

Have them recite selections and speak dialogues.

Give them short oral lessons in science. Occasionally read them a short sketch from such papers as *Treasure Trove*.

Never tell a scholar anything he can find out for himself, but teach him how to study. Show him that he is not sent to school as a punishment, but show him why he goes to school. Show him why he learns each lesson, and how he may apply it practically. To interest pupils in any one study apply the rule just given. Show him why he studies that specific study. Also bring out points connected with the lesson outside of the text-book. In reading, question the pupil regarding his lesson, that he may learn how to study and remember it. Have them write reproductions of their lessons occasionally. Fourth and higher reader pupils may also be interested by their attention being called to the beauties of different authors.

In all reading classes do not skip any words without finding their meanings. If we make a lot of machines of our pupils, to stand and simply reiterate mere sounds without comprehending their meaning or use, they soon lose all interest in the most important branch of all study.

In language, grammar, writing, and spelling, interest the pupils by urging the use of writing decent letters and composition. To arouse an interest in letter writing, procure a lot of cheap paper and envelopes. Have each child old enough to write letters, write a letter to another pupil and place the same in a box called the post-office. Mark mistakes in these and hand them back to the authors. After having been re-written, the letter may be replaced in the post-office, and the one to whom it is addressed receives, when he, in return, answers it in the same way.

In arithmetic, we should take special care, lest the students become disinterested by learning only the "how" and not the "why."

Therefore, in addition to work in the book, have them frame examples of their own, which demonstrate the rules under which they work, and which are practical illustrations of such examples as are liable to occur in the vocation they or their parents are pursuing. The class in oral numbers can be kept busy by adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing with small sticks (such as tooth-picks, for instance) as well in their seats as in the class.—*From Essay of J. W. Olson.*

WHISPERING.

A CONVERSATION WITH AN OLD TEACHER.

How do you stop whispering?

I don't stop it. I regulate it.

Please tell me what methods you use.

The principal one is *interest*. I stop one fire by building another. When I see a pupil addicted to communication, I first discover whether it is about school work or not. If it is not, I inquire of myself why he likes to talk of things outside the school-room rather than things inside; in fact, I begin a sort of self-examination as to the reason why I have failed to interest him sufficiently in his studies to lead him willingly to attend to school thoughts inside the school-house.

Do you consider yourself responsible for the interests pupils take in their studies?

If I am not, who is? My duty is not done until I can influence each pupil willingly to study his lessons. Forcing pupils to do what they don't want to do is the prime cause of criminal whispering. I say *criminal*, for I do not consider that communicating about lessons with an honest spirit of inquiry is a great crime. The fact is, it is

an excellent symptom in an indifferent scholar to find him anxious to find out something concerning school work that he cannot find out for himself. Many times I have rejoiced to find a pupil whispering about his work, for it gave evidence that his mind was *voluntarily* commencing to work. The best sign a pupil can give of progress is a spirit of enquiry. I am careful never to repress it when once it begins to be active. Frequently I have been obliged to quietly hint in a private way that he must be careful about his S's, suggesting that they are hissing sibilants. Generally this is sufficient, but if not, I talk to him alone, being very careful to keep his confidence, and urge on the spirit of inquiry awakened into activity.

Some teachers seem to be more anxious to keep order and stop whispering than rousing into action the sleeping energies of the children. Activity is the only evidence of life. A whispering, and even whistling, boy is worth a thousand times as much as a sleepy dolt who hasn't energy enough to kill a mosquito. I have seen a dull pupil so perfectly trained by a "first-class disciplinarian" (?) that he would sit for five minutes with folded hands, eyes fixed on vacuity, and let a mosquito bite him on his nose, and not dare to raise a hand to brush it off. I wouldn't give a fig for such a pupil as that, or the twentieth part of a fig for such a teacher.

A teacher has something else to do than to spend his time in continually talking about order. I have heard such an address as this at the opening of a school:

"Now, pupils, be careful to keep very quiet to-day. I am expecting visitors, and it would disgrace us for them to see any of you whispering. Don't laugh, move very quietly, and when you are out at recess *make no noise*. Remember our motto: 'Order is heaven's first law.'"

Isn't that a good maxim? I have always been taught that it lay at the foundation of all school government.

It is the most pernicious maxim ever posted on the walls of a school-room. The thought is right, if interpreted properly, but most teachers understand it to mean that classes must move in exact military precision, and that every recitation must be guided by the law of *suppression* rather than activity and growth. The maxim should read,

"System is heaven's first law."

The worst teaching I ever saw was in a most "orderly" school. Everything moved like clock-work. Each question was asked with wonderful precision, and the answers were given with text-book certainty. There was no whispering in this school. The teacher told me that it was entirely banished. I believed her, but I wanted to say: "So is everything else worth anything." I didn't, but left her believing that she was teaching the most wonderful school in the state, while the fact is *she wasn't teaching school at all*.

What would you say to young teachers about whispering?

In answering this question I will give you some of the "points" in an address before our last county teachers' association. They will answer your question as well as I am able.

The duty of a teacher is to teach.

Good government comes through good teaching.

Disorder coming from attention to school work is easily regulated.

Disorder coming from want of attention to school work can be banished by securing interest in studies.

When it is proved that a pupil *cannot* be interested in what pertains to the school, steps should be taken to remove him from the school.

INCENTIVES are the most powerful governmental forces. The best teachers make great use of them.

All good government is self government, both as it relates to the teacher and the pupil.—*Exchange.*