

**THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR:
COMPRISING THE SUBSTANCE OF ALL THE
MOST APPROVED ENGLISH
GRAMMARS EXTANT, BRIEFLY DEFINED,
AND NEATLY ARRANGED; WITH COPIOUS
EXERCISES IN PARSING AND SYNTAX**

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The principles of English grammar: comprising the substance of all the most approved English grammars extant, briefly defined, and neatly arranged; with copious exercises in parsing and syntax by William Lennie

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WILLIAM LENNIE

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COPIOUS EXERCISES IN PARSING AND SYNTAX.

BY WILLIAM LENNIE,

LATE TEACHER OF ENGLISH, EDINBURGH.

Seventy-First Edition,

WITH THE AUTHOR'S LATEST IMPROVEMENTS, AND AN APPENDIX

IN WHICH

ANALYSIS OF SENTENCES

IS FULLY TREATED.



EDINBURGH:

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MAIN

It is probable, that the original design and principal motive of every teacher, in publishing a School-Book, is the improvement of his own pupils. Such, at least, was the immediate object of the present compilation; which, for brevity of expression, neatness of arrangement, and comprehensiveness of plan, is, perhaps, superior to any other book of the kind. "My chief end has been to explain the general principles of Grammar as clearly and intelligibly as possible. In the definitions, therefore, easiness and perspicuity have been sometimes preferred to logical exactness."

Orthography is mentioned rather for the sake of order than with a view to instruction; for the pupil may be supposed to have mastered its practical details before he commences the study of Grammar.

On Etymology I have left much to be remarked by the teacher, in the time of teaching. My reason for doing this is, that children, when by themselves, labour more to have the words of their book imprinted on their memories, than to have the meaning fixed in their minds; but, on the contrary, when the teacher addresses them *vis voce*, they naturally strive rather to comprehend his meaning, than to remember his exact expressions. In pursuance of this idea, the first part of this little volume has been thrown into a form more resembling Heads of Lectures on Grammar than a complete elucidation of the subject. That the teacher, however, may not be always under the necessity of having recourse to his memory to supply the deficiencies, the most remarkable Observations have been subjoined at the bottom of the page, to which the pupils themselves may occasionally be referred.

The desire of being concise has frequently induced me to use very elliptical expressions; but I trust they are all sufficiently perspicuous. I may also add, that many additional and critical remarks which might have, with propriety, been inserted in the Grammar, have been inserted rather in the Key; for I have studiously withheld everything from the Grammar that could be spared, to keep it low-priced for the general good.

The Questions on Etymology, at pages 174 and 175 will speak for themselves: they unite the advantages of both the usual methods, *viz.* that of plain narration, and that of question and answer, without the inconvenience of either.

Syntax is commonly divided into two parts, Concord and Government; and the rules respecting the former, grammarians in general have placed before those which relate to the latter.

I have not, however, attended to this division, because I deem it of little importance; but have placed those rules first which are either more easily understood, or which occur more frequently. In arranging a number of rules, it is difficult to please every reader. I have frequently been unable to satisfy myself; and therefore cannot expect that the arrangement which I have at last adopted will give universal satisfaction. Whatever order be preferred, the one rule must necessarily precede the other; and since they are all to be learned, it signifies little whether the rules of concord precede those of government, or whether they be mixed, provided no anticipations be made which may embarrass the learner.

In connexion with the Rules of Syntax, I have introduced "Exercises to be corrected" as well as "Exercises to be passed and construed;" and in the case of the former I have generally compressed into a single page as many faulty expressions as some of my predecessors have done into two pages of a larger size. Hence, though the book seems to contain but few exercises on bad grammar, it really contains so many that a separate volume of exercises is quite unnecessary.

Whatever defects were found in the former editions in the time of teaching have been carefully supplied.

On Etymology, Syntax, Punctuation, and Prosody, there is scarcely a Rule or Observation in the largest grammar in print that is not to be found in this; besides, the Rules and Definitions, in general, are so very short and pointed, that, compared with those in most other grammars, they may be said to be *hit off* rather than *made*. Every page is independent, and though quite full, not crowded, but wears an air of neatness and ease invitingly sweet,—a circumstance not unimportant. But, notwithstanding these properties, and others that might be mentioned, I am far from being so vain as to suppose that this compilation is altogether free from inaccuracies or defects; much less do I presume that it will obtain the approbation of every one who may choose to peruse it; for, to use the words of Dr. Johnson, "He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake."

