

**THE ALDINE SPELLER.  
PART THREE: FOR  
GRADES FIVE AND SIX**

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The Aldine Speller. Part Three: For Grades Five and Six by Catherine T. Bryce & Frank J. Sherman

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**CATHERINE T. BRYCE & FRANK J. SHERMAN**

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PART THREE  
FOR GRADES FIVE AND SIX

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## PREFACE

To teachers and the public alike, probably no subject taught in the public schools has been more disappointing than spelling. This disappointment is undoubtedly due to:

1. Defective material for study and poor methods of teaching;
2. Too much testing and too little teaching;
3. Finding errors rather than preventing them;
4. The use of a theoretical, rather than the practical, vocabulary of children and adults.

The teaching of spelling must be done from a spelling book in the hands of the children, since the individual teacher does not have the time to prepare lists of words which will produce as good results as the lists given in a spelling book, the selection and preparation of which are the result of years of special observation and testing.

A plan of teaching spelling to secure the best results should consist of a thoughtful, systematic, and comprehensive presentation of the words and spelling facts which every pupil must learn. It must contain an adequate and simple system of phonics for the primary grades, since a large per-

centage of the words in common use are purely phonetic and present no spelling difficulties once a sane and practical phonetic foundation is fixed. It must have a vocabulary selected and graded with such care that it will give the child the ability to spell correctly those words which he needs to use in his written work, and that it will also develop and broaden his vocabulary for his future needs. It should contain suitable directions and hints to the teacher, sufficiently removed from the pupil's text so that he may not be confused by them. It may, and in many grades should, contain information and suggestions to the pupil that will help him to master the many peculiarly non-phonetic words which present their individual problems and must be individually mastered. It should contain a very few of the most important spelling rules simply stated. It should contain a large variety of sentences for dictation, which may wisely take the form of gems of thought. Such a plan, well taught, constantly supplemented by the teacher with such words as the peculiar difficulties of individual pupils and classes may require, will produce a maximum of ability to spell correctly.

In the *Aldine Speller* the authors have presented a plan of teaching which in actual results has proved singularly effective. The vocabulary has been selected and graded with unusual care to meet the actual needs of life and to develop a spelling sense. In its preparation a careful com-

parison was made of the vocabularies of several of the most popular spelling books of the day in respect to both gradation and selection. Paralleling this, the various recent tests and investigations, notably those of Ayres, Jones, and Cook and O'Shea, have been checked. The resulting vocabulary is thought to represent the real writing vocabulary of the average child of the grade in which it is taught. Special and repeated drills are given on the real trouble makers — the one hundred and more words that comprise four-fifths of the misspelled words of the schoolroom.

In the primary grades use is made of exceptionally valuable phonetic lists. Emphasis is placed upon this important and very practical foundation for the development of a spelling sense, and its mastery in the primary grades will do much to train children to spell correctly. A few comparatively uncommon words are used in these lists chiefly for the value of the phonetic drill.

As every error creates a tendency, and if repeated quickly establishes a habit, it is important that the correct spelling of words be taught before children have occasion to write them. Every worth-while test and investigation shows the most common and most useful words in our language to be the words used early by children. It is likewise certain that very many of the misspelled words are one-syllable words in very common use. It would, therefore, seem essential that the real teaching of spelling should be done as early as pos-



sible in the grades — somewhat earlier than has frequently been the case — that correct habits, rather than incorrect ones, may be formed.

Obligation is expressed to Dr. Leonard P. Ayres of the Russell Sage Foundation for kind permission to make use of his list of "The Thousand Commonest Words." These and some four thousand other very common and important words constitute the Aldine vocabulary.

That the Aldine Speller may lead to some real teaching, and decrease "lesson hearing," is the hope of the authors.

## DIRECTIONS TO TEACHERS

### ORAL SPELLING

ORAL spelling should always precede written spelling in the primary grades. Careful and distinct pronunciation by the child should always precede oral spelling. Children cannot be expected to spell correctly words that they cannot pronounce. It is well to emphasize the form of a word of more than one syllable by syllabication. It makes the spelling more obvious, promotes clear enunciation, and assists in creating a correct mental picture of the word. The sight words in this book are so syllabicated when first presented. A slight pause between the syllables is usually sufficient in oral spelling. In writing the words they should not be divided.

### TESTING

The mere "hearing" of spelling lessons is happily a thing of the past in most schools. However, teachers cannot be too strongly impressed with the worthlessness of such exercises. The primary object is to instruct, not to examine — to teach to spell correctly, not to find out how many

words may be spelled incorrectly. Review lessons should be given frequently, and these are sufficient for test purposes. All other lessons should be thoroughly taught with instruction the aim and object of the lesson.

### INTEREST

It has been well said that "interest is nine-tenths of education." This is true in teaching spelling. Any means which will arouse interest in mastering words is likely to be effective. So far as our forefathers succeeded in securing results in this subject they did so by interest in the old-fashioned "spelling-bee." Spelling matches of various sorts are desirable for creating interest. The review lists and special lists will be found admirable for this purpose. It should be remembered, however, that this is testing what is already learned and is not teaching something new.

### PUPILS' LISTS

Each pupil has his own difficulties in spelling. Teach him to make private lists of the words which he finds especially hard to spell and have him use extra effort to conquer these trouble-makers. These may be listed in the back of his textbook or in his individual note book. Occasional lessons may be devoted entirely to this kind of exercise and they should be individual and painstaking. Such words should be watched for in the other written work and mis-