

**HOW TO TEACH READING : A
MANUAL FOR THE USE OF TEACHERS
: TO ACCOMPANY MONROE'S
PRIMARY READING CHARTS AND
MONROE'S NEW PRIMER**

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How to teach reading : a manual for the use of teachers : to accompany Monroe's primary reading charts and Monroe's new primer by Mrs. L. B. Monroe

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MRS. L. B. MONROE

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TO ACCOMPANY

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AND

MONROE'S NEW PRIMER.

BY

MRS. L. B. MONROE.

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TO

ALL FAITHFUL TEACHERS WHO DESIRE TO GIVE TO
CHILDHOOD EVERY ACCESSIBLE POINT OF
VANTAGE-GROUND AT THE VERY
OUTSET OF EDUCATION

THIS LITTLE MANUAL

IS

EARNESTLY DEDICATED.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Self-reliance the true starting-point in education	5
The necessity of arousing the mental faculties of children before anything like reading is attempted.—Hints for the same	6
Chart 2 (page 9 in New Primer).—Lines and figures.—Suggestions for training the eye and the hand	7
Chart 3 (page 10, New Primer).—Counting-lesson.—Suggestions for bringing out pleasant qualities of voice	8
The phonic method develops self-reliance	9
Diagrams of the vocal organs in producing the sounds of <i>m</i> , <i>n</i> , <i>ñ</i> and <i>ñ</i>	10
Blackboard work preliminary to Chart 4	11
Chart 4 (page 11, New Primer).—Directions	12
Chart 5 (page 12, New Primer).—Hints for preliminary conversation to awaken interest	13
Chart 6 (page 13, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>r</i> .—Hints for helping children who have already learned the names of the letters	14
Chart 7 (page 14, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>s</i>	15
Hints for encouraging little ones.—Easy, natural tones of voice necessary to good reading	16
Chart 8 (page 15, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>k</i>	17
Chart 9 (page 16, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>t</i>	17
Chart 10 (page 17, New Primer)	17
Chart 11 (page 18, New Primer).—The reason for not using diacritical marks at this stage of reading	18
Chart 12 (page 19, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>f</i>	19
Chart 13 (page 20, New Primer)	19
Hints for bringing out speaking qualities of voice	20
Chart 14 (page 21, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>p</i>	20
Chart 15 (page 22, New Primer).—Language-lesson in connection with the correct pronunciation of the articles	21
Script.—How to teach it	22
Chart 16 (page 23, New Primer).—The natural way of teaching the long and the short sound of <i>i</i>	23
Chart 17 (page 24, New Primer).—Hints for bringing out sprightly tones of voice	24

	PAGE
Chart 18 (page 25, New Primer)	24
Chart 19 (page 26, New Primer)	24
Chart 20 (page 27, New Primer).—Difference between the sounds of <i>d</i> and <i>t</i>	24
Chart 21 (page 28, New Primer).—Difference between the sounds of <i>b</i> and <i>p</i>	25
Chart 22 (page 29, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>l</i>	25
Chart 23 (page 30, New Primer)	25
Chart 24 (page 31, New Primer).—The natural way of teaching the long and the short sounds of <i>e</i>	25
Chart 25 (pages 32, 33, New Primer)	26
Chart 26 (page 34, New Primer)	26
Chart 27 (page 35, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>w</i> as a consonant	27
Chart 28 (page 36, New Primer)	27
Chart 29 (page 37, New Primer)	27
Chart 30 (page 38, New Primer)	27
Chart 32 (page 40, New Primer).—Words of two syllables	27
Chart 33 (pages 41, 42, New Primer).—Hints for calling out the imagination without the aid of a picture	27
Chart 35 (page 44, New Primer).—Difference between sounds of <i>y</i> and <i>f</i>	28
Chart 37 (page 46, New Primer).— <i>You</i> the same sound as <i>u</i>	28
Chart 38 (page 47, New Primer)	28
Chart 39 (page 48, New Primer).—Long and short sounds of vowels	29
Chart 41 (page 50, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>ah</i>	29
Chart 42 (page 51, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>y</i> as a consonant	29
Chart 43 (page 52, New Primer).—Hints for teaching "by-sight" words	30
Chart 44 (page 55, New Primer).—Monotonous reading	30
Charts 45, 46 (pages 58, 59, New Primer).—Diagram— <i>th</i>	30
Chart 47 (page 60, New Primer).—The natural way of teaching long and short <i>y</i>	31
Chart 50 (page 71, New Primer)	31
Charts 51, 52 (pages 75, 76, New Primer)	31
Chart 53 (Page 77, New Primer).—The initial letters of "by-sight" words	31
Learning to write	32
Confounding words	32

HOW TO TEACH READING.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

TO the lover of childhood nothing is more delightful than to teach little ones "how to read;" but in order to ensure that success in teaching which would give pleasure to the children and satisfaction to the teacher, one must call common sense to her aid and free herself from the old traditions concerning the first steps in reading. No wonder the little ones hated to go to school, when they were expected to learn the whole alphabet before reading a word! There is a surer and a better way.

This little manual has been prepared hoping that it will aid earnest teachers in making the first road to knowledge an easy, pleasant one. Especially does the writer hope that some assistance is herein given whereby teachers may clearly understand the very important difference between the *sounds* of letters and their *names*; for he who teaches by sight alone (or the word-method) not only robs the child of the advantage to be gained by learning through two of the senses instead of through one, but also fails to arouse in him that self-reliance in overcoming difficulties which is the secret of true progress.

Do not think that you can gain time by turning at once to Chart 4 (page 11 in New Primer). It would be an economy in the end if several weeks were spent in training the children to observe and com-

pare forms before anything like reading is attempted. What should we say of a carpenter who commenced a nice piece of work knowing that his tools were blunt? And yet most teachers expect little ones to learn to read without any mental preparation whatever. One of the most successful primary teachers we have met—one whose children read and write remarkably well at the close of the first school-year—does not turn to Chart 4 until she has spent several months in training the eye and the hand as a basis for future work.

“Why train the *hand*?” do you ask, teacher? The answer is evident: what the child learns through two senses is more firmly fixed in his memory than what he learns through one. Develop sense of touch, therefore, as well as sense of sight.

The teacher referred to gives her children beads to string, blocks to build, cards to sew, papers to cut and to weave, and in connection with each occupation she has interesting *talks with the children*—miniature object-lessons—which call out their thought and train them to observe, compare, and remember forms. She has a little store of china animals, pretty stones and shells, and many other things that interest children. She has a jar of goldfish, another jar of tadpoles. There are flowers growing in the windows, pictures on the walls, and there is a small aquarium filled with plants which the children helped the teacher to gather. It is needless to say that such a teacher establishes from the outset a sweet fellowship with her pupils which is rivaled only by the mother's love.

It must be remembered, however, that the teacher herself must converse in pleasant, sprightly tones, or she will not call out pleasing inflections in the children's voices. The faulty intonations of pupils in the high school may be the result of bad habits of voice acquired in the primary department. The ingenious teacher will think of many devices for inducing the children to talk with her, and to bring out sweet qualities in their voices. Let them tell what they saw on their way to school. Let them

describe objects in the room. Let them tell about their pets at home.

To recapitulate, then, the needs of the primary school, the following points should receive attention before anything like reading is attempted:

1. The children must be taught to see and to remember forms.
2. They must be taught to talk.
3. They must learn to use the voice pleasantly.
4. Their imagination must be called out.

All these results can be attained by wide-awake object-lessons such as have already been suggested.

Children that have had preparation through occupations and object-lessons will be ready to learn from

Chart 2 (page 9 in *New Primer*).—Do not allow them to see at first all the lines and figures on this chart. The teacher should draw on the blackboard a horizontal and a vertical line; these are enough for one lesson. Do not use the terms "horizontal" and "vertical;" "up-and-down line" and "left-to-right line" are enough for the outset. Let the children point out the straight lines in the room—around the doors, the windows, etc. Give the children little sticks that they may reproduce these lines on their desks. (These can be obtained at "school-supply" stores at a trifling cost, or the teacher herself can make them from matches, cutting off the brimstone ends. Bits of wire may be used for curves.) Give only two sticks at first, and increase the number day by day. At the close of these lessons let the children invent little forms with their sticks and take turns in telling what they have made. Perhaps one will say he has made a slate, another a window, another a kite, and so on. This exercise tends to call out the imagination and greatly interests the little ones.

For another lesson the teacher should copy on the blackboard the first slanting line. Ask the children if they find in the room any lines like it. Let them reproduce it with their sticks, and pro-