

**MODERN ENGLISH, BOOK
ONE: ELEMENTARY
LESSONS IN ENGLISH**

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Modern English, Book One: Elementary Lessons in English by Henry P. Emerson & Ida C. Bender

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HENRY P. EMERSON & IDA C. BENDER

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BOOK ONE

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ELEMENTARY LESSONS IN ENGLISH

BY

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PREFACE

THE two books of the "Modern English" Course are closely related, not only in a common purpose to arouse interest in the correct use of the English of to-day, but in the means by which this purpose is to be attained. Both books aim to make pupils able to express their own thoughts with freedom and satisfaction, to understand with ease the thoughts of others, and to appreciate when such thoughts are expressed with power, beauty, or grace.

Instead of relying upon technical grammar to mold the daily speech of children, emphasis is laid upon practice in speaking, reading, interpreting, and writing under the guidance of the teacher, who should have a deep interest in the language and be master of its forms and uses.

The authors believe in the supreme importance of interest in successful language study. They have, therefore, spared no pains in determining upon the topics to be presented and in subjecting their choice to repeated tests in the schoolroom.

The lessons in Book One are based upon a cycle of topics, beginning with home life, leading out through school associations and familiar sights and sounds in nature, and culminating in the larger and remoter thought of country and society. Pictures, stories, poems, exercises, suggested readings, have all been chosen in accord-

ance with this plan, to the end that children may view language less as an unrelated branch of study than as a unifying medium for all school studies and out-of-school experiences. In developing the plan, the authors have sought to keep in close sympathy with the child mind and heart.

It is believed that the method of presentation will be found simple, natural, effective. Interesting questions to be thought out during a silent study period or discussed with the teacher prepare the mind to receive definition, rule, or principle, or to enjoy a selection soon to follow. Application of the knowledge gained or feelings aroused is then made in various ways, as in copying, writing from dictation, in original oral or written composition, or in studying and memorizing selections.

Much attention is given to the cultivation of the imagination, on account of its reaction both upon language and upon life.

Throughout the book the preëminent importance of oral practice is recognized. The ear is too often a neglected factor in language teaching. Selections have been introduced which the teacher is to read to the pupils to train them to a perception of nice language values. Frequent "word studies" require pupils to repeat aloud the correct forms of pronouns and of strong verbs most commonly misused. Pupils are directed to criticise their own language as regards not only the interest of the thought expressed in it, but the quality of its sound also.

Home readings are indicated. Great care has been taken in the preparation of the lists submitted, that the

literary worth of each selection named may be assured and that each may come within the children's ability to feel its charm or understand its message. These readings are drawn from the great sources of literary wealth for children; namely, fable, myth, fairy story, legend, anecdote, and history, as well as interesting pictures of child life.

On its formal side the plan of the book is as follows: Part I is devoted to the sentence, which from the first is treated as a part of connected discourse. It aims to make the printed page mean more to the pupil, and to give him mastery of the simplest uses of capital letters, punctuation marks, and grammatical relations, that his words, spoken or written, may mean more to others.

Part II consists of an elementary and, it is hoped, inviting treatment of letter writing. The lessons have been grouped together for the convenience of the teacher, who will select and relate this practice as best meets the needs of the class.

Part III again takes up the sentence, looking more closely at its parts and their uses. No attempt at refinement of classification is made. Such forms only are introduced as bear directly upon the pupil's growing desire to express his own thoughts with accuracy and to gain a clearer insight into the thoughts of others.

Sentence grouping, begun in Part I, is emphasized in a variety of ways, but the formal study of topic sentences, of the principles of unity and coherence, and of paragraph and theme development is deferred to Book Two, where these points are adequately treated.