his reading will convey both pleasure and profit to the hearer. This involves a grasp of the meaning of the subject-matter. Every explanation by the teacher should be short, simple, and to the point. Special examples in pronunciation should be given, and, as an introductory exercise to a lesson, a few minutes with the aid of the blackboard will help emphasis and phrasing.

A teacher should not do too much himself. Slavish imitation is not true training of the pupil's own powers. He should be shown occasionally and then encouraged to read, so that he gives his own emphasis and interpretation to passages other than that read by the teacher. Self-expression should be one of the aims of the reading lesson. Neither gesture, action, nor emphasis should be systematically taught; they should be encouraged to come naturally.

#### UPPER SCHOOL

In the upper school, the reading lesson merges, to a great extent, into a literature lesson. Here the teacher lays the foundation of an appreciation of all that is best in literature. In the past, many of the finest passages in literature have been spoiled by association with routine work.

It is the teacher's privilege to indicate, in the reading lesson, beauties that the pupil may discover for himself in other poems and passages. The sound of the best literature conveys much of its meaning. Take two lines of Tennyson: "The murmur of innumerable bees"; cannot we hear the bees busy about the flowers? or "The moan of doves in immemorial elms"; does not this line convey by its very sound the feeling of the poet. So in prose, we may find passage after passage

where alliteration powerfully aids the meaning. Enlargement of the pupil's vocabulary should be aimed at, and this becomes easy if every opportunity is grasped. In these upper grades, too, a course of newspaper reading makes a pleasant change from the more formal matter, and an opportunity is given to guide the child's future reading. An article on a current topic may instil ideas and form opinions, for, at this stage, reading should be reflective. Free periods for general reading are desirable and necessary, but the teacher should so organise the lesson that no child is left entirely to himself, and his interest should be tested by skilful questioning on the subject-matter. A further aid will be found in insisting on some method of reproduction, either in the form of notes or of a resume of the book or article.

## **Grammar**

"Language is the expression of thought by means of words. Grammar teaches us how to speak or write a language correctly."

While purely formal grammar does not hold so important a place as formerly, in the modern curriculum of a primary school, we find that we must retain its leading and fundamental principles, and grammar-drill must still, to an extent, find a place in our programmes. In the lower school, the language lesson provides the means of inculcating certain rules, which guide our use of language, but when the middle school is reached, a certain amount of formal grammar comes into the curriculum. Its chief function is to standardise language forms, and, by the study of rules, to eliminate errors of speech and writing. The foundation of all speech is the sentence, and very early in school life, in answering questions or in making a statement, the complete sentence should be insisted upon. Gradually the children will see that the sentence is composed of a subject and a predicate, and, by the exercise of affixing verbs to nouns or nouns to verbs, they begin to learn in Grade IV. something of formal grammar. In the study of the noun, adjective, pronoun, verb, and adverb, the importance of function, as opposed to minute classification and definition, cannot be overstated. The function of the noun in pointing out either a whole class of similar objects or particular individuals, as the name of the class, should be shown and, from this, the function of the adjective naturally develops. In the same way, the verb and adverb and their natural relation can be brought under review.

Grammar must attend closely on composition, but as its servant not as its master. The pupil in the higher grades should be made to realise that the most beautiful ideas cannot be adequately expressed, unless the composition of the letter, essay, or poem be rendered correctly according to the rules of grammar. It is in this connection that analysis of sentences is found useful. In it is learnt the use of phrases instead of words in various enlargements, and the grouping of several clauses into the combination of complex or of compound sentences.

To sum up: "In the primary school course, all instruction in formal grammar has for its object correct speech and a graceful style. All unnecessary technicalities must, therefore, be excluded from the curriculum; in other words, grammar must be considered the handmaid of composition. Analysis is given only because the pupils learn from the exercise the structure of a good sentence; it is useless unless it follows, and is followed, by synthesis. Parsing is valuable only when the pupils learn how words are related in a sentence. If properly taught, the grammar of the primary school may be made a most interesting and practical study."

