

carried their interest to spring flowers and the general awakening of life in the spring time. Then he was able to direct their attention to the effect upon men's minds of the first Easter message "that life is ever lord of death." Doubtless he got the cue as to his beginning from some scraps of conversation which he overheard before the lesson commenced. But he showed his wisdom in two things, first in placing his first question on the rather low level of the girls' present interest, and second in framing his further questions so that the class were brought as speedily as possible to the Easter subject.

2. So order your later questions that each will connect naturally with its predecessor. Scrappy, disjointed, desultory questioning is to be avoided just because it always fails to maintain the interest of the class, and they consequently refuse to devote their whole minds to the making of satisfactory answers. Pupils enjoy keenly seeing the successive answers to a well-arranged series of questions built up into an orderly framework of knowledge.

3. Spare no pains in making your questions absolutely plain to your class. Observe always, both as to matter and as to form, the happy medium between the too easy and the too difficult. A veteran teacher was once asked, "Do you not get sometimes some very foolish answers from the pupils?" His reply was, "Yes! I find that if I ask a foolish question, I usually get a foolish answer."

More important even than the problem of skilful questioning by the teacher, is the problem of developing in the class the disposition to ask questions on their own account. Wordsworth has said that the "whole vocation" of the child is "endless imitation." I think he would have been nearer the truth had he said, "endless questioning." The aim of every teacher should be to promote in her class that spirit of confidence and of intellectual alertness which will lead the pupils to ask questions with something of the freedom and impelling curiosity which one finds in the right sort of home.

To show just how this may be done is hardly possible within the space assigned for this article, but I may say that one of the secrets of the child's questioning at home is the challenge of the environment. There are so many interesting things about him which he wants to have explained. Unless the class environment makes a similar challenge, he will ask no questions simply because he has no questions to ask.

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The Material We Work On

"Holds a thousand green leaves folded tight,
Holds a thousand flowers, pink and white,
Holds a tree with its branches all complete,
And fruit that is juicy, golden and sweet."

It is of the little child that the rhymster writes, the child so little, but with such infinite possibilities of development. And that same wondrous little bundle of possibilities is the material the teacher works on.



How to Tell a Story

By Rev. A. J. Wm. Myers, Ph.D.

With few exceptions stories should be told, not read. Even the new beginner will get much better results by telling the story. Some stories should be memorized word for word, others told in our own words. But whichever plan is followed, the first principle of story-telling is:

See and feel the story for yourself. Read the story over until familiar with it. Then sit back and think it through, letting the imagination have free play until every scene is vivid and you feel the thrill of the situations as they develop.

When you have gripped the story, say it aloud. This tests out the form, language and freedom in its use, and gives confidence when one comes before the class. This method of preparation is not only best but takes least time. When the story is seen and felt, it is easy to give it natural expression. The problem of memory is solved.

For example, any one who can see and feel the story of the Prodigal Son—the wealthy home, the father and two sons, departure, fast living, want, swineherd, memory, resolve, the return with leaden step, the welcome!—can tell it to any group. The scenes follow each other naturally, and the Bible language is so concise and fitting that it easily becomes one's own.

Begin at once. The first sentence should take us into the story. Avoid apology and explanation. Here are the first sentences of some good stories: "A certain man had two sons," "There was once a giant, and he lived in a cave by himself," "Once upon a time there was a little boy who talked a great deal about Santa Claus," "The bugles rang out," "Little Jack Horner sat in a corner," "There was once a little Indian boy who rode fifty miles on the cowcatcher of an engine." Ask yourself: Is my first sentence interesting to my audience?

Have continuous movement and action. Keep strictly to the single thread of the story. Avoid digressions. It is a tiresome bore who, in relating a story, incident or conversation