

English Lessons
Through
Literature
Samples

Kathy Jo DeVore

barefoot
ragamuffin
curricula

www.barefootmeandering.com
veritas • gnaritas • libertas

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This sample PDF contains the introduction, table of contents, and the first six lessons (two weeks) of each level of *English Lessons Through Literature* (formerly *Language Lessons Through Literature*).



Level
One

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Introduction

After more than seven years of homeschooling, I've come to a conclusion: While I often regret the purchase of curricula, I rarely regret the purchase of quality books.

It may seem ironic, then, that I've chosen to write a grammar curriculum for young children. I believe absolutely in copywork, narration, and dictation for instilling values, promoting memorization, and teaching spelling and writing. Yet, in the early years I relied on grammar texts for young children that taught using sentences manufactured for the sole purpose of demonstrating grammatical concepts.

The real irony lies in focusing on quality literature in every area *except* the teaching of the grammar and mechanics of the English language. While I believe the best way to teach grammar and mechanics is through literature and that no curriculum is needed for this, I also believe the easiest way to do this is through a series of lessons based on literature that can be repeated with each child. So here we are.

The reasoning behind manufactured sentences is often that in using real sentences from literature, children will encounter advanced concepts which they have not yet learned. However, once upon a time, every elementary student was a toddler just learning to speak. He sometimes confused “my” and “me,” he might have formed plurals incorrectly, and he made any number of other grammatical errors. A great many of us found these errors very cute, even while we corrected them. What we didn't do was simplify our speech to the child's level of understanding, knowing that he would learn best by exposure to correctly spoken language.

And so it is with teaching grammar and mechanics. When I first began narration with my oldest son, we used an old retelling of Aesop with its more difficult syntax and vocabulary rather than using a modern, simplified retelling of Aesop. I followed this pattern with my second son in his turn. Instead of being confused, both of my sons amazed me by incorporating those advanced concepts into their narrations.

Children learn by imitating. It is up to us to insure what they come into contact with is worthy of imitation.

Schedule and Readiness

This book was previously published as *Language Lessons Through Literature*.

Both levels of this program are intended as three-day-per-week lessons over thirty-six weeks, for a total of 108 lessons per year. Each lesson includes a literature selection to be read aloud, a poem, and either an Aesop's fable or a picture study.

Level 1 is intended for a first grade child who is ready for copywork and is beginning to read fluently. Level 2 is intended for a second grade child or for older children in need of remediation. Completion of Level 1 is not a prerequisite for Level 2.

Purpose and Necessary Resources

Level 1 is an intentionally light program. First grade should be a time for getting children comfortable with reading and handwriting. Most young children are simply not ready for more advanced grammar, and the grammar for which they are ready can be taught very quickly when they are just a little older. Although children can begin learning the parts of speech in the first grade, the simple fact is that one can take two years beginning in first grade to teach the parts of speech, or one can take one year beginning in second grade to teach the parts of speech. It's simply more efficient to wait until the child is truly ready, and it leaves more time to focus on reading and handwriting during first grade. An advanced child—one who was reading and writing comfortably in Kindergarten—might be best served by skipping Level 1 and going straight into Level 2, or by using Level 1 in Kindergarten.

The focus of Level 1 is to begin teaching usage and mechanics of the English language through copywork. Although I have written lessons for many (but not all) of the Level 1 lessons, the real lessons are truly the copywork selections. It is in copywork that children will learn and internalize proper spelling, capitalization, and punctuation while practicing handwriting. The lessons that I've written for Level 1 merely point out and reinforce concepts to the child before he begins his copywork. Children are introduced to punctuation marks, quotations, and contractions; they then practice writing them.

In Level 2, the child learns the parts of speech as well as lists of helping verbs, prepositions, etc. Examples and exercises consist of

a sentence or passage from the literature or from a poem. In the exercises, the child takes what he has learned from the lesson and demonstrates understanding. The repetition necessary for mastery comes from constant review in the exercises, not from long exercises.

I have occasionally simplified or modified sentences to avoid confusion, but I have tried to keep this to a minimum. Particularly in Level 1, some sentences have been shortened to make them a more appropriate length for copywork. Since all of the literature selections are old, and many are British, spelling and punctuation have been modified as necessary.

The literature selections in this book are intended to be read aloud to the child; this program does not cover reading instruction. In addition, spelling is not taught explicitly, so a formal spelling program, if desired, should be supplied separately.

Literature Selections

The literature suggested in this book is in the public domain in the United States and the full text of each story and book can be found online. Most are also available as audio books. A complete reading list appears at the beginning of each level.

Since most of the examples and part of the daily copywork come directly from the literature, reading the literature is an important component of this program. However, there is certainly room to skip books that the child does not like. Fairy tales may be disturbing to some children, and it is up to the parents to determine whether or not a recommended resource is right for their family. My homeschooling motto has long been, “Use the curriculum; don’t let the curriculum use you.” I recommend the motto more highly than I recommend any of the literature selections in this book.

I do recommend reading the literature prior to the lesson. The examples and the copywork almost always come from the reading selection from that day.

Copywork

This book contains a great deal of copywork. From the middle of Level 1 through Level 2, most weeks have five pages of copywork

consisting of one to four lines per page for each week: three pages from the literature selection, one from the poetry selection, and one containing a maxim or Bible verse. This amount of copywork would have made my oldest son cry. My second son wanted more copywork than this. If you find this is too much copywork for your child, there are several options:

1. Skip part of the copywork. Decide which portions of the copywork are most important to your goals, and have your child do only those.
2. If you'd rather have your child do all of the copywork, have the child do the copywork portions five days a week instead of three. This would be one page of copywork per day.
3. Have your child do copywork in the morning and again in the afternoon. If your child is doing copywork three days a week, this would be one page in the morning and one page in the afternoon twice a week, with only one page of copywork on the last lesson day of the week. If your child is doing copywork five days per week, this would only be half a page at each sitting.

Narrations

Narrations occur every two weeks throughout both levels. Once the child is comfortable with narrating, you can include narration exercises from history and science reading as well. Each level includes ninety of Aesop's fables that could also be used for additional narration practice if desired.

Level 1 begins with picture narrations. After the instructor reads the fable, the child is asked to draw a picture of the story and then tell his instructor about the picture. During the second half of the year, he will begin standard narrations.

The standard narrations at the end of Level 1 and throughout Level 2 start with the shortest Aesop's fables and gradually increase in length. The procedure for doing the narrations is quite simple: After the instructor reads the fable, the child tells the story back to his instructor in his own words while the instructor writes the story down for the child. Remember that the child is learning a brand new skill and may not understand exactly what is expected of him. Prompting him with

questions helps. Ask questions such as, “What happened first?” and, “Then what happened?” Help him get the details of the story in the proper order. Since the instructor is doing the writing for the child, the child has no need to worry about spelling or punctuation. At this stage, I correct nothing more than grammatical errors and, occasionally, a detail from the story.

In Level 2, part of the narration will be printed or written for the child to use as copywork for that day.

Approached this way, narrations follow a logical progression. Narrations first start with something the child is probably already doing: drawing pictures and explaining them. Next the child begins telling the story without the picture, though he may certainly draw a picture to illustrate his narration. Then, he begins copying his own words. Finally, he will begin writing the story down himself without orally narrating it first. This final stage is not covered in this book.

Memory Work

Both levels include lists to memorize, and Level 2 includes many definitions to memorize as well. In Level 1, the lists to learn are included in the lessons with instructions for memorization, and reviews are included in the lessons as well. However, poetry and Bible verses are not included in the lessons for memorization. In Level 2, grammatical concepts and lists are introduced in the lessons, but should be memorized separately. Grammar memory work is included in Appendix A for quick and easy review.

I recommend a memory card system for Bible and poetry.

I do not specify which poems to memorize. My suggestion is to begin memorizing the first poem of the level. When that is memorized, choose one of the poems that the child particularly liked from the preceding lessons, or one that you feel is particularly important, and begin memorizing it. Continue in this fashion throughout the year. There are 108 poems in each level, giving everyone a good selection from which to choose. For Christians, there is a Bible verse to be used as copywork every two weeks beginning in Lesson 38 of Level 1. I advise memorizing these verses unless you already have memory verses from church or a Bible study program.

We use 5 x 8 index cards because there are binders available to hold them, but smaller index cards work just as well. Have dividers for three sections: Current, Short Term Review, and Long Term Review. One side of the card should have the title of the card (i.e. John 3:16, Definition of a Noun, Clouds by Christina Rossetti, etc.). The reverse has the memory work.

Cards in the Current section should be read three times a day until the passage has been memorized. The card can then move to the Short Term Review section, and that section can be reviewed once a week. Once the child has successfully recited a card several weeks in a row, it can go into the Long Term Review section for review once a month. You can also color code the cards by subject or topic.

Picture Study

All pictures of paintings in this book are, of necessity, black and white. I highly recommend searching online for color copies of the art to view online or print for studying. Color copies of the paintings are included in the optional workbook file for convenience.

Optional Workbook

The suggested exercises and copywork are included in this book, so the workbook is truly optional. The benefits of purchasing the workbook are:

1. The workbook is a file that may be printed out for all the children in your family. It may not be resold.
2. The copywork is already typed in a handwriting font so that you don't have to type or write it for the child to copy. There are several popular handwriting styles from which to choose, and you get them all because you shouldn't have to buy a new workbook if you change handwriting styles with the next child.

Color copies of the artwork are available as a free download. Very light black and white copies of the artwork are included as coloring pages.

Level 1 Literature List

All the literature selections suggested herein are in the public domain in the United States of America and are probably available at your local library. The complete texts can also be found online from Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) and/or the Baldwin Project (www.mainlesson.com). Most are available as audio books, and free audio book versions may be found online from LibriVox (www.librivox.org).

Beatrix Potter Stories

The twenty Beatrix Potter stories do not follow the order of any particular published edition of her work.

Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling

One of the stories, “How the Leopard Got His Spots,” contains a racial slur near the end. Please pre-read to determine the best way to deal with this for your family.

Five Children and It by Edith Nesbit

The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling

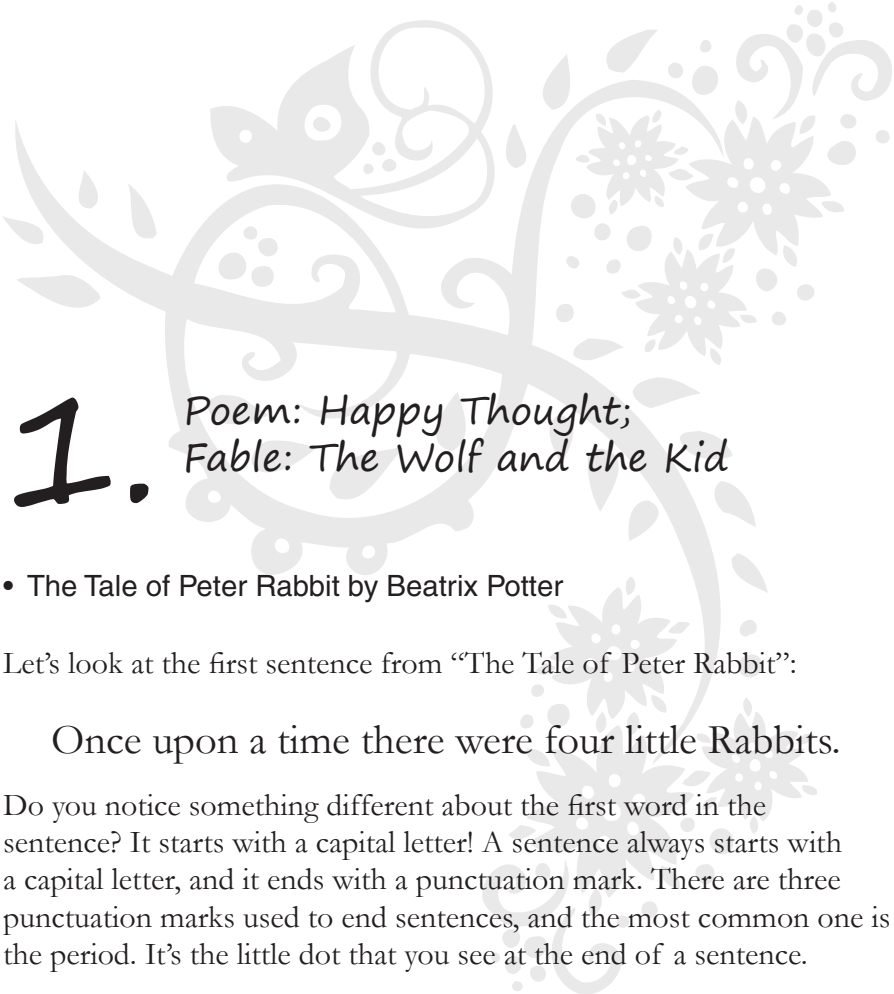
Pinocchio by C. Collodi

The Orange Fairy Book by Andrew Lang (seven stories)

The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams

Five Little Peppers and How They Grew by Margaret Sidney

All the Aesop’s fables in Level 1 are from *The Aesop for Children* by Milo Winter.



1.

Poem: *Happy Thought*;
Fable: *The Wolf and the Kid*

- The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter

Let's look at the first sentence from "The Tale of Peter Rabbit":

Once upon a time there were four little Rabbits.

Do you notice something different about the first word in the sentence? It starts with a capital letter! A sentence always starts with a capital letter, and it ends with a punctuation mark. There are three punctuation marks used to end sentences, and the most common one is the period. It's the little dot that you see at the end of a sentence.

Today you will begin copywork. That means you will copy a sentence from today's story, "The Tale of Peter Rabbit." When you copy your sentence, be sure to start it with a capital letter and end it with a period.

Happy Thought

by Robert Louis Stevenson

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

The Wolf and the Kid

An Aesop's Fable

There was once a little Kid whose growing horns made him think he was a grown-up Billy Goat and able to take care of himself. So one evening when the flock started home from the pasture and his mother called, the Kid paid no heed and kept right on nibbling the tender grass. A little later when he lifted his head, the flock was gone.

He was all alone. The sun was sinking. Long shadows came creeping over the ground. A chilly little wind came creeping with them making scary noises in the grass. The Kid shivered as he thought of the terrible Wolf. Then he started wildly over the field, bleating for his mother. But not half-way, near a clump of trees, there was the Wolf!

The Kid knew there was little hope for him.

“Please, Mr. Wolf,” he said trembling, “I know you are going to eat me. But first please pipe me a tune, for I want to dance and be merry as long as I can.”

The Wolf liked the idea of a little music before eating, so he struck up a merry tune and the Kid leaped and frisked gaily.

Meanwhile, the flock was moving slowly homeward. In the still evening air the Wolf's piping carried far. The Shepherd Dogs pricked up their ears. They recognized the song the Wolf sings before a feast, and in a moment they were racing back to the pasture. The Wolf's song ended suddenly, and as he ran, with the Dogs at his heels, he called himself a fool for turning piper to please a Kid, when he should have stuck to his butcher's trade.

Do not let anything turn you from your purpose.

Copywork

Literature

Peter sat down to rest.

2.

Poem: *What is Pink?*;
Fable: *The Tortoise and
the Ducks*

- The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin by Beatrix Potter

When you do your copywork today, remember to begin your sentence with a capital letter. Do you remember what the little dot at the end of the sentence is called? It's a punctuation mark, and it's called a period.

What is Pink?

by Christina Rossetti

What is pink? a rose is pink
By the fountain's brink.
What is red? a poppy's red
In its barley bed.
What is blue? the sky is blue
Where the clouds float thro'.
What is white? a swan is white
Sailing in the light.
What is yellow? pears are yellow,
Rich and ripe and mellow.
What is green? the grass is green,
With small flowers between.
What is violet? clouds are violet
In the summer twilight.
What is orange? why, an orange,
Just an orange!

The Tortoise and the Ducks

An Aesop's Fable

The Tortoise, you know, carries his house on his back. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot leave home. They say that Jupiter punished him so, because he was such a lazy stay-at-home that he would not go to Jupiter's wedding, even when especially invited.

After many years, Tortoise began to wish he had gone to that wedding. When he saw how gaily the birds flew about and how the Hare and the Chipmunk and all the other animals ran nimbly by, always eager to see everything there was to be seen, the Tortoise felt very sad and discontented. He wanted to see the world too, and there he was with a house on his back and little short legs that could hardly drag him along.

One day he met a pair of Ducks and told them all his trouble.

"We can help you to see the world," said the Ducks. "Take hold of this stick with your teeth and we will carry you far up in the air where you can see the whole countryside. But keep quiet or you will be sorry."

The Tortoise was very glad indeed. He seized the stick firmly with his teeth, the two Ducks took hold of it one at each end, and away they sailed up toward the clouds.

Just then a Crow flew by. He was very much astonished at the strange sight and cried:

"This must surely be the King of Tortoises!"

"Why certainly——" began the Tortoise.

But as he opened his mouth to say these foolish words he lost his hold on the stick, and down he fell to the ground, where he was dashed to pieces on a rock.

Foolish curiosity and vanity often lead to misfortune.

Copywork

Literature

Now this riddle is as old as the hills.



Apple-Picking by Camille Pissarro

Picture Study

1. Read the title and the name of the artist. Study the picture for several minutes, then put the picture away.
2. Describe the picture.
3. Look at the picture again. Do you notice any details that you missed before? What do you like or dislike about this painting? Does it remind you of anything?

3. *Poem: The Moon;* *Picture Study: Apple-Picking*

- The Tailor of Gloucester by Beatrix Potter

What kind of letter do we use to begin a sentence? What punctuation mark have we been using so far to end a sentence?

Did you remember? A sentence begins with a capital letter, and you've been ending sentences with period. Look at today's copywork sentence and point out the capital letter and the period:

The tailor worked and worked.

The Moon

by Robert Louis Stevenson

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall;
She shines on thieves on the garden wall,
On streets and fields and harbour quays,
And birdies asleep in the forks of the trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse,
The howling dog by the door of the house,
The bat that lies in bed at noon,
All love to be out by the light of the moon.



But all of the things that belong to the day
Cuddle to sleep to be out of her way;
And flowers and children close their eyes
Till up in the morning the sun shall arise.

Copywork

Literature

The tailor worked and worked.

4.

Poem: *The Kind Moon*;
Fable: *The Dog, the Cock,
and the Fox*

- The Tale of Benjamin Bunny by Beatrix Potter

You've learned that we use a capital letter to begin a sentence. We also use capital letters when we write someone's name. Look at the names in these sentences from "The Tale of Benjamin Bunny":

A gig was coming along the road. It was driven by Mr. McGregor, and beside him sat Mrs. McGregor in her best bonnet.

Mr. stands for **mister**, and it's a title of respect for a man. **Mrs.**, which we pronounce **missus**, stands for **mistress**, and it's a title of respect for a married lady. We use titles of respect to be polite. Since a title of respect is part of someone's name, we begin it with a capital letter. Notice that each title of respect also has a period at the end.

The Kind Moon

by Sara Teasdale

I think the moon is very kind
To take such trouble just for me.
He came along with me from home
To keep me company.

He went as fast as I could run;
I wonder how he crossed the sky?
I'm sure he hasn't legs and feet
Or any wings to fly.

Yet here he is above their roof;
Perhaps he thinks it isn't right
For me to go so far alone,
Though mother said I might.

The Dog, The Cock, and the Fox

An Aesop's Fable

A Dog and a Cock, who were the best of friends, wished very much to see something of the world. So they decided to leave the farmyard and to set out into the world along the road that led to the woods. The two comrades traveled along in the very best of spirits and without meeting any adventure to speak of.

At nightfall the Cock, looking for a place to roost, as was his custom, spied nearby a hollow tree that he thought would do very nicely for a night's lodging. The Dog could creep inside and the Cock would fly up on one of the branches. So said, so done, and both slept very comfortably.

With the first glimmer of dawn the Cock awoke. For the moment he forgot just where he was. He thought he was still in the farmyard where it had been his duty to arouse the household at daybreak.

So standing on tip-toes he flapped his wings and crowed lustily. But instead of awakening the farmer, he awakened a Fox not far off in the wood. The Fox immediately had rosy visions of a very delicious breakfast. Hurrying to the tree where the Cock was roosting, he said very politely:

“A hearty welcome to our woods, honored sir. I cannot tell you how glad I am to see you here. I am quite sure we shall become the closest of friends.”

“I feel highly flattered, kind sir,” replied the Cock slyly. “If you will please go around to the door of my house at the foot of the tree, my porter will let you in.”

The hungry but unsuspecting Fox, went around the tree as he was told, and in a twinkling the Dog had seized him.

Those who try to deceive may expect to be paid in their own coin.

Copywork

Literature

Old Mr. Bunny had no opinion whatever of cats.

5.

Poem: *A Bird Came Down the Walk*; Fable: *The Ass and His Driver*

- The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-winkle by Beatrix Potter

Today your story was about Mrs. Tiggy-winkle and a little girl named Lucie. Do you remember what **Mrs.** means? It's a title of respect for a married lady. We capitalize it because it is part of someone's name, and we always begin names with a capital letter.

Do you know all of your names? Most people have three names: a first name, a middle name, and a last name. The last name is also called a family name because we share that name with members of our family. What are your first, middle, and last names?

Do you know what Mrs. Tiggy-winkle's husband's name would be? Mr. Tiggy-winkle!

A Bird Came Down the Walk

by Emily Dickinson

A bird came down the walk:
He did not know I saw;
He bit an angle-worm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw.

And then he drank a dew
From a convenient grass,

And then hopped sidewise to the wall
To let a beetle pass.

He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all abroad,—
They looked like frightened beads, I thought;
He stirred his velvet head

Like one in danger; cautious,
I offered him a crumb,
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home
Than oars divide the ocean,
Too silver for a seam,
Or butterflies, off banks of noon,
Leap, splashless, as they swim.

The Ass and His Driver

An Aesop's Fable

An Ass was being driven along a road leading down the mountain side, when he suddenly took it into his silly head to choose his own path. He could see his stall at the foot of the mountain, and to him the quickest way down seemed to be over the edge of the nearest cliff. Just as he was about to leap over, his master caught him by the tail and tried to pull him back, but the stubborn Ass would not yield and pulled with all his might.

“Very well,” said his master, “go your way, you willful beast, and see where it leads you.”


With that he let go, and the foolish Ass tumbled head over heels down the mountain side.

They who will not listen to reason but stubbornly go their own way against the friendly advice of those who are wiser than they, are on the road to misfortune.

Copywork

Literature

Then Mrs. Tiggy-winkle made tea.



6. *Poem: Seal Lullaby; Picture Narration: The Frogs and the Ox*

- The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher by Beatrix Potter

The Frogs and the Ox

An Aesop's Fable

An Ox came down to a reedy pool to drink. As he splashed heavily into the water, he crushed a young Frog into the mud. The old Frog soon missed the little one and asked his brothers and sisters what had become of him.

“A great big monster,” said one of them, “stepped on little brother with one of his huge feet!”

“Big, was he!” said the old Frog, puffing herself up. “Was he as big as this?”

“Oh, much bigger!” they cried.

The Frog puffed up still more.

“He could not have been bigger than this,” she said. But the little Frogs all declared that the monster was much, much bigger and the old Frog kept puffing herself out more and more until, all at once, she burst.

Do not attempt the impossible.

Seal Lullaby

by Rudyard Kipling

Oh, hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green,
The moon o'er the combers, looks downward to find us
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.
Where billow meets billow, there soft be thy pillow;
Ah, weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow-swinging seas.

Copywork

Literature

But Mr. Jeremy liked getting his feet wet.

Picture Narration

Draw a picture of the Aesop's fable from today. Show your picture to your instructor and tell her about it.



Level
Two

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Introduction

After more than seven years of homeschooling, I've come to a conclusion: While I often regret the purchase of curricula, I rarely regret the purchase of quality books.

It may seem ironic, then, that I've chosen to write a grammar curriculum for young children. I believe absolutely in copywork, narration, and dictation for instilling values, promoting memorization, and teaching spelling and writing. Yet, in the early years I relied on grammar texts for young children that taught using sentences manufactured for the sole purpose of demonstrating grammatical concepts.

The real irony lies in focusing on quality literature in every area *except* the teaching of the grammar and mechanics of the English language. While I believe the best way to teach grammar and mechanics is through literature and that no curriculum is needed for this, I also believe the easiest way to do this is through a series of lessons based on literature that can be repeated with each child. So here we are.

The reasoning behind manufactured sentences is often that in using real sentences from literature, children will encounter advanced concepts which they have not yet learned. However, once upon a time, every elementary student was a toddler just learning to speak. He sometimes confused “my” and “me,” he might have formed plurals incorrectly, and he made any number of other grammatical errors. A great many of us found these errors very cute, even while we corrected them. What we didn't do was simplify our speech to the child's level of understanding, knowing that he would learn best by exposure to correctly spoken language.

