

PREFACE.

The powers and sounds of the letters should be taught at the blackboard.

The letters are associated in the book with pictures which are intended to suggest the powers and sounds of the letters after they have been taught.

All the work in the book is intended to be done by the pupils, absolutely without help. This independent work, though it may seem at first to be slow, will be really most effective and most rapid.

Most phonic systems are based on the idea that every sound of the variable letters must be represented by a special sign or mark. Experience has proved that this idea is wrong. If pupils are properly taught the common and long sounds of vowels, and are trained to know when to expect certain letters to be silent, the association of the words in the sentences will enable them to do the rest, and the mental exercise they get in making the necessary adjustments is one of the best direct intellectual results of learning to read.

After the first few weeks it is well to have more than one sound of a letter or diphthong on the same page or even in the same sentence.

There are two kinds of problems in learning to read: *ear* problems and *eye* problems. In the *ear* problems the pupil hears the sounds spoken by the teacher and translates the sounds of the word into letters; in the *eye* problems he sees the word and translates the letters into sounds, and combines the sounds into the word.

The combining process is the very first step in teaching reading. The pupils should be trained to recognize short words by listening to them, when they are sounded with a slight pause between the sounds of which they are composed.

Most of the work in class should be *ear* problems. The Primer contains *eye* problems for the pupil to solve at his seat.

The use of script must begin in the first lesson in connection with the *ear* problems. Children learn to write by using script for a definite purpose.

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