

**HINTS FOR LANGUAGE  
LESSONS AND PLANS FOR  
GRAMMAR LESSONS: A  
HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS**

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Hints for Language Lessons and Plans for Grammar Lessons: A Handbook for Teachers by  
John A. MacCabe

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HINTS FOR LANGUAGE LESSONS

AND

PLANS FOR GRAMMAR LESSONS.

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*A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS.*

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BY

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## PREFACE.

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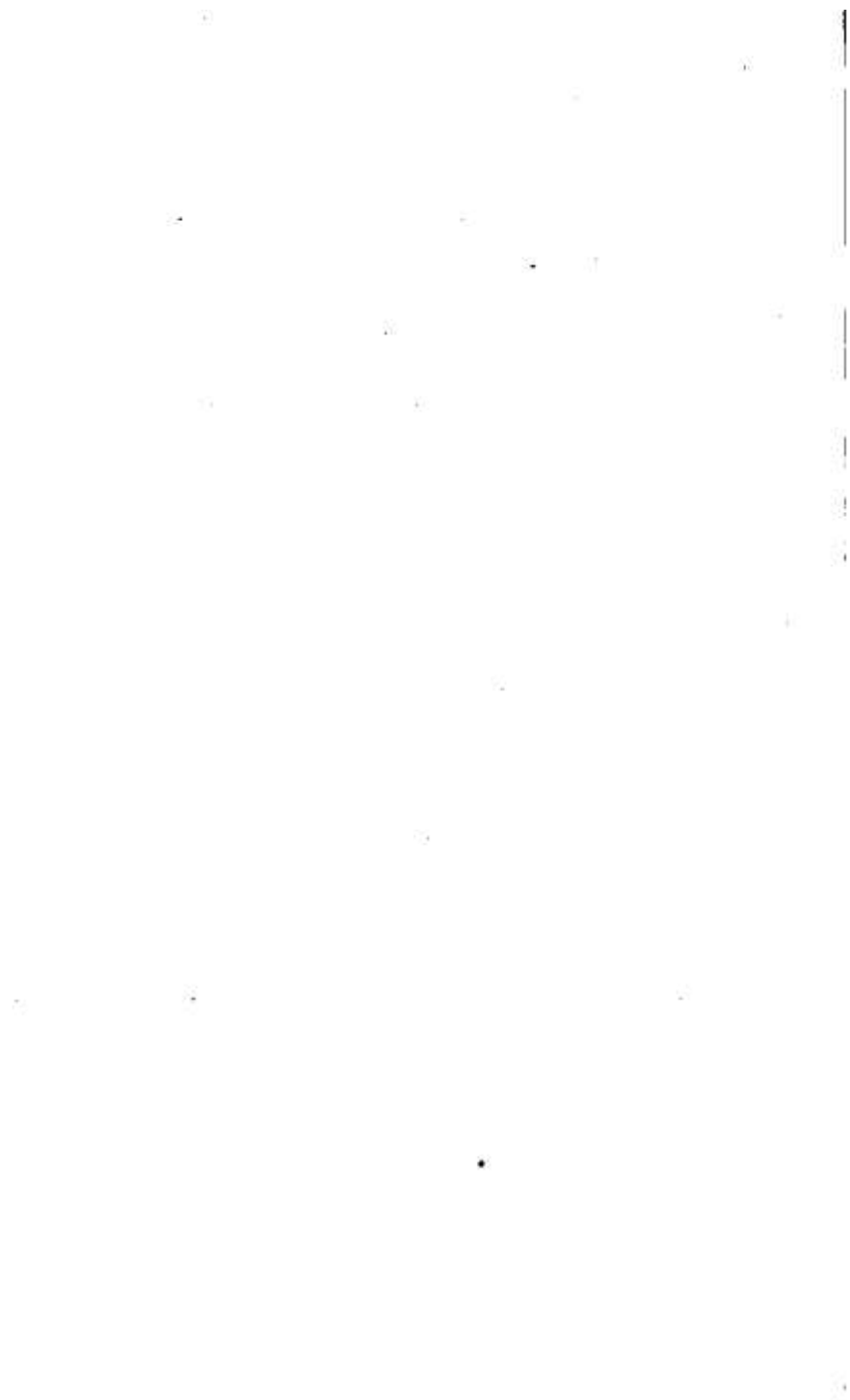
THE following Hints for Language Lessons and Plans for Grammar Lessons are part of the author's instructions in "Method," as given to the students of the Ottawa Normal School.