And so it is with teaching grammar and mechanics. When I first began narration with my oldest son, we used an old retelling of Aesop with its more difficult syntax and vocabulary rather than using a modern, simplified retelling of Aesop. I followed this pattern with my second son in his turn. Instead of being confused, both of my sons amazed me by incorporating those advanced concepts into their narrations.

Children learn by imitating. It is up to us to insure what they come into contact with is worthy of imitation.

Schedule and Readiness

This book was previously published as *Language Lessons Through Literature*.

Both levels of this program are intended as three-day-per-week lessons over thirty-six weeks, for a total of 108 lessons per year. Each lesson includes a literature selection to be read aloud, a poem, and either an Aesop's fable or a picture study.

Level 1 is intended for a first grade child who is ready for copywork and is beginning to read fluently. Level 2 is intended for a second grade child or for older children in need of remediation. Completion of Level 1 is not a prerequisite for Level 2.

Purpose and Necessary Resources

Level 1 is an intentionally light program. First grade should be a time for getting children comfortable with reading and handwriting. Most young children are simply not ready for more advanced grammar, and the grammar for which they are ready can be taught very quickly when they are just a little older. Although children can begin learning the parts of speech in the first grade, the simple fact is that one can take two years beginning in first grade to teach the parts of speech, or one can take one year beginning in second grade to teach the parts of speech. It's simply more efficient to wait until the child is truly ready, and it leaves more time to focus on reading and handwriting during first grade. An advanced child—one who was reading and writing comfortably in Kindergarten—might be best served by skipping Level 1 and going straight into Level 2, or by using Level 1 in Kindergarten.

The focus of Level 1 is to begin teaching usage and mechanics of the English language through copywork. Although I have written lessons for many (but not all) of the Level 1 lessons, the real lessons are truly the copywork selections. It is in copywork that children will learn and internalize proper spelling, capitalization, and punctuation while practicing handwriting. The lessons that I've written for Level 1 merely point out and reinforce concepts to the child before he begins his copywork. Children are introduced to punctuation marks, quotations, and contractions; they then practice writing them.

In Level 2, the child learns the parts of speech as well as lists of helping verbs, prepositions, etc. Examples and exercises consist of

a sentence or passage from the literature or from a poem. In the exercises, the child takes what he has learned from the lesson and demonstrates understanding. The repetition necessary for mastery comes from constant review in the exercises, not from long exercises.

I have occasionally simplified or modified sentences to avoid confusion, but I have tried to keep this to a minimum. Particularly in Level 1, some sentences have been shortened to make them a more appropriate length for copywork. Since all of the literature selections are old, and many are British, spelling and punctuation have been modified as necessary.

The literature selections in this book are intended to be read aloud to the child; this program does not cover reading instruction. In addition, spelling is not taught explicitly, so a formal spelling program, if desired, should be supplied separately.

Literature Selections

The literature suggested in this book is in the public domain in the United States and the full text of each story and book can be found online. Most are also available as audio books. A complete reading list appears at the beginning of each level.

Since most of the examples and part of the daily copywork come directly from the literature, reading the literature is an important component of this program. However, there is certainly room to skip books that the child does not like. Fairy tales may be disturbing to some children, and it is up to the parents to determine whether or not a recommended resource is right for their family. My homeschooling motto has long been, “Use the curriculum; don’t let the curriculum use you.” I recommend the motto more highly than I recommend any of the literature selections in this book.

I do recommend reading the literature prior to the lesson. The examples and the copywork almost always come from the reading selection from that day.

Copywork

This book contains a great deal of copywork. From the middle of Level 1 through Level 2, most weeks have five pages of copywork

consisting of one to four lines per page for each week: three pages from the literature selection, one from the poetry selection, and one containing a maxim or Bible verse. This amount of copywork would have made my oldest son cry. My second son wanted more copywork than this. If you find this is too much copywork for your child, there are several options:

1. Skip part of the copywork. Decide which portions of the copywork are most important to your goals, and have your child do only those.
2. If you'd rather have your child do all of the copywork, have the child do the copywork portions five days a week instead of three. This would be one page of copywork per day.
3. Have your child do copywork in the morning and again in the afternoon. If your child is doing copywork three days a week, this would be one page in the morning and one page in the afternoon twice a week, with only one page of copywork on the last lesson day of the week. If your child is doing copywork five days per week, this would only be half a page at each sitting.

Narrations

Narrations occur every two weeks throughout both levels. Once the child is comfortable with narrating, you can include narration exercises from history and science reading as well. Each level includes ninety of Aesop's fables that could also be used for additional narration practice if desired.

Level 1 begins with picture narrations. After the instructor reads the fable, the child is asked to draw a picture of the story and then tell his instructor about the picture. During the second half of the year, he will begin standard narrations.

The standard narrations at the end of Level 1 and throughout Level 2 start with the shortest Aesop's fables and gradually increase in length. The procedure for doing the narrations is quite simple: After the instructor reads the fable, the child tells the story back to his instructor in his own words while the instructor writes the story down for the child. Remember that the child is learning a brand new skill and may not understand exactly what is expected of him. Prompting him with

questions helps. Ask questions such as, “What happened first?” and, “Then what happened?” Help him get the details of the story in the proper order. Since the instructor is doing the writing for the child, the child has no need to worry about spelling or punctuation. At this stage, I correct nothing more than grammatical errors and, occasionally, a detail from the story.

In Level 2, part of the narration will be printed or written for the child to use as copywork for that day.

Approached this way, narrations follow a logical progression. Narrations first start with something the child is probably already doing: drawing pictures and explaining them. Next the child begins telling the story without the picture, though he may certainly draw a picture to illustrate his narration. Then, he begins copying his own words. Finally, he will begin writing the story down himself without orally narrating it first. This final stage is not covered in this book.

Memory Work

Both levels include lists to memorize, and Level 2 includes many definitions to memorize as well. In Level 1, the lists to learn are included in the lessons with instructions for memorization, and reviews are included in the lessons as well. However, poetry and Bible verses are not included in the lessons for memorization. In Level 2, grammatical concepts and lists are introduced in the lessons, but should be memorized separately. Grammar memory work is included in Appendix A for quick and easy review.

I recommend a memory card system for Bible and poetry.

I do not specify which poems to memorize. My suggestion is to begin memorizing the first poem of the level. When that is memorized, choose one of the poems that the child particularly liked from the preceding lessons, or one that you feel is particularly important, and begin memorizing it. Continue in this fashion throughout the year. There are 108 poems in each level, giving everyone a good selection from which to choose. For Christians, there is a Bible verse to be used as copywork every two weeks beginning in Lesson 38 of Level 1. I advise memorizing these verses unless you already have memory verses from church or a Bible study program.

We use 5 x 8 index cards because there are binders available to hold them, but smaller index cards work just as well. Have dividers for three sections: Current, Short Term Review, and Long Term Review. One side of the card should have the title of the card (i.e. John 3:16, Definition of a Noun, Clouds by Christina Rossetti, etc.). The reverse has the memory work.

Cards in the Current section should be read three times a day until the passage has been memorized. The card can then move to the Short Term Review section, and that section can be reviewed once a week. Once the child has successfully recited a card several weeks in a row, it can go into the Long Term Review section for review once a month. You can also color code the cards by subject or topic.

Picture Study

All pictures of paintings in this book are, of necessity, black and white. I highly recommend searching online for color copies of the art to view online or print for studying. Color copies of the paintings are included in the optional workbook file for convenience.

Optional Workbook

The suggested exercises and copywork are included in this book, so the workbook is truly optional. The benefits of purchasing the workbook are:

1. The workbook is a file that may be printed out for all the children in your family. It may not be resold.
2. The copywork is already typed in a handwriting font so that you don't have to type or write it for the child to copy. There are several popular handwriting styles from which to choose, and you get them all because you shouldn't have to buy a new workbook if you change handwriting styles with the next child.

Color copies of the artwork are available as a free download. Very light black and white copies of the artwork are included as coloring pages.

Level 2 Literature List

All the literature selections suggested herein are in the public domain in the United States of America and are probably available at your local library. The complete texts can also be found online from Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) and/or the Baldwin Project (www.mainlesson.com). Most are available as audio books, and free audio book versions may be found online from LibriVox (www.librivox.org).

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum

The Blue Fairy Book by Andrew Lang (13 stories)

Peter Pan by J. M. Barrie

The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There
by Lewis Carroll

A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys by Nathaniel Hawthorne

The Aesop's fables in Level 2 are from *The Aesop for Children* illustrated by Milo Winter and *Aesop's Fables* by J. H. Stickney.



1. Definition: Noun: Person

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Chapter 1

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Everybody and everything has a name. We call those words nouns. A noun is the name a person, place, thing, or idea. We're going to start by looking at the first part of that definition: A noun is the name of a person.

You are a person. Are you a boy or a girl? **Boy** and **girl** are both nouns because they are names for people.

In your family, there are many kinds of people. You might have a **mother**, a **father**, a **grandmother**, and a **grandfather**. These words are all nouns that name people. Can you think of other nouns that name people in your family?

In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy is a little girl who lives with her aunt and uncle. Names for people are nouns. Since **Dorothy**, **girl**, **aunt**, and **uncle** are all names for people, they are all nouns. In the following sentence from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the names for people are underlined:

Dorothy lived in the midst of the great Kansas prairies, with Uncle Henry, who was a farmer, and Aunt Em, who was the farmer's wife.

Clouds

by Christina Rossetti

White sheep, white sheep,
On a blue hill,
When the wind stops
You all stand still;
When the wind blows
You walk away slow,
White sheep, white sheep,
Where do you go?

Your first poem is called “Clouds” by Christina Rossetti. To what does she compare the clouds? What is the blue hill?

Mercury and the Woodman

An Aesop’s Fable

A poor Woodman was cutting down a tree near the edge of a deep pool in the forest. It was late in the day and the Woodman was tired. He had been working since sunrise and his strokes were not so sure as they had been early that morning. Thus it happened that the axe slipped and flew out of his hands into the pool.

The Woodman was in despair. The axe was all he possessed with which to make a living, and he had not money enough to buy a new one. As he stood wringing his hands and weeping, the god Mercury suddenly appeared and asked what the trouble was. The Woodman told what had happened, and straightway the kind Mercury dived into the pool. When he came up again he held a wonderful golden axe.

“Is this your axe?” Mercury asked the Woodman.

“No,” answered the honest Woodman, “that is not my axe.”

Mercury laid the golden axe on the bank and sprang back into the pool. This time he brought up an axe of silver, but the Woodman declared again that his axe was just an ordinary one with a wooden handle.

Mercury dived down for the third time, and when he came up again he had the very axe that had been lost.

The poor Woodman was very glad that his axe had been found and could not thank the kind god enough. Mercury was greatly pleased with the Woodman's honesty.

"I admire your honesty," he said, "and as a reward you may have all three axes, the gold and the silver as well as your own."

The happy Woodman returned to his home with his treasures, and soon the story of his good fortune was known to everybody in the village. Now there were several Woodmen in the village who believed that they could easily win the same good fortune. They hurried out into the woods, one here, one there, and hiding their axes in the bushes, pretended they had lost them. Then they wept and wailed and called on Mercury to help them.

And indeed, Mercury did appear, first to this one, then to that. To each one he showed an axe of gold, and each one eagerly claimed it to be the one he had lost. But Mercury did not give them the golden axe. Oh no! Instead he gave them each a hard whack over the head with it and sent them home. And when they returned next day to look for their own axes, they were nowhere to be found.

Honesty is the best policy.

Exercise

In your workbook, underline the nouns that name people from this passage:

Suddenly Uncle Henry stood up.

"There's a cyclone coming, Em," he called to his wife.

[Note to instructor: Some children may recognize "he" and "his" as words naming people. This is a good thing! It means that the child firmly grasped the lesson on words that name people. If your child does, you can point out that these are special words called pronouns, and we'll begin discussing pronouns in Lesson 16.]

Copywork

Literature

“There’s a cyclone coming, Em,” he called to his wife.

Poetry—Clouds

White sheep, white sheep,
On a blue hill,
When the wind stops
You all stand still;



2. Common and Proper Nouns

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Chapter 2

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Think of the different people you have met. You know men and women, boys and girls. **Men, women, boys, and girls** are all nouns because these words name people. Besides your family, you might know a doctor whom you see when you are sick and a librarian who helps you find books. **Doctor** and **librarian** are both nouns because these words name people, too. Can you think of some other nouns that name people?

Dorothy is a little girl. **Girl** is a common noun. A common noun is a noun that can be common to many people. Dorothy is a little girl, but so are many other people. But Dorothy also has a special name all her own: Dorothy! **Dorothy** is a proper noun. When we talk about Dorothy, we're not talking about just any little girl, but one special little girl. When we write someone's special, proper name, we begin it with a capital letter.

Look at this sentence from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* again:

Dorothy lived in the midst of the great Kansas prairies, with Uncle Henry, who was a farmer, and Aunt Em, who was the farmer's wife.

Dorothy lived with Uncle Henry and Aunt Em. **Dorothy**, **Uncle Henry**, and **Aunt Em** are proper nouns because they name specific people. Uncle Henry is a farmer. **Farmer** is a common noun because there are many farmers. Aunt Em is Uncle Henry's wife. **Wife** is also a common noun because many women are also wives.

What is your special, proper name? What are the special, proper names for the people in your family?

Whole Duty of Children

by Robert Louis Stevenson

A child should always say what's true,
And speak when he is spoken to,
And behave mannerly at table:
At least as far as he is able.

The Cock and the Jewel

An Aesop's Fable

A Cock was busily scratching and scraping about to find something to eat for himself and his family, when he happened to turn up a precious jewel that had been lost by its owner.

"Aha!" said the Cock. "No doubt you are very costly and he who lost you would give a great deal to find you. But as for me, I would choose a single grain of barleycorn before all the jewels in the world."

Precious things are without value to those who cannot prize them.

Exercise

In your workbook, underline the nouns that name people from this passage:

“Who is Aunt Em?” inquired the little old woman.

“She is my aunt who lives in Kansas, where I came from.”

Which nouns are common, and which nouns are proper?

Copywork

Literature

“Who is Aunt Em?” inquired the little old woman.

Bible—Romans 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



A Shepherdess and Her Flock by Jean-Francois Millet

Picture Study

1. Read the title and the name of the artist. Study the picture for several minutes, then put the picture away.
2. Describe the picture.
3. Look at the picture again. Do you notice any details that you missed before? What do you like or dislike about this painting? Does it remind you of anything?

3.

*Noun: Place;
Picture Study: A Shepherdess
and Her Flock*

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Chapter 3

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Nouns are the names for more than just people. The names of places are also nouns.

Do you like to go to the park or the zoo? Do you ever go to the store? **Park**, **zoo**, and **store** are all nouns that name places. These words are all common nouns because there are many parks, zoos, and stores. Each park, zoo, and store can also have its own special, proper name as well.

Think of some other places you like to go, or places you would like to go. Would you like to go see an ocean? **Ocean** is a common noun, but **Atlantic Ocean** is a proper noun because it is the special, proper name of a specific ocean. Would you like to go to a mountain? **Mountain** is a common noun, but **Rocky Mountains** is a proper noun because it is the name for a specific chain of mountains. Would you like to go see a canyon? **Canyon** is a common noun, but **Grand Canyon** is a proper noun because it is the name of a specific canyon. Remember that proper nouns always begin with a capital letter.

Dorothy lived on a farm. **Farm** is a noun, too, because it is the name of a place. Is **farm** a common noun or a proper noun?

Think of some more places. Which names are common nouns and which names are proper nouns?

Faults

by Sara Teasdale

They came to tell your faults to me,
They named them over one by one,
I laughed aloud when they were done;
I knew them all so well before, -
Oh they were blind, too blind to see
Your faults had made me love you more.

Exercise

In your workbook, underline all of the nouns that name people and places from this passage:

“Come along, Toto,” she said. “We will go to the Emerald City and ask the Great Oz how to get back to Kansas again.”

Which nouns are common and which are proper?

Copywork

Literature

“We will go to the Emerald City and ask the Great Oz how to get back to Kansas again.”



4. *Noun: Place*

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Chapter 4

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Where do you live? Do you live in a town or a city? **Town** and **city** are names for places. They are common nouns because there are many towns and cities. Each town and city also has its own special, proper name, just like each child has his own special, proper name. What is the name of the town or city in which you live?

Your town or city is in a state, and the states are all in a country. **State** and **country** are common nouns; there are many states and countries. Our country is called the United States of America. **United States of America** is a proper noun since it's our country's special, proper name. There are fifty states in our country, and each has its own special, proper name, too.

Because they are proper nouns, the names of towns, cities, countries, and states always begin with capital letters.

In which state do you live? Were you born in that state, or were you born in another state?

In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy lived in the state named Kansas. Kansas is a proper noun. It's not the name of just any state, but of one particular state. Dorothy is traveling to the Emerald City. Is Emerald City a proper noun or a common noun?

Can you think of other names for places?

Piping Down the Valleys Wild

by William Blake

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
'Piper, pipe that song again.'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!'
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.'
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

The Fox and the Pheasants

An Aesop's Fable

One moonlight evening as Master Fox was taking his usual stroll in the woods, he saw a number of Pheasants perched quite out of his reach on a limb of a tall old tree. The sly Fox soon found a bright patch of moonlight, where the Pheasants could see him clearly; there he raised himself up on his hind legs, and began a wild dance. First he whirled 'round and 'round like a top, then he hopped up and down, cutting all sorts of strange capers. The Pheasants stared giddily. They hardly dared blink for fear of losing him out of their sight a single instant.

Now the Fox made as if to climb a tree, now he fell over and lay still, playing dead, and the next instant he was hopping on all fours, his back in the air, and his bushy tail shaking so that it seemed to throw out silver sparks in the moonlight.

By this time the poor birds' heads were in a whirl. And when the Fox began his performance all over again, so dazed did they become, that they lost their hold on the limb, and fell down one by one to the Fox.

Too much attention to danger may cause us to fall victims to it.

Exercise

In your workbook, underline all of the nouns that name people and places from this passage:

So she told him all about Kansas, and how gray everything was there, and how the cyclone had carried her to this queer Land of Oz.

Which nouns are common and which are proper?

Copywork

Literature

So she told him all about Kansas and how the cyclone had carried her to this queer Land of Oz.

Poetry— Clouds

When the wind blows
You walk away slow,
White sheep, white sheep,
Where do you go?

5.

Noun: Thing

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Chapter 5

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

So far, you've learned about nouns that name people and nouns that name places. Today, we're going to talk about nouns that name things.

Everything has a name, and those names are nouns. Look around the room you are in and name some of the things you see. Is there a **table**, a **couch**, a **bookshelf**? All of these words are common nouns.

Things can also have proper names. We've been reading a book. **Book** is a common noun that doesn't refer to any one, specific book. The book we've been reading is entitled *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. The title of a book is a special, proper name.

Your toys are all things. The word **toys** is a common noun because it can refer to many different things. Do any of your toys have a special, proper name?

When we talk about things, this can also include living things like plants and animals. Dorothy has a pet dog. **Dog** is a common noun, and the proper name of Dorothy's dog is Toto!

What about the Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman? Are they people or living things? L. Frank Baum, the man who wrote this story, used nouns that are usually common nouns as their proper names! There can be many scarecrows, but there is only one named Scarecrow who talks and is friends with Dorothy.

Rain

by Robert Louis Stevenson

The rain is raining all around,
It falls on field and tree,
It rains on the umbrellas here,
And on the ships at sea.

The Dog in the Manger

An Aesop's Fable

A Dog asleep in a manger filled with hay, was awakened by the Cattle, which came in tired and hungry from working in the field. But the Dog would not let them get near the manger, and snarled and snapped as if it were filled with the best of meat and bones, all for himself.

The Cattle looked at the Dog in disgust. "How selfish he is!" said one. "He cannot eat the hay and yet he will not let us eat it who are so hungry for it!"

Now the farmer came in. When he saw how the Dog was acting, he seized a stick and drove him out of the stable with many a blow for his selfish behavior.

Do not grudge others what you cannot enjoy yourself.

Exercise

In your workbook, underline all of the nouns that name people, places, and things from this passage:

The Tin Woodman gave a sigh of satisfaction and lowered his axe, which he leaned against the tree.

Which nouns are common and which are proper?

Copywork

Literature

The Tin Woodman gave a sigh of satisfaction and lowered his axe, which he leaned against the tree.

Maxim

Think before you speak.

6.

Narration: The Young Crab and His Mother

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Chapter 6

In this lesson, there is another fable written long ago by a man named Aesop. A fable is a story with a moral. Do you know what a moral is? A moral teaches a lesson about how we should act.

Today, you're going to do a narration. Your instructor will read this fable to you, and you will tell the story back to her while she writes it down for you. Then your instructor will write part of it for you to use as copywork.

Like L. Frank Baum in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Aesop uses nouns that are normally common nouns as special, proper names. Notice how Mother Crab and the little Crab both start with capital letters.

The Young Crab and His Mother

An Aesop's Fable

"Why in the world do you walk sideways like that?" said a Mother Crab to her son. "You should always walk straight forward with your toes turned out."

"Show me how to walk, mother dear," answered the little Crab obediently, "I want to learn."

So the old Crab tried and tried to walk straight forward. But she could walk sideways only, like her son. And when she wanted to turn her toes out she tripped and fell on her nose.

Do not tell others how to act unless you can set a good example.

Over in the Meadow

by Olive Wadsworth

Over in the meadow,
In the sand in the sun
Lived an old mother toadie
And her little toadie one.
“Wink!” said the mother;
“I wink!” said the one,
So they winked and they blinked
In the sand in the sun.

Over in the meadow,
Where the stream runs blue
Lived an old mother fish
And her little fishes two.
“Swim!” said the mother;
“We swim!” said the two,
So they swam and they leaped
Where the stream runs blue.

Over in the meadow,
In a hole in a tree
Lived an old mother bluebird
And her little birdies three.
“Sing!” said the mother;
“We sing!” said the three,
So they sang and were glad
In a hole in the tree.

Over in the meadow,
In the reeds on the shore
Lived an old mother muskrat
And her little ratties four.

“Dive!” said the mother;
“We dive!” said the four,
So they dived and they burrowed
In the reeds on the shore.

Over in the meadow,
In a snug beehive
Lived a mother honey bee
And her little bees five.
“Buzz!” said the mother;
“We buzz!” said the five,
So they buzzed and they hummed
In the snug beehive.

Over in the meadow,
In a nest built of sticks
Lived a black mother crow
And her little crows six.
“Caw!” said the mother;
“We caw!” said the six,
So they cawed and they called
In their nest built of sticks.

Over in the meadow,
Where the grass is so even
Lived a gay mother cricket
And her little crickets seven.
“Chirp!” said the mother;
“We chirp!” said the seven,
So they chirped cheery notes
In the grass soft and even.

Over in the meadow,
By the old mossy gate
Lived a brown mother lizard
And her little lizards eight.
“Bask!” said the mother;
“We bask!” said the eight,
So they basked in the sun
On the old mossy gate.

Over in the meadow,
Where the quiet pools shine
Lived a green mother frog
And her little froggies nine.
“Croak!” said the mother;
“We croak!” said the nine,
So they croaked and they splashed
Where the quiet pools shine.

Over in the meadow,
In a sly little den
Lived a gray mother spider
And her little spiders ten.
“Spin!” said the mother;
“We spin!” said the ten,
So they spun lacy webs
In their sly little den.

Copywork

Narration

Instructor: Write or print part of today’s narration to use as copywork.



Level
Three

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Introduction

After more than seven years of homeschooling, I've come to a conclusion: While I often regret the purchase of curricula, I rarely regret the purchase of quality books.

It may seem ironic, then, that I've chosen to write a grammar curriculum for young children. I believe absolutely in copywork, narration, and dictation for instilling values, promoting memorization, and teaching spelling and writing. Yet, in the early years I relied on grammar texts for young children that taught using sentences manufactured for the sole purpose of demonstrating grammatical concepts.

The real irony lies in focusing on quality literature in every area except the teaching of the grammar and mechanics of the English language. While I believe the best way to teach grammar and mechanics is through literature and that no curriculum is needed for this, I also believe the easiest way to do this is through a series of lessons based on literature that can be repeated with each child. So here we are.

The reasoning behind manufactured sentences is often that in using real sentences from literature, children will encounter advanced concepts which they have not yet learned. However, once upon a time, every elementary student was a toddler just learning to speak. He sometimes confused “my” and “me,” he might have formed plurals incorrectly, and he made any number of other grammatical errors. A great many of us found these errors very cute, even while we corrected them. What we didn't do was simplify our speech to the child's level of understanding, knowing that he would learn best by exposure to correctly spoken language.

