

**BOSTON SCHOOL
SERIES; THE
EASY PRIMER**

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Boston School Series; The Easy Primer by Sarah C. Richards

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SARAH C. RICHARDS

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Boston School Series

THE

EASY PRIMER

S. S. S. S.

BOSTON
BOSTON SCHOOL SUPPLY COMPANY
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1896

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[From the Report of the Committee of Fifteen.]

"It is granted that we all have frequent occasion to condemn poor methods of instruction as teaching words rather than things. But we admit that we mean empty sounds or characters rather than true words. Our suggestions for the correct method of teaching amount, in this case, simply to laying stress on the true meaning of the word, and to setting the teaching process on the road of analysis of content rather than form.

"The pupil must call up the corresponding idea by thought, memory, and imagination, or else the word will cease to be a word, and remain only a sound or character."

PREFACE.

THIS primer is intended to be a pleasant field of exercise for children commencing to conquer print and script. No pains have been spared to make the book as simple as possible. Only a very few new words are introduced into each lesson. The mechanics of reading have not been neglected. Special attention has been paid to the typography. In fact the primer, from preface to colophon, has been written in the light of Herbart's dictum—every new text-book should make learning easier for the learner.

The Introduction was prepared by teachers distinguished for their success in primary-school work. The importance of their help is gratefully acknowledged.

This little volume is not a compilation, but a class-room outgrowth. Several experienced Boston educators have kindly aided its progress toward its present form, and it owes much to their wide practical acquaintance with primary-grade pedagogics.

For critical reading of the proofs thanks are extended to Mr. Alfred Bunker, principal of the Quincy School, and to his accomplished assistant teachers, Mrs. A. T. Corliss, Miss Emily Maynard, and Miss H. M. Bolman; to Mr. Henry L. Clapp, principal of the George Putnam School; to Miss Julia H. Cram, of the Williams School; and to Dr. D. B. Hagar, principal of the State Normal School, Salem, Mass.

To teach children to read well is the hardest of class-room tasks. Yet it is only in late years that even the most advanced primary schools have made systematic efforts to bring their teaching into line with the laws governing the child's mental development. In this primer it is sought, by the use of modern methods of instruction, to make initiation into the mysteries of alphabetic language less of a task and more of a pleasure to young minds.

S. C. R.

Boston, May, 1896.

INTRODUCTION.

A LESSON OUTLINE.

WRITE the new words on the blackboard.
Pronounce and explain them.
Have the pupils pronounce the words.
Allow the pupils time to study the lesson.
Require individual reading.
Have sentences read as wholes.
Insist on every member of the class reading distinctly enough to be heard by every other member.

NEED OF PREPARATION.

You will save yourself much labor and anxiety by planning out the work of each recitation at least one day ahead.

No matter if you have studied a lesson ten times, study it again. Faithful preparation will give you new power and inspiration. Ask yourself—

What review should be made? What questions does the picture call for? How can I best teach the new words? How can rote reading be prevented? How can interest be aroused?

To such queries, or similar ones, the earnest teacher will soon find the right answers, and then success is assured.

ATTENTION.

Children will not give that kind of attention which we adults give from a sense of duty. They will give only the kind of attention we give when we are interested.

A child may follow the teacher's directions, and yet may not be giving real attention. Quiescence, or even acquiescence, does not always guarantee concentration of mind. Attention implies vigorous mental activity.

Before your pupils begin to read, get them to tell you what they know about the lesson. Question them about the picture. *Do not criticise their language so severely as to make them hesitate to talk freely.*

When a child has read a few lines, direct him to close his book and to tell you what he has read. The next child, expecting to be required to tell the substance of his reading, will therefore read attentively.

Reading is said to be the key of knowledge. This aphorism is not true absolutely. *Attentive* reading will open the locks of Learning's door, but thoughtless reading is sheer waste of time.

WORD REVIEWING.

Write on the blackboard a list of the words to be reviewed.

Pronounce each word and let the children individually repeat your pronunciation.

Sound (phonetically) each word and let the children repeat.

Pronounce the words and have the pupils sound them phonetically.

Sound the words and let the children pronounce them.

Write on the board sentences lacking words that the pupils are to supply from the review list.

Have two children, standing at the board, compete in pointing out words chosen, from the list, by other members of the class.

Name words and call on the pupils to cross them out.

Suggest words to be supplied from the list; for example, "On the board I see the name of a flower. Who will tell me the name?"

Call for volunteers to make up sentences containing words found in the review list.