

English.

All articles and communications intended for this department should be addressed to the ENGLISH EDITOR EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL, Room 5, 11½ Richmond Street West, Toronto.

THE AGE OF TREES.

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The plan of this lesson will be much as any other prose lesson plan. Speaking generally, this consists of: (1) Getting the meaning of each paragraph, sentence by sentence. (2) Getting the relation of one paragraph to another. (3) Giving the thought in child-language to show possession of idea. (4) Reading the author's own words in a way to please the listener, by reproducing the author's ideas in clear, expressive style.

This is such a long and sustained story (really a chain of stories all bearing upon the one subject) that it must be taken in parts, securing a knowledge of each part before proceeding to the next. Any paragraph would do to begin upon, but let us take the author's sequence at this time.

Trees. Draw attention to their beauty and grandeur, their value in industries, and in keeping the air pure; speak of forms of various trees (draw on board if possible), notice any visible from windows. Speak of the poet's love for trees, the "Talking Oak," "The Spreading Chestnut Tree," and tell of Oliver Wendell Holmes' love for the elms of New England. Having aroused the interest, compare the tree's life with man's in point of length. Introduce the first paragraph. Question on words. Ask for questions. Get synonyms—counts, sapling, mature, gigantic, king of the greenwood, touch of time, decline, rears, reckons centuries of old age, just as it reckoned centuries of youth. Drill upon a clear pronunciation of mature, gigantic, *man* counts his life, one hundred years, proud head, reckons centuries, old age.

Reading of the paragraph. This gives a good exercise in expression. There are contrasts to be shown—*man* is held up to view, while we compare him with the *oak*, held up upon the other side. We are painters, using our colors as effectively as possible; some use the colors in a blur, and others put them on clearly, delicately, lively. So each reader is incited to use the words (colors) so that the author's meaning flashes out upon us as we listen. We see the young oak, we mark its growth to maturity, we watch its slow decline, we are delighted, we all want to show how we can paint the picture.

The second paragraph is a puzzling one. It begins, as you all know, with: "It has been said that the patriarch of the forest laughs at history. Is it not true?" The latter, in spite of the question mark at the end, is commonly read, "It is not true," with a downward curve of the voice which effectually kills all meaning. Before taking the sentence find out their ideas upon "the patriarch of the forest," then "why he laughs at history." Give concrete examples of persons surprised at finding things which occurred in their lifetime recorded in a book of history; show that often the history could be amended if such persons were consulted. Get the reason of the patriarch's laughter into their heads, use their imagination to picture the silent laughter of the tree as it hears man's wonderful story told. What a different story the tree might tell if it could speak as the author imagines it to do in this paragraph. Meanings of balmy zephyrs, generations, pass into silence, ears fine enough.

Again we prepare to paint. We have strange laughter, we have gentle breezes lightly stirring the leaves, we have small whispers of the leaves; these we have to paint with proper touch, and then, more solemnly, we come to the "suns rising and setting," the successive generations of frail man passing into the silence of death, and we find the "story of the trees" assuming a value that we should delight to fathom, if only they could speak and we could hear. Have you any story of ears opened to hear the language of the creation which is usually called "dumb"? Here tell your story. The *Goadrind* is nearly extinct, happily, and you need fear no censure from him.

With the third paragraph we are plumped into the region of the actual, and we feel the fall. Measurements are needed to show the size of "the king of white oak trees," or the interest fades to

inertia. The manner of estimating the age of trees from the wood is interesting to the class, who, you can see, are deciding to try the plan at their earliest opportunity. The teacher must be prepared to answer the question, "Why does the tree have these rings?" for it is generally forthcoming. In reading this paragraph a deliberate style must be used; special attention to commas will repay the reader in this and in the next paragraph. Imagine "One California pine cut down about 1855 was according to very good authority eleven hundred and twenty years old and many of its neighbors," etc., etc., given without commas and in a monotonous voice. It is not well to hurry these two paragraphs (as one feels like doing when the delights of the next paragraphs are in view), but, again impressing the class with the idea of being "painters," strive to obtain good reading before leaving them.

We come to the part where a love for history may be awakened in the children, for the real story is, after all, the one they love. Be ready with William the Conqueror (have the life of the Duke of Normandy also), and your class will listen to you, never fear. Use dates, and make as clear as possible the age of the King's Oak. After examining these two paragraphs as explained before try for definite expression in reading them. There is room for study in them.

The Roman departure and its cause are mentioned in the next paragraph. "The usual evidences" of the age of trees should now be given by the pupils, and, as in the other paragraphs, the children should give synonymous phrases to show the meaning. We begin to catch the idea of the author now in the progression he is making; he is leading us to great wonders in the way of the age of trees, he is "linking the far-off past with the living present." By this time the class are almost ready to formulate a rule for reading numbers, as "eight centuries ago," "fourteen centuries," "eight hundred and fifty years old." Unconsciously they, with deliberation, hold up the number to our view separated from the other words, and seem to impress upon us the marvellous fact thereby.

