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TEACHING COMPOSITION.

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Composition is the art of expressing our ideas and thoughts in words. It is the art of telling what we know, or of embodying our knowledge in language. This knowledge may consist of facts which we have observed, heard, or read, or of thoughts which we may have acquired by conversation and reading, or developed by thinking.

Importance. — Composition is one of the most important branches taught in our schools. It does more to prepare a pupil for success in many departments of life than almost any other branch. It also affords valuable culture to the mind, for it requires closeness of observation, fulness and readiness of memory, and the power of original thought and generalization. It is valuable for its own sake; the art of correct and elegant expression is an accomplishment to be highly prized. It also cultivates a literary taste that enables one to appreciate the works of literature, and thus becomes a source of the most refined and exquisite pleasure.

Composition is also, when properly taught, one of the most interesting and delightful of the common-school branches. The popular dread of composition writing is due to the fact that it has been so poorly taught in our schools: There can be no intrinsic repulsiveness in writing compositions. Children love to