

"Klinefelter's Pond"; "The Noroton River"; "The Lake at Laddins' Rock Farm."

The fruit of the foregoing work began to show itself in the spontaneous response and initiative of the class. Some suggested describing the lake in winter, for they wished to produce an impression of desolation. Others wished to paint a summer picture, for the music, color, and fragrance of that season appealed to them, while a third group preferred autumn with its rich coloring. One boy attempted a poem and "thus became our first poet."

The following plan and composition were prepared by one of the pupils:

The Lake at Hallowe'en

Impression. — Desolation. Winter scene.

Point of view.—Standing on the rustic bridge which spans the lake.

Details.—Ice-bound lake, wind, trees, lone snow-bird, steamer on the sound, sky.

Words used to bring about a scene of desolation: groan, creak, piping, shrieking, groping, booming.

The composition.—Before me lies the ice-bound lake at Hallowe'en. Held in winter's icy grip it no longer sparkles and dances as it did in summer. The biting wind sweeps up the lake causing the trees along its margin to groan and creak in dismay. A lone snow-bird who has braved the rigors of winter vainly tries to raise his piping voice above the shrieking of the wind. Now and then the weary voice of a steamer answered by the booming voice of a nearby light comes faintly to my ears. The steel gray of the sky, foretelling an approaching storm, makes the already cheerless scene one of desolation.

Lesson VIII

Finish the work which was begun in the preceding lesson. During these periods of written composition, it is very necessary that the teacher move about among the children in a very sympathetic spirit giving individual help and encouragement. The pupils, on the other hand, must feel perfectly free to consult books of synonyms, dictionaries, or question each other or the teacher. The movable furniture now

used in most of the modern school buildings allow for the necessary freedom in such a vital subject as oral and written composition.

Lesson IX

(Correction of composition by the teacher and by the pupils.)

Many teachers feel that correcting compositions is a great burden, and in many cases is time ill spent, since the same errors often reappear in the child's written work. Dr. Franklin T. Baker's suggestions on this point are very valuable: Shall the teacher correct themes? Surely. But he must know how. He must not be fussy nor pitch his standards too high. He must not forget that it is the ideas, rather than the form, that are the main thing. He must not forget to put the responsibility for the form on the pupil as fast as possible and make them proofread their themes.

The aim in this lesson is to develop the habit of self-criticism on the part of all the children. In order to realize this aim, however, the compositions must be short.

Method of Procedure

a) Criticism by teacher.—During the period of written composition the teacher is of great service to her class, for as she walks about among them she has a splendid opportunity, not only to help those who need encouragement and individual attention, but also to correct errors without curbing free expression. The child, of course, must know the cause of his error; otherwise he will never become self-critical—a habit which the teacher of composition should endeavor to help her pupils to acquire.

Select those children who are below the standard of the grade in this work and in the conference period, make known to them their weaknesses, and aid them to acquire skill in this most useful art.

Note.—When the teacher has read the set of papers (not necessarily corrected, nor marked them) she notes the typical errors or general weaknesses of her class. She makes this work the basis of her next instruction.