And so it is with teaching grammar and mechanics. When I first began narration with my oldest son, we used an old retelling of Aesop with its more difficult syntax and vocabulary rather than using a modern, simplified retelling of Aesop. I followed this pattern with my second son in his turn. Instead of being confused, both of my sons amazed me by incorporating those advanced concepts into their narrations.

Children learn by imitating. It is up to us to insure that what they come into contact with is worthy of imitation.

Schedule and Readiness

This book was previously published as *Language Lessons Through Literature*.

Level 3 has three lessons per week for thirty-six weeks. This is 108 lessons total. It is intended for a third or fourth grade student, but it would also work for older children in need of remediation. The parts of speech are reviewed, and new concepts, including diagramming, are introduced. Level 2 is not a prerequisite for Level 3.

The longer I homeschool, the more I believe in the “better late than early” philosophy of teaching young children. It’s often a fine line, though. On the one hand, things that take a long time to teach to younger children can be taught quickly to older children. On the other hand, some concepts are much easier for older children to learn because of the foundation laid in earlier years.

I aim for the middle ground. Some concepts simply must wait until the child is developmentally ready to cover them. Because of this, there is, by necessity, a great deal of repetition in elementary grammar books. A later start and a very light Level 1 minimize the repetition while laying the foundation for more advanced studies.

In our state, we are not required by law to do any standardized testing, so we are free to please ourselves regarding the time table for teaching grammar. I see no reason for a child to be memorizing grammatical concepts before he’s reading fluently. That means that we might not start Level 1 until second grade, Level 2 until third grade, etc. Alternatively, a second grader who has just learned to read fluently can skip Level 1 and go straight to Level 2, especially if one is required to do testing that includes grammar. The program can also be stretched out more by completing two levels over the course of three years with two lessons per week. It just depends upon your goals and your child’s readiness.

Move from Known to Unknown

It is best to transition children gently into doing new things. In writing, this means that first we talk, then we write. Oral exercises are included throughout this book to practice new concepts without the additional stress of having to write the answers. Children of this age can continue to give their narrations orally, then they can take the first sentence as dictation. See the section on dictation for instructions.

If typing lessons begin now, children will be ready to type their narrations by the beginning of next year.

Literature

The literature suggested in this book is in the public domain in the United States, and the full text of each story and book can be found online. Most are also available as audio books, and children who are reading well can read the book themselves rather than using the books as read-alouds.

I do recommend reading the literature prior to the lesson. The examples and the copywork almost always come from the reading selection from that day.

Since most of the examples and part of the daily copywork come directly from the literature, reading the literature is an important component of this program. However, there is certainly room to skip books that the child does not like, and it is up to the parents to determine whether or not a recommended resource is right for their family. My homeschooling motto has long been: Use the curriculum; don't let the curriculum use you. I recommend the motto more highly than I recommend any of the literature selections in this book.

Lessons and Exercises

I love using real sentences from real books for the lessons and exercises. They are far more interesting, which means children are far more likely to be engaged by the material. Copywork selections are only altered to change outdated punctuation and/or spelling when necessary. Lesson examples are often shortened—some of those old authors really knew how to write a paragraph into a sentence. I did have to simplify most of the sentences for diagramming. Children of this age can certainly pick out various forms of verbs from real sentences, but diagramming those same sentences is another matter entirely.

When I check over the exercises with my children, I do not do so with red pencil in hand. Instead, we look at the work together, and I point out mistakes which he then corrects. I believe working with real sentences, even modified ones, can be a little harder than manufactured sentences. But I also believe that there's more value in working through the exercises to discover the correct answers.

Copywork

This book contains a great deal of copywork. Young children, particularly boys, often struggle with fine motor control which makes handwriting a difficult, sometimes painful, experience. Children should not do more copywork than they can complete perfectly and neatly. If you find this is too much copywork for your child, there are several options:

1. Skip part of the copywork. Decide which portions of the copywork are most important to your goals, and have your child do only those.
2. If you'd rather have your child do all of the copywork, have him do the copywork portions five days a week instead of three.
3. Have your child do half the copywork in the morning and the other half in the afternoon.

Prepared Dictation

Like copywork, dictation is a form of studying grammar, spelling, and the mechanics of writing. However, dictation requires children to take a more active role and actually study and think about the material, as opposed to passively taking it in through copywork. For this reason, dictation should not begin until third or fourth grade, depending on readiness.

Dictation is for children who write easily. A child who is still struggling with reading or penmanship should just continue with copywork. However, children who type can type their dictations instead. This simplifies the process for children who hate writing.

In prepared dictation, children type or write a passage after studying it for five to ten minutes. Without this preparation, the exercise is not a teaching exercise; it is a test. In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason went further, describing dictation without preparation as “a fertile cause of bad spelling” (241).

I know that dictation can sound like a huge, time consuming exercise, especially with multiple children. It's not. We do prepared dictation twice a week, on the “off” days from grammar. Each of my boys

studies his exercise for about 10 minutes. He chooses, sometimes with my help, two or three words to analyze. A passage should not have more than three or four unknown words to be studied. He adds these to his Spelling Journal, writing each word with a space between the syllables, which helps him to analyze each word syllable by syllable. The Spelling Journal organizes words according to phonogram or spelling rule, and it is a free download on my site.

Dictations may be written or typed. My boys type their dictations. The spelling and grammar checks are turned off in our word processing program, and we increase the font size to 20+ points so that I can read over their shoulders. I read the exercises while each boy takes his turn at the keyboard. I stand behind them so that I can make sure they don't make any mistakes.

Level 3 includes two dictation exercises each week. One exercise is from the Aesop's fables, narration stories, poetry, or the child's own narration. The other is either a maxim or a Bible verse.

If you prefer, choose dictation exercises from history, science, or free reading. Begin with a single sentence. When the child is comfortable with that, try slightly longer passages.

Watch as the child writes to catch mistakes immediately. Mistakes imprint on a child's mind just as correctly written material does, and this confusion is difficult to correct, as some of us have found while using poor spelling programs which ask children still learning the basics to proofread something. In Home Education, Charlotte Mason writes:

Once the eye sees a misspelt word, that image remains; and if there is also the image of the word rightly spelt, we are perplexed as to which is which. Now we see why there could not be a more ingenious way of making bad spellers than 'dictation' as it is commonly taught. Every misspelt word is an image in the child's brain not to be obliterated by the right spelling. It becomes, therefore, the teacher's business to prevent false spelling, and, if an error has been made, to hide it away, as it were, so that the impression may not become fixed (242).

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book is a book for copying poetry, passages from literature, and other writings or information. A simple composition book can be used for this purpose; both Mead® and Roaring Spring produce primary composition books.

Each narration story has a commonplace book exercise, a passage from the story to copy. Space is provided in the optional workbook for copying the passage, but starting a commonplace book is also an option. My third son, who will be the first of my children to use this book, will be using a commonplace book for narration passages instead of the workbook pages because he wants a commonplace book like his brothers.

Children can also begin to add to the commonplace book from other reading: history, science, literature, or free reading. My children choose their own passages to copy, passages which speak to them in some way. For my oldest son, it's often something philosophical or political. For my second son, it's usually something funny.

Picture Study

Charlotte Mason recommended having the child look at the picture without interruption for several minutes, then putting the picture away and having the child describe the picture. It is, in essence, a picture narration. Afterwards, bring the picture back out and see if he notices anything else. This is not art criticism, though. It is learning to attend to detail and to form a love and appreciation for art.

Each artist is has six paintings studied with new paintings added every other week, so you have a full twelve weeks to enjoy each artist and to include additional activities if desired. For example, you could read a children's biography of the artist and view some of his additional works. More paintings can often be found at <http://www.wikipaintings.org/>, or just do an internet search for the artist's name.

All pictures of paintings in this book are, by necessity, black and white. Color copies of the paintings are provided on my site at no cost for your convenience. These can be printed so that you can display the picture for the two weeks between new paintings. In the past, we have also used the pictures as backgrounds on my computer. However,

my oldest son did tell me once that it was strange seeing a particular painting without the icons.

Memory Work

At the back of the book, there are pages that have all the definitions and lists to learn from this book to make it easy to learn and review the information. New material should be read three times every lesson day, or daily, until it is learned. Newly learned material should be reviewed regularly at first, perhaps once a week. Material that's been learned for longer time should be reviewed every month to six weeks, but if it stops being automatic, it goes back to the frequent review.

There are more than one hundred poems in this book. My suggestion is to select a poem, preferably one the child enjoys, and begin to memorize it. When he has memorized it, move on to a new one. If you want the decision made for you, then memorize the poetry used for copywork. The child can read it straight off his copywork page to memorize it, and then he can keep those pages separate in his notebook for review. Alternatively, memory work can be copied into a composition book instead of a workbook.

Correct Use of Words

Following the memory work at the back of the book are sentences to read for correct use of words. The purpose is akin to that of copywork in that it is intended to imprint certain grammatical concepts into the child's mind just through repetition. Have you ever said, or heard another say, that something just "sounds" right? Unfortunately, whatever we hear most frequently is what "sounds" right to us. Saying these sentences aloud regularly will help the correct forms to "sound" right to our children and to ourselves. My advice is to read these sentences approximately once a week for the school year. That could mean all of them once a week, or it could mean a page a day. By the time you get to the actual lessons on these topics, your child will already know these forms and the lessons will be reviews.

Third Person Singular Pronouns

I wish the English language had a gender-neutral third person singular pronoun acceptable for people. I use the masculine because it's what I grew up with and I'm too old to like change. It is at least as correct as

the feminine form and, as the mother of four boys, the feminine sounds odd to me in reference to children; I still call my two year old daughter “son” more often than not. And using the plural with a singular antecedent, which is becoming more common, is simply incorrect.

Level 3 Literature List

All the literature selections suggested herein are in the public domain in the United States of America and are probably available at your local library. The complete texts can also be found online from Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) and/or the Baldwin Project (www.mainlesson.com). Most are available as audio books, and free audio book versions may be found online from LibriVox (www.librivox.org).

The Story of Doctor Dolittle by Hugh Lofting

There is a racially sensitive portion of this book in chapters eleven and twelve. My understanding is that the Dover Children's Thrift Classics edition of the book is an altered version which changes this part to better respect modern sensibilities. Parents can read the original chapters online to determine whether or not the altered version is desired.

The Marvelous Land of Oz by L. Frank Baum

Beautiful Stories from Shakespeare by E. Nesbit

There are many children's versions of Shakespeare's plays, modern versions such as those by Bruce Coville and Leon Garfield, as well as others in the public domain such as those by Charles and Mary Lamb. Choose the ones you like best. We prefer Bruce Coville's picture books. Modern versions can often be found at the local library. One of my sons even found a graphic novel of Macbeth at the library which was very well done.

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

The Princess and the Goblin by George McDonald



1. Introduction to the Dictionary

- The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Chapter 1

The dictionary is a book of words. It lists the words of a language and tells the part of speech and the definition of each word. It also shows how to spell it, how to pronounce it, and sometimes, even the history of the word. We call the history of the word and how the word has changed meanings over the years the **etymology** of the word. Sometimes, a sample sentence is included. Let's look at the entry for **animal** from the Beginner's Dictionary at www.wordsmyth.net:

an·i·mal

pronunciation: æ nə məl

part of speech: noun

definition 1: one of a large group of living things that is not a plant. Animals can move around by themselves to find food.

synonyms: being, creature; similar words: mammal

definition 2: a living creature that is not a plant or a human.
We saw many animals at the zoo. They have cows, chickens, and other animals on their farm.

similar words: mammal; related words: being, pet

Word History

Animal comes from a Latin word that means “a breathing thing.”

The first part shows us the word divided into **syllables**. A syllable is a chunk of a word, and each syllable contains one vowel sound. Next, we see the pronunciation. Different dictionaries have different ways for showing pronunciation, so it’s a good idea to get familiar with your own dictionary by reading the guide at the beginning. The part of speech and the definitions are listed next, along with words which mean the same thing (synonyms) and related words.

The dictionary is an important tool. It’s a good idea to get into the habit of looking up new words that you come across in your reading to learn both the pronunciation and the definition.

So, how do you find a word in the dictionary?

All of the words in the dictionary are listed in **alphabetical order**. This means that they follow the order of the alphabet. **A** words come first, then **B** words, and so on, all the way to **Z**.

Today, pick up your dictionary and get acquainted with it. Look up a few words and read their definitions.

What Do the Stars Do

By Christina Rossetti

What do the stars do
Up in the sky,
Higher than the wind can blow,
Or the clouds can fly?

Each star in its own glory
Circles, circles still;
As it was lit to shine and set,
And do its Maker’s will.

Writing: Oral Narration

Your first narration exercise will be on “The Otters and the Wolf.” Today, your instructor will read the story aloud, and then you will give an oral narration. Over the coming lesson days, you will have some other activities with this story, and then you’ll do the written narration. This story is a **fable**, which is a story with a moral.

The Otters and the Wolf

From *More Jataka Tales* by Ellen C. Babbitt

One day a Wolf said to her mate, “A longing has come upon me to eat fresh fish.”

“I will go and get some for you,” said he and he went down to the river.

There he saw two Otters standing on the bank looking for fish. Soon one of the Otters saw a great fish, and entering the water with a bound, he caught hold of the tail of the fish.

But the fish was strong and swam away, dragging the Otter after him. “Come and help me,” the Otter called back to his friend. “This great fish will be enough for both of us!”

So the other Otter went into the water. The two together were able to bring the fish to land. “Let us divide the fish into two parts.”

“I want the half with the head on,” said one.

“You cannot have that half. That is mine,” said the other. “You take the tail.”

The Wolf heard the Otters and he went up to them.

Seeing the Wolf, the Otters said: “Lord of the gray-grass color, this fish was caught by both of us together. We cannot agree about dividing him. Will you divide him for us?”

The Wolf cut off the tail and gave it to one, giving the head to the other. He took the large middle part for himself, saying to them, “You can eat the head and the tail without quarreling.” And away he ran with the body of the fish. The Otters stood and looked at each other. They had nothing to say, but each thought to himself that the Wolf had run off with the best of the fish.

The Wolf was pleased and said to himself, as he ran toward home, “Now I have fresh fish for my mate.”

His mate, seeing him coming, came to meet him, saying: “How did you get fish? You live on land, not in the water.”

Then he told her of the quarrel of the Otters. “I took the fish as pay for settling their quarrel,” said he.

Copywork

Literature

He had a cow with a calf too, and an old lame horse—twenty-five years of age—and chickens, and pigeons, and two lambs, and many other animals. But his favorite pets were Dab-Dab the duck, Jip the dog, Gub-Gub the baby pig, Polynesia the parrot, and the owl Too-Too.

Poetry—What Do the Stars Do

What do the stars do
Up in the sky,
Higher than the wind can blow,
Or the clouds can fly?



2. Parts of Speech: Nouns

- The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Chapter 2

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Everybody and everything has a name, and all of those names are nouns. Some nouns are the names of people, like Doctor Dolittle or his sister, Sarah. Some nouns are the names of places, like Puddleby or the kitchen. Some nouns are the names of things, like animals. And some nouns are the names of ideas, like freedom, peace, and love.

Look at the underlined words from the sentences below from *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*.

“That man has got sense. That’s what you ought to do. Be an animal-doctor. Give the silly people up—if they haven’t brains enough to see you’re the best doctor in the world. Take care of animals instead—THEY’ll soon find it out. Be an animal-doctor.”

In the passage above, we have people: man, people, doctor, animal-doctor. We have a place: world. We have things: brains and animals. And we have an idea: sense. All these words are nouns.

Nouns can be either common or proper. Common nouns refer to something in general. You are a child, and there are many children in

the world. But you also have a special, proper name. Each member of your family has his own special, proper name. When I say doctor, I'm not talking about a specific person. There are many doctors in the world. But when I say Doctor Dolittle, I'm speaking of a particular character from the book, or I may even be speaking of the book itself since it has the same name! There are many parrots, but only one Polynesia who belongs to Doctor Dolittle. There are seven continents, but only one Africa. Common nouns are general, and proper nouns are specific.

Name some nouns, and tell me whether the noun you named is common or proper. Name a person in your house. Name a person you see when you're out-and-about. Name a place you like to go. Name a favorite toy.

Memory Work

Memorizing definitions and other information is an important part of this program. To make it easy for you to learn and review, there is a complete list of this material at the end of this book in Appendix A.

When a new definition or list is introduced, read it three times every lesson time, or every day, until it is memorized. After items are memorized, review them periodically. Review newly learned items at least once a week. Review items that you've known for a long time at least once a month. Knowing these definitions and other important information will make the lessons in this book and in future grammar books much easier.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

By Jane Taylor

Twinkle, twinkle, little star!
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the glorious sun is set,
When the grass with dew is wet,

Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle all the night.

In the dark-blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye,
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Guides the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star!

The Monkey and the Crocodile

From *Jataka Tales* by Ellen C. Babbitt

Part I

A Monkey lived in a great tree on a river bank.

In the river there were many Crocodiles. A Crocodile watched the Monkeys for a long time, and one day she said to her son: "My son, get one of those Monkeys for me. I want the heart of a Monkey to eat."

"How am I to catch a Monkey?" asked the little Crocodile. "I do not travel on land, and the Monkey does not go into the water."

"Put your wits to work, and you'll find a way," said the mother.

And the little Crocodile thought and thought.

At last he said to himself: "I know what I'll do. I'll get that Monkey that lives in a big tree on the river bank. He wishes to go across the river to the island where the fruit is so ripe."

So the Crocodile swam to the tree where the Monkey lived. But he was a stupid Crocodile.

"Oh, Monkey," he called, "come with me over to the island where the fruit is so ripe."

"How can I go with you?" asked the Monkey. "I do not swim."

"No—but I do. I will take you over on my back," said the Crocodile.

The Monkey was greedy, and wanted the ripe fruit, so he jumped down on the Crocodile's back.

"Off we go!" said the Crocodile.

"This is a fine ride you are giving me!" said the Monkey.

“Do you think so? Well, how do you like this?” asked the Crocodile, diving.

“Oh, don’t!” cried the Monkey, as he went under the water. He was afraid to let go, and he did not know what to do under the water.

When the Crocodile came up, the Monkey sputtered and choked. “Why did you take me under water, Crocodile?” he asked.

“I am going to kill you by keeping you under water,” answered the Crocodile. “My mother wants Monkey-heart to eat, and I’m going to take yours to her.”

“I wish you had told me you wanted my heart,” said the Monkey, “then I might have brought it with me.”

“How queer!” said the stupid Crocodile. “Do you mean to say that you left your heart back there in the tree?”

“That is what I mean,” said the Monkey. “If you want my heart, we must go back to the tree and get it. But we are so near the island where the ripe fruit is, please take me there first.”

“No, Monkey,” said the Crocodile, “I’ll take you straight back to your tree. Never mind the ripe fruit. Get your heart and bring it to me at once. Then we’ll see about going to the island.”

“Very well,” said the Monkey.

But no sooner had he jumped onto the bank of the river than—whisk! up he ran into the tree.

From the topmost branches he called down to the Crocodile in the water below:

“My heart is way up here! If you want it, come for it, come for it!”

Writing: Playing with Words

Part of writing is developing what the ancient Greeks called **copia**, which means an abundance of words and phrases. This year’s writing exercises are meant to help you develop copia, so in addition to writing narrations, you’ll also be playing with words and sentences so that you’ll learn a variety of ways to say things.

Today you have a Playing with Words exercise. In your workbook, alphabetize the following five words from the story and look them up in the dictionary. You may look up other words from the story instead if you need help with some words. Read the pronunciation, definition, and etymology, if available, of each word.

quarrel, longing, bound, pay, great

Exercise

In your workbook, mark the nouns N and the proper nouns PN from the following sentence. If a proper noun is more than one word, make arms stretched out to include the whole thing, like this:

_____PN_____

Then John Dolittle got a fine, big pair of green spectacles; and the plow horse stopped going blind in one eye and could see as well as ever.

Copywork and Dictation

Literature

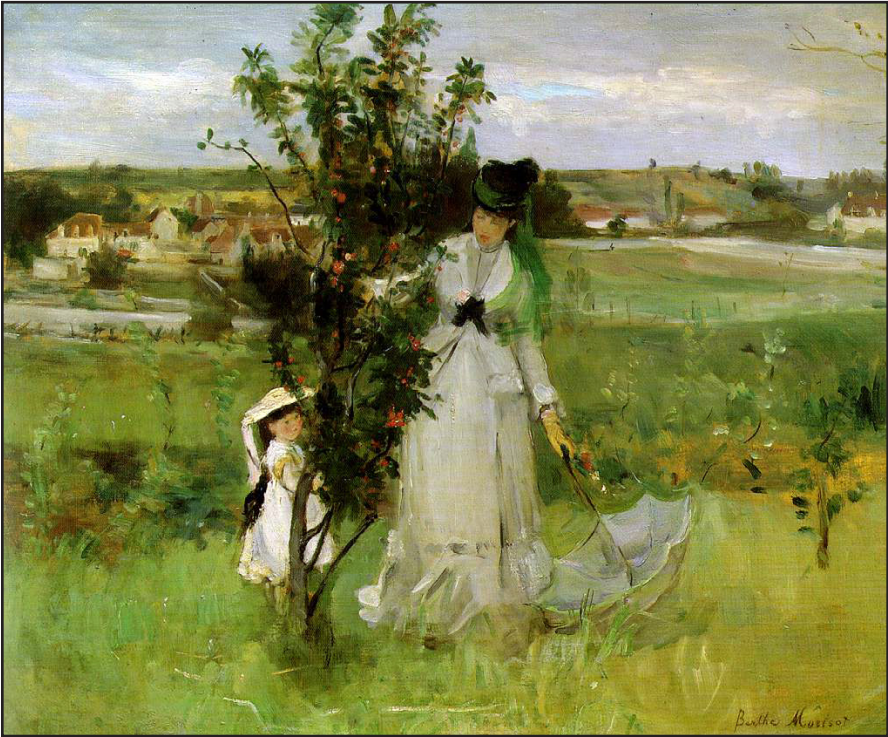
Then John Dolittle got a fine, big pair of green spectacles; and the plow horse stopped going blind in one eye and could see as well as ever.

Bible—Luke 2:11

For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Dictation: “The Otters and the Wolf”

The two together were able to bring the fish to land.



Hide-and-Seek by Berthe Morisot

Picture Study

1. Read the title and the name of the artist. Study the picture for several minutes, then put the picture away.
2. Describe the picture.
3. Look at the picture again. Do you notice any details that you missed before? What do you like or dislike about this painting? Does it remind you of anything?

3. Dictionary Skills: Alphabetizing



- Picture Study: Hide-and-Seek
- The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Chapter 3

If all of your words start with different letters, then it is easy to alphabetize them. But what do you do when words start with the same letter?

When words start with the same letter, we look at the second letter to determine which one comes first alphabetically. Look at these words:

crocodile, cheetah, calves

All of these words begin with **C**, so they will all be in the **C** section of the dictionary. Look at the second letter of each word and you see **R**, **H**, and **A**. Using the second letters, we see that we alphabetize these words like this:

calves
cheetah
crocodile

How would you alphabetize these words?

good, garden, gum
monkey, man, mending
pig, parrot, Polynesia

Hide and Seek

By Walter de la Mare

Hide and seek, says the Wind,
 In the shade of the woods;
Hide and seek, says the Moon,
 To the hazel buds;
Hide and seek, says the Cloud,
 Star on to star;
Hide and seek, says the Wave,
 At the harbour bar;
Hide and seek, say I,
 To myself, and step
Out of the dream of Wake
 Into the dream of Sleep.

The Monkey and the Crocodile

From *Jataka Tales* by Ellen C. Babbitt

Part II

The Monkey soon moved away from that tree.

He wanted to get away from the Crocodile, so that he might live in peace.

But the Crocodile found him, far down the river, living in another tree.

In the middle of the river was an island covered with fruit-trees.

Half-way between the bank of the river and the island, a large rock rose out of the water. The Monkey could jump to the rock, and then to the island. The Crocodile watched the Monkey crossing from the bank of the river to the rock, and then to the island.

He thought to himself, "The Monkey will stay on the island all day, and I'll catch him on his way home at night."

The Monkey had a fine feast, while the Crocodile swam about, watching him all day.

Toward night the Crocodile crawled out of the water and lay on the rock, perfectly still.

When it grew dark among the trees, the Monkey started for home. He ran down to the river bank, and there he stopped.

"What is the matter with the rock?" the Monkey thought to himself. "I never saw it so high before. The Crocodile is lying on it!"

But he went to the edge of the water and called: “Hello, Rock!”

No answer.

Then he called again: “Hello, Rock!”

Three times the Monkey called, and then he said: “Why is it, Friend Rock, that you do not answer me to-night?”

“Oh,” said the stupid Crocodile to himself, “the rock answers the Monkey at night. I’ll have to answer for the rock this time.”

