

**NATURE STUDY IN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:  
SECOND READER.  
MYTHS, STORIES, POEMS**

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Nature Study in Elementary Schools: Second Reader. Myths, Stories, Poems by Lucy Langdon Williams Wilson

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—  
READER

NATURE STUDY  
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ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

SECOND READER

*Myths, Stories, Poems*

BY

MRS. LUCY LANGDON WILLIAMS WILSON, PH.D.

AUTHOR OF "NATURE STUDY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, A MANUAL  
FOR TEACHERS"

HEAD OF THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES IN THE PHILADELPHIA  
NORMAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, AND IN CHARGE OF THE NATURE  
WORK IN THE SCHOOL OF OBSERVATION AND PRACTICE,  
CONNECTED WITH THE NORMAL SCHOOL



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## PREFACE

IN the preparation of this Reader my purpose has been threefold:—

*First*, to put in the hands of the teachers who follow the Nature Course outlined in my *Manual for Teachers* suitable supplementary reading matter. The myths and poems are arranged in an order corresponding to the lessons therein suggested.

*Second*, to tell these myths in language simple enough to make them practicable reading lessons for second and third year pupils.

I am aware that most of these myths have been infinitely better told by Hawthorne and others; but even the charmingly simple version given by Baldwin could not be read by pupils younger than those in the fourth year of school work, and the place of the Greek myth should be much earlier in the child's school life. Tell the stories as elaborately or as simply as you please. In the one case Hawthorne, in the other Baldwin, are the safest guides. Let this serve as an introduction to the science work. Afterwards, let the children read the simple version, supplementing both this and the oral lessons with the

poems and pictures with which this little book is abundantly provided.

*Third*, I hope in a succeeding edition to make it possible for the multitude of teachers who have neither printing press nor a mimeograph and a typewriter at their disposal to adopt the excellent device of "Leaflet Reading Lessons." This method has been used in most of our progressive schools, and is a well-known feature of the Horace Mann, the New Britain, the Chicago Normal, and the Philadelphia Normal Schools.

I desire to thank Messrs. Chas. Scribner's Sons, Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., The Youth's Companion, Mr. J. T. Trowbridge, Miss Emilie Poulsen, Miss Eleanor Smith, Mr. Morgan Bates, and the Educational Publishing Company, to each of whom I am indebted for copyright privileges.

L. L. W. WILSON.

PHILADELPHIA NORMAL SCHOOL,  
February, 1896.





## SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

THE original matter in this Reader has been written and the selections chosen with the desire of putting into the hands of little children literature which shall have, for their minds, the same interest and value that really good books and magazines have for grown-up people. It is the author's aim to prepare the ground and even thus early to plant the seeds of that which may later develop into a taste for art, for literature, and for nature.

But this most desirable result cannot be accomplished by merely putting the Reader in the hands of the child, expecting him to master the words by reading the sentences; to get at the thought while he stumbles and hesitates over unfamiliar words.

There are perhaps some teachers who fail to develop the thought through their anxiety to give an exhaustive drill on the words: their form, their pronunciation, their meaning, and use.

There are others, perhaps a more numerous class, who spend so much time in developing the thought, and in practising artificial and elaborate devices for teaching "expression," that they pay no attention to the necessary mechanics of reading.

Of these two faults in method, the latter is the more serious for the pupil. He gets not even a mastering of the words. It seems to be taken for granted that, after the first year, little or no drill is necessary for the acquiring of new words, and that the way to learn to read is to have a series of oral language lessons based, to be sure, on the text.

A middle course is recommended : —

Divide the time allotted to reading into two periods as widely separated from each other as possible.

In the first of these teach all of the new words, and drill upon them thoroughly. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the importance of this preparatory word study.

In general, the following methods will be satisfactory with second and third year pupils : —

I. Write upon the board a new word with all the diacritical marks that may be necessary to enable the pupil to pronounce it correctly.

II. Teach the meaning of the word.

III. Proceed in the same way with several other words.

IV. Drill on the instant recognition of these words without diacritical marks.

V. Let the pupils write the words from dictation, marking the sounds and accents, and dividing it properly into syllables.

Later in the day let him read the lesson for the

sake of the thought. Do not take it for granted that no further teaching is necessary, but remember, too, that it is now the pupil's time to talk.

If he does not read well now, it is because he fails to grasp the thought. A word, a question, will often clear up the obscurity in his mind. Lead him to think, not to imitate.

It is a good idea to have a systematic plan for silent reading. Many of the short stories in this little book will lend themselves easily to this device. On this work may be based a subsequent oral and written language lesson.

Above all do not neglect to cultivate his taste, — his literary and artistic instincts. What stanza, or what line, or what part of this did you like best? Why? are questions always in order and always interesting.

L. L. W. WILSON.

PHILADELPHIA NORMAL SCHOOL,  
February, 1898.