## Composition

"The art of writing, like that of painting and sculpture," says Professor Lounsbury, is an imitative art." If this be so, it is necessary that all examples set before a pupil, from the very first, should be examples of pure and correct speech. Young people often have plenty of ideas, the difficulty is in finding words to express them. They are not alone in this, for many a great writer finds himself in the same difficulty. Richard Jefferies, delightful writer as he was, has left this record: -"One of the greatest difficulties I have encountered is the lack of words to express, ideas." Can we wonder, then, at the lack of self-expression in children of all school grades, when we remember the limitation of their vocabularies? Words form, as it were, the rough material from which a writer builds; therefore, an adequate supply of words must be one of the first cares of the teacher of composition. The first requisite for success is a bounteous store of words. Mere fluency is not enough, and no number of hum-drum exercises in grammar or composition will make a good writer. There must be given to the child the best model available, and this can be given only through the teacher, whose aim should be threefold: -

1. To widen the range of the pupil's thoughts.
2. To enlarge the pupil's vocabulary
3. To develop a taste for the best in literature.

The practice of composition begins with the first sentences uttered by a child; the composition at this stage is oral, and it is through oral effort that the child's mind is prepared for the more formal composition, when writing puts the means of such expression into his power. It is never too early for the teacher to guide the mind along this road. When the habit and standards of speech are being acquired, we should see that both habit and standards are correct. The subject matter of the child's earliest efforts should, of course, be familiar and easy, but it should follow a system, and be made educative. Oral composition has the great advantage of being subject to instant correction, and of being spontaneous. Written composition requires more time and effort, and has the drawback of late correction. But both oral and written composition should invariably be corrected, or their virtue has gone.

There should be in the middle and upper schools free composition on current events, based on the child's actual experience. By this, observation as well as expression is encouraged, while if told in the form of a letter, the lesson is serving a twofold purpose, for, of all the forms of composition, letter writing will be the one that will be the most widely used in after life. Every pupil in the upper school should be able to write a thoughtful business letter, correct as to form, spelling, and punctuation; and a friendly letter should be included in the exercises in all divisions of written composition.

*Letter Writing.* -Letter writing is a branch of composition that has been greatly neglected in the past. One who has been in touch with children's correspondence for many years says that this fact is emphasised by almost all letters he has received. It is seldom a child writes both heading, superscription, and subscription correctly. Business people also complain of the lack of ability on the part of lads leaving school to write a concise, clear, correct letter.

In the first place, the teacher should see that the heading and date are correctly given. In small country places, the name of the post town is sufficient. In centres where houses are close together, it is necessary to give the number of

the house as well as the name of the street and the town. Then comes the date. This should be written in full, except in the case of a short, hurried note, when, for example, August 16th may be written 16.8.20. This form is too casual for a letter.

The familiar letter uses the form "Dear" or "My Dear" according to the degree of intimacy. Thus, to one's mother or other members of one's family, or to a dear friend, "My Dear Mother," etc.; to acquaintances, Dear Miss, or Mr., So-and-so." In the first case, the subscription might be "Your loving daughter," etc. To those you do not know very well, "Yours sincerely" is a correct ending. Punctuation, in both heading and conclusion, is as necessary as in the body of a letter.

*Business Letters.*-In writing a letter to a business firm, the superscription and subscription are all important, for it is by such small points that a business man judges the knowledge and ability of the writer, and very often the writing of a business letter is the test given to an applicant for appointment.

It is to be observed that while a person is addressed as "Sir" or "Madam" (the latter whether the lady addressed is married or single), a letter to a firm should commence "Gentlemen" or "Dear Sirs," and never "Sirs." It should conclude with "Yours faithfully" or "Yours truly." A margin of at least three-quarters of an inch should invariably be left at the left hand side of the page. It adds to the appearance, and is useful as a space for marginal notes and for binding. In writing to a business firm to whom the writer is not personally known, it is necessary to prefix the signature with the information necessary to enable the answer to be properly addressed. A lady should write in brackets, before her signature [Mrs.] or [Miss], a clergyman [Rev.], and a doctor [Dr.].

