

A GUIDE TO THE TEACHING OF SPELLING

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A Guide to the Teaching of Spelling by Hugh Clark Pryor & Marvin Summers Pittman

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HUGH CLARK PRYOR & MARVIN SUMMERS PITTMAN

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BY

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PREFACE

THE primary purpose of this book is to help teachers to improve the quality of their teaching of spelling. While it has been written with the problems of the inexperienced teacher foremost in mind, it is believed that it may be of substantial value to experienced teachers as well. Simplicity of expression and natural sequence in arrangement are very important to busy, practical teachers. An earnest effort has been made throughout the book to keep these factors in mind.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

Is our spelling poor? Yes, it is poor but it is not so bad as is ordinarily supposed. We use a small number of words in our writing. Not more than one thousand are necessary to satisfy most of our daily needs. One hundred of these common words are misspelled many more times, as a group, than the other nine hundred; so frequently, in fact, that Professor Jones has properly called them the "One Hundred Spelling Demons."

It has been supposed by some persons that our forefathers spelled better than we do. This belief arose from the fact that a great deal was said about the good spellers who won in the old spelling bees and very little about the "ninety and nine" who were "spelled down."

In 1906 some old spelling examination papers which had been written in 1846 were discovered in the attic of one of the school buildings in Springfield, Massachusetts. The words were pronounced to the eighth grade children and they did much better than their forefathers had done sixty years before in the same school. This old Springfield list has been pronounced to eighth grade children all over the country, always, so far as the writers know, with the same result: children of the present generation have shown their superiority as spellers over the Springfield children of 1846.

While our shortcomings have been overemphasized,