So he answered: “Yes, Monkey! What is it?”

The Monkey laughed, and said: “Oh, it’s you, Crocodile, is it?”

“Yes,” said the Crocodile. “I am waiting here for you. I am going to eat you.”

“You have caught me in a trap this time,” said the Monkey. “There is no other way for me to go home. Open your mouth wide so I can jump right into it.”

Now the Monkey well knew that when Crocodiles open their mouths wide, they shut their eyes.

While the Crocodile lay on the rock with his mouth wide open and his eyes shut, the Monkey jumped.

But not into his mouth! Oh, no! He landed on the top of the Crocodile’s head, and then sprang quickly to the bank. Up he whisked into his tree.

When the Crocodile saw the trick the Monkey had played on him, he said: “Monkey, you have great cunning. You know no fear. I’ll let you alone after this.”

“Thank you, Crocodile, but I shall be on the watch for you just the same,” said the Monkey.

Writing: Playing with Sentences Oral Exercise

Take the following sentence and play with it aloud. Remember that the point is not necessarily to make the sentence better. The point is to play with the sentence and make it different. Try to make a new sentence with following changes. As you learn more, there will be new ways to change sentences.

So then the Doctor’s sister came to him and said, “John, you must send that creature away.”

1. **Change the nouns.** Change proper to common, or common to proper.

[Instructor, as an example: “So then Sarah came to him and said, “Brother, you must send that creature away.” It’s also fine to make up names for unnamed characters for these exercises. It’s playing.]

Exercise

In your workbook, mark the nouns N and the proper nouns PN from the following passage.

So then the Doctor’s sister came to him and said, “John, you must send that creature away. Now the farmers and the old ladies are afraid to send their animals to you—just as we were beginning to be well off again.”

Copywork and Dictation

Literature

So then the Doctor’s sister came to him and said, “John, you must send that creature away. Now the farmers and the old ladies are afraid to send their animals to you—just as we were beginning to be well off again.”

Dictation: Maxim

Birds of a feather flock together.



4. Making Plurals with S and ES

- The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Chapter 4

A noun is the name of a
person, place, thing, or idea.

Nouns can be either singular or plural. Singular means only one of something. Plural means more than one. In most cases, we only need to add an **s** to a word to make it plural.

girl—girls
boy—boys

However, some words make plurals in different ways. Because it is difficult to make two hissing sounds in a row, words which end in **ch**, **sh**, **s**, **x**, or **z** in the singular need **es** to become plural.

beach—beaches
dish—dishes
dress—dresses
fox—foxes
waltz—waltzes

Sometimes, **ch** says /k/. When it does, it no longer makes the hissing sound, so it only needs an **s** to make it plural.

stomach—stomachs

Words that end in **y** form plurals in two different ways. If a vowel comes before the **y**, then we just add an **s**.

day—days
monkey—monkeys

But when a consonant comes before the **y**, we change the **y** to **i** and add **es**.

sky—skies
baby—babies
pony—ponies

Wishing

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Do you wish the world were better?
Let me tell you what to do:
Set a watch upon your actions,
Keep them always straight and true;
Let your thoughts be clean and high:
Of the sphere you occupy.

Do you wish the world was wiser?
Well, suppose you make a start
By accumulating wisdom
In the scrapbook of your heart.
Do not waste one page on folly;
Live to learn, and learn to live.
If you want to give men knowledge
You must get it ere you give.

Do you wish the world were happy?
Then remember day by day
Just to scatter seeds of kindness
As you pass along the way:
For the pleasures of many
May be oft times traced to one,
As the hand that plants an acorn
Shelters armies from the sun.

How the Turtle Saved His Own Life

From *Jataka Tales* by Ellen C. Babbitt

A King once had a lake made in the courtyard for the young princes to play in. They swam about in it, and sailed their boats and rafts on it. One day the king told them he had asked the men to put some fishes into the lake.

Off the boys ran to see the fishes. Now, along with the fishes, there was a Turtle. The boys were delighted with the fishes, but they had never seen a Turtle, and they were afraid of it, thinking it was a demon. They ran back to their father, crying, "There is a demon on the bank of the lake."

The king ordered his men to catch the demon, and to bring it to the palace. When the Turtle was brought in, the boys cried and ran away.

The king was very fond of his sons, so he ordered the men who had brought the Turtle to kill it.

"How shall we kill it?" they asked.

"Pound it to powder," said some one. "Bake it in hot coals," said another.

So one plan after another was spoken of. Then an old man who had always been afraid of the water said: "Throw the thing into the lake where it flows out over the rocks into the river. Then it will surely be killed."

When the Turtle heard what the old man said, he thrust out his head and asked: "Friend, what have I done that you should do such a dreadful thing as that to me? The other plans were bad enough, but to throw me into the lake! Don't speak of such a cruel thing!"

When the king heard what the Turtle said, he told his men to take the Turtle at once and throw it into the lake.

The Turtle laughed to himself as he slid away down the river to his old home. "Good!" he said, "those people do not know how safe I am in the water!"

Exercise

In your workbook, mark the nouns N and the proper nouns PN from the following passage. Circle the s at the end of each plural noun.

“Doctor!” he cried, “I’ve just had a message from a cousin of mine in Africa. There is a terrible sickness among the monkeys out there. They are all catching it—and they are dying in hundreds.”

Make the following nouns plural:

cherry, box, joy, sketch, epoch

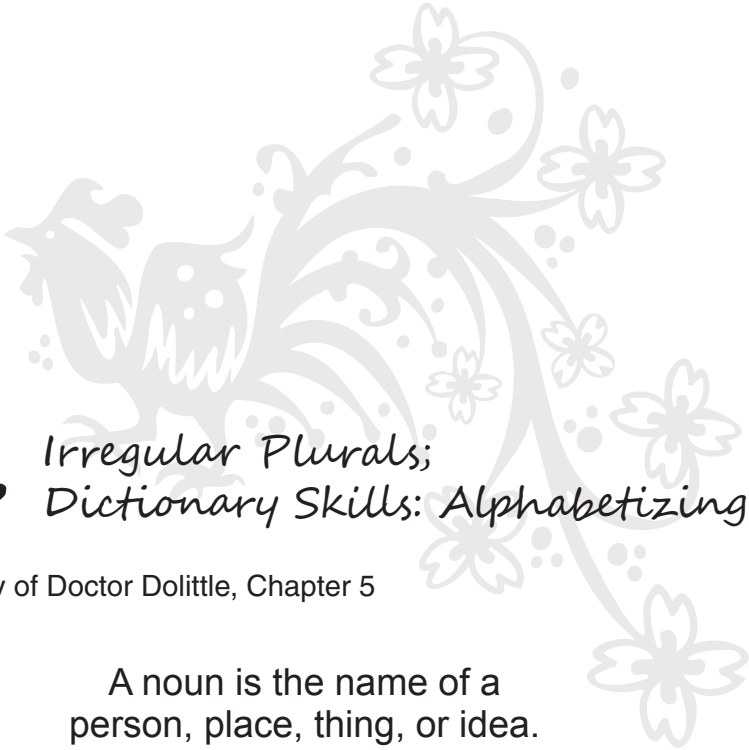
Copywork

Literature

“Doctor!” he cried, “I’ve just had a message from a cousin of mine in Africa. There is a terrible sickness among the monkeys out there. They are all catching it—and they are dying in hundreds.”

Poetry—What Do the Stars Do

Each star in its own glory
Circles, circles still;
As it was lit to shine and set,
And do its Maker’s will.



5. Irregular Plurals; Dictionary Skills: Alphabetizing

- The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Chapter 5

A noun is the name of a
person, place, thing, or idea.

Most words form plurals by adding **s** or **es**, but some words change completely to become plurals. Look at the following passage from *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*:

When she flew down to get it, she found one of the white mice, very frightened, sitting inside it.

“What are you doing here?” asked the duck. “You were told to stay behind in Puddleby.”

“I didn’t want to be left behind,” said the mouse.

In the singular, the word is **mouse**. In the plural, the word is **mice**. Other words change in different ways.

child—children	ox—oxen
goose—geese	louse—lice
man—men	woman—women

And some words don't change at all.

sheep—sheep deer—deer

Alphabetizing

Monkey, money, more. You know how to alphabetize words which begin with different letters, and even words which begin with the same letter. But what about words which have the same first two, three, or even four or more letters?

When words begin in the same way, keep going to the next letter until you get to one which is different. Just as **apple** comes before **banana**, **banana** comes before **book**, **book** comes before **boots**, and **boots** comes before **booty**.

Now can you alphabetize monkey, money, and more?

Little White Lily

By George MacDonald

Little White Lily
Sat by a stone,
Drooping and waiting
Till the sun shone.
Little White Lily
Sunshine has fed;
Little White Lily
Is lifting her head.

Little White Lily
Said: "It is good
Little White Lily's
Clothing and food."
Little White Lily
Dressed like a bride!
Shining with whiteness,
And crowned beside!

Little White Lily
Drooping with pain,
Waiting and waiting
For the wet rain.
Little White Lily
Holdeth her cup;
Rain is fast falling
And filling it up.

Little White Lily
Said: "Good again,
When I am thirsty
To have the nice rain.
Now I am stronger,
Now I am cool;
Heat cannot burn me,
My veins are so full."

Little White Lily
Smells very sweet;
On her head sunshine,
Rain at her feet.
Thanks to the sunshine,
Thanks to the rain,
Little White Lily
Is happy again.

The Merchant of Seri

From *Jataka Tales* by Ellen C. Babbitt

There was once a merchant of Seri who sold brass and tinware. He went from town to town, in company with another man, who also sold brass and tinware. This second man was greedy, getting all he could for nothing, and giving as little as he could for what he bought.

When they went into a town, they divided the streets between them. Each man went up and down the streets he had chosen, calling, "Tinware for sale. Brass for sale." People came out to their doorsteps, and bought, or traded, with them.

In one house there lived a poor old woman and her granddaughter.

The family had once been rich, but now the only thing they had left of all their riches was a golden bowl. The grandmother did not know it was a golden bowl, but she had kept this because her husband used to eat out of it in the old days. It stood on a shelf among the other pots and pans, and was not often used.

The greedy merchant passed this house, calling, "Buy my water-jars! Buy my pans!" The granddaughter said: "Oh, Grandmother, do buy something for me!"

"My dear," said the old woman, "we are too poor to buy anything. I have not anything to trade, even."

"Grandmother, see what the merchant will give for the old bowl. We do not use that, and perhaps he will take it and give us something we want for it."

The old woman called the merchant and showed him the bowl, saying, "Will you take this, sir, and give the little girl here something for it?"

The greedy man took the bowl and scratched its side with a needle. Thus he found that it was a golden bowl. He hoped he could get it for nothing, so he said: "What is this worth? Not even a halfpenny." He threw the bowl on the ground, and went away.

By and by the other merchant passed the house. For it was agreed that either merchant might go through any street which the other had left. He called: "Buy my water-jars! Buy my tinware! Buy my brass!"

The little girl heard him, and begged her grandmother to see what he would give for the bowl.

"My child," said the grandmother, "the merchant who was just here threw the bowl on the ground and went away. I have nothing else to offer in trade."

"But, Grandmother," said the girl, "that was a cross man. This one looks pleasant. Ask him. Perhaps he'll give some little tin dish."

"Call him, then, and show it to him," said the old woman.

As soon as the merchant took the bowl in his hands, he knew it was of gold. He said: "All that I have here is not worth so much as this bowl. It is a golden bowl. I am not rich enough to buy it."

"But, sir, a merchant who passed here a few moments ago, threw it on the ground, saying it was not worth a halfpenny, and he went away," said the grandmother. "It was worth nothing to him. If you value it, take it, giving the little girl some dish she likes for it."

But the merchant would not have it so. He gave the woman all the money he had, and all his wares. "Give me but eight pennies," he said.

So he took the pennies, and left. Going quickly to the river, he paid the boatman the eight pennies to take him across the river.

Soon the greedy merchant went back to the house where he had seen the golden bowl, and said: "Bring that bowl to me, and I will give you something for it."

"No," said the grandmother. "You said the bowl was worthless, but another merchant has paid a great price for it, and taken it away."

Then the greedy merchant was angry, crying out, "Through this other man I have lost a small fortune. That bowl was of gold."

He ran down to the riverside, and, seeing the other merchant in the boat out in the river, he called: "Hallo, Boatman! Stop your boat!"

But the man in the boat said: "Don't stop!" So he reached the city on the other side of the river, and lived well for a time on the money the bowl brought him.

Writing: Commonplace Book

A commonplace book is a book where you can copy down poetry, passages from books, and other types of information which appeal to you. A simple composition book can be used for this purpose.

Today you will do copywork from your narration story, either in your notebook or in a commonplace book.

And away he ran with the body of the fish. The Otters stood and looked at each other. They had nothing to say, but each thought to himself that the Wolf had run off with the best of the fish.

Exercise

In your workbook, mark the nouns N and the proper nouns PN from the following passage. Circle the **S** at the end of each plural noun. Underline the irregularly formed plural.

"The rest of the animals, like the dormice and the water-voles and the bats, they will have to go back and live in the fields where they were born till we come home again."

Make the following nouns plural:

holly, bay, berry, tooth, beauty

Dictation

Bible—Luke 6:31

Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.



6. *Narration: The Otters and the Wolf*

- The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Chapter 6

Writing: Written Narration

Today is the day for the written narration. Reread the story first if necessary. Be careful to place the events from the narrative in the correct order. Your narration can be short with fewer details, or you can make it longer by adding more details.

Instructor: The child should give his narration to you orally while you play scribe and write or type it. You can then give the first sentence back to him as dictation after he has studied it. You can work up to dictating more of his narrations by the end of Level 3.

How The Leaves Came Down

Susan Coolidge

“I’ll tell you how the leaves came down,”

The great Tree to his children said:

“You’re getting sleepy, Yellow and Brown,

Yes, very sleepy, little Red.

It is quite time to go to bed.”

“Ah!” begged each silly, pouting leaf,
“Let us a little longer stay;
Dear Father Tree, behold our grief!
‘Tis such a very pleasant day,
We do not want to go away.”

So, for just one more merry day
To the great Tree the leaflets clung,
Frolicked and danced, and had their way,
Upon the autumn breezes swung,
Whispering all their sports among —

“Perhaps the great Tree will forget,
And let us stay until the spring,
If we all beg, and coax, and fret.”
But the great Tree did no such thing;
He smiled to hear their whispering.

“Come, children, all to bed,” he cried;
And ere the leaves could urge their prayer,
He shook his head, and far and wide,
Fluttering and rustling everywhere,
Down sped the leaflets through the air.

I saw them; on the ground they lay,
Golden and red, a huddled swarm,
Waiting till one from far away,
White bedclothes heaped upon her arm,
Should come to wrap them safe and warm.

The great bare Tree looked down and smiled.
“Good-night, dear little leaves,” he said.
And from below each sleepy child
Replied, “Good-night,” and murmured,
“It is so nice to go to bed!”



Level
Four

Level 4 Literature List

All the literature selections suggested herein are in the public domain in the United States of America and are probably available at your local library. The complete texts can also be found online from Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) and/or the Baldwin Project (www.mainlesson.com). Most are available as audio books, and free audio book versions may be found online from LibriVox (www.librivox.org).

The Book of Dragons by E. Nesbit

Black Beauty by Anna Sewell

Ozma of Oz by L. Frank Baum

“The Reluctant Dragon” by Kenneth Grahame

“The Reluctant Dragon” is part of the book *Dream Days* by Kenneth Grahame on Gutenberg.org. It is also available commercially as an illustrated book.

Heidi by Johanna Spyri

Tanglewood Tales by Nathaniel Hawthorne

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Introduction

English Lessons Through Literature has three lessons per week for thirty-six weeks. This is a total of 108 lessons per year.

Level 4 is intended for 4th grade and up. Level 5 is intended for 5th grade and up. It is the first of a two-volume set which is intended for use before high school. Either level could be used for older children as well. I would advise Level 4 first for children who do not have a very strong background in grammar. If you are doing Level 4 with older students, please see Appendix D: Additional Writing Lessons for Older Students.

It is best to transition children gently into doing new things. In writing, this means that first we talk, then we write. *English Lessons Through Literature* includes oral lessons in some levels so that students can practice new concepts without the stress of having to write the answers. Oral lessons in early levels will then be written lessons in the following level.

Literature

The literature suggested in this book is in the public domain in the United States, and the full text of each story and book can be found online. Most are also available as audio books, and children who are reading well can read the book themselves rather than using the books as read-alouds.

I do recommend reading the literature prior to the lesson. The examples and the copywork almost always come from the reading selection from that day. We like to read it the day before so that written lessons can begin without delay on the lesson day.

Since most of the examples and part of the daily copywork come directly from the literature, reading the literature is an important component of this program. However, there is certainly room to skip books that the child does not like, and it is up to the parents to determine whether or not a recommended resource is right for their family. My homeschooling motto has long been: Use the curriculum; don't let the curriculum use you. I recommend the motto more highly than I recommend any of the literature selections in this book.

Lessons and Exercises

If your child has already covered some of the concepts in this book, use the lesson as a review by having him tell what he knows on the subject. Instead of reading the lesson on nouns, say, “Tell me everything you know about nouns.” Afterwards, you can skim the lesson and see if he’s left out any pertinent information. Prompt him for that information (“What do you know about abstract and concrete nouns?”), or go over that portion. In this way, he practices narration, he makes the information his own by telling it himself, and—in some cases—he may be reminded that he doesn’t know or remember as much as he thinks he does. We often believe that since “we’ve been over this a hundred times,” that means we know the subject. The student who can give you the lesson instead of reading it truly does.

English Lessons Through Literature narrations should be in addition to the oral narrations in other areas such as history and science. At this age, I recommend beginning to include written narrations from those subjects as well. You can start with just one per week, and work up from there.

The writing lessons follow a two-week repeating pattern.

Day 1: The model story for the next two weeks (six lessons) is in this lesson. The student reads and orally narrates the new model story.

Day 2: The student has a playing with words copia exercise, or he outlines the new model story.

Day 3: The student has either a literary analysis or descriptive writing exercise.

Day 4: The student has a playing with sentences copia exercise.

Day 5: The student has a commonplace book entry from the model story.

Day 6: The student writes the written narration from his outline.

I love using real sentences from real books for the lessons and exercises. They are far more interesting, which means children are far more likely to be engaged by the material. Copywork selections are only altered to change outdated punctuation and/or spelling when necessary. Lesson examples are often shortened—some of those old authors really knew how to write a paragraph into a sentence. Some sentences are simplified for diagramming.

When I check over the exercises with my children, I do not do so with red pencil in hand. Instead, we look at the work together, and I point out mistakes which he then corrects. I believe working with real sentences, even modified ones, can be a little harder than manufactured sentences. But I also believe that there's more value in working through the exercises to discover the correct answers.

English Lessons Through Literature includes a moderate number of exercise sentences to practice the concepts presented in the lessons. However, some children require more practice with grammatical concepts than others. Rather than fill each level with an excessive number of exercises, I chose to create a free download full of worksheets which can be used with any level for extra practice. The sentences are all taken from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as most children will have a basic familiarity with that story, one way or another. You can find a link to the practice worksheets on my website: www.barefootmeandering.com/bookstore.html.

Prepared Dictation

Like copywork, dictation is a form of studying grammar, spelling, and the mechanics of writing. However, dictation requires children to take a more active role and actually study and think about the material, as opposed to passively taking it in through copywork. For this reason, dictation should not begin until third or fourth grade, depending on readiness.

Dictation is for children who write easily. A child who is still struggling with reading or penmanship should just continue with copywork. However, children who type can type their dictations instead. This simplifies the process for children who hate writing.

In prepared dictation, children type or write a passage after studying it for five to ten minutes. Without this preparation, the exercise is not a teaching exercise; it is a test. In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason went further, describing dictation without preparation as “a fertile cause of bad spelling” (241).

I know that dictation can sound like a huge, time consuming exercise, especially with multiple children. It's not. We do prepared dictation twice a week, on the “off” days from grammar. Each of my boys

studies his exercise for about 10 minutes. He chooses, sometimes with my help, two or three words to analyze. A passage should not have more than three or four unknown words to be studied. He adds these to his Spelling Journal, writing each word with a space between the syllables, which helps him to analyze each word syllable by syllable. The Spelling Journal organizes words according to phonogram or spelling rule, and it is a free download on my site.

Dictations may be written or typed. My boys type their dictations. The spelling and grammar checks are turned off in our word processing program, and we increase the font size to 20+ points so that I can read over their shoulders. I read the exercises while each boy takes his turn at the keyboard. I stand behind them so that I can make sure they don't make any mistakes.

English Lessons Through Literature includes two dictation exercises each week. Sources include the literature, poems, and Bible verses. If you prefer, choose dictation exercises from history, science, or free reading.

Watch as the child writes to catch mistakes immediately. Mistakes imprint on a child's mind just as correctly written material does, and this confusion is difficult to correct, as some of us have found while using poor spelling programs which ask children still learning the basics to proofread something. In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason writes:

Once the eye sees a misspelt word, that image remains; and if there is also the image of the word rightly spelt, we are perplexed as to which is which. Now we see why there could not be a more ingenious way of making bad spellers than 'dictation' as it is commonly taught. Every misspelt word is an image in the child's brain not to be obliterated by the right spelling. It becomes, therefore, the teacher's business to prevent false spelling, and, if an error has been made, to hide it away, as it were, so that the impression may not become fixed (242).

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book is a book for copying poetry, passages from literature, and other writings or information. A simple composition book can be used for this purpose.

Each narration story has a commonplace book exercise, a passage from the story to copy. Children can also begin to add to the commonplace book from other reading: history, science, literature, or free reading. My children choose their own passages to copy, passages which speak to them in some way. For my oldest son, it's often something philosophical or political. For my second son, it's usually something funny.

In Level 5, the commonplace book completely replaces copywork. In Level 4, however, copywork suggestions are still given. If you want to transition to the commonplace book, then I recommend giving the child a choice each day. He can either do the scheduled copywork, or he can choose a passage that he enjoyed from another book.

Picture Study

Charlotte Mason recommended having the child look at the picture without interruption for several minutes, then putting the picture away and having the child describe the picture. It is, in essence, a picture narration. Afterwards, bring the picture back out and see if he notices anything else. This is not art criticism, though. It is learning to attend to detail and to form a love and appreciation for art.

Each artist has six paintings studied with new paintings added every other week, so you have a full twelve weeks to enjoy each artist and to include additional activities if desired. For example, you could read a children's biography of the artist and view some of his additional works. More paintings can often be found at <http://www.wikipaintings.org/>, or just do an internet search for the artist's name.

All pictures of paintings in this book are, by necessity, black and white. Color copies of the paintings are provided on my site at no cost for your convenience. These can be printed so that you can display the picture for the two weeks between new paintings. In the past, we have also used the pictures as backgrounds on my computer. However, my oldest son did tell me once that it was strange seeing a particular painting without the icons.

Memory Work and Reference Pages

Memory work is an important part of this program. The student cannot properly analyze a sentence when he doesn't remember the difference between a verb and an adverb, or a phrase and a clause, or if he can't remember which verbs are linking verbs. When it comes to learning the basics of any subject, vocabulary is king.

At the back of the book, there are pages that have all the definitions and lists to learn from this book to make it easy to learn and review the information. New material should be read three times every lesson day, or daily, until it is learned. Newly learned material should be reviewed regularly at first, perhaps once a week. Material which has been learned for a longer time should be reviewed every month to six weeks, but if it stops being automatic, it goes back to the frequent review.

There are more than one hundred poems in this book. My suggestion is to select a poem, preferably one the child enjoys, and begin to memorize it. When he has memorized it, move on to a new one.

Appendix B has sentences to read, if desired, for correct use of words. The purpose is akin to that of copywork in that it is intended to imprint certain grammatical concepts into the child's mind just through repetition. Saying these sentences aloud regularly will help the correct forms to "sound" right to our children and to ourselves. My advice is to read these sentences approximately once a week for the school year.

Diagramming reference pages are also included in Appendix C.

Third Person Singular Pronouns

I wish the English language had a gender-neutral third person singular pronoun acceptable for people. I use the masculine because it's what I grew up with and I'm too old to like change. It is at least as correct as the feminine form and, as the mother of four boys, the feminine sounds odd to me in reference to children; I still call my daughter "son" more often than not. And using the plural with a singular antecedent, which is becoming more common, is simply incorrect.



1. Introduction to the Thesaurus

- The Book of Dragons, Chapter 1

Like the dictionary, the **thesaurus** is a book of words. But while the purpose of the dictionary is to define words, the purpose of the thesaurus is to help you find the best word for your writing.

The thesaurus includes both **synonyms** and **antonyms**. Synonyms are words which have the same or similar meanings, while antonyms have opposite meanings.

