THEME-BOOK IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649719785

Theme-Book in English Composition by Alfred M. Hitchcock

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

www.triestepublishing.com

ALFRED M. HITCHCOCK

THEME-BOOK IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Trieste

THEME-BOOK

IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY

ALFRED M. HITCHCOCK
HARTFORD PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1910

PREFACE

THIS little volume owes its existence to a card catalog of composition subjects which has been growing through many years. Not a few of the topics have been suggested by pupils and still others by fellow teachers. I am indebted especially to my associate Miss Mercy Brann. It has occurred to me that if carefully grouped the tasks could be made to form a progressive course of some value, and this I have tried to do.

Five things have been kept in mind. First, a pupil writes with greater ease and pleasure if permitted, within reasonable limits, to select his own subjects. Second, oral composition, though no adequate substitute for written work, nevertheless furnishes profitable drill and does not call for weary hours of correction. Third, far too little attention is paid to the mental processes preceding final expression. In every year of the course, I think, many essays should be planned, some by the individual pupil and some by the entire class in co-operation with the instructor, which may never be written,—this to accustom the mind to methodical composing. Fourth, because of its very nature English should be closely correlated

with other branches, subjects being chosen freely from science, history, literature, and kindred studies. This is especially true in these days of many electives, when frequently the pupil's greatest interest lies not in the things he does at home but in some study pursued in school. We have followed too long the ancient assumption that whatever has to do with instruction is necessarily distasteful to youth. Fifth, a text-book should not be so planned that it leaves the instructor hampered by a fast-bound sequence, nor should it so anticipate all that he would naturally wish to say to his classes that little remains save the trying work of correction.

The customary question remains to be answered: For what year in the high school course are these exercises designed? They are designed for all years. Few of the tasks are too simple for the most learned senior, though from upper classes should be expected a high degree of excellence. On the other hand, nearly every group contains exercises none too difficult for first year pupils. For convenience, the old sequence of narration, exposition, description, and argument has been adopted; yet it is pretty well agreed that it is best to give in each year of the course tasks involving all four forms. And so far as was practicable, the exercises in each group have been arranged in the order of their difficulty. Yet after all, the book presents simply a collection of subjects; the task of planning a course appropriate for a given year remains, as

it must and should, with the individual instructor. I have tried, it is true, to suggest a profitable sequence; but the skilled instructor, doubtless, will frequently depart from it.

A. M. H.

HARTFORD, CONN.
January, 1910

CONTENTS