

A FIRST READER

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A First Reader by J. H. Stickney

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J. H. STICKNEY

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Classics for Children.

A
FIRST READER.

J. H. (STICKNEY) *Stickney*



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◁ANNOUNCEMENT.▷

NO special originality has been sought in the plan of this First Reader. Following lines of method most widely approved and pursued, the author has aimed to give it pre-eminence rather in features common to all methods.

Chief among these are the following :—

Careful grading in text and type. Beginning with sentences of three words, it adds new ones slowly, and provides for abundant repetition. As sentences are gradually extended, changes of type accompany them so as to render the transition scarcely perceptible.

Brightness of style and vivacity in expression. We believe the readings will be found to be in an unusual degree spirited. Considered either in relation to language-training or vocal expression, gain in this direction must give substantial advantage.

Facilities for teaching by sounds of letters. While not distinctly a phonic reader, a course of training is indicated both in the use of short regular words, and in marked vowels, so as to provide for full teaching of phonics during the first school year if desired.

Indebtedness is here acknowledged to a large number of teachers whose aid and advice have been freely rendered during the preparation of the book.

NOTES ON METHOD.



Repetition of Words. — It has been the aim of the author to make natural occasion for the necessary repetition of words, yet the teacher may greatly multiply these by means suggested on page 1; namely, by using the new idiom of each lesson with all appropriate words as fast as they are learned. Thus, after *See my cow*, use *cat*, *dog*, *pig*, etc., in place of *cow*. This makes place for

Blackboard Teaching. — Keep the idiom *See my* in a convenient place upon the board as the permanent feature of the sentence, and write in new words from time to time calling for instant recognition of the change. This is

Sentence-Reading. — It is as unnecessary for children to read separately every word of a short sentence as it is for them to count *one, two, three*, each time they see the number three illustrated. Three is soon as easily known at sight as one, and when *See my cow* is really familiar, and *pig* equally so, the change in *See my pig* will be instantly detected. Proceed thus with each new idiom, and progress will be surprisingly rapid.

Phonic Training. — It is presupposed that teachers will wish to do more than teach each word, as an object, without helping the children to discover the harmonies of large classes of words similarly made. After *cow, cat, fan, nut*, etc., have been taught at sight, *hero, hat, man, but*, etc., should lead to lessons in comparison, and the breaking up of spoken words into sounds and printed ones into letters. Other things being equal, the teachers who give time each day to word-building in the way here suggested will find their success greater and their work more agreeable.

Finding out Words. — By means of vowel-markings, most words found in the lessons, and a large class beside, may be studied out. Beginning with those of two or three letters, and giving a daily lesson, will soon bring such proficiency that little

teaching will be required beyond putting a few words upon the blackboard before the children enter the schoolroom. Curiosity will do the rest, though some teachers thread the words together afterward and make a pleasant language lesson.

Expression in Reading. — Special care has been taken in each lesson to give opportunity for varied shades of expression, and the reading will be enjoyed the more for making this feature prominent. It is without doubt sometimes overdone, but this error may be a safer one than its opposite. Any degree which does not overstimulate self-consciousness can do no harm. The rule should be, *Read as you would talk.*

Spelling. — Letter spelling comes with writing. The naming of letters in words at the head of the lesson gives practice in the alphabet, but memory should not be taxed to retain the succession of letters in a word at this time.

Writing. — The cover pages give means for identifying the script capitals and small letters. Reference should be had to them frequently. The script sentences given at intervals are for practice in writing.

Use of Lessons in Poetry. — A few pages have been given to this exercise. They are most effectively used by making the line teach the new word (see pp. 22, 75, 85, 86). This is the reverse of the usual process, in which the study of the words precedes and prepares for the reading. Words introduced in poetry should be afterwards used in different order in prose. It will be found that they are very readily learned.

Reviews. — More than twelve pages in the eighty-seven of reading-matter are given to reviews. This, with the constant care to make words reappear in the new lessons till they are familiar, insures thoroughness in teaching. It is recommended that pupils be allowed to read a review lesson only when they read the lessons which it reviews fluently. They are for tests rather than for drill work.

Spirit of Teaching. — We suggest, in concluding, that nothing in method or plan, or in the lack of it, has half the power of a happy atmosphere. Children grow in knowledge as they do in stature — by living in sunlight; and the teacher is the sun of her room. It should seldom be under clouds.

VOCAL EXERCISE.

TRAINING FOR THE EAR AND EYE.

ē ā â ä û ą օ օ (օօ)

TEACHER: We will repeat together the Long Vowel Scale. Find in the cards the letters that stand for these sounds. Now say with me: *heat, hit*; one is long and one short, — *seat, sit*; *beat, bit*; *neat, knit*; *eat, it*, — ē ı.

ē ¹	ı ¹	Find ı in the <i>First Card</i> . <i>Second</i> . Who knows a word that rhymes with ā? Now	
pro- ā ę.	ā ²	ę ²	nounce <i>mate, met</i> ; <i>wait, wet</i> ; <i>late, let</i> ;
very long, <i>pair, pat</i> ;	â ³	ä ³	<i>Third. Fair, fat</i> ; make the long one and the short one very short:
Listen to <i>cärt, cást</i> ;	ä ⁴	ą ⁴	<i>part, pást</i> , ä ą. The <i>Fifth</i>
long sound is û, and	û ⁵	ũ ⁵	the short one most like it
is ũ, the sound in <i>cut, but,</i>	ą ⁶	օ ⁶	<i>hut, ú ũ</i> . <i>Sixth. Saw,</i>
<i>caught</i> ; the short sounds	օ ⁷	օ ⁷	would be in <i>sot, cot</i> .
<i>Seventh</i> . Now make օ very	օօ ⁸	օօ ⁸	long for the
long scale, and a little shorter			for the short
one, and do the same with օօ and օօ,			as in
<i>cōō, cōuld</i> ; <i>wōō, wōuld</i> ; <i>gōō, good</i> .			

Repeat now the two scales together from the cards. Make the long sounds *long* and *strong*, and the short ones *sharp* and *quick*. *Sing* each scale.

