

**ELEMENTARY-
SCHOOL SPELLER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649570690

Elementary-School Speller by J. N. Hunt

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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BY

J. N. HUNT

Author of "Progressive Course in Spelling"
"Modern Word Book for Primary Grades," etc.



AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

NEW YORK

CINCINNATI

CHICAGO

SUGGESTIONS ON SPELLING AND WORD-STUDY

"I TELL you earnestly, you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable, nay letter by letter.

"Let the accent of words be watched, and closely; let their meaning be watched more closely still."

—JOHN RUSKIN.

"In no other aspect of spelling instruction has there been more improvement than in the methods employed to associate the three necessary factors of *meaning*, *pronunciation*, and *spelling*.

"As spelling has improved in its methods of teaching, it has steadily given a larger place to the development of the *meaning* of words within the spelling exercise. A progressive teacher of the present day will have as much vital experience for the child in spelling as in geography or history."

—DR. HENRY SUZZALLO,

In "The Teaching of Spelling."

"SPELLING is an important study in the school curriculum. It is no more important, however, than correct pronunciation. The written language calls for correct spelling — the spoken language for correct pronunciation. Although orthoëpy is the science of pronunciation and not of spelling, it is so closely linked with orthography as to be inseparable."

—Supt. CHAS. A. HARRIS,

In "New England Journal of Education."

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PREFACE

In recent years a number of careful investigations have been made as to the extent of the vocabularies that are employed by adults in personal and business correspondence, and also by pupils in the written work required in Elementary schools.

The results of these investigations indicate that in these several fields the number of different words employed is decidedly less than has been generally supposed. Accordingly, many educators have suggested that the vocabulary of the spelling book should be limited to the words in practical use in composition, and that ample provision should be made for their intensive study in the regular drill work of the schoolroom.

The Elementary-School Speller has been prepared in response to these suggestions. It is planned to cover the formal work in spelling and word-study for the grades below the high school. Its exercises are presented in six sections; each section is designed to cover the work of one school year or grade. The utmost care has been exercised in selecting the vocabulary for each year's work. The aim throughout has been to present words related to the needs of each grade as determined by the experience and observation of skilled teachers, and by the results of recent scientific investigations as to the words in general use both in and out of the schoolroom.

The organization of the vocabulary of each section is such that ample provision is made for the study of the *phonic elements* and the *symbols* that represent them. By this means a firm foundation is laid for rendering each pupil self-helpful and independent in learning by himself the correct pronunciation of all words that he has occasion to use. The importance of this phase of the study of English, and of drills involving it, can hardly be overestimated, since we are assured in reputable educational works of recent issue that—"Incorrect pronunciation explains one half the cases of poor spelling." Hence in this speller, all words in the columns are syllabicated and their accented syllables indicated, thus providing the pupil assistance in learning their correct *spoken forms*.

Vocabularies Investigated

The Scope of Each Section

Correct Pronunciation Stressed

Besides grouping words *phonetically*, many are arranged *topically*, thereby suggesting their *meanings*. Other exercises include practical drills on words of *similar* meaning and of *opposite* meaning, and on words *pronounced alike* but *spelled differently*.

The common *prefixes* and *suffixes* receive attention in exercises in word-building and word-analysis; these provide for applying the common Rules for Spelling, as well as for illustrating the significance of prefixes and suffixes in their relation to derivatives.

One fourth of the space of the Elementary-School Speller is devoted to *reviewing* words in columns and in context, thus providing for their intensive study and practical use. The script work of Section One presents an excellent copy for the pupil and encourages him to write neatly and legibly.

Throughout this book, the words have been grouped in harmony with the *Law of Association*, thereby giving the learner real assistance in their mastery. Then, too, the "Directions" which appear at the close of many exercises provide helpful suggestions for a great variety of work beyond the mere spelling of the words in the columns. This supplemental work includes: (a) the mastery of the common *grammatical forms* in which words are used; (b) the application of the common rules for spelling; (c) the study of *prefixes and suffixes* and their significance; (d) the study of *antonyms, synonyms* and *homophones*, and the origin of words.

Besides, in the work outlined for the upper grades, many suggestions are made to the pupil for utilizing the dictionary, thus encouraging the formation of the *dictionary habit* — a habit that teachers should encourage by precept and example. The vocabulary is limited to words that are commonly used in the grades in which they are presented, and no pains have been spared to organize and stress these practical words in such a manner as to assist the pupil in acquiring a knowledge of their *pronunciation, meaning, spelling*, and *use* in context.

Methods of Grouping

Reviews and Script

Supplemental Work

Dictionary Habit

TO THE TEACHER

THE attention of every teacher who examines or uses this spelling book is invited to the subject-matter of the preceding pages. The "Suggestions on Spelling and Word-Study" are quoted verbatim from writers whose opinions are worth while. They should be read, considered, and applied in the work of instruction. Then, too, the Preface should be of interest to every teacher, because it sets forth briefly the reasons for the existence of this book, and calls attention to its content and organization.

Dr. Suzzallo in his monograph on "The Teaching of Spelling" makes the following pertinent suggestions: "The teacher has more functions than teaching a child to know, pronounce, and spell a certain group of words with persisting accuracy. In addition to instructing the child, he must show him how to study; in this case, how to get by himself the meaning, sound, and spelling of words that are unfamiliar to him. He must train the child to solve new spelling difficulties as he will meet them in later life outside the school."

