

FIRST LESSONS IN LANGUAGE

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First Lessons in Language by Gordon A. Southworth & F. B. Goddard

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**FIRST LESSONS
IN LANGUAGE**

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PREFACE.

THIS book provides a course in language to be used within the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth year grades, covering either two or three years, according to the amount of time allowed for language work, the age of the pupils, and their previous training.

In the preparation of it the design has been —

(1) To help children to talk and write more freely about the many things that they see or know. Suggestive questions have been asked, in order to stimulate thought, to develop clear ideas, and to enable the learner to report more readily, both orally and in writing, what he has discovered. Provision has been made for a great amount of practice in talking and writing.

(2) To make children more and more observing, — especially in the field of natural science, — adding to their knowledge, and leading them to find out for themselves. Teaching from the object itself, when practicable, is much to be desired. Many illustrations are set before the children for descriptive and imaginative writing, and help is given in the form of leading questions.

(3) To make correct expression habitual, by calling for frequent repetition of the right forms, and by constantly suppressing the wrong.

(4) To secure the use of correct written forms by giving models for imitation, and by leading up to simple rules for the use of capitals, punctuation-marks, and word-forms, with examples and much work for practice.

(5) To give a little insight into the structure of language by showing how words are classified.

Various methods are introduced which experience has shown to be attractive, thoroughly sound, and quickly effective; and it is confidently believed that children who do the work of the book under these methods will make great gain in talking and writing easily, clearly, and correctly, within the range of their knowledge.

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May 1, 1881.

TO TEACHERS.

These lessons are not of uniform length; they are graded, and those of a kind are arranged accordingly; but, in general, they are not dependent consecutively one upon another. The order of them, therefore, may often be changed at discretion; some may be omitted, some divided; others may be amplified and dwelt upon.

Good talkers easily become good writers; and talking lessons should precede and out-number written lessons. Indeed, every school exercise should contribute its part towards the child's training in language.

A right use of the suggestive questions will lead to habits of thought and investigation, along given lines. Other questions may be added, but the direct giving of information will not often be necessary.

In both oral and written composition, the arrangement of material and the order of statement are left to the personal direction of the teacher. From the outset, the children must be trained to criticise and correct one another's work.

Additional suggestions to teachers will be found in Part I. of "Our Language."

FIRST LESSONS IN LANGUAGE.



LESSON 1.—What is a Statement?



When we talk or write we put our words into groups called *Sentences*.

Make a sentence that asks something about this kitten.

Some sentences *ask questions*.

Command some one to do something with the kitten.

Some sentences *command* some one to do something.

Make a sentence that tells where the kitten is.

Most of our sentences *tell what we think or know*.

Which of the following sentences ask questions?

Which of them tell something?

Which one contains a command?

1. This kitten has had a lonesome journey.
2. Do you think she is glad to see the world again?
3. It was dark as night inside the basket.
4. She wonders where she is.
5. Is she going to jump out?
6. Do not let her run away.
7. She must have a ribbon to wear.

In answer to the following questions, make spoken sentences or statements that will tell something about the kitten :—

1. Would Skip be a good name for this kitten?
2. How old do you think she is?
3. What is tied to the handle of the basket?
4. What do you think pussy would like best now?

Remember that—

A sentence that tells something is a statement.

LESSON 2.—Written Statements.

Here are some answers to the questions in Lesson 1. Make a careful copy of them.

1. Skip is a good name.
2. She is three months old.
3. There is a card on the handle.
4. Pussy would like some milk.

LESSON 3.—How Statements Begin and End.

1. In copying the sentences of Lesson 2, how many capital letters did you make?
2. Which words did you begin with capitals?
3. Where is the capital used in each sentence?
4. What mark did you use to show that a sentence was ended?
5. How should you begin every written statement?
6. How should you end one?*

Write four different answers to the questions in Lesson 1.

Remember that —

A Statement begins with a capital and ends with a period.

LESSON 4.—Practice in making Statements.

- I. *Make complete oral statements by telling what these do :—*

horses	furnaces	merchants
cows	watches	farmers

Write the statements that you have made.

- II. *Make complete oral statements telling what these are, and then write them :—*

fish	a tumbler	doctors
quadruped	scissors	oranges

- III. *Tell of what and by whom these things are made, first in oral and then in written statements :—*

shoes	butter	candy
coats	bread	doors

* *To the Teacher.*—These, and similar questions and directions throughout the book, are for the pupil to read aloud and answer. If they are not sufficient to develop the given subject and lead the learner to see without actually being told, they at least present a method, and may easily be supplemented by the teacher. Do not ask questions that contain the whole answer in themselves: let the questions call for thought and reasoning.

LESSON 5.—A Picture Story.



I. *Tell your teacher a story about this picture by answering these questions in complete statements:—*

1. Of what is this a picture?
2. How old do you think she is?
3. Where is she sitting?
4. What do you see on the table?
5. What has she before her?
6. What has she in her hand?
7. What do you think she is eating?
8. Think of something else to say about her hair or her dress.

II. *Write the story that you have been telling.*

LESSON 6.—A Memory Gem to Copy and Learn.

Deep in a mountain valley
A brook goes tumbling loud,
Yesterday, up in heaven,
It was a summer cloud.

1. How many lines or verses does this stanza of poetry contain?
2. At the end of the lines what words sound somewhat alike, or rhyme?
3. With what kind of letter does each line begin?

Copy the stanza, learn it, and at some time write it from memory.

Remember that—

Every line of poetry should begin with a capital.