

**THE AMERICAN
SCHOOL
READERS. PRIMER**

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The American School Readers. Primer by Kate F. Oswell & C. B. Gilbert

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KATE F. OSWELL & C. B. GILBERT

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PRIMER



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THE AMERICAN SCHOOL READERS

PRIMER

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ARITHMETICS," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

SOME PRINCIPLES

1. The one function of a primer is to acquaint children with the printed symbols of words already familiar. No secondary purpose should be allowed to get in the way of this.

Most children come to school in command of a vocabulary reasonably sufficient for their immediate needs. But to this vocabulary they are wholly ear-minded; that is, they know the words when they hear them, and they can speak the greater part, if not all, of them. Through the use of the primer they become eye-minded as to the words; they learn to recognize them and to "sense" them as printed.

This is a great step, and it is enough to accomplish through the agency of the child's first school book. Any attempt to enlarge the scope of the primer is likely to divert the attention from the main issue and to interfere with its successful pursuit.

2. A primer should not attempt greatly to enlarge the children's vocabulary. Such enlargement will come rapidly enough through the various new activities of the school life. Especially should a primer not attempt to teach unusual words. It has enough to do to teach the printed forms of words well known.

3. A primer should not attempt to teach any elaborate analysis of words into their sonant elements. This also diverts the attention from the main issue of making the connection between ideas and printed words.

Enlarging the vocabulary through the use of fanciful literature comes properly a little later, as also does phonic analysis, when a foundation has been laid in the knowledge of the printed symbols of a limited vocabulary.

4. Only a few new words should be presented in a single lesson, and these should be used many times in different sentential relations. The progress should be slow and steady.

5. Reading in a primer should always be reading, "sensing" the thought expressed by the printed words, just as it is "sensed"