- (a) A business letter should be expressed as briefly as possible.
- (b) The meaning should be plain and clear.

*Addressing Envelopes.*-Care in this particular, and neatness in the folding of a letter, stand for much. The first line of an address should be at least 1-1/4in. from the top of the envelope, thus allowing space for the postage stamp. The beginning of each succeeding line should be a little to the right of the one above it.

The appearance of the addressed envelope predisposes (or otherwise) the recipient towards the writer, and neatness is indispensable.

*Punctuation.*-This is a matter in which modern writers are inclined to be slipshod. Punctuation is a most necessary factor in good composition. While the full stop is necessarily retained, too often the comma is negligently used, while the colon and semi-colon have almost dropped out of modern writing. Punctuation should be the special care of every teacher, for improper or scant punctuation may entirely alter the meaning of a sentence or quotation.

## Poetry

Poetry is the highest form of literature, and an effort should be made to inculcate a love for it. The mother's cradle songs and nursery rhymes probably begin to form the taste for musical sounds. The teacher of infants should continue this, and aim at fostering a love for beautiful thought as well. A poem may be simple and yet be a beautiful thought fittingly expressed. In teaching poetry there is a twofold aim—to master the thought and to gain a proper appreciation of the beauty of the language in which the idea is expressed. Care is necessary in the

selection of poems, to see that they are suited to the child's mental development. In narrative poetry, an attempt must be made to visualise or form mental pictures of the scenes described. As the inculcation of a love for poetry is the main object, every possible care should be taken to prevent a feeling of anything like drudgery in memorising the poems. Many poems are well suited for school purposes but by their length render memorising tedious. In such cases *portions* may be selected for learning by heart, provided that the children have first been made familiar with the meaning and spirit of the poem.

Single stanzas or couplets, chosen on account of their literary beauty or their applicability to something else that has been discussed in class, may be learned.

*Method of Treatment.*-When the poem has been selected, the teacher's first efforts must be directed towards arousing in the pupils' minds a desire to learn it by heart.

No set plan of treating the poem can be laid down to meet all cases. The methods must vary according to the poem. There must, however, be one broad principle. Interest and anticipation must be aroused by an introductory discussion. A good mental atmosphere must be established. Children must be introduced to the poem by hearing it and not by silently reading it.

Suitable poems for memorisation by the pupils of various grades will be published in the *Children's Hour* from time to time, and lists from which a selection can be made will be found on pages 64 to 67.

## **Spelling**

Three specific plans should be practised in teaching spelling, each of which has its own importance. In transcription and in all written work, the child makes use of his visual memory. He looks at the printed word and then reproduces it on paper. As his acquaintance with words increases, quickness of recognition and ease of transcription keep pace, until only a small percentage of the words that he has to write need more than a glance. If transcription were the only means of learning, however, progress would be exceedingly slow, because it is only by repetition that words are fixed in the memory, and it is only the most common words that recur often enough to be remembered by this plan alone. Evidently, then, in transcription, one of the points to be aimed at is accuracy. Though in the early stages too much must not be expected, there should be a constant striving after correctness.

The second plan is by dictation. It may be objected that dictation is mere examination and not teaching; consequently the examination of spelling by dictation must hold a secondary place. Sometimes the exact passage should be prescribed for preparation. At other times, the page or column from which the passage is to be taken should be set beforehand for study. Correction of errors is of the greatest importance. A list of errors should be kept by the teacher and frequently corrected with the class.

The third plan involves the use of the prescribed spelling-book. The methods to be adopted in using this book need no explanation.

It is often claimed that spelling is learned by the eye - by observing the form of the word. That is only partly true; the ear has its share to do. If we learn chiefly through the eye, it is the ear that directs the call on the eye memory when the word is to be written. By means of a trained ear, too, we distinguish between

sounds that approach one another, as "able" and "ible." The effect of training the ear is many-sided. It leads to distinguishing words, to closer observation of form, to clearer speech, to correctness of utterance, to a musical tone—all of which react on and help one another.

