

A HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN SPEECH

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A handbook of American speech by Calvin L. Lewis

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CALVIN L. LEWIS

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AMERICAN SPEECH**

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A HANDBOOK
OF
AMERICAN SPEECH

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PREFACE

The recent revival of interest in Oral English has met with one serious obstacle. It finds few teachers trained in Oral English and able to teach it. No one now questions the desirability of more attention to the oral side of the subject than has been given in the past, but many superintendents and principals hesitate to introduce oral work for lack of properly trained instructors.

There is little doubt that before many years adequate oral endowment and training will come to be a necessary part of the English teacher's equipment. Meanwhile ways must be devised for instructing pupils in the elements of accurate and effective speech.

The writer has frequently been asked to prepare a textbook to be used by teachers without special training. He does not believe that a book can be written which will wholly take the place of personal instruction. He does think, however, that it is not impossible for an untrained teacher to teach some of the fundamental facts of correct speech from a simple text. The HANDBOOK is such a text. It is for use in the English class room and out of it *by the pupil*.

That the HANDBOOK may the more readily be understood by beginning students and untrained teachers, none but common and simple terms have

been used in it; technical terms have been avoided; no terminology has been created. No diacritical marks have been used to puzzle and discourage the beginner and to detract from the vocal aspect of the subject.

The HANDBOOK is suitable for use in any beginning class, whether of college freshmen, high school students, or pupils of upper elementary grades. It is probably not wise to attempt to do much intensive work with children whose voices have not changed. Simple speech defects, however, like those of pronunciation, enunciation, dialect, lispings, etc., should be corrected as early as the intelligence of the child permits—the earlier the better. None but a skillful and experienced teacher should attempt to handle an unchanged or a changing voice.

The exercises and illustrations provided should be put before the pupil when he is practicing, so that he can see as well as hear what he is doing. A MANUAL goes with the HANDBOOK and explains its use. Teachers will find that the best and quickest results will come from following the directions given in the MANUAL. If anyone undertakes to use the HANDBOOK without a teacher, he should procure a MANUAL and follow the directions it contains.

The quotations used as Exercises in the HANDBOOK are taken almost without exception from the masterpieces of English and American literature set for reading and study in the upper grammar grades and the high school. The *Selections for*

Practice are the accumulations of years of teaching declamation. Many were written by college students; others were adaptations from—who knows where?—newspapers, magazines, etc. A few were lifted bodily from easily recognized sources. Because the copies of most of these selections exist only in manuscript form with nothing about the manuscript to indicate the name of the writer, the compiler of the HANDBOOK finds himself unable to make proper acknowledgment of authorship. He apologizes for this inability and thanks the writers who have thus unwittingly contributed to his book.

CALVIN L. LEWIS.

*Hamilton College,
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1916



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREPARE	1
CHAPTERS	
I. THE ORGANS USED TO PRODUCE SPEECH.....	9
II. THE ELEMENTS OF SPEECH	
VOWEL SOUNDS.....	19
QUALITY OF TONE.....	26
CONSONANT SOUNDS.....	39
THE SPELLING OF CONSONANT SOUNDS.....	52
III. SOUNDS COMBINED INTO WORDS.....	54
DIFFICULT CONSONANT ENDINGS.....	56
FIRST SYLLABLES.....	61
MIDDLE SOUNDS.....	67
FINAL SYLLABLES.....	68
IV. WORDS COMBINED INTO SENTENCES.....	72
VARIATIONS OF SPEECH.....	73
RATE	91
WHEN TO CHANGE RATE.....	94
QUALITY	97
CHANGE OF QUALITY.....	98
PITCH	106
INFLECTIONS	113
EMPHASIS	116
PLACING EMPHASIS.....	119
END WORDS.....	125
POETRY	128
V. DIALECT SPEECH.....	132
VI. SPEAKING IN PUBLIC.....	136
THE SUBJECT	139
HOW TO PREPARE A SPEECH.....	141
VII. ORAL COMPOSITION.....	147