In *The Book of Dragons*, young Lionel apologizes to the Prime Minister for **vexing** him.

“Well, I’m sorry if I’ve vexed you,” said Lionel. “Come, let’s kiss and be friends.”

Roget’s Thesaurus at www.thesaurus.com lists both synonyms and antonyms for the word **vex**.

Synonyms: afflict, agitate, annoy, displease, disquiet, disturb, embarrass, exasperate, gall, infuriate, irk, irritate, offend, peeve, perplex, rile, torment.

Antonyms: aid, appease, calm, comfort, delight, ease, help, make happy, please, quiet, soothe.

Look at how we could change that sentence with this information.

“Well, I’m sorry if I’ve agitated you,” said Lionel.

“Well, I’m sorry if I’ve exasperated you,” said Lionel.

“Well, I’m sorry if I didn’t help you,” said Lionel.

“Well, I’m sorry if I didn’t appease you,” said Lionel.

Within the lists above, we have shades of meaning. The synonyms do not mean exactly the same thing, and the antonyms are not perfect opposites. Using the thesaurus, we can find the best word to express the exact meaning we want to convey. The thesaurus can also help us to vary our word choice so that we are not using the same words over and over again.

Today, get acquainted with the thesaurus. Look up a few words, and find different ways to say them.

New Feet Within My Garden Go

By Emily Dickinson

New feet within my garden go,
New fingers stir the sod;
A troubadour upon the elm
Betrays the solitude.
New children play upon the green,
New weary sleep below;
And still the pensive spring returns,
And still the punctual snow!

Writing: Oral Narration

A model story is one which you will be using as a model for your own writing. When you get a new model story, you will read it and give an oral narration of it. Over the following five lessons, you will have other exercises with the model story, finally producing a written narration from it.

Read your new model story below, and then give your instructor an oral narration of it.

Anansi and Nothing

From *West African Folk-Tales* by William H. Barker

Near Anansi's miserable little hut there was a fine palace where lived a very rich man called Nothing. Nothing and Anansi proposed, one day, to go to the neighboring town to get some wives. Accordingly, they set off together.

Nothing, being a rich man, wore a very fine velvet cloth, while Anansi had a ragged cotton one. While they were on their way Anansi persuaded Nothing to change clothes for a little while, promising to give back the fine velvet before they reached the town. He delayed doing this, however, first on one pretext, then on another—till they arrived at their destination.

Anansi, being dressed in such a fine garment, found no difficulty in getting as many wives as he wished. Poor Nothing, with his ragged and miserable cloth, was treated with great contempt. At first he could not get even one wife. At last, however, a woman took pity on him and gave him her daughter. The poor girl was laughed at very heartily by Anansi's wives for choosing such a beggar as Nothing appeared to be. She wisely took no notice of their scorn.

The party set off for home. When they reached the cross-roads leading to their respective houses the women were astonished. The road leading to Anansi's house was only half cleared. The one which led to Nothing's palace was, of course, wide and well made. Not only so, but his servants had strewn it with beautiful skins and carpets, in preparation for his return. Servants were there, awaiting him, with fine clothes for himself and his wife. No one was waiting for Anansi.

Nothing's wife was queen over the whole district and had everything her heart could desire, Anansi's wives could not even get proper food; they had to live on unripe bananas with peppers. The wife of Nothing heard of her friends' miserable state and invited them to a great feast in her palace. They came, and were so pleased with all they saw that they agreed to stay there. Accordingly, they refused to come back to Anansi's hut.

He was very angry, and tried in many ways to kill Nothing, but without success. Finally, however, he persuaded some rat friends to dig a deep tunnel in front of Nothing's door. When the hole was finished Anansi lined it with knives and broken bottles. He then smeared the steps of the palace with okro to make them very

slippery, and withdrew to a little distance.

When he thought Nothing's household was safely in bed and asleep, he called to Nothing to come out to the courtyard and see something. Nothing's wife, however, dissuaded him from going. Anansi tried again and again, and each time she bade her husband not to listen. At last Nothing determined to go and see this thing. As he placed his foot on the first step, of course he slipped, and down he fell into the hole. The noise alarmed the household. Lights were fetched and Nothing was found in the ditch, so much wounded by the knives that he soon died. His wife was terribly grieved at his untimely death. She boiled many yams, mashed them, and took a great dishful of them round the district. To every child she met she gave some, so that the child might help her to cry for her husband. This is why, if you find a child crying and ask the cause, you will often be told he is "crying for nothing."

Commonplace Book

With your instructor's approval, add the passage below to your commonplace book, or choose your own passage from a work of fiction. This can be from either school reading or free reading.

When the people in the town saw the Dragon fly off after the Hippogriff and the King, they all came out of their houses to look, and when they saw the two disappear, they made up their minds to the worst, and began to think what they would wear for Court mourning.

Dictation

At last came a Saturday when the Dragon actually walked into the Royal nursery and carried off the King's own pet Rocking Horse. Then the King cried for six days, and on the seventh he was so tired that he had to stop. He heard the Blue Bird singing among the roses and saw the Butterfly fluttering among the lilies, and he said, "Nurse, wipe my face, please. I am not going to cry any more."



2. Parts of Speech: Nouns

- The Book of Dragons, Chapter 2

Definition: A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Nouns are naming words. Everything and everybody has a name, and all of those names are nouns. Some nouns are the names of people, like **Princess Mary Ann**, a little **girl**, and **Tom**, the gardener's **boy**. Some words name places, like **castle**, **Zoological Gardens**, and **Rotundia**. Some words name things, like **pet** and **rhinoceros**, two words we thankfully don't normally see together. And some words name ideas, like **wickedness** and **love**.

Look at the following passage from *The Book of Dragons*. The underlined words are all nouns.

What with the elephant, and the Princess's affection, and the knowledge that the very next day he would receive the History of Rotundia, beautifully bound, with the Royal arms on the cover, Tom could hardly sleep a wink. And, besides, the dog did bark so terribly. There was only one dog in Rotundia—the kingdom could not afford to keep more than one.

In this sentence, we have a person: Tom. We have places: kingdom and

Rotundia. We have things: elephant, *History of Rotundia*, arms, cover, wink, and dog. And we have ideas: affection and knowledge. All of these words are nouns.

Nouns can be either **common** or **proper**. Common nouns like **girl** and **boy** could refer to any child at all, but **Princess Mary Ann** and **Tom** refer to very specific children. There are many **kingdoms**, but no other like **Rotundia**. There are many **elephants** in the world, but only **Fido** is six inches tall and can fit in your pocket. Common nouns are general; proper nouns are specific and point out an individual person, place, thing, or idea. Proper nouns are always capitalized.

Some authors capitalize nouns that aren't ordinarily capitalized. For instance, the animal names in Aesop are always capitalized. We have stories about the Tortoise and the Hare, and even the Ants and the Grasshopper. He used the common names as if they were the proper names for his characters. If the author treats a noun as a proper noun by capitalizing it, I also treat it as a proper noun in the exercises.

You'll be learning the definitions for all the parts of speech as well as lists of important material. It is important to know this information well.

The Fairy in Winter

By Walter De La Mare

There was a Fairy—flake of winter—
Who, when the snow came, whispering, Silence,
Sister crystal to crystal sighing,
Making of meadow argent palace,
Night a star-sown solitude,
Cried 'neath her frozen eaves, "I burn here!"
Wings diaphanous, beating bee-like,
Wand within fingers, locks enspangled,
Icicle foot, lip sharp as scarlet,
She lifted her eyes in her pitch-black hollow—
Green as stalks of weeds in water—
Breathed: stirred.
Rilled from her heart the ichor, coursing,
Flamed and awoke her slumbering magic.

Softlier than moth's her pinions trembled;
Out into blackness, light-like, she flittered,
Leaving her hollow cold, forsaken.
In air, o'er crystal, rang twangling night-wind.
Bare, rimed pine-woods murmured lament.

How Mushrooms First Grew

From *West African Folk-Tales* by William H. Barker

Long, long ago there dwelt in a town two brothers whose bad habits brought them much trouble. Day by day they got more deeply in debt. Their creditors gave them no peace, so at last they ran away into the woods. They became highway robbers.

But they were not happy. Their minds were troubled by their evil deeds. At last they decided to go home, make a big farm, and pay off their debts gradually.

They accordingly set to work and soon had quite a fine farm prepared for corn. As the soil was good, they hoped the harvest would bring them in much money.

Unfortunately, that very day a bushfowl came along. Being hungry, it scratched up all the newly planted seeds and ate them.

The two poor brothers, on arriving at the field next day, were dismayed to find all their work quite wasted. They put down a trap for the thief. That evening the bushfowl was caught in it. The two brothers, when they came and found the bird, told it that now all their debts would be transferred to it because it had robbed them of the means of paying the debts themselves.

The poor bird—in great trouble at having such a burden thrust upon it made a nest under a silk-cotton tree. There it began to lay eggs, meaning to hatch them and sell the young birds for money to pay off the debts.

A terrible hurricane came, however, and a branch of the tree came down. All the eggs were smashed. As a result, the bushfowl transferred the debts to the tree, as it had broken the eggs.

The silk-cotton tree was in dismay at having such a big sum of money to pay off. It immediately set to work to make as much silk cotton as it possibly could, that it might sell it.

An elephant, not knowing all that had happened, came along. Seeing the silk cotton, he came to the tree and plucked down all its bearings.

By this means the debts were transferred to the poor elephant.

The elephant was very sad when he found what he had done. He wandered away into the desert, thinking of a way to make money. He could think of none.

As he stood quietly under a tree, a poor hunter crept up. This man thought he was very lucky to find such a fine elephant standing so still. He at once shot him.

Just before the animal died, he told the hunter that now the debts would have to be paid by him. The hunter was much grieved when he heard this, as he had no money at all.

He walked home wondering what he could do to make enough money to pay the debts. In the darkness he did not see the stump of a tree which the overseers had cut down in the road. He fell and broke his leg. By this means the debts were transferred to the tree-stump.

Not knowing this, a party of white ants came along next morning and began to eat into the tree. When they had broken it nearly to the ground, the tree told them that now the debts were theirs, as they had killed it.

The ants, being very wise, held a council together to find out how best they could make money. They decided each to contribute as much as possible. With the proceeds one of their young men would go to the nearest market and buy pure linen thread. This they would weave and sell and the profits would go to help pay the debts.

This was done. From time to time all the linen in stock was brought and spread out in the sunshine to keep it in good condition. When men see this linen lying out on the ant-hills, they call it “mushroom,” and gather it for food.

Writing: Copia, Playing with Words

Part of writing is developing what the ancient Greeks called *copia*, which means an abundance of words and phrases. The writing exercises are meant to help you develop *copia*, so in addition to writing narrations, you'll also be playing with words and sentences so that you'll learn a variety of ways to say things.

Take each of the following words from your model story and look them up in the thesaurus. Give two or three different ways to say each word.

garment, scorn, wounded, miserable, rich

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral exercise. Find the nouns in this passage. Which nouns are proper nouns, and which are common?

“Come, little birthday present,” he said tenderly. “The dragon will be so pleased. And I’m glad to see you’re not crying. You know, my child, we cannot begin too young to learn to think of the happiness of others rather than our own. I should not like my dear little niece to be selfish, or to wish to deny a trivial pleasure to a poor, sick dragon, far from his home and friends.”

Commonplace Book

With your instructor’s approval, add the poem below to your commonplace book, or choose your own poem.

There was a Fairy—flake of winter—
Who, when the snow came, whispering, Silence,
Sister crystal to crystal sighing,
Making of meadow argent palace,
Night a star-sown solitude,
Cried ‘neath her frozen eaves, “I burn here!”

Dictation

Hebrews 13:7-8

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.



Young Women Picking Fruit by Mary Cassatt

Picture Study

1. Read the title and the name of the artist. Study the picture for several minutes, then put the picture away.
2. Describe the picture.
3. Look at the picture again. Do you notice any details that you missed before? What do you like or dislike about this painting? Does it remind you of anything?

3. *Literary Analysis*

- The Book of Dragons, Chapter 3

Writing: Literary Analysis

This should be an oral exercise.

With your instructor's approval, choose a story from *The Book of Dragons*, or one of the other books you're currently reading, and answer the following questions.

If you could trade places with one of the characters, which one would it be, and why?

It's important to tell why you feel this way. Give examples from the story. For instance, don't say that you liked a character because he was nice. Instead, give an example from the story that shows that he was nice. For example, consider the two men in yesterday's fable who wanted to pay back their debts. Were they good men? If I wanted to write about that fable, I might say one of the following sentences.

I think the two men were trying to be good. They stopped thieving and started farming to pay back their debts.

I think the men were still bad. They said they wanted to pay back their debts, but when they bushfowl ate their crop, they claimed that the debts they had run up were now his.



Wee Willie Winkie

By William Miller

Wee Willie Winkie rins through the town,
Up-stairs and doon-stairs, in his nicht-gown,
Tirlin' at the window, cryin' at the lock,
“Are the weans in their bed?—for it's now ten o'clock.”

Hey, Willie Winkie! Are ye comin' ben?
The cat's singin' gay thrums to the sleepin' hen,
The doug's speldered on the floor, and disna gie a cheep;
But here's a waukrife laddie that winna fa' asleep.

Anything but sleep, ye rogue! Glow'rin' like the moon,
Rattlin' in an airn jug wi' an airn spoon,
Rumblin' tumblin' roun' about, crowin' like a cock,
Skirlin' like a kenna-what—wauknin' sleepin' folk.

Hey, Willie Winkie! The wean's in a creel!
Waumblin' aff a body's knee like a vera eel,
Ruggin' at the cat's lug, and ravellin' a' her thrums,—
Hey, Willie Winkie!—See, there he comes!

Wearie is the mither that has a storie wean,
A wee stumpie stoussie that canna rin his lane,
That has a battle aye wi' sleep before he'll close an ee;
But a kiss frae aff his rosy lips gies strength anew to me.

Origin of the Difference in Modes of Life Between Hottentots and Bushmen

From *South-African Folk-Tales* by James A. Honey

In the beginning there were two. One was blind, the other was always hunting. This hunter found at last a hole in the earth from which game proceeded and killed the young. The blind man, feeling and smelling them, said, “They are not game, but cattle.”

The blind man afterwards recovered his sight, and going with the hunter to this hole, saw that they were cows with their calves. He then

quickly built a kraal (fence made of thorns) round them, and anointed himself, just as Hottentots (in their native state) are still wont to do.

When the other, who now with great trouble had to seek his game, came and saw this, he wanted to anoint himself also. "Look here!" said the other, "you must throw the ointment into the fire, and afterwards use it." He followed this advice, and the flames flaring up into his face, burnt him most miserably; so that he was glad to make his escape. The other, however, called to him: "Here, take the kirri (a knobstick), and run to the hills to hunt there for honey."

Hence sprung the race of Bushmen.

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral exercise. Find the nouns in this passage. Which nouns are proper nouns, and which are common?

"We must go and look," said Harry boldly. "You shall wear a dragonproof frock, made of stuff like the curtains. And I will smear myself all over with the best dragon poison, and—"

Effie clasped her hands and skipped with joy and cried: "Oh, Harry! I know where we can find St. George!"

Commonplace Book

With your instructor's approval, add the passage below to your commonplace book, or choose your own passage from a work of non-fiction. This can be from the Bible, a biography, or one of your history or science books.

Then they joined hands and set out to walk to St. George's Church. As you know, there are many St. George's churches, but fortunately they took the turning that leads to the right one, and went along in the bright sunlight, feeling very brave and adventurous.

4.

Parts of Speech: Verbs

- The Book of Dragons, Chapter 4

Definition: A verb is a word that shows action or a state of being.

Verbs are what we do. They show action. Can you **speak**, **hop**, **listen, and **talk**? These are all action verbs. If you can do it, it's a verb. Look at the following sentences from *The Book of Dragons*. The action verbs are underlined. Notice that I use a double underline for verbs.**

The fairy spears of light twinkled and gleamed.

George kicked his boots against the fencing.

Some actions are invisible. Can you **love**, **wonder**, and **believe**? Of course you can, but no one can see these actions. What two invisible action verbs are in the sentence below?

Very few people know this, though you would think they could tell it by the ice in the jugs of a morning.

In the sentence above, the two invisible action verbs are **think** and **know**. Although you can do these things, the action cannot be seen by others. Can you think of other invisible action verbs?

Not all verbs show action. Some verbs merely show that something or

someone exists. We call these verbs **state of being verbs**.

The state of being verbs are: am, are, is, was, were, be, being, been.

I am. You are. He is. These sentences show existence, not action, but they are still verbs. Often, they are used to answer questions.

Is it the North Pole? It is.

Were the children naughty to go there? They were.

If I Had But Two Little Wings

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

If I had but two little wings
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
And then one wakes, and where am I?
All, all alone.

Thunder and Anansi

From *West African Folk-Tales* by William H. Barker

There had been a long and severe famine in the land where Anansi lived. He had been quite unable to obtain food for his poor wife and family. One day, gazing desperately out to sea, he saw rising from the midst of the water, a tiny island with a tall palm tree upon it. He determined to reach this tree—if any means proved possible—and climb it, in the hope of finding a few nuts to reward him. How to get there was the difficulty.

This, however, solved itself when he reached the beach, for there

lay the means to his hand, in the shape of an old broken boat. It certainly did not look very strong, but Anansi decided to try it.

His first six attempts were unsuccessful—a great wave dashed him back on the beach each time he tried to put off. He was persevering, however, and at the seventh trial was successful in getting away. He steered the battered old boat as best he could, and at length reached the palm tree of his desire. Having tied the boat to the trunk of the tree—which grew almost straight out of the water—he climbed toward the nuts. Plucking all he could reach, he dropped them, one by one, down to the boat. To his dismay, every one missed the boat and fell, instead, into the water until only the last one remained. This he aimed even more carefully than the others, but it also fell into the water and disappeared from his hungry eyes. He had not tasted even one and now all were gone.

He could not bear the thought of going home empty-handed, so, in his despair, he threw himself into the water, too. To his complete astonishment, instead of being drowned, he found himself standing on the sea-bottom in front of a pretty little cottage. From the latter came an old man, who asked Anansi what he wanted so badly that he had come to Thunder's cottage to seek it. Anansi told his tale of woe, and Thunder showed himself most sympathetic.

He went into the cottage and fetched a fine cooking-pot, which he presented to Anansi—telling him that he need never be hungry again. The pot would always supply enough food for himself and his family. Anansi was most grateful, and left Thunder with many thanks.

Being anxious to test the pot at once, Anansi only waited till he was again seated in the old boat to say, "Pot, pot, what you used to do for your master do now for me." Immediately good food of all sorts appeared. Anansi ate a hearty meal, which he very much enjoyed.

On reaching land again, his first thought was to run home and give all his family a good meal from his wonderful pot. A selfish, greedy fear prevented him. "What if I should use up all the magic of the pot on them, and have nothing more left for myself! Better keep the pot a secret—then I can enjoy a meal when I want one." So, his mind full of this thought, he hid the pot.

He reached home, pretending to be utterly worn out with fatigue and hunger. There was not a grain of food to be had anywhere. His wife and poor children were weak with want of it, but selfish Anansi took no notice of that. He congratulated himself at the thought of his magic pot, now safely hidden in his room. There he retired from

time to time when he felt hungry, and enjoyed a good meal. His family got thinner and thinner, but he grew plumper and plumper. They began to suspect some secret, and determined to find it out. His eldest son, Kweku Tsin, had the power of changing himself into any shape he chose; so he took the form of a tiny fly, and accompanied his father everywhere. At last, Anansi, feeling hungry, entered his room and closed the door. Next he took the pot, and had a fine meal. Having replaced the pot in its hiding-place, he went out, on the pretence of looking for food.

As soon as he was safely out of sight, Kweku Tsin fetched out the pot and called all his hungry family to come at once. They had as good a meal as their father had had. When they had finished, Mrs. Anansi—to punish her husband—said she would take the pot down to the village and give everybody a meal. This she did—but alas! In working to prepare so much food at one time, the pot grew too hot and melted away. What was to be done now? Anansi would be so angry! His wife forbade every one to mention the pot.

Anansi returned, ready for his supper, and, as usual, went into his room, carefully shutting the door. He went to the hiding-place—it was empty. He looked around in consternation. No pot was to be seen anywhere. Some one must have discovered it. His family must be the culprits; he would find a means to punish them.

Saying nothing to any one about the matter, he waited till morning. As soon as it was light he started off towards the shore, where the old boat lay. Getting into the boat, it started of its own accord and glided swiftly over the water—straight for the palm tree. Arrived there, Anansi attached the boat as before and climbed the tree. This time, unlike the last, the nuts almost fell into his hands. When he aimed them at the boat they fell easily into it—not one, as before, dropping into the water. He deliberately took them and threw them over-board, immediately jumping after them. As before, he found himself in front of Thunder's cottage, with Thunder waiting to hear his tale. This he told, the old man showing the same sympathy as he had previously done.

This time, however, he presented Anansi with a fine stick and bade him good-bye. Anansi could scarcely wait till he got into the boat so anxious was he to try the magic properties of his new gift. "Stick, stick," he said, "what you used to do for your master do for me also." The stick began to beat him so severely that, in a few minutes, he was

obliged to jump into the water and swim ashore, leaving boat and stick to drift away where they pleased. Then he returned sorrowfully homeward, bemoaning his many bruises and wishing he had acted more wisely from the beginning.

Writing: Copia

Take the following sentence and play with it. Remember that the point is not necessarily to make the sentence better. The point is to play with the sentence and make it different. Make a new sentence with a change from each of the following categories. For the first category, change the grammar in one of the ways listed. For the second category, use synonyms or antonyms. New categories and different types of changes will be added as you learn more.

The wife of Nothing heard of her friends' miserable state and invited them to a great feast in her palace.

1. Change the grammar.
 - Change the nouns from common to proper and vice versa. You can make up names for this exercise if you want.
 - Change the nouns from singular to plural and vice versa.
2. Use synonyms and antonyms.
 - Substitute synonyms.
 - Say the opposite thing using antonyms.

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral exercise. Find the verbs in this passage.

“Tumble for your life!” cried George, and he fell down at once, because it is the only way to stop. Jane fell on top of him—and then they crawled on hands and knees to the snow at the edge of

the slide—and there was a sportsman, dressed in a peaked cap and a frozen moustache, like the one you see in the pictures about Ice-Peter, and he had a gun in his hand.

Commonplace Book

With your instructor's approval, add the passage below to your commonplace book, or choose your own passage from a work of fiction. This can be from either school reading or free reading.

“Well, well,” said he, “here’s a whole Arctic expedition thrown away! I shall have to go home and fit out another. And that means a lot of writing to the papers and things. You seem to be a singularly thoughtless little girl.”

Dictation

All around the Pole, making a bright ring about it, were hundreds of little fires, and the flames of them did not flicker and twist, but went up blue and green and rosy and straight like the stalks of dream lilies.

Jane said so, but George said they were as straight as ramrods.

5.

How to Write a Condensed Narrative

- The Book of Dragons, Chapter 5

Today you'll learn how to write a condensed narrative. A condensed narrative is also called a **summary**. When you write a summary, you leave out all the details and only include the most important information.

Read the following story.

Tit for Tat

From *West African Folk-Tales* by William H. Barker

There had been a great famine in the land for many months. Meat had become so scarce that only the rich chiefs had money enough to buy it. The poor people were starving. Anansi and his family were in a miserable state.

One day, Anansi's eldest son—Kweku Tsin—to his great joy, discovered a place in the forest where there were still many animals. Knowing his father's wicked ways, Kweku told him nothing of the matter. Anansi, however, speedily discovered that Kweku was returning loaded, day after day, to the village. There he was able to sell the meat at a good price to the hungry villagers. Anansi immediately wanted to know the secret—but his son wisely refused

to tell him. The old man determined to find out by a trick.

Slipping into his son's room one night, when he was fast asleep, he cut a tiny hole in the corner of the bag which Kweku always carried into the forest. Anansi then put a quantity of ashes into the bag and replaced it where he had found it.

Next morning, as Kweku set out for the forest, he threw the bag, as usual, over his shoulder. Unknown to him, at each step, the ashes were sprinkled on the ground. Consequently, when Anansi set out an hour later he was easily able to follow his son by means of the trail of ashes. He, too, arrived at the animals' home in the forest, and found Kweku there before him. He immediately drove his son away, saying that, by the law of the land, the place belonged to him. Kweku saw how he had been tricked, and determined to have the meat back.

He accordingly went home—made a tiny image and hung little bells round its neck. He then tied a long thread to its head and returned toward the hunting-place.

When about half-way there, he hung the image to a branch of a tree in the path, and hid himself in the bushes near by—holding the other end of the thread in his hand.

