

PRIMARY GRADES—SEAT WORK

In the early months of the school year when it is so hard for little people to settle down to real work, I have found this device in seat work profitable employment for the so-called "busy-work" period. Materials required: Discarded readers, clippings from newspapers, magazines, etc., thin cardboard, envelopes.

For the first step in the work select a page that has a picture. Mount the picture and printed story on separate pieces of cardboard. Now write the story on another piece of cardboard and cut between words. Put mounted picture, printed story and cut up words into envelope. Now this seat work is not mere "busy work," and it can be used in several ways. Of course, the first way which suggests itself is matching the written words to the printed story. A child never tires of this, and you will find he learns a great deal from the comparison and discrimination used in his work.

Another way is to read the printed story silently, put it back into envelope, then arrange written words to tell the story about the picture. Again, to vary the lesson, tell the children to leave picture and printed story in the envelope. Select the written words, beginning with capitals, and make as many sentences as possible. Now take out the printed lesson and compare. Some day, give the children paper and let them copy the printed story. Now arrange the written words and have the children compare their written work with that done by teacher. This may,

or may not, be an aid to work in penmanship—depends on how carefully the teacher's work has been done.

Now in order that this seat-work, or any seat-work, may be successful, we must make the children feel that their work is to be inspected and appreciated. It does not take very much time out of a lesson for the teacher to walk up the aisles, give a little pat here, a nod there, a "silent word" to the lazy child, while his industrious neighbor receives a "Well done, John!" If there is time, allow some child who has done his work extra well to read the story to the class. After a child has worked hard, I think he is entitled to a little reward for his effort. There is nothing much more discouraging to a pupil than to work diligently all the session and have his seat work collected without a word from the teacher. Now if something should happen so that you cannot inspect work, it will not lower your dignity very much to explain to the little folks why you couldn't look at their work.

I have been asked in connection with the aforementioned device in seat-work, if there isn't some one in the class continually raising his hand to say that he can't find certain words. No, for I tell the children at the beginning of a period to leave a space for the word they can't find and go on. It is a good idea to have a number of the small cardboard slips on the desk, and just before the envelopes are collected write the missing words and give to owners.

BUSY WORK A PART OF THE REGULAR PRIMARY WORK

By E. A. S.

Busy work is probably one of the most thoughtlessly planned, carelessly executed and hastily examined, of all primary school work.

It is thoughtlessly planned because, many times, it has no definite aim nor

any immediate connection with any other work. Disconnected busy work is of little value, except as a diversion to be used once in a while for variety. The most helpful, and the most interesting busy work follows, and goes