

**MONROE'S
SUPPLEMENTARY SERIES-
FOURTH BOOK. THE
ADVANCED THIRD READER**

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MRS. LEWIS B. MONROE

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THE

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THIRD READER

BY

MRS. LEWIS B. MONROE



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PHILADELPHIA

PREFACE

TEACHERS who have used the lower books of this series know that their *aim* is to teach children to write good English, as well as to read correctly. In the Primer the little ones copy, at first, only two words in script; then four words, or a line, but always a complete sentence. Afterwards they are given two, three, and four lines. This prepares them for copying the simple letters which are found in the First Reader. The Second Reader goes a step beyond this, in giving little stories or conversations which are to be copied on the slates, or written from dictation, at the discretion of the teacher. With all this preparatory drill, the children are qualified to begin, in connection with the Third Reader, to

Express their own Thoughts.

This book, therefore, gives opportunities for constant drill in language-lessons, and in simple compositions. But, teachers should avoid using the word "composition" before young pupils. It is a bugbear,—a stumbling block in the way of many a child's progress. It is much better to lead children so gradually into the expression of their own thoughts that they are unconscious of difficulties.

Each lesson in the Third Reader should be regarded as a writing, as well as a reading-lesson; and teachers should get a fourfold drill from each story. For instance:—In the first lesson, "The Cat," the teacher should begin by thoroughly interesting her class in the subject. Have, if possible, a live cat to talk about, before the reading-

lesson. Let each child say something about Pussy. One will tell the color of her fur; another, how many feet she has; another will notice her claws; and so on. And if the little ones do not exhaust the facts of the story (with which, of course, the teacher has already made herself familiar,) *they should not be told, but should be led into finding out the facts for themselves.* This requires tact. But what teacher, with a heart full of love for children,—and we can imagine none other in a school-room,—can look into their eager, questioning faces and not be inspired with helpfulness?

The object-lesson on "The Cat" may consume the hour for reading. Can any one say the time has been wasted because the readers have not been opened? The wise teacher knows that the children will look forward with eagerness to the reading-lesson of the next day. That hour will probably be strictly a reading-lesson; and experience has proved that the young voices will be fresher and freer, and the inflections—unconsciously to the children themselves—more varied from the interest awakened in the subject, during the object-lesson.

Not until the third day would we have the teacher call particular attention to the words at the beginning of the lesson. And then the exercise should not be made a bleak, bare spelling-lesson. Let the children copy the words on their slates, and then make up and express (but not yet write out) sentences introducing each word: as, "The **claws** of a cat are sharp;" "Archie made Pussy show her claws by **squeezing** her paw," etc. An hour spent in this way can be made exceedingly interesting to children; and is far more profitable to them than committing to memory prosy definitions, containing words often more difficult for them to understand than are the words so defined.

On the fourth day the children should again copy on their slates the words at the beginning of the lesson, and *write* sentences containing them,—either new ones or those thought

of the day before,—but always in connection with the story. This drill will not only fix in the children's minds the spelling and meaning of each word, but will familiarize them with the facts of the story, and will give them readiness in the expression of their own thoughts, so that they will have no trouble in

Writing Letters,

which is an important feature of this book. A severe but just criticism of our public school system is, that children graduate from many of our grammar schools without being able to write correctly, even simple notes. The author had this in mind in arranging Archie's letters to Kate, which the children are to copy on their slates and then write a reply. It will be noticed that Archie's letters are suggestive, in order that the little ones may readily find something to say in their answers. *These letters also contain the rules for punctuation and the use of capitals*, which the children have already met *practically* in the Second Reader. The letters are purposely without dates, as these are to be added in copying.

In connection with the correspondence with Archie, we trust the teacher will induce the children to express themselves frequently in writing. Call the imagination into play—that mighty lever in the training of the young. Have a post-office in the school. Let the children write letters to each other or to their teacher. Let them imagine that Archie goes away again, or that Kate makes a journey and describes what she sees. Let the boys go, in thought, to the far North, and write home their adventures. Try anything—no matter what—that will induce the children to express themselves in writing. One may become a perfect oral speller, and have at his tongue's end all the rules of grammar, and yet not be able to write correctly a simple note;—and all this—because he has been drilled in **talking about how to do a thing instead of doing it**. "Practice makes perfect;"—this every one will acknowledge. We trust that it will not be said of any child that has used the Second

and Third Readers of this series, that he cannot write a simple note correctly. It should not be said, if the teacher has been faithful to her trust.

And this learning to write must have a reflex influence upon learning to read well. He who can express his own thoughts in simple, concise sentences, becomes an excellent critic and exponent in interpreting the thoughts of others. He unconsciously acquires the power of analysis. He will seek for the emphatic words in a sentence; he will bring those words to the front in his imagination, and the subordinate ideas shall pay homage, through voice and proper inflections, to the central or leading thoughts.

In arranging the lessons for this Reader (three-fourths of the book was never before in print) we have attempted to give the teacher something interesting to talk about with her classes, as well as to bring out the various inflections of the children's voices. A careful reading of the simple stories in the first part of the book should enable children to tell, by looking at the skull of an animal, whether it belongs to the flesh-eating, gnawing, or chewing animals.

Would that the teacher could realize the importance of encouraging the children to talk with her! Not until we give are we ready to receive. The child who expresses his thoughts to others has not only the joy of giving, but he unconsciously arouses within himself a new power of growth, which will show itself in the quickening of all his mental faculties.

The author would express her indebtedness to Mrs. Celia Thaxter, who has kindly permitted the use of several of her poems; also, to J. W. Bradley, of Philadelphia, for permission to use poems from the pen of Marion Douglass. Some of the stories on Natural History were written by W. N. Lockington.

MRS. L. B. MONROE.

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