The greedy father, in the meantime, had killed as many animals as he could find, being determined to become rich as speedily as possible. He then skinned them and prepared the flesh—to carry it to the neighboring villages to sell. Taking the first load, he set off for his own village. Half-way there, he came to the place where the image hung in the way. Thinking this was one of the gods, he stopped. As he approached, the image began to shake its head vigorously at him. He felt that this meant that the gods were angry. To please them, he said to the image, "May I give you a little of this meat?" Again the image shook its head. "May I give you half of this meat?" he then inquired. The head shook once more. "Do you want the whole of this meat?" he shouted fiercely. This time the head nodded, as if the image were well pleased. "I will not give you all my meat," Anansi cried. At this the image shook in every limb as if in a terrible temper. Anansi was so frightened that he threw the whole load on the ground and ran away. As he ran, he called back, "Tomorrow I shall go to Ekubon—you will not be able to take my meat from me there, you thief."

But Kweku had heard where his father intended to go next day—and set the image in his path as before. Again Anansi was obliged to leave his whole load—and again he called out the name of the place

where he would go the following day.

The same thing occurred, day after day, till all the animals in the wood were killed. By this time, Kweku Tsin had become very rich—but his father Anansi was still very poor. He was obliged to go to Kweku's house every day for food.

When the famine was over, Kweku gave a great feast and invited the entire village. While all were gathered together, Kweku told the story of his father's cunning and how it had been overcome. This caused great merriment among the villagers. Anansi was so ashamed that he readily promised Kweku to refrain from his evil tricks for the future. This promise, however, he did not keep long.



A story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Can you identify the beginning, middle, and end of today's story?

Beginning: A great famine was in the land, and meat was scarce.

Middle: Kweku found a place where there were still many animals. His father, Anansi, tried to trick Kweku into telling him where the animals were, but Kweku instead tricked Anansi and kept his secret.

End: Kweku gave a great feast when the famine was over and told the story of how he had overcome his father's cunning.

Notice that in our condensed version, I've left out all the details about Anansi's trickery, and how Kweku overcame it. These details make the story more interesting, but they are unnecessary in a summary.

When we put the parts together as a paragraph, we have a condensed narrative, or a summary paragraph. The original story was almost two pages, but the summary is only a few sentences long.

A great famine was in the land, and meat was scarce. Kweku found a place where there were still many animals. His father, Anansi, tried to trick Kweku into telling him where the animals were, but Kweku instead tricked Anansi and kept his secret.

Kweku gave a great feast when the famine was over and told the story of how he had overcome his father's cunning.

The Star-Spangled Banner

By Francis Scott Key

O! Say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming—
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming!
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O! Say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On that shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner; O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps, pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

O! Thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto—"In God is our trust":

And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral exercise. Find the verbs in this passage.

The stuff in the cauldron boiled up in foaming flashes of yellow and blue and red and white and silver, and sent out a sweet scent, and presently the witch poured it out into a pot and set it to cool in the doorway among the snakes.

Writing: Commonplace Book

Add the passage below from your model story to your commonplace book.

Nothing, being a rich man, wore a very fine velvet cloth, while Anansi had a ragged cotton one. While they were on their way Anansi persuaded Nothing to change clothes for a little while, promising to give back the fine velvet before they reached the town. He delayed doing this, however, first on one pretext, then on another—till they arrived at their destination.

Dictation

Use the first stanza of today's poem for dictation.

6.

Condensed Narrative: Anansi and Nothing

- The Book of Dragons, Chapter 6

Write “Anansi and Nothing” as a condensed narrative, or summary. Remember, just include the main content of the story and leave out unnecessary details. What is the beginning, the middle, and the end of “Anansi and Nothing”?

Down-Adown-Derry

By Walter De Le Mare

Down-adown-derry,
Sweet Annie Maroon,
Gathering daisies
In the meadows of Doone,
Hears a shrill piping,
Elflike and free,
Where the waters go brawling
In rills to the sea;
Singing down-adown-derry.
Down-adown-derry,
Sweet Annie Maroon,
Through the green grasses
Peeps softly; and soon

Spies under green willows
A fairy whose song
Like the smallest of bubbles
Floats bobbing along;
Singing down-adown-derry.

Down-adown-derry,
Her cheeks were like wine,
Her eyes in her wee face
Like water-sparks shine,
Her niminy fingers
Her sleek tresses preen,
The which in the combing
She peeps out between;
Singing down-adown-derry.

Down-adown-derry,
Shrill, shrill was her tune:—
“Come to my water-house,
Annie Maroon:
Come in your dimity,
Ribbon on head,
To wear siller seaweed
And coral instead”;
Singing down-adown-derry.

“Down-adown-derry,
Lean fish of the sea,
Bring lanthorns for feasting
The gay Faërie;
’Tis sand for the dancing,
A music all sweet
In the water-green gloaming
For thistledown feet”;
Singing down-adown-derry.
Down-adown-derry,
Sweet Annie Maroon
Looked large on the fairy
Curled wan as the moon
And all the grey ripples
To the Mill racing by,
With harps and with timbrels

Did ringing reply;
Singing down-adown-derry.
“Down-adown-derry,”
Sang the Fairy of Doone,
Piercing the heart
Of Sweet Annie Maroon;
And lo! When like roses
The clouds of the sun
Faded at dusk, gone
Was Annie Maroon;
Singing down-adown-derry.
Down-adown-derry,
The daisies are few;
Frost twinkles powdery
In haunts of the dew;
And only the robin
Perched on a thorn,
Can comfort the heart
Of a father forlorn;
Singing down-adown-derry.
Down-adown-derry,
There’s snow in the air;
Ice where the lily
Bloomed waxen and fair;
He may call o’er the water,
Cry—cry through the Mill,
But Annie Maroon, alas!
Answer ne’er will;
Singing down-adown-derry.

Editing

- Did you meet the goal of this writing exercise?

46.

Parts of Speech: Interjections; Nouns of Direct Address

- Ozma of Oz, Chapter 5

Definition: An interjection is a word or group of words that shows sudden or strong feeling.

There is no set list of words that can be used as interjections. Although the word **why** usually begins a question, it is also often used as an interjection at the beginning of a sentence, as are **yes**, **no**, and **indeed**. **Hello** is an interjection when it is used as a greeting or to express surprise. Look at the examples below from *Ozma of Oz*.

“Dear me!” said Dorothy, in a frightened tone. “What can the matter be?”

“Oh, I’m sure it was ripe,” declared Dorothy.

“No, that can’t be,” answered the little girl.

Interjections can be one word or more than one word, and they are set apart from the rest of the sentence by commas or exclamation marks.

Definition: A noun of direct address is the name or other reference directly to the person being addressed.

We use nouns of direct address to refer directly to the person or persons to whom we are speaking. This can be the person's name, but it can also be another word or phrase, such as **my friends, boys and girls**, or a title like **sir**. The second sentence has both an interjection and a noun of direct address.

“So I don’t believe there can be any automobiles, Billina.”

“Now, Tiktok,” said Dorothy, “the first thing to be done is to find a way for us to escape from these rocks.”

What do interjections and nouns of direct address have in common that made me put them both in the same lesson?

Neither has any grammatical relationship to the rest of the sentence! In other words, we can take them out of a sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence at all.

Interjections and nouns of direct address are also both diagrammed and punctuated exactly the same way. Both should be set apart from the rest of the sentence, usually with commas, but both are sometimes set apart with exclamation marks as well.

Because nouns of direct address have no grammatical relationship to the rest of the sentence, they will never be the subject of the sentence.

That last sentence is important. Nouns of direct address will never be the subject of the sentence. They also will not fill any other role, but they often look like the subject, especially when the real subject is the understood you.

“Dorothy, run!”

In the sentence above, **Dorothy** is the noun of direct address. The subject is the understood you. Does this sound like nonsense? Try removing the direct address from the sentence.

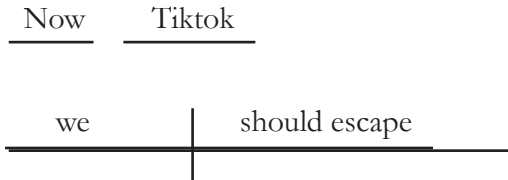
“Run!”

The sentence still makes sense. It still expresses a complete thought. The subject is an essential part of the sentence, even when it's the

unstated, understood you. The direct address is never an essential part of the sentence, not in a grammatical sense.

Interjections and nouns of direct address are both diagrammed on a floating line above the rest of the diagram.

“Now, Tiktok, we should escape.”



Brookland Road

By Rudyard Kipling

I was very well pleased with what I knowed,
I reckoned myself no fool—
Till I met with a maid on the Brookland Road
That turned me back to school.

Low down—low down!
Where the liddle green lanterns shine—
Oh! maids, I've done with 'ee all but one,
And she can never be mine!
'Twas right in the midst of a hot June night,
With thunder duntin' round,
And I seed her face by the fairy light
That beats from off the ground.

She only smiled and she never spoke,
She smiled and went away;
But when she'd gone my heart was broke,
And my wits was clean astray.

Oh! Stop your ringing and let me be—
Let be, O Brookland bells!
You'll ring Old Goodman * out of the sea,

Before I wed one else!

Old Goodman's farm is rank sea sand,
And was this thousand year;
But it shall turn to rich plough land
Before I change my dear!

Oh! Fairfield Church is water-bound
From Autumn to the Spring;
But it shall turn to high hill ground
Before my bells do ring!

Oh! leave me walk on the Brookland Road,
In the thunder and warm rain—
Oh! leave me look where my love goed
And p'raps I'll see her again!
Low down—low down!
Where the liddle green lanterns shine—
Oh! maids, I've done with 'ee all but one,
And she can never be mine!

Farmer Mybrow and the Fairies

From *West African Folk-Tales* by William H. Barker

Farmer Mybrow was one day looking about for a suitable piece of land to convert into a field. He wished to grow corn and yams. He discovered a fine spot, close to a great forest—which latter was the home of some fairies. He set to work at once to prepare the field.

Having sharpened his great knife, he began to cut down the bushes. No sooner had he touched one than he heard a voice say, "Who is there, cutting down the bushes?" Mybrow was too much astonished to answer. The question was repeated. This time the farmer realized that it must be one of the fairies, and so replied, "I am Mybrow, come to prepare a field." Fortunately for him the fairies were in great good humour. He heard one say, "Let us all help Farmer Mybrow to cut down the bushes." The rest agreed. To Mybrow's great delight, the bushes were all rapidly cut down with very little trouble on his part. He returned home, exceedingly well pleased with his day's work, having resolved to keep the field a secret even from his wife.

Early in January, when it was time to burn the dry bush, he set off

to his field, one afternoon, with the means of making a fire. Hoping to have the fairies' assistance once more, he intentionally struck the trunk of a tree as he passed. Immediately came the question, "Who is there, striking the stumps?" He promptly replied, "I am Mybrow, come to burn down the bush." Accordingly, the dried bushes were all burned down, and the field left clear in less time that it takes to tell it.

Next day the same thing happened. Mybrow came to chop up the stumps for firewood and clear the field for digging. In a very short time his faggots and firewood were piled ready, while the field was bare.

So it went on. The field was divided into two parts—one for maize and one for yams. In all the preparations—digging, sowing, planting—the fairies gave great assistance. Still, the farmer had managed to keep the whereabouts of his field a secret from his wife and neighbors.

The soil having been so carefully prepared, the crops promised exceedingly well. Mybrow visited them from time to time, and congratulated himself on the splendid harvest he would have.

One day, while maize and yams were still in their green and milky state, Mybrow's wife came to him. She wished to know where his field lay, that she might go and fetch some of the firewood from it. At first he refused to tell her. Being very persistent, however, she finally succeeded in obtaining the information—but on one condition. She must not answer any question that should be asked her. This she readily promised, and set off for the field.

When she arrived there she was utterly amazed at the wealth of the corn and yam. She had never seen such magnificent crops. The maize looked most tempting—being still in the milky state—so she plucked an ear. While doing so she heard a voice say, "Who is there, breaking the corn?" "Who dares ask me such a question?" she replied angrily—quite forgetting her husband's command. Going to the field of yams she plucked one of them also. "Who is there, picking the yams?" came the question again. "It is I, Mybrow's wife. This is my husband's field and I have a right to pick." Out came the fairies. "Let us all help Mybrow's wife to pluck her corn and yams," said they. Before the frightened woman could say a word, the fairies had all set to work with a will, and the corn and yams lay useless on the ground. Being all green and unripe, the harvest was now utterly spoiled. The farmer's wife wept bitterly, but to no purpose. She returned slowly home, not knowing what to say to her husband about such a terrible

catastrophe. She decided to keep silence about the matter.

Accordingly, next day the poor man set off gleefully to his field to see how his fine crops were going on. His anger and dismay may be imagined when he saw his field a complete ruin. All his work and foresight had been absolutely ruined through his wife's forgetfulness of her promise.

Writing: Copia

Take the following sentence and play with it. Remember that the point is not necessarily to make the sentence better. The point is to play with the sentence and make it different. Make a new sentence with a change from each of the following categories.

He comes to the top of the water much more often than before, and sends a bubble of air out of his mouth.

1. Change the grammar.
 - Change the nouns from common to proper and vice versa.
 - Change the nouns from singular to plural and vice versa.
 - Change the sentence type.
 - Change the adjectives from articles to descriptive to possessive, etc.
 - Change a quotation from direct to indirect and vice versa.
2. Condense the sentence.
 - Remove details.
 - Remove modifiers.
 - Remove phrases or clauses.
3. Amplify the sentence.
 - Add details.
 - Add dialogue.
 - Add modifiers.
 - Add phrases or clauses.
4. Use synonyms and antonyms.
 - Substitute synonyms.
 - Say the opposite thing using antonyms.

5. Point of view.
- Change the point of view.

Exercise

Review memory work. Identify each group of words below as either a phrase or a clause. If it is a clause, double underline the predicate and underline the subject.

until suddenly he became motionless

that low bow to you

she ran around the copper man

Copy each sentence below. Double underline the predicate, and underline the subject. Label the part of speech of each word. Noun, N; Proper Noun, PN; Pronoun, PRO; Verb, V; Linking Verb, LV; Adjective, ADJ; Article, ART; Conjunction, CJ; Interjection, INJ. Diagram each sentence.

“Haven’t you a club?”

“He must have been a great loss.” [Hint: **loss** has an article modifier. What part of speech does that make it?]

“The best thinker was a scarecrow.”

Commonplace Book

With your instructor’s approval, add the passage below to your commonplace book, or choose your own passage from a work of fiction. This can be from either school reading or free reading.

He gave a sort of gurgle and stopped short, waving his hands frantically until suddenly he became motionless, with one arm in the air and the other held stiffly before him with all the copper fingers of the hand spread out like a fan.

Dictation

At once she wound up Tiktok's voice, taking care to give the key as many turns as it would go around. She found this quite a task, as you may imagine if you have ever tried to wind a clock, but the machine man's first words were to assure Dorothy that he would now run for at least twenty-four hours.

"You did not wind me much, at first," he calmly said, "and I told you that long story about King Evoldo; so it is no wonder that I ran down."

95.

Indirect Objects

- This Week: Tanglewood Tales, The Pygmies

A transitive verb is one which has a direct object. Intransitive verbs do not have direct objects.

Occasionally, transitive verbs have an additional type of object.

Definition: An indirect object is a noun or pronoun that tells to whom or what, or for whom or what, the action of the verb is performed.

The direct object receives the action of the verb. It answers the question **whom** or **what** following a transitive verb. Sometimes, a transitive verb is performed for someone or something.

He wrote a letter.

He wrote what? A **letter**. Letter is the direct object. But **to whom** did he write a letter?

He wrote me a letter.

Now, the sentence tells **to whom** he wrote the letter: **me**. **Me** is the **indirect object**. Notice the position of the indirect object. It sits between the verb and the direct object. To have an indirect object, a

sentence must have a direct object, and the indirect object will always be between it and the verb.

The indirect object answers the question **to whom or what**, or **for whom or what**, the action of the verb is performed.

Look at the following sentence from “The Pygmies.”

His one vast eye gave the whole nation a friendly wink.

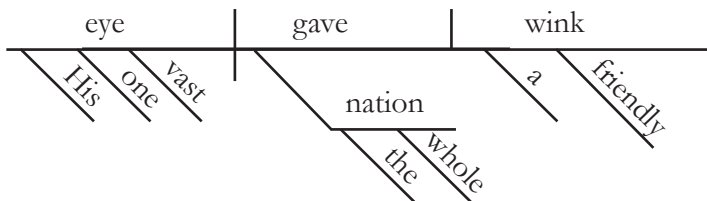
The transitive verb **gave** has a direct object, **wink**. His eye gave a wink to whom? To the whole **nation**. **Nation** is the indirect object.

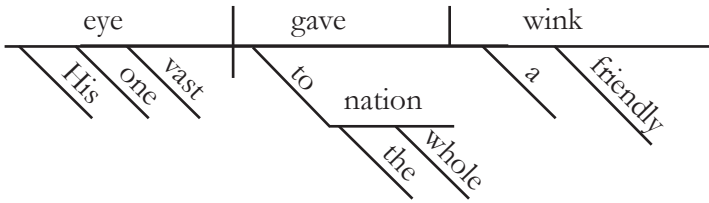
Note that this information could also be part of a prepositional phrase, using the preposition **to** or **for**.

His one vast eye gave a friendly wink to the whole nation.

With the preposition, **nation** is the object of the preposition **to**. The prepositional phrase modifies **gave**. In either case, the purpose is the same: to identify the recipient of the direct object. In other words, the indirect object tells who or what gets the direct object. You’ll find indirect objects with verbs such as build, buy, do, get, give, make, read, save, send, show, and tell.

Look at the following two diagrams. The first diagrams the sentence with **nation** as the indirect object. The second diagrams the sentence with **nation** as the object of the preposition **to**. In both cases, the word identifies the recipient of the direct object. Who received the wink? The whole **nation**. In both cases, it appears in the same position on the diagram.





Remember that only a sentence which has a direct object can have an indirect object. Follow this procedure for analyzing sentences.

Put brackets around prepositional phrases.

What is the predicate? The main verb is often easier to find than its subject, so find it first. Double underline it. Is it an action verb or a linking verb?

What is the subject? Underline it once.

For action verbs, is there a direct object which receives the action of the verb by answering the question **whom** or **what**? IF THERE IS A DIRECT OBJECT, is there an indirect object between the DO and the verb which identifies the recipient of the direct object by answering the question **to whom** or **what**, or **for whom** or **what**, the action of the verb is performed?

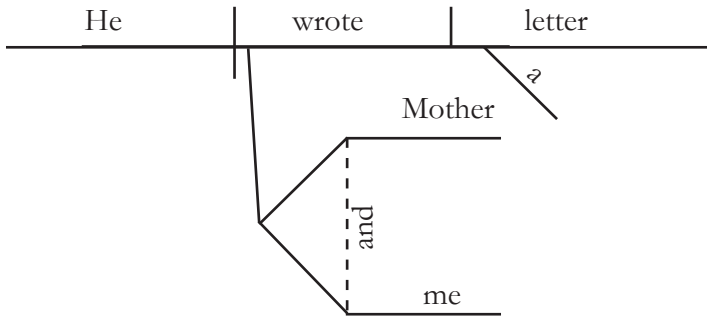
For linking verbs, is there a subject complement—a predicate nominative or a predicate adjective—which renames or modifies the subject?

You can also have a compound indirect object.

He wrote mother and me a letter.

He wrote what? A **letter**; **letter** is the direct object. Who receives the letter? **Mother** and **me**. **Mother** and **me** is the compound indirect object.

A compound indirect object is diagrammed like this:



Barnacles

By Sidney Lanier

My soul is sailing through the sea,
 But the Past is heavy and hindereth me.
 The Past hath crusted cumbrous shells
 That hold the flesh of cold sea-mells
 About my soul.

The huge waves wash, the high waves roll,
 Each barnacle clingeth and worketh dole
 And hindereth me from sailing!

Old Past, let go, and drop i' the sea
 Till fathomless waters cover thee!
 For I am living, but thou art dead;
 Thou drawest back, I strive ahead
 The Day to find.
 Thy shells unbind! Night comes behind;
 I needs must hurry with the wind
 And trim me best for sailing.

Crocodile's Treason

From *South-African Folk-Tales* by James A. Honey

Part 2.

“I stake my word of honor,” was the prompt answer from

Crocodile, and he let drop a few more long tears of honesty into the sand.

Baboon then said it was all square and honest as far as he could see into the case. He thought it was nonsense to attempt to dig pitfalls for one another; because he personally was well aware that his race would benefit somewhat from this contract of peace and friendship. And more than this, they must consider that use must be made of the fast disappearing water, for even in the best of times it was an unpleasant thing to be always carrying your life about in your hands. He would, however, like to suggest to the King that it would be well to have everything put down in writing, so that there would be nothing to regret in case it was needed.

Jackal did not want to listen to the agreement. He could not see that it would benefit the animals of the veldt. But Wolf, who had fully satisfied himself with the fish, was in an exceptionally peace-loving mood, and he advised Lion again to close the agreement.

After Lion had listened to all his advisers, and also the pleading tones of Crocodile's followers, he held forth in a speech in which he said that he was inclined to enter into the agreement, seeing that it was clear that Crocodile and his subjects were in a very tight place.

There and then a document was drawn up, and it was resolved, before midnight, to begin the trek. Crocodile's messengers swam in all directions to summon together the water animals for the trek.

Frogs croaked and crickets chirped in the long water grass. It was not long before all the animals had assembled at the vaarland willow. In the meantime Lion had sent out a few despatch riders to his subjects to raise a commando for an escort, and long ere midnight these also were at the vaarland willow in the moonlight.

The trek then was regulated by Lion and Jackal. Jackal was to take the lead to act as spy, and when he was able to draw Lion to one side, he said to him:

"See here, I do not trust this affair one bit, and I want to tell you straight out, I am going to make tracks! I will spy for you until you reach the sea-cow pool, but I am not going to be the one to await your arrival there."

Elephant had to act as advance guard because he could walk so softly and could hear and smell so well. Then came Lion with one division of the animals, then Crocodile's trek with a flank protection of both sides, and Wolf received orders to bring up the rear.

Meanwhile, while all this was being arranged, Crocodile was

smoothly preparing his treason. He called Yellow Snake to one side and said to him: "It is to our advantage to have these animals, who go among us every day, and who will continue to do so, fall into the hands of the Boer. Listen, now! You remain behind unnoticed, and when you hear me shout you will know that we have arrived safely at the sea-cow pool. Then you must harass the Boer's dogs as much as you can, and the rest will look out for themselves."

Thereupon the trek moved on. It was necessary to go very slowly as many of the water animals were not accustomed to the journey on land; but they trekked past the Boer's farm in safety, and toward break of day they were all safely at the sea-cow pool. There most of the water animals disappeared suddenly into the deep water, and Crocodile also began to make preparations to follow their example. With tearful eyes he said to Lion that he was, oh, so thankful for the help, that, from pure relief and joy, he must first give vent to his feelings by a few screams. Thereupon he suited his words to actions so that even the mountains echoed, and then thanked Lion on behalf of his subjects, and purposely continued with a long speech, dwelling on all the benefits both sides would derive from the agreement of peace.

Lion was just about to say good day and take his departure, when the first shot fell, and with it Elephant and a few other animals.

"I told you all so!" shouted Jackal from the other side of the sea-cow pool. "Why did you allow yourselves to be misled by a few Crocodile tears?"

Crocodile had disappeared long ago into the water. All one saw was just a lot of bubbles; and on the banks there was an actual war against the animals. It simply crackled the way the Boers shot them.

But most of them, fortunately, came out of it alive.

Shortly after, they say, Crocodile received his well-earned reward, when he met a driver with a load of dynamite. And even now when the Elephant gets the chance he pitches them up into the highest forks of the trees.

Exercise

Review memory work. Below are two clauses, one dependent and one independent. Show the two ways to join them.

the figure looked all the more terrible

because it carried an enormous brass club on its shoulder

Copy each sentence below. Double underline the predicate, and underline the subject. Put brackets around any prepositional phrases. Label the part of speech of each word. Noun, N; Proper Noun, PN; Pronoun, PRO; Verb, V; Linking Verb, LV; Adjective, ADJ; Article, ART; Conjunction, CJ; Preposition, Prep; Interjection, INJ. Diagram each sentence.

The Giant gave them his brotherly kindness.

He gave the Pygmies a breeze with his breath.

The Pymies built themselves structures of clay.

Writing: Commonplace Book

Add the passage below from your model story to your commonplace book.

In the first century before our era, when the Romans came to Egypt, they found the valley full of strange little pictures which seemed to have something to do with the history of the country. But the Romans were not interested in “anything foreign” and did not inquire into the origin of these queer figures which covered the walls of the temples and the walls of the palaces and endless reams of flat sheets made out of the papyrus reed. The last of the Egyptian priests who had understood the holy art of making such pictures had died several years before.

