

CHILD CLASSICS

THE PRIMER

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Child Classics the Primer by Georgia Alexander

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GEORGIA ALEXANDER

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THE PRIMER**



Wire, brier, limber-lock,
Three geese in a flock.
One flew east, one flew west,
And one flew over the cuckoo's nest.

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THE PRIMER

By
GEORGIA ALEXANDER

With pictures by
FANNY Y. CORY

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INTRODUCTION

The natural instinct of the child is play. "In the child's world of dim sensation," says Stevenson, "play is all in all. Making believe is the gist of his whole life, and he can not so much as take a walk except in character. I could not learn my alphabet without some suitable *mise-en-scene*, and had to act a business man in an office before I could sit down to my book."

In order to turn this play instinct of the child to his account in learning to read, this *Primer* is written in conversational form. In its pages four little children live a joyous outdoor life such as we all would wish every child to live. From the first page the child reader is one with the children in the story, and his whole business is in getting and giving thought. In other words, this is not merely an exercise book in word calling. The child is trained to look not only at words but through them to the thought which they contain.

The vocabulary is unusually small, averaging only three new words to the page. Great care has been taken so that as far as possible each time a word occurs it is used in a *new* relation. This prevents that facile habit of calling words which is so commonly mistaken for true reading. As Socrates says, "In every enterprise the beginning is the main thing, especially in dealing with the young and tender nature. For at that time it is most plastic and into it the stamp which it is desired to impress, sinks deepest."

Notwithstanding the strong thought tendency of *The Primer*, eighty per cent. of its words are distinctly "phonetic" and form the basis of a simple and effective phonetic system, taught through induction. So simple is the method that no special training is necessary on the part of the teacher, and the book may be used with any standard method of teaching phonetics. *The Primer* has stood the test of actual school-room practice.

INTRODUCTION

The use throughout the book of classic nursery rhymes which have been known and loved by children of many generations, will be of assistance in the introduction of new words to the child. These words are repeated in the subsequent lessons.

Good illustrations are a most important element in enlisting the sympathetic interest of children. Those in *Child Classics* are by the best artists and have a distinct value as examples of good drawing and composition. Care has been taken to keep the pictures in *The Primer* free from the confusing details that a child can not readily understand. They tell simply and directly the stories told by the words and are a definite element in unfolding to the child the thought which the lessons contain. Acknowledgment is gratefully made to Fanny Y. Cory for the excellent illustrations in this book.

It is a pleasure to thank Miss Nebraska Cropsey, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Indianapolis, for suggestions concerning the teaching of reading covering a period of twenty years; Miss Alice Louise Harris, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Worcester, Massachusetts, for her helpful suggestions during the preparation of the manuscript and her critical examination of it in its completed form; and the many teachers who have tested the book in their classes.

It is the hope of the author that the book may bring happiness to the child and the teacher in whose hands it finds place.

G. A.

To Martha and Francis



Day's at the morn