

COMPOSITION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Composition in the Elementary Schools by Joseph S. Taylor

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JOSEPH S. TAYLOR

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THE ELEMENTARY
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Preface

This book was written to supply a need. Many excellent manuals on composition of the secondary school and college grade are accessible to American teachers; but similar books of a modern type for elementary schools are comparatively rare. The reason for this condition lies on the surface. The teachers of the elementary grades do not write many books; and yet they are the only people who possess the experience which an author must have who undertakes to show what elementary school children may know and how they should be taught. Hence we have any quantity of elementary school manuals and text-books written by professors in colleges and teachers in high schools that are worse than useless. They do a lot of mischief by setting up impossible standards and thus increasing the labor of the teacher and destroying the interest of the pupil.

The work suggested and described in the following pages can be done by the children for whom it is intended. The proof of this statement is in the fact that it has been done with eminent success during several years in hundreds of class-rooms supervised by the author. All the sample exercises shown in Chapter XII were selected from work produced in classes under ordinary conditions.

Particular attention is called to the plan of work in Chapter X. A principal who directs his teachers to follow that plan will, without a doubt, achieve satisfactory results; provided he be willing to supervise the work. To facilitate such supervision the written exercises required are numbered consecutively. It will thus be possible to refer, in progress books or otherwise, to any piece of work by merely giving its number. The numbers in Chapter XII correspond with similar numbers in the plan. This plan was prepared, under the auspices of the author and District Superintendents John Dwyer and Edward W. Stitt, by Emma C. Schoonmaker, Elizabeth A. Duggan, and Olive M. Jones. It was first published in *School Work*.

Chapter XI is a valuable compilation, and represents the labor of many people. The author claims no credit for it beyond that of editing the material, and he desires to express his thanks to District

Superintendent Julia Richman and the Editors of *School Work* for permission to reprint this collection of graded exercises.

The chapter on punctuation, it is confidently believed, will be found helpful because an effort has been made to include only such rules as come within the comprehension of the pupil at the time he is required to learn the same. The assignment by grades; the systematic review indicated, and the reference by numbers, are features to which attention is invited.

Finally, one of the appendices presents a suggested "cover" for compositions, which the author believes to be essential to successful supervision of composition work. In case the covers are not printed, the teacher need select only such items of the method of production as apply in the case under consideration.

The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the principals and teachers who have contributed illustrative material found in Chapter V and Chapter XII.

JOSEPH S. TAYLOR.



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