

year. The list of words useful in the early stages of spelling is found in a subsequent paragraph. See page 8.

There are also forms of seat work related to reading, suitable for pupils who are studying the *First Reader*. A special paragraph will be given to a discussion of these. See page 8.

SECTION II—THE TEACHING OF PHONICS

With most pupils there should be an introductory exercise in slow pronunciation. This may with some children occupy a few minutes every day for two or three weeks. The teacher utters some familiar word slowly, as *m-a-n*, and the pupils combine the sounds to get the word *man*. Or she says *r-ed* and the pupils say *red*. This exercise may work over into a game during which the various objects in the room are named. Pupils who have taken part freely in such a game will develop power to recognize sounds and to combine them. They will, also, if they imitate the teacher in uttering the words in their broken form, pick up the correct method of uttering the elements with a view to combination. This is very important. The chief reason why many pupils are unable to find out words by phonic synthesis is that they do not give a right value to the elements. Th *y* are too noisy and vocalize the consonants. A child that says *buh-u-t-uh* instead of *b-u-t* will surely have great difficulty in arriving at the meaning of the printed form *but*. He will in all probability arrive at the word *butter*. See *A Modern Phonic Manual* (Macmillan).

After a short course in what has been termed slow pronunciation, real phonic instruction may begin by writing on the board some known word, as *man*. This is sounded more and more slowly until the various sound elements are recognized as *m a n*. The letters are pointed to one by one as the sounds are uttered, and the pupils know three symbols corresponding to the three sounds or utterances. Similarly another word, such as *cat*, may be analyzed and the new elements *c* and *t* may be discovered. Then the process may be reversed and pupils asked to discover by continuation of elementary sounds such words as *at*, *an*, *am*, *tan*, *can*, *tam*, *mat*. From lesson to lesson other elements will be introduced in the same way. Later on when the process is well known, the elements may be given directly without the preliminary step of analysis.

The order of presenting the elements is worthy of consideration. At first the short vowel *a* is given and the consonants which are easily combined with it to make words. As a rule, these are the consonants formed, as children say, at the front of the mouth—*p*, *t*, *s*, *f*, *l*, *m*, *n*. Later on the sub-vocals as *b*, *d*, *g* may be given, and the short and long vowels in any order that seems best to the teacher. The exact order is not so important as that a definite record be kept as to the amount of work covered. The teacher who drills thoroughly and introduces new matter slowly is bound to succeed.

The following table found in the *Primer of The Alexandra Readers* (Macmillan) has been found quite satisfactory: