

**SELECTIONS FOR
MEMORIZING: BOOK ONE,
FIRST, SECOND,
THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS**

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Selections for Memorizing: Book one, First, Second, Third and Fourth Years by Avery Warner Skinner

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AVERY WARNER SKINNER

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SELECTIONS
FOR MEMORIZING

BOOK ONE

FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS

REQUIRED FOR THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK STATE

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

AVERY WARNER SKINNER ✓

INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF
NEW YORK STATE



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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE poems in "Selections for Memorizing" are those authorized by the Education Department of the State of New York in its syllabus for elementary schools. The revision of this syllabus, published in 1910, necessitated the revision of the original edition of "Selections for Memorizing" to include the new material.

In addition to the selections for memorizing, the new edition now includes the poems designated for appreciative reading in English in seventh and eighth years, and the shorter history poems suggested for collateral reading in the fifth to eighth years.

In order that this material may be available in the most convenient and economical form for pupils' use, it is published in a three book series, as follows:

BOOK ONE. Selections for Memorizing, First, Second, Third and Fourth Years.

BOOK TWO. Selections for Memorizing and History Selections for Collateral Reading, Fifth and Sixth Years.

BOOK THREE. Selections for Memorizing, Poems for Appreciative Reading and History Poems for Collateral Reading, Seventh and Eighth Years.

In connection with the poems for appreciative reading in Book Three there are also sufficient notes to guide the pupil to a careful study of these poems in preparing for the elementary English examinations of the eighth year. For the assistance of the teacher, topics for composition, based on these selections, have also been given.

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In addition to the regular edition the entire contents of the three books are also published in a single volume, for the convenience of those teachers who wish all the material.

The poems prescribed by the Education Department have been chosen after a careful and exhaustive examination of the best courses of study in the schools of this and other states. It is believed that this grouping of these poems in a single series is exceedingly desirable as it offers to teacher and pupil, in permanent and accessible form, the material for the required work in English and also the shorter selections suggested for reading in connection with the study of history in the grades.

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By permission of and special arrangement with Houghton, Mifflin Company, the following poems are used: "The Children's Hour" and "The Village Blacksmith," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; "The Brown Thrush" and "Calling the Violet," by Lucy Larcom; "November," by Alice Cary; "The Sandman," by Margaret Vandergrift; and "The Barefoot Boy," by John Greenleaf Whittier.

The following copyrighted selections are used through the courtesy of and by special arrangement with Charles Scribner's Sons: "A Dutch Lullaby," "The Night Wind" and "Rock-a-by Lady," by Eugene Field; "Foreign Children," "My Shadow," "The Swing," "Where Go the Boats" and "The Wind," by Robert Louis Stevenson; and "One, Two, Three," by Henry Cuyler Bunner.

The following poems are used through the kindness of the publishing houses mentioned: "The Wonderful

World," by William Brighty Rands (John Lane Company); "O Little Town of Bethlehem," by Phillips Brooks (E. P. Dutton & Company); "September," by Helen Hunt Jackson (Little, Brown & Company); and "Bobolink," by Clinton Scollard (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Company).

Thanks are also due to Mrs. Lionel S. Marks (Josephine Preston Peabody) for permission to use "Making a House" and "The Journey;" to Mr. Clinton Scollard for "Fraidie-Cat" and "Jim Crow;" to Mrs. Emily Huntington Miller for "The Bluebird;" and to Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich for "Marjorie's Almanac," published by Houghton, Mifflin Company.

TO THE TEACHER

IN teaching children how to read and what to read, it seems necessary to say that there must be an appreciation of good literature on the part of the teacher. This does not mean that she must of necessity be a literary critic, or even very widely read, but it is of the greatest importance that she be well grounded in the few great books of all generations, capable of a wise discrimination between the good and the bad in literature and able to bring to her class a love of good books and a heart touched and inspired by a comradeship with the great minds of the ages.

Ruskin well says: "Will you go and gossip with your housemaid or with your stable-boy, when you may talk with kings and queens? Will you jostle with the common crowd for *entrée* here or audience there, when all the while this eternal court is open to you with its society wide as the world, — the chosen and the mighty of every place and time?"

There is such a multitude of books to-day, such a mass of ephemeral literature in magazines and books of fiction that it is scarcely surprising that our taste for good reading is vitiated and our mental energies more or less dissipated. How many of us are as familiar as we should be with the mighty epic of Isaiah, with the lyrics of David, with his songs of rejoicing or of penitence? Are we well acquainted with the masterpieces of Shakespeare — that great analyst of the human soul — with their records of passion and tenderness, true for all ages and conditions of man? It cannot be too earnestly

urged that if we would influence rightly the reading of the children under our guidance, we must be careful in the choice of our own reading.

The habit of committing to memory some of the fine gold of literature is most helpful and stimulating. Facts and figures may pass away, but the splendid imagery of the poet, the great thoughts of great men, will do much toward the molding of character and the formation of taste.

It is believed that this grouping together of choice literary material will greatly facilitate the efforts of teachers to instill in the minds of the young an appreciation of good literature.

In the use of these selections for memorizing, permit me to emphasize the fact that the study of a poem should always precede the study of the author's life. For convenient reference, sketches of the authors from whose writings selections are quoted are appended to each volume. The facts given therein, however, are to be learned, if at all, only after the children are familiar with the poems from the authors to whom they relate.

The essence of literature, it has been finely said, is beauty; to study it mechanically is like grasping a butterfly. The teaching of these poems should be not merely a training of memory but also a process of developing the imagination, giving the child a quick and keen perception of the beauty in literature.

In the attainment of this double end it becomes necessary, therefore, for the teacher to have interest and enthusiasm in a poem before attempting to present it to the class.

The teacher should make a careful study of the poem, stanza by stanza, and seek to grasp the full meaning of each sentence. She should try to see the pictures presented and to understand the feelings and emotions

of the author when he wrote, for the ideas which the author has expressed appeal to similar experiences in the child's life. When this has been done thoroughly, the teacher will have entered into the spirit of the poem and should be able to arouse a like enthusiasm in the class. Of course, in the poems set for memorization she must commit each selection to memory and drill herself upon the oral rendering of it before it is given to the children. After this somewhat extensive but necessary preparation, the poem in its entirety should be read or recited to the class. In this way the children will be able to gain a general idea of its purpose and theme. Then as they proceed to commit it to memory, select the key word or words of each stanza and let these suggest the thought of the stanza. By thus grouping sentences around some central idea, you will find that the children will memorize and retain readily.

There are, in many poems, some few lines that reveal the heart of the poem—inspired thoughts that appeal to the best there is in us. Such gems of thought should be so frequently repeated, both individually and in concert, that the child will never forget them but will make them a permanent part of his richest mental treasure.

It is not necessary to memorize the history poems, but they should be read by the children while they are studying the lives of the men to whom the poems refer or the periods which the poems illustrate.

Good literature, especially poetry, paints vivid pictures of the life of a nation, and should constantly be used to illuminate the pages of history. Through this correlation of literature and history greater interest in both subjects is aroused.

AVERY WARNER SKINNER.