

**WHEELER'S GRADED
STUDIES IN ENGLISH: FIRST
LESSONS IN GRAMMAR
AND COMPOSITION**

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Wheeler's Graded Studies in English: First Lessons in Grammar and Composition by William H. Wheeler

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WILLIAM H. WHEELER

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GRADED STUDIES
IN
ENGLISH

First Lessons
IN
GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

JUST AS THE TWIG IS BENT THE TREE'S INCLINED
— *Alexander Pope*

CHICAGO
W. H. WHEELER AND COMPANY

PREFACE.

DURING the last quarter of a century, radical changes have been made in methods of teaching elementary English, and scores of text-books have been written on this subject. Authors have done much to improve instruction in English, and their work has been supplemented by thousands of thoughtful teachers.

From our colleges, our universities, and the press, however, still comes the complaint that pupils are graduated from the public schools without having acquired the art of speaking and writing correct English. One meets everywhere men and women who lament that they were not taught elementary English when they were young enough to master it.

It is agreed that the proper study of English should enable a pupil to understand the expressed thoughts of others, and to give expression to thoughts of his own; but there is a great difference of opinion as to the means to be used to attain this end.

In the preparation of "Graded Studies in English," the author has attempted to present theory and practice in just proportion and in their proper relation.

The lessons begin with a logical development of the relations of ideas as the foundation of all connected discourse. The sentence is presented as the unit of language. The relations of words in sentences are shown to be based on the relations of ideas in thought. Beginning with sentences of two words each, the development proceeds gradually with an explanation of each modifier as it is introduced, until the most complicated form of the sentence has been reached. By this process, the pupil forms the habit of noticing at a glance the chief words of a sentence, and of determining the exact office of each modifying word, phrase, and clause.

In the constructive work, the pupil's mind is directed at the very outset to the proper mode of expressing the relations of ideas. Many of the exercises are especially designed for this purpose. The pupil is taught to perceive not only the relation of idea to idea, but also that of thought to thought, and to group the expressions of related thoughts into paragraphs.

Subjects for composition with appropriate outlines are given throughout the book. These furnish the pupil abundant exercise for acquiring readiness and correctness in the application of the rules of grammar, and for developing his power of thought and expression. The more frequently the pupil writes the correct form, the better; for the hand has a memory of its own, and the mere act of writing a given form tends to fix it in memory.

An important feature of the book is the great number and variety of carefully chosen literary selections. These serve

not only as memory gems and grammatical exercises, but also as a means of educating the pupil in the use of a higher and better English style. A good English style is not to be acquired by the study of grammar so much as by a familiarity with the works of the great masters of expression. A faithful study of these models will exert a great influence on the pupil's thought and manner of expression, and inspire him with a love of beauty and harmony in language.

Pupils will like to know about the authors of the selections, and will easily remember their names, their dates, their most famous works, some traits of their characters and incidents of their lives. Learning these in connection with each selection will be good preparation for the study of the history of literature.

In the preparation of this little book, the author has received suggestions from many teachers, to whom he gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness. He also takes pleasure in acknowledging his great indebtedness to his critic, the distinguished Prof. Francis A. March, of Lafayette College. Acknowledgments are due to Houghton, Mifflin & Co. and The Bowen-Merrill Co. for permission to use selections from their publications.

To read the English language well, to write with dispatch a neat, legible hand, and to be master of the first rules of arithmetic, so as to dispose of, at once, with accuracy, every question of figures which comes up in practice, — I call this a good education. And if you add the ability to write pure grammatical English, I regard it as an excellent education. These are the tools. You can do much with them, but you are helpless without them. They are the foundation; and unless you begin with these, all your flashy attainments are ostentatious rubbish. — EDWARD EVERETT.

GRADED STUDIES IN ENGLISH.



PART I.



LESSON 1.

IDEAS.

How many senses have we ?

What are their names ?

By which sense do we perceive color ?

What do we perceive by the sense of hearing ?

What do we perceive by each of the other senses ?

Think of some object you saw on your way to school.

Describe it.

Since you have described it, we know that you have in your mind what we call an *idea*.

Describe something so as to show that you have an idea of *size*.

How do you get the idea of *roughness* or of *hardness* ?

How do you get the idea of *sweetness*, of *bitterness*, or of *sourness* ?