Dictation

Use part of today’s poem for dictation.



Level
Five

Level 5 Literature List

All the literature selections suggested herein are in the public domain in the United States of America and are probably available at your local library. The complete texts can also be found online from Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) and/or the Baldwin Project (www.mainlesson.com). Most are available as audio books, and free audio book versions may be found online from LibriVox (www.librivox.org).

“The Ransom of Red Chief” by O. Henry

“The Gift of the Magi” by O. Henry

The Emerald City of Oz by L. Frank Baum

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain

The Happy Prince and Other Tales by Oscar Wilde

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

Around the World in Eighty Days by Jules Verne

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Introduction

English Lessons Through Literature has three lessons per week for thirty-six weeks. This is a total of 108 lessons per year.

Level 4 is intended for 4th grade and up. Level 5 is intended for 5th grade and up. It is the first of a two-volume set which is intended for use before high school. Either level could be used for older children as well. I would advise Level 4 first for children who do not have a very strong background in grammar.

It is best to transition children gently into doing new things. In writing, this means that first we talk, then we write. *English Lessons Through Literature* includes oral lessons in some levels so that students can practice new concepts without the stress of having to write the answers. Oral lessons in early levels will then be written lessons in the following level.

Literature

The literature suggested in this book is in the public domain in the United States, and the full text of each story and book can be found online. Most are also available as audio books, and children who are reading well can read the book themselves rather than using the books as read-alouds.

I do recommend reading the literature prior to the lesson. The examples and the copywork almost always come from the reading selection from that day. We like to read it the day before so that written lessons can begin without delay on the lesson day.

Since most of the examples and part of the daily copywork come directly from the literature, reading the literature is an important component of this program. However, there is certainly room to skip books that the child does not like, and it is up to the parents to determine whether or not a recommended resource is right for their family. My homeschooling motto has long been: Use the curriculum; don't let the curriculum use you. I recommend the motto more highly than I recommend any of the literature selections in this book.

Lessons and Exercises

If your child has already covered some of the concepts in this book, use the lesson as a review by having him tell what he knows on the subject. Instead of reading the lesson on nouns, say, “Tell me everything you know about nouns.” Afterwards, you can skim the lesson and see if he’s left out any pertinent information. Prompt him for that information (“What do you know about abstract and concrete nouns?”), or go over that portion. In this way, he practices narration, he makes the information his own by telling it himself, and—in some cases—he may be reminded that he doesn’t know or remember as much as he thinks he does. We often believe that since “we’ve been over this a hundred times,” that means we know the subject. The student who can give you the lesson instead of reading it truly does.

English Lessons Through Literature narrations should be in addition to the oral narrations in other areas such as history and science. At this age, I recommend beginning to include written narrations from those subjects as well. You can start with just one per week, and work up from there.

The writing lessons follow a two-week repeating pattern.

Day 1: The model story for the next two weeks (six lessons) is in this lesson. The student reads and orally narrates the new model story.

Day 2: (Level 4) The student has a playing with words copia exercise. (Levels 5 and up) The student outlines the new model story.

Day 3: The student has either a literary analysis or descriptive writing exercise.

Day 4: The student has a playing with sentences copia exercise.

Day 5: The student has a commonplace book entry from the model story.

Day 6: The student writes the written narration from his outline.

I love using real sentences from real books for the lessons and exercises. They are far more interesting, which means children are far more likely to be engaged by the material. Copywork selections are only altered to change outdated punctuation and/or spelling when necessary. Lesson examples are often shortened—some of those old authors really knew how to write a paragraph into a sentence. Some sentences are simplified for diagramming.

When I check over the exercises with my children, I do not do so with red pencil in hand. Instead, we look at the work together, and I point out mistakes which he then corrects. I believe working with real sentences, even modified ones, can be a little harder than manufactured sentences. But I also believe that there's more value in working through the exercises to discover the correct answers.

English Lessons Through Literature includes a moderate number of exercise sentences to practice the concepts presented in the lessons. However, some children require more practice with grammatical concepts than others. Rather than fill each level with an excessive number of exercises, I chose to create a free download full of worksheets that can be used with any level for extra practice. The sentences are all taken from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as most children will have a basic familiarity with that story, one way or another. You can find a link to the practice worksheets on my website: www.barefootmeandering.com/bookstore.html.

Prepared Dictation

Like copywork, dictation is a form of studying grammar, spelling, and the mechanics of writing. However, dictation requires children to take a more active role and actually study and think about the material, as opposed to passively taking it in through copywork. For this reason, dictation should not begin until third or fourth grade, depending on readiness.

Dictation is for children who write easily. A child who is still struggling with reading or penmanship should just continue with copywork. However, children who type can type their dictations instead. This simplifies the process for children who hate writing.

In prepared dictation, children type or write a passage after studying it for five to ten minutes. Without this preparation, the exercise is not a teaching exercise; it is a test. In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason went further, describing dictation without preparation as “a fertile cause of bad spelling” (241).

I know that dictation can sound like a huge, time consuming exercise, especially with multiple children. It's not. We do prepared dictation twice a week, on the “off” days from grammar. Each of my boys

studies his exercise for about 10 minutes. He chooses, sometimes with my help, two or three words to analyze. A passage should not have more than three or four unknown words to be studied. He adds these to his Spelling Journal, writing each word with a space between the syllables, which helps him to analyze each word syllable by syllable. The Spelling Journal organizes words according to phonogram or spelling rule, and it is a free download on my site.

Dictations may be written or typed. My boys type their dictations. The spelling and grammar checks are turned off in our word processing program, and we increase the font size to 20+ points so that I can read over their shoulders. I read the exercises while each boy takes his turn at the keyboard. I stand behind them so that I can make sure they don't make any mistakes.

English Lessons Through Literature includes two dictation exercises each week. Sources include the literature, poems, and Bible verses. If you prefer, choose dictation exercises from history, science, or free reading.

Watch as the child writes to catch mistakes immediately. Mistakes imprint on a child's mind just as correctly written material does, and this confusion is difficult to correct, as some of us have found while using poor spelling programs which ask children still learning the basics to proofread something. In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason writes:

Once the eye sees a misspelt word, that image remains; and if there is also the image of the word rightly spelt, we are perplexed as to which is which. Now we see why there could not be a more ingenious way of making bad spellers than 'dictation' as it is commonly taught. Every misspelt word is an image in the child's brain not to be obliterated by the right spelling. It becomes, therefore, the teacher's business to prevent false spelling, and, if an error has been made, to hide it away, as it were, so that the impression may not become fixed (242).

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book is a book for copying poetry, passages from literature, and other writings or information. A simple composition book can be used for this purpose.

Each narration story has a commonplace book exercise, a passage from the story to copy. Children can also begin to add to the commonplace book from other reading: history, science, literature, or free reading. My children choose their own passages to copy, passages which speak to them in some way. For my oldest son, it's often something philosophical or political. For my second son, it's usually something funny.

In Level 5, the commonplace book completely replaces copywork. In Level 4, however, copywork suggestions are still given. If you want to begin transitioning to the commonplace book, then I recommend giving the child a choice each day. He can either do the scheduled copywork, or he can choose a passage that he enjoyed from another book.

Picture Study

Charlotte Mason recommended having the child look at the picture without interruption for several minutes, then putting the picture away and having the child describe the picture. It is, in essence, a picture narration. Afterwards, bring the picture back out and see if he notices anything else. This is not art criticism, though. It is learning to attend to detail and to form a love and appreciation for art.

Each artist is has six paintings studied with new paintings added every other week, so you have a full twelve weeks to enjoy each artist and to include additional activities if desired. For example, you could read a children's biography of the artist and view some of his additional works. More paintings can often be found at <http://www.wikipaintings.org/>, or just do an internet search for the artist's name.

All pictures of paintings in this book are, by necessity, black and white. Color copies of the paintings are provided on my site at no cost for your convenience. These can be printed so that you can display the picture for the two weeks between new paintings. In the past, we have also used the pictures as backgrounds on my computer. However, my oldest son did tell me once that it was strange seeing a particular painting without the icons.

Memory Work and Reference Pages

Memory work is an important part of this program. The student cannot properly analyze a sentence when he doesn't remember the difference between a verb and an adverb, or a phrase and a clause, or if he can't remember which verbs are linking verbs. When it comes to learning the basics of any subject, vocabulary is king.

At the back of the book, there are pages that have all the definitions and lists to learn from this book to make it easy to learn and review the information. New material should be read three times every lesson day, or daily, until it is learned. Newly learned material should be reviewed regularly at first, perhaps once a week. Material that's been learned for longer time should be reviewed every month to six weeks, but if it stops being automatic, it goes back to the frequent review.

There are more than one hundred poems in this book. My suggestion is to select a poem, preferably one the child enjoys, and begin to memorize it. When he has memorized it, move on to a new one.

Diagramming reference pages are also included in Appendix B.

Third Person Singular Pronouns

I wish the English language had a gender-neutral third person singular pronoun acceptable for people. I use the masculine because it's what I grew up with and I'm too old to like change. It is at least as correct as the feminine form and, as the mother of four boys, the feminine sounds odd to me in reference to children; I still call my two year old daughter "son" more often than not. And using the plural with a singular antecedent, which is becoming more common, is simply incorrect.



1. Parts of Speech: Nouns

- The Ransom of Red Chief by O. Henry

Definition: A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Everything and everybody has a name, and all of those names are nouns. We use the phrase “person, place, thing, or idea” in an effort to include every name, because every name is a noun.

“The Ransom of Red Chief” has a grand total of four people in it. We have “two desperate **men**,” **Bill** and **Sam**, who quickly become even more desperate. And we have the **Dorsets**, father **Ebenezer** and son **Johnny**, also known as **Red Chief**.

The names of places, things, and ideas are also nouns. Each of the underlined words in the following paragraph is a noun.

Yes, sir, that boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping out in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive, himself. He immediately christened me Snake-eye, the Spy, and announced that, when his braves returned from the warpath, I was to be broiled at the stake at the rising of the sun.

In this passage, we have people: boy, captive, Snake-eye, Spy, and braves. We have a place: the cave. We have things: the stake and the sun. And we have ideas: fun, time, life, and warpath.

Nouns can be common, naming any general person, place, thing, or idea. Nouns can also be proper, naming an individual person, place, thing, or idea. A proper noun begins with a capital letter. In addition to the names of people above, the story includes the proper names of places, Alabama and Summit, and a thing, the paper named the *Weekly Farmers' Budget*.

You'll be learning the definitions for all the parts of speech as well as lists of important material. It is important to know this information well.

A Prayer

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

O Lord, the hard-won miles
Have worn my stumbling feet:
Oh, soothe me with thy smiles,
And make my life complete.
The thorns were thick and keen
Where'er I trembling trod;
The way was long between
My wounded feet and God.
Where healing waters flow
Do thou my footsteps lead.
My heart is aching so;
Thy gracious balm I need.

Writing: Oral Narration

A model story is one that you will be using as a model for your own writing. Read your new model story below, and then give your instructor an oral narration of it.

The Three Bears

From *Nursery Tales Told to the Children* by Amy Steedman

It really was the neatest little cottage that ever was seen, and the three bears who lived in it were the tidiest and best-behaved bears in all that forest. For, of course, the cottage was in the middle of a

forest. Bears love quiet, shady places where there are plenty of trees to climb. The cottage had a porch covered with honeysuckle, while roses climbed up the walls and peeped into the lattice-windows.

Now the three bears were not a bit like one another, for one was a Great Big Bear, and one was a Middle-sized Bear, and one was a Tiny Wee Bear. They kept the cottage very tidy, and every morning they made the great big bed, and the middle-sized bed, and the tiny wee bed, and dusted the great big chair, and the middle-sized chair, and the tiny wee chair before they sat down to breakfast.

One morning when the porridge was made and had been poured out into the great big bowl, and the middle-sized bowl, and the tiny wee bowl, it was so hot that the three bears went out for a walk in the wood, to pass the time until it cooled. The Great Big Bear and the Middle-sized Bear walked along most properly, but the Tiny Wee Bear took his hoop and bowled it along in front.

Now that very morning it happened that Goldilocks lost her way in the forest. She was a very pretty little girl, with hair like threads of shining gold, and that is how she got her name. But she was very self-willed, and fancied she knew better than her mother. That is how she came to lose her way in the wood, for her mother had told her if she wandered from the path she would not be able to find her way home again, and Goldilocks had tossed her head and paid no attention. And so it happened that she wandered so far that she could not find her way back, and arrived at the bears' cottage that sunny morning just after they had left it.

It was a fresh, cool morning, just the sort of morning that made Goldilocks want her breakfast more than usual, for she had run out before it was ready, and when she came to the pretty little cottage she skipped for joy.

"I am sure some kind person lives here, and will give me some bread and milk," she said to herself. And then she peeped through the open door.

"There does not seem to be any one at home," she said anxiously. "But oh, what a delicious smell of porridge!"

She could not wait another moment, but walked in and sat down in the great big chair and took a spoonful of porridge out of the great big bowl. "Ugh!" she cried, making a face, "this is far too salt, and this chair is much too hard!"

So she changed her seat and tried the middle-sized chair, and tasted the porridge out of the middle-sized bowl.

“Oh dear me! this has no salt at all,” she said, “and this chair is far too soft.” And laying down the spoon, she jumped up in a great hurry. Then she tried the tiny wee chair, and took a spoonful of the porridge out of the tiny wee bowl.

“This is simply delicious!” she cried, “and the little chair is just right too.”

And she ate and ate till she finished all the porridge out of the tiny wee bowl. And the tiny little chair was so comfortable that she curled herself up in it until suddenly the seat gave a crack and she fell right through on to the floor.

Goldilocks picked herself up and looked round to see if she could find a sofa to rest on, for she was now so sleepy she could scarcely keep her eyes open. Then she saw a staircase, and she climbed up at once to see if there was a bed in the room above. And sure enough in the room upstairs she found three beds, standing side by side under the open lattice-window where the roses peeped in.

She threw herself at once on to the great big bed, but it was so hard that she rolled off as quickly as she could. Then she tried the middle-sized bed, but it was so soft that she sank right in and felt quite smothered. So then she tried the tiny wee bed, and it was just soft enough, and so deliciously comfortable that she curled herself up on it with a big sigh of content, and went fast asleep in the twinkling of an eye.

Presently home came the three bears from their walk, and they went to the table to begin their breakfast.

“Who has been sitting in my chair?” growled the Great Big Bear in his great big voice. For the cushion had been pulled all to one side.

“Who has been sitting in my chair?” said the Middle-sized Bear in her middle-sized voice. For there was a large dent in the cushion where Goldilocks had sat.

“Who has been sitting in my chair, and broken it right through?” said the Tiny Wee Bear in his tiny wee voice.

Meanwhile the Great Big Bear had been staring at his great big bowl of porridge which had a spoon sticking in it.

“Who has been eating my porridge?” he growled in his great big voice.

“Who has been eating my porridge?” said the Middle-sized Bear in her middle-sized voice.

“Who has been eating my porridge and has eaten it all up?” cried the Tiny Wee Bear in his tiny wee voice.

Then the three bears searched all round the room to see if they could find out who had been there. Next they climbed up the stairs to look in the bedroom.

But the moment the Great Big Bear saw his bed all rumped and tossed about, he growled in his great big voice, "Who has been lying on my bed?"

"And who has been lying on my bed?" said the Middle-sized Bear in her middle-sized voice.

"Who has been sleeping on my little bed, and lies here still?" cried the Tiny Wee Bear in his tiny wee voice.

Now when the Great Big Bear spoke, Goldilocks dreamed of a thunderstorm; and when the Middle-sized Bear spoke, she dreamed that the wind was making the roses nod. But when the Tiny Wee Bear cried out, she opened her eyes and was wide awake in a moment. She jumped up and ran to the window, and, before the three bears could catch her, she jumped out into the garden below. Then she ran through the wood as fast as she could, and never stopped till she reached home. And you may be sure she never went wandering into the wood again, so the Great Big Bear and the Middle-sized Bear and the Tiny Wee Bear ate their porridge in peace all the rest of their days.

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral exercise. Find the nouns in this passage. Which nouns are proper nouns, and which are common?

Ebenezer Dorset, Esq.:

We have your boy concealed in a place far from Summit. It is useless for you or the most skillful detectives to attempt to find him. Absolutely, the only terms on which you can have him restored to you are these: We demand fifteen hundred dollars in large bills for his return; the money to be left at midnight tonight at the same spot and in the same box as your reply — as hereinafter described. If you agree to these terms, send your answer in writing by a solitary messenger tonight at half-past eight o'clock. After crossing Owl Creek, on the road to Poplar Cove, there are three large trees about a hundred yards apart, close to the fence of the wheat field on the right-hand side. At the bottom of the fence-post, opposite the third tree, will be found a small pasteboard box. The

messenger will place the answer in this box and return immediately to Summit.

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book is a book where you can copy down poetry, passages from books, and other types of information which appeal to you. A simple composition book can be used for this purpose. If you don't already have a commonplace book, you should begin one this year. There are commonplace prompts throughout this book which instruct you to write a commonplace entry. For most prompts, you will choose your own commonplace entry, though you will be instructed to choose from a particular type of literature, such as a work of fiction, a work of non-fiction, or a poem. A commonplace book entry should be half to a full a page long.

Today, choose a passage from a work of fiction. With your instructor's approval, this can be from either school reading or free reading. If you cannot think of a passage that you enjoy or that means something to you personally, then copy the opening paragraphs from today's literature reading.

Dictation

We selected for our victim the only child of a prominent citizen named Ebenezer Dorset. The father was respectable and tight, a mortgage fancier and a stern, upright collection-plate passer and forecloser. The kid was a boy of ten, with bas-relief freckles, and hair the colour of the cover of the magazine you buy at the newsstand when you want to catch a train. Bill and me figured that Ebenezer would melt down for a ransom of two thousand dollars to a cent. But wait till I tell you.



2. Abstract & Concrete Nouns

- The Gift of the Magi by O. Henry

Nouns can be either concrete or abstract. Concrete nouns are recognizable through the five senses. Abstract nouns name an idea, event, quality, or concept. Look at the following sentence from “The Gift of the Magi.”

Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim’s gold watch that had been his father’s and his grandfather’s. The other was Della’s hair.

The pride the Youngs feel is an abstract noun. We can understand it, but not through our senses; we can neither see, hear, taste, touch, nor smell it. Christmas and Christmas Eve are also abstract nouns. Their possessions, on the other hand, his watch and her hair, are tangible. We could reach out and touch them.

Snow-Flakes

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Out of the bosom of the Air,
Out of the cloud-folds of her garments shaken,
Over the woodlands brown and bare

Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
Silent, and soft, and slow
Descends the snow.
Even as our cloudy fancies take
Suddenly shape in some divine expression,
Even as the troubled heart doth make
In the white countenance confession,
The troubled sky reveals
The grief it feels.

This is the poem of the air,
Slowly in silent syllables recorded;
This is the secret of despair,
Long in its cloudy bosom hoarded,
Now whispered and revealed
To wood and field.

Mulla Nasrudin

Level 5 contains many stories of Mulla Nasrudin, a character in tales from the Middle East. Though it is uncertain exactly when and where the tales began, new stories have been added over generations.

The tales included here were written by Rodney Ohebsion. He writes, “Much of Nasrudin’s actions and can be described as illogical yet logical, rational yet irrational, bizarre yet normal, and simple yet profound. What adds even further to his uniqueness is the way he gets across his messages in unconventional yet very effective methods.”

The Loan Request

By Rodney Ohebsion

Nasrudin struck up a conversation with a stranger.
At one point, he asked, “So how’s business?”
“Great,” the other replied.
“Then can I borrow ten dollars?”
“No. I don’t know you well enough to lend you money.”
“That’s strange,” replied Nasrudin. “Where I used to live,

people wouldn't lend me money because they knew me; and now that I've moved here, people won't lend me money because they don't know me!"

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral exercise. Find the nouns in this passage. Which nouns are concrete, and which are abstract?

As soon as she saw it she knew that it must be Jim's. It was like him. Quietness and value—the description applied to both. Twenty-one dollars they took from her for it, and she hurried home with the 87 cents. With that chain on his watch Jim might be properly anxious about the time in any company. Grand as the watch was, he sometimes looked at it on the sly on account of the old leather strap that he used in place of a chain.

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book entry should be half to a full a page long. Today, choose a poem. If you cannot think of a poem that you enjoy or that means something to you personally, then copy all or part of today's poem.

Dictation

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.



An Old Woman Cooking Eggs by Diego Velazquez

Picture Study

1. Read the title and the name of the artist. Study the picture for several minutes, then put the picture away.
2. Describe the picture.
3. Look at the picture again. Do you notice any details that you missed before? What do you like or dislike about this painting? Does it remind you of anything?

3. *Literary Analysis*



- The Emerald City of Oz, Chapter 1

Writing: Literary Analysis

You read two different short stories by O. Henry this week. Choose one of them and answer the following questions. This should be a written exercise. However, it is often helpful to discuss your topic with someone before you begin writing.

Who is the story about? Did you have sympathy for any of the characters in the story? Why or why not?

It's important to give evidence to support your opinions. Give examples from the story. For instance, don't say that you liked a character because he was nice. Instead, give me an example from the story that shows that he was nice. For example, yesterday you read the fable "The Cat and the Old Rat." If I wanted to write about that fable, I might say one of the following sentences:

I felt sorry for the cat because he was hungry.

I felt sorry for the mouse because he was trapped in his home all the time.

In both cases, I gave a reason for sympathy. You're writing your opinion, so there are no right or wrong answers as long as you can show why you feel that way.

The Poet and His Song

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

A song is but a little thing,
And yet what joy it is to sing!
In hours of toil it gives me zest,
And when at eve I long for rest;
When cows come home along the bars,
And in the fold I hear the bell,
As Night, the shepherd, herds his stars,
I sing my song, and all is well.
There are no ears to hear my lays,
No lips to lift a word of praise;
But still, with faith unfaltering,
I live and laugh and love and sing.
What matters yon unheeding throng?
They cannot feel my spirit's spell,
Since life is sweet and love is long,
I sing my song, and all is well.
My days are never days of ease;
I till my ground and prune my trees.
When ripened gold is all the plain,
I put my sickle to the grain.
I labor hard, and toil and sweat,
While others dream within the dell;
But even while my brow is wet,
I sing my song, and all is well.
Sometimes the sun, unkindly hot,
My garden makes a desert spot;
Sometimes a blight upon the tree
Takes all my fruit away from me;
And then with throes of bitter pain
Rebellious passions rise and swell;
But—life is more than fruit or grain,
And so I sing, and all is well.

The Moving Friend

By Rodney Ohebsion

“Nasrudin,” a friend said one day, “I’m moving to another village. Can I have your ring? That way, I will remember you every time I look at it?”

“Well,” replied Nasrudin, “you might lose the ring and then forget about me. How about I don’t give you a ring in the first place—that way, every time that you look at your finger and don’t see a ring, you’ll definitely remember me.”

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book entry should be half to a full a page long. Today, choose a passage from a work of non-fiction. With your instructor’s approval, this can be from the Bible, a biography, or one of your history or science books. If you cannot think of a passage that you enjoy or that means something to you personally, then copy the opening paragraphs from your next reading in your history spine.

Editing

Today, you wrote a literary analysis paper. That’s a fancy way to say that you wrote about a story.

Part of writing well is learning to edit. Most of us do not write a perfect paper the first time. But we can make changes to our writing that will make it better.

Start by reading your paper out loud. Sometimes, we notice mistakes when we hear them out loud, but we don’t notice them when we just read them silently.

- Did you meet the goal of this writing exercise?
- If you gave an opinion, did you support it with evidence? If not, add examples that support your opinions. Did you include all the important details from the story? If not, add them now.

4. Parts of Speech: Pronouns

- The Emerald City of Oz, Chapter 2

Definitions:

A pronoun is a word used in the place of a noun.

An antecedent is the noun that a pronoun replaces in a sentence.

It's not always convenient to keep saying the name of a noun over and over again. We can use pronouns to take the place of nouns, both common and proper. Look at the following sentences.

Dorothy Gale lived on a farm in Kansas, with (1) her Aunt Em and (2) her Uncle Henry. (3) It was not a big farm, nor a very good one, because sometimes the rain did not come when the crops needed (4) it, and then everything withered and dried up. Once a cyclone had carried away Uncle Henry's house, so that (5) he was obliged to build another; and as (6) he was a poor man (7) he had to mortgage (8) his farm to get the money to pay for the new house.

The underlined words are pronouns. Each pronoun has an antecedent. The antecedent is the noun that the pronoun replaces. In the passage above, the antecedent of the first and second pronouns is **Dorothy Gale's**; the antecedent of the third pronoun is **farm**; the antecedent of the fourth pronoun is **rain**. And the antecedents for the sixth, seventh, and eighth pronouns are **Uncle Henry** and **Uncle Henry's**.

