

**THE NORMAL
COURSE
IN READING**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649658237

The Normal Course in Reading by Emma J. Todd & W. B. Powell

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Cover @ 2017

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BY

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DIVERSIFIED READINGS AND STUDIES.



SILVER, BURDETT & CO., PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK . . . BOSTON . . . CHICAGO

1896
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

588215

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NORMAL COURSE IN READING.

COMPRISING:—

- PRIMER: Preliminary Work in Reading;
FIRST READER: First Steps in Reading;
SECOND READER: Select Readings and Culture Lessons;
ALTERNATE SECOND READER: Progressive Readings in Nature;
THIRD READER: Diversified Readings and Studies;
ALTERNATE THIRD READER: How to Read with Open Eyes;
FOURTH READER: The Wonderful Things around Us;
FIFTH READER: Advanced Readings in Literature—Scientific,
Geographical, Historical, Patriotic, and Miscellaneous;
PRIMARY READING CHARTS: Preliminary Drill in Reading, 48
numbers, 29 x 36 inches, Illustrated.

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Typography: J. S. Cushing & Co.

Presswork: Barwick & Smith.

Illustrations: H. A. Dennison.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

PROBABLY no books in our schools represent, on the whole, more effort and enterprise on the part of publisher and author alike, than the school reading books. They have constantly received contributions from our ablest and most thoughtful educators, and to their publication have been given the best endeavors of our most successful schoolbook makers—facts which abundantly attest the importance of the subject and the interest taken in it by the educational public.

. That there have yet remained possibilities for improvement in this department of school work cannot be doubted by any who have followed the discussions of the subject among educators and in the press. Our best teachers have not been satisfied with the readers of stereotyped pattern, and have over and again expressed a desire for something different and better. All this has revealed and emphasized the necessity for improvement, not alone in the manner of presentation, but also in the subject-matter presented.

It is confidently claimed that the Normal Course in Reading fully answers this demand for improvement. Its literature is of the choicest. Its subject-matter is drawn from topics which attract and engage all children, appealing at once to their intelligence and interest, and giving them something to read about and think about. Its order of presentation and treatment is based on true pedagogical principles. Its plan and scope are natural, comprehensive, and in full accord with the most advanced school work of to-day.

A more definite and detailed exposition of the plan, scope, and subject-matter of each book in the series will be found in the "Suggestions to Teachers," prepared by the authors.

The publishers confidently commend the Series to all progressive educators, and anticipate for it large favor at the hands of those who appreciate the best schoolroom work.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

THE chief work in teaching the child to read is that of giving him information from other sources than the printed page.

The first requisite in teaching the child to read Third Reader text is to know that he is prepared for the work. Not yet is he to "read that he may know." He is yet to be made to know in advance of the attempt at learning to read, that he may properly and most easily acquire that power.

The child must be prepared for the reading lesson by such work as will give him knowledge of the subjects about which he will be asked to read, and that will at the same time create in him a desire to know more of these subjects.

The teacher may be certain that the more the child knows, the more easily will he learn to read; the more accurately he knows, the more intelligently will he learn to read; the more nearly the text represents what he knows and what he has expressed, the more enjoyable will learning to read be to him.

The teacher, therefore, must prepare himself to give broad and accurate information on those subjects about which the lessons of the book treat, the information to be given in every instance before the reading of the lesson is attempted.

In this preparatory work the lessons should be as carefully planned as are any other lessons of the school. The plan in each instance will be suggested by the text, which of course the teacher must read in advance. In the development of these lessons the child should be made to do most of the talking. The utmost care should be exercised to have the child talk correctly; to have him as far as practicable use the language of the text, especially

the technical part of it; to use sentences that are as involved as those of the text; to pronounce the words correctly; to use the voice in natural, conversational tones. The transition from such intelligent conversation to the reading of matter corresponding to what has been said, is thus made easy, interesting, and profitable.

The child "stumbles" over words whose meanings or whose relations he does not know, and he stumbles over no others. How wise it is, then, to cause him first to know the words he is to read and to know their use in relations as involved as those in which he will find them when he first meets them on the printed page!

