

**ENGLISH SPELLING: A SERIES
OF DICTATION LESSONS
FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS
AND PRIVATE STUDENTS**

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English Spelling: a Series of Dictation Lessons for the Use of Schools and Private Students by A. H. Barford & Henry A. Tilley

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DICTATION LESSONS.

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A SERIES OF

DICTATION LESSONS

For the use of Schools and Private Students

ARRANGED BY

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PREFACE.

THE PRESENT LITTLE WORK is intended by the Compilers to be a handbook, by the use of which teachers may put their pupils through a complete course of English Spelling, according to the most approved mode of teaching that art, viz. by Dictation. The words given for practice are those which experience in the correction of papers of candidates for public appointment, has shown to be the most liable to mis-spelling. The sentences have been framed in a manner that will best show the common meaning of the words to be dictated, and, at the same time, either to convey some useful truth or moral, or to cause the pupil to think and distinguish.

In the spelling of inflected words, no particular dictionary has been followed. It is assumed, that in teaching 'English Spelling, as it is,' no better guide could possibly be found than that afforded by the leading articles of the 'Times,' and of other first-rate journals, which represent the Intellect of the day. With all words of disputed spelling, though

only one form is given, care has been taken that the one selected is that which is most in accordance with common usage, whenever that usage is not opposed to the derivation of the word, and the analogies of the language.

The system of giving false, although phonetic, spelling to School-boys for correction is pernicious, and does away with all that assistance which the eye affords when any perplexity in the spelling of a word arises. The Compilers are of opinion, however, that the plan they have adopted at the end of the book, of giving selections from old authors for re-writing with modern spelling, will not have that objection: on the contrary, it is hoped that, the School-boy being now sufficiently sure of his spelling, such exercises will prove beneficial, by directing his attention to the various inflexional and orthographical changes which have really taken place in the English language.

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DICTATION LESSONS.



INTRODUCTION.

A VIBRATION of the air coming in contact with objects produces various sounds.

A vocal sound is that vibration which is caused by the human organs of speech. Air is propelled from the lungs, and the sound so produced is modulated by the glottis, the roof of the mouth, the tongue, the teeth, the lips, and the nose.

Language is a combination of vocal sounds forming words, by means of which men communicate their thoughts to each other.

Orthoëpy is the harmonious utterance of such language, and is acquired by the ear.

Orthography is the art of writing correctly (that is, in accordance with the accepted manner of the day,) such language, and can only be acquired by constant practice and a knowledge of the etymology of a language. In phonetic languages the orthography ought to represent as nearly as possible the orthoëpy. The human voice has, however, so many modulations that written symbols often fail to represent them exactly. This is especially found to be the case when transferring words from one language to another.

There are few languages in which the orthography differs so much from the orthoëpy as in the English

language. The reason of this is that the English language is made up of words derived from various other languages, ancient and modern.

The basis of the English language, like the source of the English people, is Anglo-Saxon. The Keltic, Scandinavian, Norman-French, Greek and Latin languages are only contributors, in a greater or less degree, to its vocabulary. Of these, the Norman-French alone has influenced its grammatical forms. The others have simply supplied it with words.

This varied constitution of the English language accounts for the imperfection of its alphabet, and the irregularities in its spelling.

1.—In the English language twelve distinct sounds are represented by five symbols called vowels, or by combinations of them, thus:—

á (Italian),	in <i>ah!</i> <i>father</i> .
ā	in <i>fate</i> , <i>bait</i> , <i>great</i> .
ǎ	in <i>fat</i> , <i>matter</i> .
ǎ = or	in <i>fall</i> , <i>haul</i> .
ē	in <i>be</i> , <i>feed</i> , <i>lead</i> .*
ē	in <i>bed</i> , <i>instead</i> , <i>leisure</i> .
ī	in <i>pin</i> , <i>pity</i> , <i>civility</i> .
ō	in <i>note</i> , <i>moat</i> , <i>smoke</i> .
ō	in <i>not</i> , <i>cotton</i> .
o = ū	in <i>prove</i> .
ū	in <i>but</i> .
ū = oo	in <i>pull</i> , <i>bullock</i> , <i>woolly</i> .

2.—Four sounds are diphthong, expressed by the letter *ī* (*y*), and combinations of the above vowel letters, viz. :—

ī (*y*) in *wine*, *mind*, *fly*, *buy*.†

* Another sound of *e* might be added—that of the final *e* in such words as *glebe*, *recede*. In the Russian language this sound has a separate letter.

† In the Russian language our sound *ī* is written as a diphthong, *э́*, as pronounced.