

**SPECIAL METHOD IN  
GEOGRAPHY FOR THIRD  
AND FOURTH GRADES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649709960

Special Method in Geography for Third and Fourth Grades by Charles A. McMurry

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**CHARLES A. MCMURRY**

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# SPECIAL METHOD

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## GEOGRAPHY

FOR

THIRD AND FOURTH GRADES

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BY

CHARLES A. MCMURRY, PH.D.

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THIRD EDITION

REVISED AND MUCH ENLARGED.

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1897

PUBLIC-SCHOOL PUBLISHING COMPANY  
Bloomington, Ill.

## PREFACE.

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This little book is designed to outline and illustrate a plan for the study of geography in third and fourth grades.

After a closer survey of home objects in third grade, it lays the scene of operations for the fourth grade in the Mississippi Valley. A series of *type studies* of great fullness and detail is worked out, with the aim of making geography thoroughly instructive and stimulating to children.

The "Pioneer History Stories of the Mississippi Valley" are used in the same grade and cover exactly the same area as the geography topics, so that the relation between history and geography is intimate and many-sided.

The natural science topics treated in the grade are also largely suggested by the geography and history. This enables us, therefore, to illustrate more fully the plan of concentration of studies discussed in the "General Method."

This book is one of a series of Special Methods, treating of the selection and quality of the best materials furnished by the separate studies, and points out the particular application of general principles to these materials. The others are as follows:

Special Method in *Literature* and *History*, especially the oral treatment of stories in primary and intermediate grades. The history course for grammar grades is also discussed and outlined.

Special Method in *Reading*, a discussion of the quality, culture-value, and method of using the best classics as reading exercises. A full list of one hundred and forty-six choice books, arranged according to grades, is given.

Special Method in *Natural Science*. A historical and critical discussion of the leading ideas involved in science teaching in common schools is followed by illustrations of the treatment of science topics, by lists of books of reference in science studies and by a series of science topics for the grades.

Other Special Methods in Language, Arithmetic, Music, and Drawing may be issued later.

A third series of books for the use of children as well as teachers, has been partly worked out, which gives in full, rounded form some of the choicest materials which are much needed to enrich the somewhat dry text-book lore of our schools. Thus far the series is worked out as follows:

*Classic Stories for the Little Ones* by Mrs. Lida B. McMurry. They are used for oral narrative in first grade and as a reading book in second grade.

*Robinson Crusoe for Boys and Girls*, by Mrs. Lida B. McMurry and Mrs. Mary Hall Husted, for oral work in second grade and used as a reading book in third grade.

*Tales of Troy*, by Dr. Charles De Garmo. A classic story for Boys and Girls in third and fourth grades.

*Pioneer History Stories, of the Mississippi Valley*, by C. A. McMurry, for fourth and fifth grades.

*Pioneer Explorers on Land and Sea*, by C. A. McMurry, for fifth and sixth grades.

*A Course of Study* for the eight grades of the common school is being worked out in a separate volume by the same author. For price-list see end of this book. CHARLES A. McMURRY,

Normal, Ill.

State Normal University, August 1, 1895.

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## CHAPTER I

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### HOME GEOGRAPHY.

Home geography in the third grade has to do with one's native town and neighborhood, and with the varied objects of study they supply.

The work will consist in the main of excursions and later of discussions of these in the class,—excursions into the home neighborhood to secure a close and accurate view of many objects and occupations, and discussions in class to bring out more fully their meaning and relations.

There are seven principal topics that may be thus experimentally studied in home geography:

1. Food products, and occupations connected with them.

2. Building materials and related trades.

3. Clothing materials used, manufacture, etc.

4. Local commerce, roads, bridges, railroads.

5. Local surface features. Streams, hills, woods, etc.

6. Town and county government. Court-house, etc.

7. Climate and seasons. Sun, wind, storms, heat.

These seven topics cover a broad and varied field of home observation and make up the phys-

ical environment which presses in from all sides through the senses. It may not be necessary to follow this outline in a fixed or unchanging order, but to consider the season, the neighborhood, the size of the class, and the local opportunities for excursions.

Many topics studied in the two preceding grades have paved the way for Home Geography. Robinson Crusoe has suggested many local interests. The science lessons have already led the children out upon short excursions. The fairy tales and myths have given vivid pictures of many home scenes. In the third grade itself, the natural science lessons and home geography supply a fitting counterpoise to the Greek myths and the story of the Seven Little Sisters. In the latter (the myths) the untamed fancy is given a pretty loose rein; in the former, common realities engage the interest and attention. And yet the two fields of experience are linked together by many close bands.

To those, therefore, who are interested in the problem of concentration of studies, the whole body of knowledge which we are now considering in third grade shows up not only a complex of closely related studies, but also a close adaptation to the interest and needs of children of this age.

We will enter upon a brief discussion of each of the seven topics previously mentioned.

1. *Food products.*—The spring season is a fit-

ting time to make a few excursions to the gardens, and perhaps still further, to the farms. The gardeners are busy with hot-beds, seeds, young plants, and the fresh-turned soil. At this season, also, many of the children may observe the work of plowing, transplanting, and cultivating in their own gardens, and report upon the same. In the fall, also, before and after the first frosts, they may again turn a closer attention to the products of the gardens, orchards, and fields. In the spring-time it may be well to select one or two characteristic vegetables for a full description of the planting and cultivation, as the cabbage-seed, hot-bed, transplanting, hoeing, storing, or covering-in for winter. In the same way one or two of the fruits may be examined and discussed; as, blackberries and grapes.

A catalogue should be made of the vegetables produced within a radius of several miles, as tomatoes, cabbages, turnips, onions, potatoes, tobacco, etc. Without going far from home, but keeping within the children's range of observation, we may form a long and varied list, and find instructive lessons, which will serve good purposes in future studies. With town children it is often necessary to take systematic lessons of this kind, else they will be ignorant of elementary ideas in agriculture, commerce, and surface.

The list of food products about our home may be increased by a list of the fruits, cultivated and