## Writing

In teaching this subject, the teacher's aim should be to enable the children to acquire the power to write legibly, neatly, and, in the upper grades, with fair rapidity. To accomplish this threefold aim, special attention must be given to the following considerations:—

(a) *Position.*—A good position is important in consideration of the pupil's work, his comfort, and his health. He should sit erect, near the desk, without leaning on it, and face it directly. Turning to right or left, leaning one side against the desk, or resting the head on the arm may lead to serious physical injuries. Curvature of the spine, malformation of the chest, and short sight or myopia are among the evil results which follow continuous sitting in a wrong position. The injury to children's eyesight, arising from working continuously at too close a range, may be serious and permanent. The posture should be comfortable and natural. Sitting square to the desk, the pupil should place his left *hand* and wrist (not the whole arm) on the desk to keep his paper in position. The right arm should be at right angles to the front of the desk, while the feet should rest easily but firmly on the floor in front and not be drawn under the body. The importance of maintaining a correct position should be explained to the children, and constant attention given to the matter.

(b) *Management of the Pen.*—Holding the pen properly is one of the most difficult of early school tasks. The muscles of the fingers are not yet fully under control, and much patient care is needed to overcome this defect. Special practice should be given three or four times during every writing lesson, until the difficulty is mastered. It is not sufficient that the child should be taught to imitate the forms presented; he should be taught to do so in a way that will gradually lead to his being able to write with fair rapidity and without discomfort.

(c) *Blackboard Instruction.*—The child's failure to write well must not be set down entirely to his lack of control over his hand. It is due largely to his not realising clearly the precise shape which is desirable. He knows in a general way, but as yet he has but little appreciation of those more delicate differences in outline, spacing, and all that goes to make up beauty of form. The eye must be trained to see such things, while the hand is gaining power to produce correct forms. To do this, the teacher must use the blackboard freely, and must direct special attention to the differences between well and badly shaped letters. The children should be encouraged to criticise the writing produced upon the blackboard so that the teacher may discover to what extent their eyes are developing the power to appreciate beauty of outline. The blackboard should be regularly and frequently used. Occasional lessons should be given on the formation of difficult letters, the children using ruled paper instead of copy-books. In such lessons, attention should be given to the analysis of those letters in which mistakes are commonly made. In the upper grades, exercises should be given to develop freedom of movement.

(d) *Thorough and Systematic Correction.*—It is not an uncommon experience to find children filling pages of their copybooks without criticism from themselves or their teachers, repeating the same errors from the first page of the book to the last. Far from doing good, such a method is positively harmful. It trains the child

to believe that anything will do, and in many cases leads to habits of gross carelessness. The *moral* effect of such work is bad. It tends to produce people easily satisfied and incapable of effort. Errors should be detected directly they are written, and a strong effort made to prevent their repetition. Children should be trained to examine their own writing carefully, and to correct their errors at once.

(e) *Teacher's Writing.*-The teacher's own writing should be such as is worthy of imitation. The teacher who writes in a careless and slovenly fashion handicaps himself severely in his efforts to teach his pupils. Teachers must always bear in mind that a great deal of what the child learns - perhaps the greater part - comes from his power of imitation. Let, then, the teacher's handwriting placed before the class always be of a high standard.

Writing is to be taught chiefly by means of copybooks; but all pen and pencil work should be so carefully done that good penmanship naturally follows.

The date of each lesson is to be written by the pupil.

### Suggested Poems

#### KINDERGARTEN

"Feeding the Chickens."  
"Piggy Wig and Piggy Wee."  
"Dolly's Party."  
"Ten Little Seagulls."  
"Five Little Pussies."  
"Four Little Fingers."  
"Santa Claus."  
"The Chick's Reply."  
"The Brave Little Mouse."  
"Ten Little 'Possums."  
"The Sun."  
"In the Morning."