How could correct language be taught more profitably than in the way suggested above? The first language lessons and the first reading lessons should be on the same subjects, and should be essentially the same matter. As language lessons, they should proceed from seeing, doing, and knowing; as reading lessons, they should proceed from the expression of what has been seen or done, and is known.

The child should be prepared to read the lessons that relate to geography by exactly such work as would be done if the purpose were to teach him the facts given as geography lessons. *

This means, according to circumstances, journeys to the fields or woods; work with sand maps; work in drawing maps; work in examining products, etc., etc., etc. The child should know this not as work preparing him for the reading lesson, but as delightful employment in getting information. The reading should be to confirm what he has learned by other means.

If the lesson is historical, the child may be prepared for it by examination of articles of dress or other things showing modes of life or conditions of the people, and talking about them; by reading narratives and descriptions to him, and having him reproduce them; by an examination of pictures, and intelligent conversation about them, etc., etc., etc.

It will be found an easy matter to interest a class in the children of other lands by talking about them, reading anecdotes about

them, showing interesting articles of wearing apparel, or playthings, about all of which the child must be made to talk.

The child's interest must be kept up. He must be made aggressive. How easy for the teacher to create a strong desire on the part of the child to read about Columbus, Washington, or Lincoln, by conversations that will give him the words and their relations as they will be found on the printed page to which he turns!

The child should be prepared to read the lessons relating to the humanities, intemperance, selfishness, generosity, etc., by practical lesson, or by story or anecdote, giving him correct, definite ideas, broadening his view and giving him and making him reproduce the words, idioms, and involved sentences corresponding to those he will be called on to read.

The child may be required to define words or give synonyms. The result of this should be to make him strong in seeing the meanings of words as they are used. He needs no dictionary for this work. The dictionary will be a disadvantage to him. The teacher should be careful to make the child see that a noun must not be defined by a verb or a verb by a noun; an infinitive by a participle, etc., etc., etc. The result of this should be to make him see meanings in forms of words. The printed page should have more meaning to the child than it usually has. It ought to do much, and may easily be made to do much, toward teaching him the grammar of the language.

It is excellent work to require children after reading a passage making an assertion concerning a form or other condition, to verify the same by reference to the object, picture, or other source from which the information is obtained.

The child may with profit be caused to reread sometimes, holding in his hand the object or picture, or pointing to it, verifying what he reads. This will greatly aid in causing him to read naturally, or as he talks. The reading should be a talking from the book. While one reads, let the other children of the class listen with closed eyes to what is read, after which let them decide whether or not the one reading reads as if he understands what he reads, and whether or not he so renders it that others may understand it.

It is profitable work for pupils to describe pictures that might be used for illustrating lessons that are not illustrated. It is also

profitable for children to draw such illustrations on paper or blackboard. After such word or pencil pictures have been made, it is most profitable to have the text reread.

Care should be given to the pronunciation of words when the lessons are talked; especially should this be true of the new words of each lesson, that the child may pronounce such words correctly when he first sees them in the text. The difficult new words should be written on the board for drill in pronouncing and spelling. (The idioms should be written and read as entireties.)

The PHONIC DRILL CHART on page 221, the key words for which have been selected with great care, can be made especially serviceable in training children in the elements of enunciation. The frequent use of this table will not only familiarize them with the various sounds of the letters, but will acquaint them with the diacritical marks employed to distinguish those sounds. The LIST OF WORDS FOR PRONUNCIATION can be used to illustrate the application of the markings, and to extend the drill in enunciation.

It may be a good plan occasionally to have the children hunt in this list for a given word, especially one that has been mispronounced, to see if its correct pronunciation can be determined by them from the markings employed. Such work intelligently done, a little at a time, leads naturally to an appreciative use of the dictionary later on. At first no word not known to be included in the list should be so asked for.

Children may be trained to use and to control the organs of speech by much practice in sounding the consonants. Instead of urging the pupil to "read louder" when he is not understood, he should be trained to speak distinctly. It will be found that the child needs to be shown how to adjust the organs of speech, that he may properly and distinctly make the sounds represented by the consonants respectively. Careful work will secure distinct and pleasant speech.