

**ORTHOGRAPHY: COMPRISING  
PHONICS, DICTIONARY  
WORK, AND SPELLING FOR  
FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES**

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Orthography: Comprising Phonics, Dictionary Work, and Spelling for Fifth and Sixth Grades by  
Elmer W. Cavins & H. D. Lukenbill

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# ORTHOGRAPHY

Comprising Phonics  
Dictionary Work  
and Spelling

FOR

FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES

BY

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# Preface

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The term "Orthography" as applied to the outline of work in the latest revision of the Illinois State Course of Study for fifth and sixth years might well be interpreted as *phonics, dictionary work, and the spelling of common words.*

As the "Bible is the book of books," and the criterion in matters of religious instruction, so the dictionary is the recognized authority on all phases of word study—an universal reference book for words in the realm of education. How to use this valuable source of useful information is not, as a rule, taught with any degree of thoroughness to children in the grades. The *Introduction* to this book, quoted at some length from an eminent teacher in a state normal school, shows plainly enough how great is the average pupil's need of a working knowledge of the dictionary. To supply such a need is one of the chief purposes of this book. This implies a systematic course in phonics, which in these pages has been "reduced to lowest terms." It implies, furthermore, provision for enough of *actual usage of the dictionary by the children* to reveal to them its value and to establish a habit of consulting it. The *method by which these ends are accomplished* is a distinct feature of this work, and one on which the authors might rest a claim for its preferment, if they were presumptuous enough to urge such a claim.

Another prominent characteristic of this text is the exposition (to teachers) of the psychology of spelling together with plans for teaching the subject in a way that saves the time of teachers and pupils. In other words, the principles of pedagogy that pertain to spelling are set forth and plans in accord with these principles described in detail—plans which may, of course, be adapted to the varying conditions of the schoolroom. *Fifteen hundred words for spelling* have been chosen, including six hundred from lower grade vocabularies, for review. The other nine hundred are all familiar in meaning and use to children of the fifth and sixth grades, yet with orthographic difficulties such as warrant their presence in a spelling lesson.

All the material of the text is profitable for study. It has been selected with the cooperation of a score of teachers, most of whom have had experience in fifth and sixth grade work.

The thanks of the authors are due to Superintendents J. K. Stableton, of Bloomington, Illinois, and C. F. Miller, of Normal, and their corps of intermediate-grade teachers for valuable assistance in selecting words for spelling and for pronunciation; and to President David Felmley, Professors E. A. Turner, Harvey T. White, and Edgar S. Packard; and to Miss Lora M. Dexheimer, of the Illinois State Normal University, for suggestions on pedagogical aspects of the work.

The authors submit this book in the hope that it may serve to lighten the labors of the teachers who use it and make the study of orthography more profitable and enjoyable to the pupils into whose presence it may come.

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# Introduction

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In the *Educational Review* for September, 1915, there is a valuable article on "The High School Student and the Dictionary", by Professor W. H. Sanders of the Normal School at LaCrosse, Wisconsin. In this article Mr. Sanders sets forth data collected from one hundred twenty-five of his pupils, "all of whom, except two, had high school training and only nine of whom were not graduates of high schools." They had come from forty different high schools. "It is probable," says Mr. Sanders, "that a similar test covering the state of Wisconsin would not give results differing materially from the showing here presented."

The following ten questions were asked and the "answers were interpreted liberally, there being no desire to find low standings."

1. Make and name all the diacritical marks you know; illustrate with the markings of *a*.

"About  $33\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the class gave half the information called for."

2. Guide Words: (a) where found; (b) what each indicates; (c) their use.

"It was a surprise to know that  $66\frac{2}{3}$  per cent of the class knew nothing of the guide words."

3. The Key Line: (a) where it is; (b) what it contains; (c) its use.

"Ninety per cent of the class failed to give any information about the key line."

4. Give the meanings of the following abbreviations: Arch.; AS.; cf.; colloq.; e. g.; imp.; Mus.; obs.; obsoles.; p. p.; p. pr. or p. pl.; pret.; prob.; Prov.; q. v.; Syn.; vb.; n.; viz.; usu.; v. t.

"Twenty per cent of the class did not know a single one of the list; a very large number knew only from one to five of them. \* \* \*Some interesting meanings were suggested: AS., 'answer soon'; imp., 'impolite'; Mus., 'musculine'; cf., 'center field.'"

5. Give meanings of the following: (a) || used before a word in its vocabulary entrance. (b) Figures following the respelling of words. (c) Figures used in connection with pictures, i. e. following the word leech is the picture of a leech and the fraction  $\frac{2}{3}$ .

"Only three pupils knew anything about points (a) and (b). Point (c) was unknown to 60 per cent of the class."

6. How does the dictionary help you to pronounce a word?

7. How are compound or hyphenated words distinguished in the dictionary from other words written with a hyphen between syllables?

"Number of students making zero, 120."

8. In what ways is syllabication indicated in the dictionary?

"Number of students making 3 per cent or less, 98."

9. What directions would you give a pupil to enable him to select the right meaning for a word in any given sentence?

10. What aid will the dictionary give you from the standpoint of (a) Grammar, (b) Spelling, (c) Composition or English?

"Answers to this question seem to point to the fact that the dictionary is not drawn upon very frequently for information regarding grammar, spelling, composition or English."

Have you been instructed as to the contents and use of the dictionary?

"Number of students answering "no", 73; answering "yes", 42; not answering, 10."

"Summarizing these results we have the following:

Number of students making below 20 per cent, 27; between 20 and 29 per cent, 58; between 30 and 39 per cent, 28; between 40 and 49 per cent, 11; making 50 per cent, 1."

### Comments on Results of Test

The opinion of Mr. Sanders in regard to this dearth of knowledge of the contents and use of the dictionary is interesting, and it will no doubt be shared by teachers generally. He comments in part as follows:

"To one who believes in the efficiency of the public schools the results of this test are very disquieting. The acquaintance of these one hundred twenty-five students with the dictionary, as indicated by this test, is not sufficient to meet the needs of an intelligent citizen, in home-making, in business pursuits, in professional lines, and certainly not in the rôle of a student.

"It is disappointing to see these bright young men and women, after spending twelve years in the public schools, come out from them as a finished product, yet helpless in the presence of difficulties that inevitably arise in the most ordinary affairs of life. Not only is the condition as revealed by this test disappointing and humiliating but it is absolutely unnecessary and inexcusable.