

**A TEACHER'S MANUAL OF  
GEOGRAPHY: TO ACCOMPANY  
TARR AND MCMURRY'S SERIES  
OF GEOGRAPHIES**

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A Teacher's Manual of Geography: To Accompany Tarr and McMurry's Series of Geographies  
by Charles McMurry

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**CHARLES MCMURRY**


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BY

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HOME GEOGRAPHY  
AND  
THE EARTH AS A WHOLE

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HOME GEOGRAPHY

For beginners home geography stands in sharp contrast to the geography of the world whole and of foreign countries. It is relatively so small. But a knowledge of local geography and industries furnishes a good starting-point in geographical study. It is difficult for adults to understand how much children are dependent upon things which they have seen in order to explain things which they cannot see. The observation of neighborhood facts must precede the study of things at a distance. A definite knowledge of the home surroundings, of its hills, streams, landscapes, agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, changing seasons, storms, floods, etc., is necessary as an introduction to the same topics in the world abroad.

When we come to study the climate, surface, industries, products, and commerce of distant states and of foreign countries, our ability to construct correct pictures is based upon the varied ideas of similar kind that we have gathered in vivid and real form from our own home neighborhood. The imagination must be our chief helper in constructing geographical pictures of things at a distance from home,

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but the imagination cannot construct pictures out of nothing, any more than a builder can construct a house without materials. The imagination works and builds with the materials which experience has already gathered. It is not expected that we shall gather all the experimental facts on these third or fourth grade excursions, but we can encourage the children to keep their eyes open and their minds alert for this kind of knowledge. We can at least open the door to these varied and interesting forms of activity.

Children are already familiar with these home things in a vague, loose way, but we are inclined to overestimate the extent and accuracy of their knowledge. In some special cases they know enough about certain local topics without help from the school; but, generally speaking, children have little accurate knowledge of local industries and phenomena. Even the teachers are found in many cases to be extremely deficient in definite knowledge about such common topics as local directions and topography; weather changes; the dairy, the cultivation of garden vegetables and fruits; the work of the farm in caring for crops and farm animals; the tools, machines, and processes of the blacksmith, the tinner, the carpenter, and others; the work done in planing-mills, wagon factories, grain elevators, mills, etc.; the shipment of fruits, meats, glassware, and iron products by rail and by water, etc.

Many of these things which we assume that teachers and children know by their own daily observation are either not known at all or are not well understood. If they are to be clearly grasped and made the basis of a real understanding of similar topics on a larger scale, it can only be done by turning the children's thoughts definitely

upon these supposedly familiar topics. They may be handled in such a way as to furnish interesting instruction and to require genuine effort on the pupil's part; both to get clear notions and to express them in language and drawing. There is much variety of surprising knowledge to be gained by stepping from the schoolroom into the real world in order to see the different kinds of workmen in their employments, and to get a view of the country from the hilltops. This is especially fitting for children, because of their delight in these concrete realities. The ignorance among so-called intelligent people of many important things about home is matter for surprise. It is to a large extent the cause of that lack of sympathy and appreciation among the well-to-do classes for many other people who are close about them. It is an extremely faulty training that allows us to pass by many of these matters of human interest without desire or effort to understand them.

It is a marked and justifiable tendency of our modern education to incorporate into the course of study a knowledge of the simple universal trades and occupations upon which our whole state of culture rests. The manual training and constructive work in primary and intermediate grades deals with some of these simple occupations. It is an extremely practical and fundamental demand that children should be made acquainted with these local affairs. They will everywhere need them as a means of interpreting social and physical environment in all studies and throughout life.

Of course it must be taken for granted that a large part of this knowledge is picked up by a child incidentally by all sorts of daily experiences. But to carry out this pur-