It is not claimed for these plans that they are the best which can be made for the respective lessons; but they are at least *suggestive* and make a *starting-point* or *rough sketch*, from which the intelligent teacher may develop better ones.

The author has been frequently asked to publish them in book form. In complying with this request, he does so with the hope that they may be found useful to teachers generally.

NORMAL SCHOOL, OTTAWA,  
February, 1892.

JOHN A. MACCABE.





## LANGUAGE LESSONS.

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A PERSON'S language is a test and evidence of his thoughts and mental culture.

In order to "talk" or "speak" well, two things are necessary: we must have thoughts or ideas, and we must have a good command of language to express these thoughts, — language which will "set out" these thoughts in all their fulness and power and effectiveness.

The object of language lessons then is, —

(a) To give the pupil ideas.

(b) To give him the means and the power to express these ideas.

Now, with the young pupil, whence is he to obtain his ideas? where did he find what ideas he has on coming to school? We all get thoughts, directly or indirectly, through the activity of the intellect; that is, through perception or observation, through memory, through imagination, and through reasoning. In the child, which of these powers is first awakened? His powers of observation or perception. Consequently, he gets by far the largest part of his ideas through his observing powers; that is, through the action of his senses. His memory and imagination will supply others. His language, therefore, will in the main refer to what he has seen, or heard, or touched, or tasted, or smelled. As, therefore, he gets his early thoughts through his observing powers, with, as is said above, occasional flights into the fields of memory and imagination, the *first* language lessons, and the greater part of them, must be in the field of thought laid out by his observing powers, his memory, his imagination, and sometimes his reasoning power.

And these language lessons will have a reflex action on the powers used; for the child, when he knows he will be called on to tell what he has seen or heard, etc., will be trained to habits of careful observation. Using this general plan as a basis, he will be led to settle firmly in his language, and use correctly three classes of words: (1) his own words, that is, those he uses intelligently in his every-day conversation; (2) words which he hears others use, and of the meaning of which he has a hazy idea; (3) new words, or words which he hears others use, but of the meaning of which he knows nothing.

Language lessons thus arranged will have the following results:—

1. The cultivation and development of the mental powers—observation, memory, imagination, and reasoning.
2. Quickness in mental activity; quickness in evolving thought.
3. Increase of knowledge—thought enlarged and extended.
4. Increase of vocabulary—new words added to the store, daily, with the new ideas.
5. A command of language.
6. A correct and concise use of language.

The choice of words and the arrangement of these words are the sum and substance of good *composition*. Train the young child to rapid, complete, and accurate observation; this will lead to concise, complete, and accurate description. "Words without thought are empty, but thought without words is helpless."

#### GENERAL HINTS FOR CONDUCTING LANGUAGE LESSONS.

1. Lead the pupils to *talk*—to talk about *anything*, provided they talk.
2. See that the pupils make *complete* statements.
3. See that they use grammatical and elegant language—no slang, no impure or irregular idioms.

4. Correct, or lead the pupils to correct, all ungrammatical and inelegant expressions. The correction should be made indirectly, either by inviting the pupil to "say it *another way*," and telling him that you *prefer* a certain way (the correct way), and that you wish him to use that form for the future; or by telling him the correct form. By drill, fix the proper form in the minds of the pupils.
5. Every lesson, no matter what the subject is, should be made a language lesson. Every error in expression should be corrected when made.
6. As soon as possible language lessons should develop a continuous story, and the story should be placed on the B.B.

MATERIAL FOR LANGUAGE LESSONS TO TRAIN TO HABITS OF  
PROMPT THINKING AND SPEAKING.

For the pupil.

- (1) What I can see in the school-room. What I saw out of school.
- (2) What I can hear. What I heard.
- (3) What I can taste. What I can eat. What I have tasted.  
What I have eaten.
- (4) What I can smell. What I have smelled.
- (5) What I can touch. What I have touched.
- (6) Where I can go. How I can go there. Where I went.  
How I went there.
- (7) What I have worn. What I can wear.
- (8) What things are worn on the hands. Who wear them.  
When. Why.
- (9) What things are worn on the feet. Who wear them.  
When. Why.
- (10) What things are worn on the head. Who wear them.  
When. Why.
- (11) Objects in the school. What each is made of. Its use.
- (12) What things are in the sky. When seen. What things  
are in a store; a mill; a dwelling-house; a church, etc.