#### GRADE 1.

"Hunting Bears."  
"The Gingerbread Man."  
"The Wind."  
"Autumn Shower."

#### GRADE II.

"Guessing Game."  
"The Rain." (Primary Educn.)  
"Up in a Toy Balloon."  
"Grown-up Land."  
"The Wind."  
"Story of a Dandelion."  
"Xmas Thoughts."  
"Autumn Leaves."  
"Fairy Folk."  
"Frank and the Bunnies."  
"A Bunch of Keys." (Primary.)  
"The Old Flag."  
"The Baby Plant."  
"Nearly Ten." (Primary.)  
"If I Were a Fairy." (Primary.)

#### GRADE I.-contd.

"Our Flag."  
"The Chick's Reply."  
"Froggy."  
"Somebody is Coming."  
"Nursery Rhymes."  
"Lost Bessie."  
"The Rainbow."  
"Autumn Leaves."  
"The Sunflower."  
"The Cherry."  
"Two Sides."  
"The Postman."  
"Cat to her Kittens."  
"The Trees' Baby."  
"Doggie and I."  
"I Will."

#### GRADE II. (contd.)

"Little Brown Bulbs."  
"Mrs. Bunny."  
"Little Brown Houses."  
"The Snow."  
"In the Cherry Tree Bough."  
"Dreamland Town."  
"A Winter Bud."  
"The School Treat."  
"A Cloud Story."  
"Bird Thoughts."  
"The Candle Man."  
"The Eskimo's House."  
"Xmas Wish."  
"The Little Eskimo."  
"The Tulip."

"The Picture on my Fan."  
"Forget Me Not."  
"The Fairy Ship."  
"A Little Red Squirrel."  
"The Endless Story."  
"The Nest in the Tree." (Primary.)  
"The Three Laughing Jacks."  
"With the Fairies."  
"Where the Four Winds Meet."  
"The Little Fairy Man."

"Wattle Fairies."  
"The Burglars."  
"Little Jack Frost."  
"The Fairies' Work."  
"Autumn Fairy."  
"The Great Brown Owl."  
"Oh! Look at the Moon."  
"Chorus of Frogs."  
"Going to Bed."

#### GRADE III.

"The Arab and His Horse"

"The Boy's Song"

"The Better Land"  
"The Bow That Bridges Heaven"  
"The Brown Thrush"  
"The Fountain"  
"Farewell to the Farm"  
"My Shadow"  
"How the Leaves Come Down"  
"Little White Lily"  
"Hiawatha" (selections from)  
"The Piper"  
"Robin Red Breast"  
"The Sunbeams"  
"Two Little Kittens"  
"The Wind in a Frolic"  
"The Wonderful World"  
"A Fairy Song"

#### **Taylor**

#### **Hogg**

*Mrs. Hemans.*  
*C. Rosetti.*  
*Lucy Larcom.*  
*Lowell.*  
*R. L. Stevenson.*  
*R. L. Stevenson.*  
*Goolidge.*  
*G. Macdonald.*  
*Longfellow.*  
*Blake.*  
*Allington.*  
*Emilie Poulsson.*  
*Jane Taylor.*  
*Howitt.*  
*W. B. Rands.*  
*Shakespeare.*

#### GRADES III. AND IV.

"Foreign Lands"  
"Where Go the Boats?"

"John Gilpin"  
"Good Night and Good Morning"  
"The Lost Doll"  
"Nature's Teaching"  
"The Pied Piper"  
"The Song of the Pippa Passes"  
"Spring"  
"In a Garden"  
"To a Butterfly"  
"To the Celandine"  
"The Wind and the Moon"  
"Wynken, Blynken, and Nod"  
"The Voice of the Grass"  
"Wishing"  
"The Brook"  
"The Sunshine"

*R. L. Stevenson.*

#### **R. L. Stevenson.**

*W. Cowper.*  
*Lord Houghton.*  
*C. Kingsley.*  
*Longfellow.*  
*R. Browning.*  
*R. Browning.*  
*Shakespeare.*  
*Swinburne.*  
*Wordsworth.*  
*Wordsworth.*  
*G. Macdonald.*  
*E. Field.*  
*Boyle.*  
*Allington.*  
*Tennyson.*  
*Mary Howell.*

GRADES V. AND VI.

