

**THE ELLIS
RATIONAL SPELLER**

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The Ellis Rational Speller by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**THE ELLIS
RATIONAL SPELLER**

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Ellis Rational Speller

FOR COMMERCIAL SCHOOLS, COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENTS
IN HIGH SCHOOLS, DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS,
AND FOR GENERAL USE IN HIGH
SCHOOLS AND THE UPPER
GRADES

1922 EDITION

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Suggestions to Teachers

It has been the custom for some time to criticise spelling as taught in our schools. One can find frequently in the daily papers articles lamenting the fact that the boys and girls of today can not spell as their fathers and mothers could a generation ago. Notwithstanding the vast improvement in teaching this branch in recent years, criticism still continues. There was a time when many reputable school men thought that spelling could be taught incidentally, or in connection with the other branches, and not as a separate study. Happily this time has passed. The best teachers are now, and have been for some time, insisting on more drill in spelling. The publishers believe that the average boy or girl of today can spell as well as the average boy or girl of a generation ago; that the average boy or girl who has finished the eighth grade can spell as well as the average parent of today. Note the word *average*.

It is unnecessary that any one learn to spell a great many exceedingly difficult words. One should be able to spell the words of general business application, and those in common use among intelligent people.

It is the aim of this book to present, in the main, common words, most of which have some orthographic difficulty. In the classified lists a few words will be found that need no attention from the student of average ability. In studying these lists, as indeed in the study of any spelling lesson, time should be spent only on the words of which one is not sure. The student should check words he knows he can spell, and study the rest.

Following are a few suggestions which we hope will be of value to both teacher and pupil:

Devote some time to spelling aloud by sound. A pupil may know how to mark diacritically every word in this book and yet not know the sounds of the letters, or how to use the dictionary to learn pronunciation. The sound must be associated with the sign.

Cultivate the dictionary habit. The teacher should see that the student not only knows how to use the dictionary, but that he does use it. To this end five or more of the unmarked words from each lesson may be assigned to be marked, defined, and used in sentences.

Only sufficient time should be spent on the rules of spelling to learn those most common. Spelling can not be learned by rule. The only way is to drill and review, and to keep on drilling and reviewing, always keeping in mind that it is the words one does not know how to spell, or those he has missed in the daily lesson, that need to be studied.

The definitions in this text are necessarily brief, and in some cases may not be sufficiently complete to bring out the full meaning of the

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

word defined. It is suggested that each word be used in a good, clear sentence—a sentence that will illustrate its meaning.

In learning to *spell*, words should be seen as in ordinary reading. The words in this book are unmarked, and should be studied unmarked for drill in spelling. The repetition of ten marked words from each lesson affords sufficient material for diacritical work.

Good teachers teach both written and oral spelling. For written lessons a bound spelling blank should be used in order that lists of misspelled words may be preserved for reviews, and as an incentive to neatness. Considerable interest can be aroused in oral spelling by spelling down frequently. Contests may also be held in written spelling.

Many teachers consider it a good plan to have missed words re-written several times. There is probably no objection to this if it is not carried to excess. If too much re-writing is required a dislike for spelling is apt to grow. No word should be rewritten more than four or five times. Indeed, is it not wiser to write the misspelled words once, study them, then write them again from memory, not seeing the previous written form? Lists of missed words may be preserved in the spelling blank, and these words used for frequent review lessons.

The school might keep a small medal, to be worn each week by the student having the highest average, the one making most rapid improvement or the one doing perfect work. Inexpensive prizes, such as a dozen name cards, a pen holder, pen wiper, eraser, paper weight or reward button may be given for a certain degree of proficiency.

Many excellent teachers keep a record of misspelled words in various classes other than spelling, and make use of these words for drill work. To secure the best results by this method, each student should be drilled on the word he himself has missed.

Careless spelling should not be accepted in any manuscript. It does very little good to check misspelled words and hand back the papers. Incorrect spelling should be marked plainly, and the paper containing the improper forms should be rewritten and again submitted to the teacher. This is especially true of English and Letter Writing.

Carelessness should be frowned upon. The teacher should pronounce clearly and distinctly. In oral spelling the pupil should pronounce before spelling.

The live teacher will use various plans and devices to create interest, and to assist the student in learning to spell difficult words. One teacher taught the word *separate* by writing it on the board, the first *a* being written with red chalk. *Let reviews be frequent. Emphasize them.*

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PART I.

Orthography—Principles and Definitions.

LESSON I.

1. **Words** are either **Spoken** or **Written**.
2. **Spoken Words** are composed of distinct vocal utterances called **Elementary Sounds**.
3. In English Speech there are forty-two elementary sounds.
4. These sounds are variously represented by twenty-six characters, or letters, called collectively, **The Alphabet**.
5. A **vocal** is a sound produced by vibration of the vocal chords, and modified either by resonance or by partial obstruction by the articulatory organs.
6. A **sub-vocal** is a vocal sound modified and obstructed by the articulatory organs.
7. An **aspirate** is an articulate sound made without vibration of the vocal chords.
8. The letters *a, e, i, o,* and *u* are called **vowels**, and the sounds they represent are called **vocal sounds**.
Vocals are sometimes called **tonics**.
9. The remaining letters are called **consonants**, and the sounds they represent are called **sub-vocal** or **aspirate sounds**.
Sub-vocals are sometimes called **sub-tonics**, also **sonants**.
Aspirates are sometimes called **atonic**, also **surds**.
The letter *y* is sometimes a vowel; as, in the words, *by, myth, hypocrite*.
10. **Pronunciation** is the art of correctly uttering spoken words.
11. **Spelling** is the art of correctly naming or writing in proper order the letters that compose written words.