The allusion to "Fine-Ear of the fairy tale" is one I have not succeeded in finding out, and I should be glad to receive information in regard to it. King John and Edward I. are more easily found, and the former will prove interesting because of the Magna Charta, while the latter they may already have some notion of in a former lesson. If so, let them tell it.

We pass from the history of England to the ancient world. The use of an atlas has been invaluable before, and we turn to the map of the world to locate our new scenes, then to a larger map to find the mountains, thence to the map of Africa to find Senegal. (Why didn't the author tell us the name of his "eminent French botanist?" He might have known that question would be asked, and justly, too.) We have risen at last to the climax, reaching an age of five thousand years; we cannot expect to go any higher, and we pause and repeat our former quotation, this time making it our own exclamation, "Truly, the patriarchs of the forest laugh at history."

SENIOR LEAVING LITERATURE.

1. Give the bibliography (a) of Merchant of Venice, (b) of Richard II.
2. Explain:
 - (a) Let me *play the fool*.
 - (b) That *royal merchant*, good Antonio.
 - (c) The moon sleeps with Endymion.
3. Compare Jessica's character and conduct with those of Portia. Refer to the influences of (a) heredity, (b) home training, (c) education, (d) society.
4. Explain the following, and give the context:
 - (a) That bill of scandal, (b) the populous north,
 - (c) her bleating gods, (d) on the grunsel edge, (e) semblance of worth, not substance, (f) That fought at Thebes and Ilium, (g) Tears such as angels weep, (h) a fabric huge rose like an exhalation, (i) his hand was known in heaven, (k) Behold a wonder!
5. "No poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavorable circumstances than Milton." Enumerate a few of these difficulties.
6. "The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante." Mention a few differences.
7. "Richard II. forms part of a trilogy." Explain this sentiment.

8. "The central idea of Richard II. is a tragical one; it is a tragedy of failure."
9. Compare the delineation of Richard II. and of Bolingbroke.
10. "Methinks I am a prophet new inspired,
And thus expiring do foretell of him:
His rash, fierce blaze of riot cannot last,"
etc.

Identify the speaker, and sketch the part he plays in the drama.

C. C.

PRIMARY RHETORIC.

High School Reader, pp. 330-336.

1. Number the paragraphs in this lesson for reference; state very briefly the topic of each paragraph *in your own words*.
2. Describe concisely the literary form of the whole extract.
3. State the subject of the whole section of which this lesson is one part.
4. Make an orderly list of all the words that serve to give explicit reference from paragraph to paragraph—the "official" words of each paragraph—and state accurately the function of each.
5. Select a transition sentence and a transition paragraph.
6. Point out several topic sentences each of a different character from the others.
7. Select several dwarf sentences of different forms, and state the office that each performs in its paragraph.
8. Divide the whole lesson into two or more parts, each including more than one paragraph; show how these parts are logically connected and constitute together one whole.
9. Select a good example of periodic sentence, of loose sentence, of rhetorical question, and of amplification.
10. Point out an example or instance used by the writer, and explain the end or purpose for which he introduces it.
11. Select all the instances of parallel construction. Tell what gain comes to the style from their use.
12. Write out the topic sentences as they occur, and, by means of letters, number them to show the framework of the whole lesson.
13. Point out in a few words the climactic order of the extract; select a single paragraph written in cumulative style.
14. What other lessons in the High School Reader resemble this one in literary form, in logical method, and in quality of thought?
15. Pronounce and explain mystery, fruition, myriads, tapestry, spectra, phantoms, impotent, Dies Irae, and Vaudois.
16. Mention three qualities of this author's style, and make clear what you mean by the descriptive terms you employ.
17. What is the form of reasoning used in the extract? Define it as well as you can.
18. State the conclusion to which Ruskin means to conduct us.
19. Point out a touch of sublimity, of sarcasm, of pathos, and show the intention of the author in each stroke.

C. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

- Miss C. S.—(1) Please give a title for "The Bugle Song," Third Reader, page 132.
- (2) What is the cause of "the splendor and glory"?
 - (3) What are "the snowy summits"?
 - (4) What does the poet refer to as "the horns of Elfland"?
 - (5) Why "faintly blowing"?
 - (6) Explain "wild echoes," "echoes roll from soul to soul."
 - (7) What are "the purple glens"?
 - (8) What is "the moral of the poem"?

ANSWERS.

- (1) It is easy to suggest many titles, such as "The Dying Day," "A Sunset Requiem," etc., which might indicate tolerably well the spirit of the song, but it is not easy to be sure that the poet, were he alive, would accept any one that we might suggest.
- (2) The level rays of the sinking sun.
- (3) "The snowy summits" may mean either the snow-tipped peaks of high mountains, or the lofty