

**FIRST BOOK IN
ENGLISH FOR PRIMARY
AND LOWER GRADES**

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First Book in English for Primary and Lower Grades by Larkin Dunton & Augustus H. Kelley

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LARKIN DUNTON & AUGUSTUS H. KELLEY

**FIRST BOOK IN
ENGLISH FOR PRIMARY
AND LOWER GRADES**

Inductive Course in English

FIRST BOOK IN ENGLISH

FOR

Primary and Lower Grammar Grades

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS little book is the outgrowth of many years of experience in language teaching in all grades of schools.

Experience has proved that little progress can be made by the child in the use of language, until he has acquired a mastery of the sentence sense.

His thoughts must be so developed that he shall come to feel that the sentence is the unit of language.

This power to appreciate the force of the sentence can come to the child by the use of language in expressing his own thoughts, not by talks about its use.

Thoughts are expressed by sentences. Our first duty is to lead the child to form right habits of thinking, our second to teach right modes of expression in correct sentences.

The thinking and the thought expression must be directed by the skill of the teacher and the author, until by constant association of thought and form, the thinking of the child will naturally shape itself in proper sentences.

It has been the aim of the authors to make as close a connection as possible between the oral and the writ-

ten forms of language. To do this the most effectually, script lessons for copying and dictation are used throughout this book.

The selections of this book from the Cary sisters, Lucy Larcom, Celia Thaxter, Whittier, and Longfellow, are used by permission of Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., the authorized publishers of the writings of these authors.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

ALL the lessons in this book are intended to be suggestive. It is believed that every lesson will awaken in the mind of the thoughtful teacher many other similar lessons.

Each lesson should be considered as a type lesson for directing and stimulating the thought of teacher and pupil alike.

Teach the children to talk in sentences from the beginning of their language study. Have no fear that they will become too precise in their modes of speech. Require the children to talk in sentences in all their recitations, with the omission of superfluous *ands*, *buts*, and *thens*, until it becomes natural for them to talk easily and sensibly about whatever is familiar to them.

If children are allowed to be inaccurate and slovenly in their modes of expression during the first five years of school life, there is little hope of making them accurate in the use of language in after life.

Every lesson in this volume must be thoroughly mastered by each pupil, if the full value of the lessons is to

be gained. The lessons must become the property of the children.

The reproduction of the sentence exercises in this book, while they are fresh in the minds of the children, will be a valuable aid to them in acquiring the sentence sense.

Following these memory exercises should come dictation.

Dictation exercises will be of great value in increasing language power, if properly used. In every dictation exercise, the thought that is to be represented in the sentence dictated must first be awakened in the minds of the children. The ideas first, then the words that represent them, is the true order.

Dictation exercises enable the children to learn to do by doing. They give the quick ear, the ready attention, and insure rapidity and accuracy of reproduction.

Accuracy in language *in early life* depends very largely upon the verbal memory. No exercises can strengthen the verbal memory so rapidly and systematically as the daily use of well graded dictation exercises.

It is evident, therefore, that nearly all the exercises of a well graded first language book should be used as dictation exercises.

The time for using these dictation exercises, and the time when they can be omitted, must be left to the discretion of the teacher; but they ought to be used daily until the sentence sense is acquired by the children.

DICTATION.

The following suggestions for dictation will be helpful:

1. Awaken in the minds of the children the thoughts that your sentences for dictation represent.

2. Begin with short sentences.

3. Never read a dictated sentence a second time. If one or more of the class do not grasp the sentence at the first reading, do not allow their failure to retard the rest of the class. It is better that a few should lose the dictation altogether, than that the majority of the class should be taught inattention, by the feeling that they can hear a second reading of a sentence, if they do not heed the first reading.

4. Require the sentences to be written as rapidly as neatness and accuracy will permit.

5. Never keep a class waiting for a few slow children to catch up. Rapidity and accuracy always wait upon promptness and acute attention. If the slow cannot be taught to write more rapidly *with the class*, put them by themselves for extra drill. Do not make a whole class slow, because a few are slow.

6. Gradually increase the length of the sentences dictated, until the children can readily write from a single reading the longest sentences used in their regular class work.