

Marking Papers.

Very early in my teaching, I discovered that marking papers night after night, was not only a bad thing for me, but that it re-acted on the pupils. I therefore try various ways to minimize the amount I must do to find out the condition of the mind of the pupil. In arithmetic and spelling the way is easy. The pupils face in rows. Rows one and two face each other, three and four, and so on. If there be an odd row after the vacant seats are filled, they are scattered to fit into the others. I say "Face!" "Pass one, two, three," or any number I see fit, and either to right or left, trying to vary constantly. Sometimes in spelling, after a few words are corrected, I say "Pass to the left, one, two," changing more than once. I usually spell the words correctly, or write them on the board, when it seems desirable, to have no talking. Words that are illegible or re-written are marked wrong, thus encouraging neatness. Pupils marking a word wrong when there is no question about the letters, or failing to mark a word that is absolutely wrong, have that word or words added to their number for correction in daily work, and in a test lose from their per cent. "Hard!" do you say? Possibly! But is not our first aim the making of trustworthy, accurate citizens? I believe this helps in the process. I am the Court of Appeals, and for five minutes while the corrections are going on, will decide any doubtful cases.

In arithmetic I proceed in much the same way. Sometimes one pupil marks an entire paper, then it is passed on to another for proof. Again, I keep the papers moving so that a pupil marks but one problem of any one paper. This is for the answers only and correct labelling. Then the problems are put on the board and the work scanned to see if it agrees with the answer. . . . Papers below sixty per cent. are always examined to find out, if possible, what the reason of the low per cent. is, that work may be put where it is especially needed. . . . Compositions—"Aye, there's the rub." Once a month I mark in school during the arithmetic or study periods. Sometimes I mark, then call the pupil to look over his errors with me. Sometimes he comes to the table and with my help marks his own. This takes a week, for I can do only six or eight in a day. Again, I take one of the poorest (I know which are likely to be the poorest) and go over it with the class very

thoroughly, marking points on the board. Then the papers are distributed and each marks his own, and then exchanges with his neighbor for confirmation. Sometimes the neighbors take it first, and sometimes it passes through two hands before it comes to the owner. In all cases, the composition is re-written, errors corrected, and the first and second drafts pinned together and returned to me.

When a thing is to be committed *verbatim et literatim*, let the class form in two or three double lines and number one, three, five, etc. Let number one recite to number three, two to four, etc., all at the same time. Then reverse it three to two, etc. It need take but a very few minutes. Those who fail are required to sit and recite to me later. Whenever I take anything in this way, I insert it into the test in some form, and am thus ready to point the moral, should I suspect some boy or girl was not absolutely honest. As a rule, however, children bear responsibilities well, after they understand what is required of them and why. These methods not only lighten the teacher's labors, but cultivate self-reliance, attention to details and judgment on the part of the pupils.—*Eleanor Curtis, in Texas School Magazine.*

Blackboard Lines for March.

How can a little child be good and sweet,
Although the month of March is drear, with wind and
sleet?

By each day striving for the best,
You will grow good and sweet, and find that you are
blest.

What we may teach this month:—

1. March, the first month of spring.
2. Note the number of windy, still, or stormy days.
3. What birds, if any, return to us from their Southern homes?
4. What flowers, if any, make their appearance?
5. Search for leaf buds.
6. Is the ground still frozen hard?
7. What preparations are the farmers making for their spring's work?
8. The work often done indoors, as: Papering, kalsomining, white-washing, painting, cleaning out pipes and chimneys, general house-cleaning, etc.—*Primary Education.*