The Teacher's Responsibilities

In the light of this statement it is evident that the teacher can meet his responsibilities to the pupil only by encouraging, on his part, habits of independence in the mastery of words. It is confidently believed that the methods of grouping words employed in this book, and the drill work suggested, will, under the stimulus of good teaching, develop power and self-helpfulness on the part of the pupil, in learning and using new words both in the school and in the home.

Self-helpfulness Developed

Throughout this work, as stated in the Preface, the Law of Association has been applied in organizing the vocabulary; the result is seen in short exercises that contain an average of six new words in the recitation assignments of Sections One to Three, and eight new words in Sections Four to Six. By "new words" are meant words that appear for the first time in the vocabulary of this book. In most cases these "new words" belong to the pupil's vernacular, or to his reading vocabulary, hence are new to him only so far as their written spelling is concerned.

Short Exercises

The ability to use the phonic elements of the English language with precision, and to interpret their symbols readily, is the foundation of self-helpfulness in the field of pronunciation. Through

the medium of systematic drill, pupils are to be made familiar with the phonic elements and the common phonograms of our language. Diacritical marks are used sparingly, and only when necessary to serve as a guide to correct pronunciation.

**Importance
of Phonic
Drill**

Among the typical exercises that are presented in this work the following deserve special attention, viz.:

1. **The Topical Exercises:** In these exercises the words are grouped because they relate to the same general subject, and thereby their meanings are suggested. For this type of exercises see pages 22, 23, 24, etc. In Sections One to Three there are 80 topical assignments for recitation with some 600 words; in Sections Four to Six there are some 800 words grouped topically. These exercises afford the teacher excellent material for awakening the interest of the pupil and teaching him the meanings of some *twenty-five* groups of words in each school year.

2. **Antonyms and Synonyms:** For typical exercises based on antonyms, or words of opposite meaning, see pages 21, 23, 24, etc. The drills on this class of words will prove of interest to the pupils, especially if the "direction" at the close of each exercise is followed by the teacher.

The methods employed for illustrating the use of *synonyms*, on pages 23, 24, etc., may well be employed in the study of other groups of synonyms suggested by the teacher.

3. **Grammatical Forms:** On pages 47, 49, 51, etc., there appear special exercises on the various forms in which *nouns, adjectives, and verbs* are used in composition. Throughout the book there are presented some forty exercises of this kind. No other line of word-study will prove of greater practical value; it should be stressed and extended by the teacher.

4. **Prefixes and Suffixes:** These vital elements of English words deserve the serious and sustained attention of both teachers and pupils because they are the keys to the meanings of thousands of derivative words. For typical exercises, see pages 57, 84, 125, 126, etc. In these drill exercises the significance of each prefix or suffix is given, and the pupil is directed to apply it in analyzing and defining the derivative words. For Reference Tables of Prefixes and Suffixes, see pages 174, 175.

5. **Exercises on Homophones:** These troublesome words, many of which are included in Dr. Jones's "Spelling Demons of the English Language," demand attention because of their very general use. In this book two lines of drill are provided: (a) by using the homophones in sentences—see pages 34, 35, 57, 58, etc.; (b) by grouping

the homophones, defining them—see pages 127, 128, 129, etc., and by requiring pupils to use them in original sentences. The use of homophonous words in sentences, in grades one to three, and their definition in grades four to six, will certainly make for increased efficiency on the part of the pupils.

6. **Word-building Exercises:** These provide for a great variety of drills which involve the application of three common Rules for Spelling. They are applied in writing the grammatical forms and in spelling numerous derivatives. These Rules are presented and applied in Sections Two and Three, and duplicated in Section Four,—see pages 52, 54, 58, 102, 103, 105, etc. Every teacher should see to it that pupils become so familiar with these Rules that they can apply them automatically.

7. **Reviews:** The reviews of this book begin on the second page of the pupil's text and occupy one fourth of its space. They include phrases, sentences, "Dictation Exercises," choice quotations, as well as quarterly reviews and annual spelling-match reviews in columns. The result is seen in the fact that in this book many of the more difficult words occur from three to a dozen times, thereby providing for their somewhat intensive study.

In addition to stressing the regular reviews provided by the textbook, the teacher who discharges his responsibilities with credit to himself and with due regard to the interests of his pupils, will provide numerous *informal reviews*. These will include any words on which the pupils have been drilled, with special reference to words that have been misspelled. As often as once a week, at least, these informal reviews should be presented by every teacher throughout grades one to six.

8. **The Dictionary:** The work in word-study involves the use of the dictionary in all of the higher grades of the Elementary school. Dr. Suzzallo has made this very definite suggestion: "Training children to a competent and ready use of the dictionary and fixing the habit of consulting it, is one of the main duties that the school can perform for the student."

The teacher will find that the Elementary-School Speller paves the way to the dictionary by enabling the pupil to read it and construe its symbols. For typical examples of the way in which this Speller encourages and directs the use of the dictionary see pages 93, 94, 97, 126, etc. No thoughtful teacher will slight or fail to encourage the use of the dictionary.