☞ These pupils that are capable of writing, should be requested to write the plural of nouns, &c., either at home or at school. The Exercises on Syntax should be written in their corrected state with a stroke drawn under the word corrected.

☞ K. means Key; the figures refer to the No. of the Key, not the page.



ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR is the art of speaking and writing the English Language with propriety.

It is divided into four parts; namely, *Orthography*, *Etymology*, *Syntax*, and *Prosody*.

ORTHOGRAPHY.

ORTHOGRAPHY *treats of Letters, Syllables, and the spelling of Words.*

THERE are *twenty-six* letters in English.

Letters are either Vowels or Consonants.

A *Vowel* is a letter, the *name* of which makes a *full open* sound.

A *Consonant* is a letter that has a sound *less distinct than* that of a vowel.

The Vowels are *a, e, i, o, u*, and sometimes *w* and *y*.

The Consonants are *b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z*.

W and *y* are consonants when they begin a word or syllable; in every other situation they are vowels.

A *Diphthong* is the union of two vowels; as, *ou* in *out*.

A *proper* Diphthong is one in which *both* the Vowels are sounded; as, *oy* in *boy*.

An *improper* Diphthong is one in which only *one* of the two vowels is sounded; as, *o* in *boat*.

A *Triphthong* is the union of three vowels; as, *eau* in *beauty*.

A *Syllable* is as much of a word as can be sounded at once; as, *gram* in *grammar*.

A *Monosyllable* is a word of *one* syllable; as, *house*.

A *Dissyllable* is a word of *two* syllables; as, *household*.

A *Trisyllable* is a word of *three* syllables; as, *householder*.

A *Polysyllable* is a word of *many* syllables.

Spelling is the art of expressing words by their proper letters.

EXERCISES ON ORTHOGRAPHY.

Tell the Vowels in

Ball, cellar, dine, folly, home, James, kitchen, lambkin, mulberry, popgun.

Tell whether w and y are Vowels or Consonants in

Awry, beware, blowy, downy, fowl, grayling, hay, jewry, lawfully, wayward, witty, yearly.

Tell which are proper and which improper Diphthongs in

Boil, cook, death, faith, gown, hawk, loud, mean, pour, queen, roar, toy.

Tell how many Syllables are in the following words:—

Aaron, barbarian, circular, diamond, extraordinary, firefly, goatherd, heavenward, Laodicea, latitudinarian, noteworthy, Utopia.

OBSERVATIONS.

In every syllable there must be at least one vowel.

Any vowel except *w* can make a syllable by itself.

ETYMOLOGY.

ETYMOLOGY treats of the different sorts of Words, their various modifications, and their derivation.

THERE are nine parts of Speech;—Article, Noun, Adjective, Pronoun, Verb, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, and Interjection.

Of the ARTICLES.

An *Article* is a word put before a noun, to show the extent of its meaning; as, *a* man.

There are two articles, *a* or *an* and *the*. *A* is used before a consonant; as, *a* day.—*An* is used before a vowel, or silent *h*; as, *an* age, *an* hour.

A is called the indefinite, and *the* the definite article.

EXERCISES ON THE ARTICLES.

Prefix the indefinite article to the following words:—

Army, ass, boot, coat, door, elm, eye, river, garden, hair, heir, honour, house, island, nation, orange, serpent, umpire, union, upstart, valley, week, yard.

Correct the following errors:—

A erroy, an hen, an hill, a hour, a inkstand, an handful, an ewe, an useful book, an history, an yewtree, an hedge, a honest man.

OBSERVATIONS.

A is used before the long sound of *y*, and before *w* and *y*; as, *A* wit, *a* swag, *a* week, *a* year.

A noun without an article to limit it, is taken in its widest sense; as, *Man* is mortal; namely, *all mankind*.

A is used before nouns in the singular number only.—It is used before the plural in nouns preceded by such phrases as *A few*; *a great many*; as, *a few* books; *a great many* apples.

The is used before nouns in both numbers; and sometimes before adverbs in the comparative and superlative degree; as, *The more* I study grammar *the better* I like it.