"Selections from Tennyson"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Selections from Longfellow"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"An Arrow"	<i>Scott.</i>
"A Farewell"	<i>C. Kingsley.</i>
"The Heritage"	<i>Lowell.</i>
"Home, Sweet Home"	<i>Payne.</i>
"The Last Rose of Summer"	<i>Moore.</i>
"The Minstrel Boy"	<i>Moore.</i>
"He Prayeth Best"	<i>Coleridge.</i>
"The Village Blacksmith"	<i>Longfellow.</i>
"The Rainy Day"	<i>Longfellow.</i>
"Requiem"	<i>R. L. Stevenson.</i>
"To-day"	<i>Carlyle.</i>
"The Homes of England"	<i>Mrs. Hemans.</i>
"Harry Dale"	<i>Henry Lawson.</i>
"The Wattle"	<i>Veronica Mason.</i>

GRADES VI. AND VII.

"Selections from Wordsworth"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Selections from Gordon and Kendall"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Selections from Longfellow"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Short Quotations from Shakespeare"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"To Daffodils"	<i>Herrick.</i>
"The Meeting of the Waters"	<i>Moore.</i>
"Solitude"	<i>Wilcox.</i>
"Soldier, Rest"	<i>Scott.</i>
"The Soldier's Dream"	<i>Campbell.</i>
"Three Fishers"	<i>Kingsley.</i>
"Wattle"	<i>Molly A. McNutt.</i>
"A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea"	<i>Cunningham.</i>
"Young and Old"	<i>Kingsley.</i>
"The Pipes at Lucknow"	<i>Whittier.</i>
"The Daisy"	<i>Robert Burns.</i>
"The Proclamation Tree"	<i>J. Sadler.</i>
"Sheoaks"	<i>Wm. Sharpe.</i>
"Australian Transcripts"	<i>Wm. Sharpe.</i>
"To a Butterfly"	<i>Wordsworth.</i>
"The Fountain"	<i>Wordsworth.</i>
"The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers"	<i>Mrs. Hemans.</i>
"Love of Country"	<i>Scott.</i>

GRADE VII.

"Selections from Shakespeare"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Selections from Wordsworth"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Selections from Gordon and Kendall"	<i>Miss O. Carter.</i>
"Sonnet on His Blindness"	<i>Milton.</i>
"Vitae Lampada"	<i>Henry Newbolt.</i>
"Yussouf"	<i>Lowell.</i>
"The Fatherland"	<i>Lowell.</i>
"The Heritage"	<i>Lowell.</i>
"Selections from 'A Glance behind the Curtain' "	<i>Lowell.</i>
"Clancy of the Overflow"	<i>A. B. Paterson.</i>
"Farewell"	<i>Byron.</i>
"A Farewell"	<i>Kingsley.</i>
"Ode to the Nightingale"	<i>Keats.</i>

"To a Skylark"	<i>Shelley.</i>
"The Skylark"	<i>Hogg.</i>
"The Skylark"	<i>Wordsworth.</i>
"The Splendour Falls"	<i>Tennyson.</i>
"The Universal Prayer"	<i>Pope.</i>
"Patriots"	<i>Cowper.</i>
"The Noble Nature"	<i>Ben Jonson.</i>
"Ye Mariners of England"	<i>Thos. Campbell.</i>
"The Cloud"	<i>Shelley.</i>
"Love of Home")	
"Recreation" )("The Traveller")	<i>Oliver Goldsmith.</i>
"Happiness" )	
"Pictures of Village Life" ("The Deserted Village")	<i>Oliver Goldsmith.</i>
"Recessional"	