We use different pronouns for speaking about different people.

We use first person pronouns when we speak of ourselves. I can speak only of myself and use the singular form, or I can speak of myself and others with the plural form.

The first person pronouns are: I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, ours.

We use second person pronouns to refer to the person to whom we are speaking. Singular and plural pronouns are the same in the second person.

The second person pronouns are: you, your, yours.

As a bit of trivia, the second person used to have different singular pronouns: thee, thou, and thy.

We use third person pronouns to refer to people and things which we are discussing.

The third person pronouns are: he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its, they, them, their, theirs.

A Day Of Sunshine

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

O gift of God! O perfect day:
Whereon shall no man work, but play;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be!
Through every fibre of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch
Of life, that seems almost too much.
I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through a sapphire sea the sun
Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloud-land in the West,
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
Whose steep sierra far uplifts
Its craggy summits white with drifts.
Blow, winds! and waft through all the rooms
The snow-flakes of the cherry-blooms!
Blow, winds! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the peach!
O Life and Love! O happy throng
Of thoughts, whose only speech is song!
O heart of man! canst thou not be
Blithe as the air is, and as free?

Mad at the Fakir

By Rodney Ohebsion

A Fakir claimed that he could teach any illiterate person to read through an “instant technique.”

“OK,” Nasrudin said. “Teach me.”

The Fakir then touched Nasrudin’s head and said, “Now go read something.”

Nasrudin left, and returned to the village square an hour later with an angry look on his face.

“What happened?” asked the villagers. “Can you read now?”

“Indeed I can,” replied Nasrudin, “but that’s not why I came back? Now where is that scoundrel Fakir?”

“Mulla,” the people said, “he taught you to read in no more than a minute. So what makes you think he’s a scoundrel?”

“Well,” Nasrudin explained, “I was just reading a book that asserted, ‘All Fakirs are frauds.’”

Writing: Copia

Part of writing is developing what the ancient Greeks called *copia*, which means an abundance of words and phrases. The writing exercises are meant to help you develop *copia*, so in addition to writing narrations, you’ll also be playing with words and sentences so that you’ll learn a variety of ways to say things.

Take the following sentence and play with it. Remember that the point is not necessarily to make the sentence better. The point is to

play with the sentence and make it different. Make a new sentence with one or more of the changes listed below. As you learn more, there will be new ways to change sentences.

Dorothy Gale lived on a farm in Kansas, with her Aunt Em and her Uncle Henry.

1. Change the grammar.
 - Change the nouns from common to proper and vice versa
 - Change the nouns from singular to plural and vice versa.

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral or written exercise. Find the pronouns in this passage. What is the antecedent of each pronoun?

“You might do housework for some one, dear, you are so handy; or perhaps you could be a nurse-maid to little children. I’m sure I don’t know exactly what you CAN do to earn money, but if your uncle and I are able to support you we will do it willingly, and send you to school. We fear, though, that we shall have much trouble in earning a living for ourselves. No one wants to employ old people who are broken down in health, as we are.”

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book entry should be half to a full a page long. Today, choose a passage from a work of fiction. With your instructor’s approval, this can be from either school reading or free reading. If you cannot think of a passage that you enjoy or that means something to you personally, then copy the opening paragraphs from today’s literature reading.

Dictation

“Because there is a deadly desert all around that fairy country, which no one is able to cross. You know that fact as well as I do, your Majesty. Never mind the lost Belt. You have plenty of power left, for you rule this underground kingdom like a tyrant, and thousands of Nomes obey your commads. I advise you to drink a glass of melted silver, to quiet your nerves, and then go to bed.”



5. How to Write a Condensed Narrative

- The Emerald City of Oz, Chapter 3

Today you'll learn how to write a condensed narrative, also called a summary. To condense a story, we make it shorter. The main content of the narrative—who, what, when, where, why, and how—remain, but we leave out the details.

Read the following story.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

From *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon, with Other Norwegian Folk Tales*
Retold by Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen

Once on a time there were three Billy Goats, who were to go up to the hillside to make themselves fat, and the family name of the goats was “Gruff.”

On the way up was a bridge, over a river which they had to cross, and under the bridge lived a great ugly Troll with eyes as big as saucers, and a nose as long as a poker.

First of all came the youngest Billy Goat Gruff to cross the bridge.

“Trip, trap; trip, trap!” went the bridge.

“Who’s that tripping over my bridge?” roared the Troll.

“Oh, it is only I, the tiniest Billy Goat Gruff, and I’m going up to the

hillside to make myself fat,” said the Billy Goat, with such a small voice.

“Now, I’m coming to gobble you up,” said the Troll.

“Oh, no! pray do not take me, I’m too little, that I am,” said the Billy Goat; “wait a bit till the second Billy Goat Gruff comes, he’s much bigger.”

“Well! be off with you,” said the Troll.

A little while after came the second Billy Goat Gruff across the bridge.

“Trip, trap! trip, trap! trip, trap!” went the bridge.

“Who is that tripping over my bridge?” roared the Troll.

“Oh, it’s the second Billy Goat Gruff, and I’m going up to the hillside to make myself fat,” said the Billy Goat. Nor had he such a small voice, either.

“Now, I’m coming to gobble you up!” said the Troll.

“Oh, no! don’t take me, wait a little till the big Billy Goat comes, he’s much bigger.”

“Very well! be off with you,” said the Troll.

But just then up came the big Billy Goat Gruff.

“Trip, trap! trip, trap! trip, trap!” went the bridge, for the Billy Goat was so heavy that the bridge creaked and groaned under him.

“Who’s that tramping on my bridge?” roared the Troll.

“It’s I! the big Billy Goat Gruff,” said the Billy Goat, and he had a big hoarse voice.

“Now, I’m coming to gobble you up!” roared the troll.

“Well come! I have two spears so stout,

With them I’ll thrust your eyeballs out;

I have besides two great big stones,

With them I’ll crush you body and bones!”

That was what the big Billy Goat said; so he flew at the Troll, and thrust him with his horns, and crushed him to bits, body and bones, and tossed him out into the river, and after that he went up to the hillside.

There the Billy Goats got so fat that they were scarcely able to walk home again, and if they haven’t grown thinner, why they’re still fat; and so,—

“Snip, snap, stout.

This tale’s told out.”



Stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end, so we start by identifying the parts of the story.

Beginning: Three Billy Goats, named Gruff, went up to the hillside each day to get fat.

Middle: As the small and middle Billy Goats each attempt to cross the bridge on their way to the hillside, a Troll under the bridge threatens to eat them. They each convince the Troll to wait for the big Billy Goat Gruff.

End: When the Troll threatened the big Billy Goat Gruff, he crushed the Troll to bits and continued to the hillside where he and his brothers continued to get fat.

Notice that all of the main events are covered in the list above. The rest of the story is details. The details make the story far more interesting to read, but we know all of the main characters and events without those details. We still know who, what, when, where, why, and how. We can write the beginning, middle, and end as a condensed narrative, or summary.

Three Billy Goats, named Gruff, went up to the hillside each day to get fat. As the small and middle Billy Goats each attempt to cross the bridge on their way to the hillside, a Troll under the bridge threatens to eat them. They each convince the Troll to wait for the big Billy Goat Gruff. When the Troll threatened the big Billy Goat Gruff, he crushed the Troll to bits and continued to the hillside where he and his brothers continued to get fat.

The Pasture

By Robert Frost

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to watch the water clear, I may):
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.
I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's so young,
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

Exercise

Review memory work. This can be an oral or written exercise. Find the pronouns in this passage. What is the antecedent of each pronoun? Are the antecedents common or proper, abstract or concrete?

In spite of all I have said in a general way, there were some parts of the Land of Oz not quite so pleasant as the farming country and the Emerald City which was its center. Far away in the South Country there lived in the mountains a band of strange people called Hammer-Heads, because they had no arms and used their flat heads to pound any one who came near them. Their necks were like rubber, so that they could shoot out their heads to quite a distance, and afterward draw them back again to their shoulders. The Hammer-Heads were called the “Wild People,” but never harmed any but those who disturbed them in the mountains where they lived.

Writing: Commonplace Book

A commonplace book entry should be half to a full a page long. Today, choose a passage from the model for your current writing project.

Dictation

Use today’s poem for dictation.



6. *Condensed Narrative:* *The Three Bears*

- The Emerald City of Oz, Chapter 4

Writing: Written Narration

Write “The Three Bears” as a condensed narrative, or summary. Remember, just include the main content of the story and leave out unnecessary details. What is the beginning, the middle, and the end of “The Three Bears”?

The Old Apple-Tree

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

There’s a memory keeps a-runnin’
Through my weary head to-night,
An’ I see a picture dancin’
In the fire-flames’ ruddy light;
‘Tis the picture of an orchard
Wrapped in autumn’s purple haze,
With the tender light about it
That I loved in other days.
An’ a-standin’ in a corner
Once again I seem to see
The verdant leaves an’ branches

Of an old apple-tree.
You perhaps would call it ugly,
An' I don't know but it's so,
When you look the tree all over
Unadorned by memory's glow;
For its boughs are gnarled an' crooked,
An' its leaves are gettin' thin,
An' the apples of its bearin'
Would n't fill so large a bin
As they used to. But I tell you,
When it comes to pleasin' me,
It's the dearest in the orchard,—
Is that old apple-tree.
I would hide within its shelter,
Settlin' in some cosy nook,
Where no calls nor threats could stir me
From the pages o' my book.
Oh, that quiet, sweet seclusion
In its fulness passeth words!
It was deeper than the deepest
That my sanctum now affords.
Why, the jaybirds an' the robins,
They was hand in glove with me,
As they winked at me an' warbled
In that old apple-tree.
It was on its sturdy branches
That in summers long ago
I would tie my swing an' dangle
In contentment to an' fro,
Idly dreamin' childish fancies,
Buildin' castles in the air,
Makin' o' myself a hero
Of romances rich an' rare.
I kin shet my eyes an' see it
Jest as plain as plain kin be,
'That same old swing a-danglin'
To the old apple-tree.
There's a rustic seat beneath it
That I never kin forget.
It's the place where me an' Hallie—
Little sweetheart—used to set,

When we 'd wander to the orchard
So 's no listenin' ones could hear
As I whispered sugared nonsense
Into her little willin' ear.
Now my gray old wife is Hallie,
An' I 'm grayer still than she,
But I 'll not forget our courtin'
'Neath the old apple-tree.
Life for us ain't all been summer,
But I guess we 'we had our share
Of its flittin' joys an' pleasures,
An' a sprinklin' of its care.
Oft the skies have smiled upon us;
Then again we 've seen 'em frown,
Though our load was ne'er so heavy
That we longed to lay it down.
But when death does come a-callin',
This my last request shall be,—
That they 'll bury me an' Hallie
'Neath the old apple tree.

Editing

Today, you wrote a condensed narrative. Read it out loud so to hear possible problems.

- Did you meet the goal of this writing exercise?
- Did you include all of the important aspects of the story—who, what, when, where, why, and how? Did you keep the events in order?



40. *Subordinate Conjunctions and Complex Sentences*

- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Chapters 17-18

A subordinate clause begins with a subordinate conjunction, a relative pronoun, or a relative adverb. It contains a subject-predicate pair, but it does not form a complete sentence.

Subordinate clauses, also called **dependent clauses**, depend on another clause to make sense. On their own, they leave the reader wondering, “And then what?” A sentence which contains a dependent clause will be complex if it contains one independent clause, or compound-complex if it contains two or more independent clauses.

There are two types of special words which begin dependent clauses, **subordinate conjunctions** and **relative pronouns**. Today’s lesson is on subordinate conjunctions.

The subordinate conjunctions are: after, although, as, because, before, even if, even though, if, in order that, once, provided that, rather than, since, so that, than, that, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, whereas, wherever, whether, while.

Coordinating conjunctions, the FANBOYS, give equal weight to the clauses which they connect. Both clauses are equally important.

He joined them promptly, for all careers were one to him.

Subordinate conjunctions reduce the importance of the clauses they begin. The most important idea is in the main clause while the subordinate clause supports the main clause with extra details. A subordinate conjunction also acts as a transition between the ideas in the sentence, indicating a time, place, or cause and effect relationship between clauses. Look at these sentences from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

As it expanded and rose in a lazy cloud, that same dull throb of sound was borne to the listeners again.

Perhaps they would be sorry when they found out what they had driven him to.

Notice that it is the subordinate conjunction which prevents the clause from expressing a complete thought. It indicates to the reader that there is more to know. Without the subordinate conjunction, the clause would be an independent clause.

It expanded and rose in a lazy cloud.

They found out what they had driven him to.

Punctuating a complex sentence is simple and straightforward. When the subordinate clause comes first, use a comma to separate it from the main clause. However, when the subordinate clause comes after the main clause, no comma is necessary.

That same dull throb of sound was borne to the listeners again as it expanded and rose in a lazy cloud.

When they found out what they had driven him to, perhaps they would be sorry.

Into My Own

By Robert Frost

One of my wishes is that those dark trees,
So old and firm they scarcely show the breeze,
Were not, as 'twere, the merest mask of gloom,
But stretched away unto the edge of doom.
I should not be withheld but that some day
Into their vastness I should steal away,
Fearless of ever finding open land,
Or highway where the slow wheel pours the sand.
I do not see why I should e'er turn back,
Or those should not set forth upon my track
To overtake me, who should miss me here
And long to know if still I held them dear.
They would not find me changed from him they knew—
Only more sure of all I thought was true.

Walnuts and Watermelons

By Rodney Ohebsion

As Nasrudin rested under a tall walnut tree one day, he looked a few yards to his side and noticed a big watermelon growing on a thin vine near the ground.

Nasrudin looked up and said, "Great God, please permit me to ask you this: why is it that walnuts grow on big strong trees, while watermelons grow on thin weak vines. Shouldn't it be the other way around?"

But at that very moment, a walnut fell from high on up in the tree and hit Nasrudin square on the head.

"Ah!" remarked Nasrudin. "I suppose Nature's ways might not be as backward as I thought. After all, if a big watermelon fell out of the tree and onto my head, it might have killed me!"

Writing: Copia

Take the following sentence and play with it. Remember that the point is not necessarily to make the sentence better. The point is to play with the sentence and make it different. Make a new sentence with a change from each of the following categories.

We were glad the little lark was safe, and got back to his wife and little ones.

1. Change the grammar.
 - Change the nouns from common to proper and vice versa.
 - Change the nouns from singular to plural and vice versa.
 - Change the type of adjectives: articles, descriptive, possessive, etc.
 - Change the sentence type.
2. Condense the sentence.
 - Remove details.
 - Remove modifiers.
 - Remove phrases or clauses.
3. Amplify the sentence.
 - Add details.
 - Add modifiers.
 - Add phrases or clauses.
4. Use synonyms and antonyms.
 - Substitute synonyms.
 - Say the same thing using antonyms.
 - Say the opposite thing using antonyms.

Exercise

Review memory work. In the sentences below, are the underlined words infinitives or prepositional phrases?

Aunt Polly and Mary were very loving to Tom, and very attentive to his wants.

“Well, try to recollect—can’t you?”

Show one way to use the following quote as evidence in a literary analysis paper. Use a colon.

But Joe's spirits had gone down almost beyond resurrection.

Punctuate the following sentences.

Aunt Polly it ain't fair

Tom I hoped you loved me that much

Copy each sentence below. Double underline the predicate, and underline the subject. Put brackets around any prepositional phrases. Label the part of speech of each word. Noun, N; Proper Noun, PN; Pronoun, PRO; Verb, V; Linking Verb, LV; Adjective, ADJ; Article, ART; Conjunction, CJ; Preposition, Prep; Interjection, INJ. Diagram each sentence.

“Why, she was here!”

Presently she stopped.

“Well, I don't know.”

The Harpers, and Aunt Polly's family, were being put into mourning.

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book entry should be half to a full page long. Today, choose a passage from a work of fiction. With your instructor's approval, this can be from either school reading or free reading. If you cannot think of a passage that you enjoy or that means something to you personally, then copy the opening paragraphs from today's literature reading.

Dictation

Then there was a dispute about who saw the dead boys last in life, and many claimed that dismal distinction, and offered evidences, more or less tampered with by the witness; and when it was ultimately decided who did see the departed last, and exchanged the last words with them, the lucky parties took upon themselves a sort of sacred importance, and were gaped at and envied by all the rest. One poor chap, who had no other grandeur to offer, said with tolerably manifest pride in the remembrance:

“Well, Tom Sawyer, he licked me once.”

84.

Scientific Narration: Vinegar

- Little Women, Chapters 38-39

Your model story, “Vinegar,” is from Jean Henri Fabre’s *The Secret of Everyday Things*. In his book, the character of Uncle Paul is explaining these scientific concepts to a group of children. The stories are written in the first person with frequent use of the second person as he speaks directly to the children.

Use your outline to write a narration on this topic. Leave out references to Uncle Paul and the children; instead, focus on the topic. Your narration should be in the third person. You may use other sources for more details if desired. You’ll need to decide which details are important to your narration and which ones should be left out.

Begin your paper with an introduction. This can be background information, an anecdote, a surprising statement or question, a quotation, or an imaginary scenario. Refer back to Lessons 50 and 62 on introductions if necessary. Add a conclusion. Refer back to Lesson 83 on conclusions if necessary.

Proof

By Emily Dickinson

That I did always love,
I bring thee proof:
That till I loved
I did not love enough.
That I shall love always,
I offer thee
That love is life,
And life hath immortality.
This, dost thou doubt, sweet?
Then have I
Nothing to show
But Calvary.

Editing

- Did you meet the goal of this writing exercise?
- Check for sentence fragments, reading the paper backwards if necessary.
- If you gave an opinion, did you support it with evidence? Did you use quotations properly (Lesson 43)? Did you include all the important details from the story? Did you keep the narrative in the proper order? Did you write an introduction (Lessons 50 and 62)? Did you write a conclusion (Lesson 83)?
- Look at your word choice. Is there a good mixture of nouns and pronouns? Is the antecedent of each pronoun clear? Did you use different ways to say **said**? Are your verb tenses consistent?
- Look at your paragraphs. Are all the sentences related? Does each paragraph focus on a single topic?



106. The Apostrophe

- Around the World in Eighty Days, Chapters 33-34

The apostrophe is an often used punctuation mark. However, it is important to understand how to use it correctly. The apostrophe has three jobs. It is used for forming contractions, showing possession, and making **odd** plurals. We'll talk more about those "odd plurals" shortly. Look at these examples of apostrophe use in *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

"Don't let this astonish you, sir."

He was never seen on 'Change.

His master's last exploit, the consequences of which he ignored, enchanted him.

When a plural word ends in **s** already, we can just add an apostrophe to show possession.

"Pretty far. It is a ten days' voyage by sea."

When a singular word ends in **s**, we add an apostrophe plus the **s** to show possession.

Sir Francis's heart throbbed.

As a general rule, we use **s** or **es** to form a plural, and we use the apostrophe to form a possessive. Even when numbers are involved, this is still the general rule.

Around the World in Eighty Days takes place in the 1800s.

Many 1800's customs are mentioned in the book.

There are a few instances when the apostrophe can be used in forming a plural, but these are odd plurals. In these cases, we use the apostrophe to form the plural in order to avoid confusion. Sometimes, we need to make an odd group of letters, such as an abbreviation, plural. When the letters are capitalized, we can follow the normal pattern and just add an **s**.

I have a digital camera, so I have many JPEGs of my family.

However, when the letters are lower-case, adding just an **s** is confusing.

Dot your is and cross your ts.

Are those supposed to be words, or plural letters? In this case, we can probably tell from the context, but that won't always be the case. This is where we use the apostrophe for a plural.

Dot your i's and cross your t's.

There's one other time when we can use the apostrophe to form a plural. We can use the apostrophe when we use a word which is normally another part of speech as a noun. Sometimes, it's not necessary.

Political discussions often revolve around the haves and the have-nots.

There are times, though, when this could cause confusion. When this is the case, it is appropriate to use an apostrophe to form the plural.

Your paper leaves me with a lot of why's.

Ah-ha's could be heard around the laboratory.

Use the apostrophe deliberately. If you add one, be able to explain why you used it. The apostrophe's primary jobs are to form contractions

and to show possession. It is used to make plurals only in odd cases where there would otherwise be confusion.

Summer's Armies

By Emily Dickinson

Some rainbow coming from the fair!
Some vision of the world Cashmere
I confidently see!
Or else a peacock's purple train,
Feather by feather, on the plain
Fritters itself away!
The dreamy butterflies bestir,
Lethargic pools resume the whirl
Of last year's Sundered tune.
From some old fortress on the sun
Baronial bees march, one by one,
In murmuring platoon!
The robins stand as thick today
As flakes of snow stood yesterday,
On fence and roof and twig.
The orchis binds her feather on
For her old lover, Don the Sun,
Revisiting the bog!
Without commander, countless, still,
The regiment of wood and hill
In bright detachment stand.
Behold! Whose multitudes are these?
The children of whose turbaned seas,
Or what Circassian land?

What in the World Were You Smuggling?

By Rodney Ohebsion

Nasrudin the smuggler was leading a donkey that had bundles of straw on its back. An experienced border inspector spotted Nasrudin coming to his border.

“Halt,” the inspector said. “What is your business here?”

“I am an honest smuggler!” replied Nasrudin.

“Oh, really?” said the inspector. “Well, let me search those straw bundles. If I find something in them, you are required to pay a border fee!”

“Do as you wish,” Nasrudin replied, “but you will not find anything in those bundles.”

The inspector intensively searched and took apart the bundles, but could not find a single thing in them. He turned to Nasrudin and said, “I suppose you have managed to get one by me today. You may pass the border.”

Nasrudin crossed the border with his donkey while the annoyed inspector looked on. And then the very next day, Nasrudin once again came to the border with a straw-carrying donkey. The inspector saw Nasrudin coming and thought, “I’ll get him for sure this time.”

He checked the bundles of straw again, and then searched through Nasrudin’s clothing, and even went through the donkey’s harness. But once again he came up empty-handed and had to let Nasrudin pass.

This same pattern continued every day for several years, and every day Nasrudin wore more and more extravagant clothing and jewelry that indicated he was getting wealthier. Eventually, the inspector retired from his longtime job, but even in retirement he still wondered about the man with the straw-carrying donkey.

“I should have checked that donkey’s mouth more extensively,” he thought to himself. “Or maybe he hid something in the donkey’s rectum.”

Then one day he spotted Nasrudin’s face in a crowd. “Hey,” the inspector said, “I know you! You are that man who came to my border everyday for all those years with a donkey carrying straw. Please, sir, I must talk to you.”

Nasrudin came towards him and the inspector continued talking. “My friend, I always wondered what you were smuggling past my border everyday. Just between you and me, you must tell me. I must know. What in the world were you smuggling for all those years? I must know!”

Nasrudin simply replied, “Donkeys.”

Writing: Copia

Take the following sentence and play with it. Remember that the point

is not necessarily to make the sentence better. The point is to play with the sentence and make it different. Make a new sentence with a change from each of the following categories.

All this, however, helped little in settling the question of the Holy Land.

1. Change the grammar.
 - Change the nouns from common to proper and vice versa.
 - Change the nouns from singular to plural and vice versa.
 - Change the type of adjectives: articles, descriptive, possessive, etc.
 - Change the sentence type.
 - Change the first word of the sentence.
 - Change the verb tense.
2. Condense the sentence.
 - Remove details.
 - Remove modifiers.
 - Remove phrases or clauses.
3. Amplify the sentence.
 - Add details.
 - Add dialogue.
 - Add modifiers.
 - Add phrases or clauses.
4. Use synonyms and antonyms.
 - Substitute synonyms.
 - Say the same thing using antonyms.
 - Say the opposite thing using antonyms.
5. Point of view.
 - Change the point of view.
 - Slant the sentence.

Exercise

Review memory work. Punctuate the following passage.

I start at nine o'clock said Captain Speedy simply Are you and your party ready

We will be on board at nine o'clock replied no less simply Mr. Fogg

It was half-past eight To disembark from the Henrietta jump into a hack hurry to the St. Nicholas and return with Aouda Passepartout and even the inseparable Fix was the work of a brief time and was performed by Mr. Fogg with the coolness which never abandoned him They were on board when the Henrietta made ready to weigh anchor

Copy each sentence below. Double underline the predicate, and underline the subject. Put brackets around any prepositional phrases. Label the part of speech of each word. Noun, N; Proper Noun, PN; Pronoun, PRO; Verb, V; Linking Verb, LV; Adjective, ADJ; Article, ART; Conjunction, CJ; Preposition, Prep; Interjection, INJ. Diagram each sentence.

Aouda was anxious, though she said nothing.

What course would Phileas Fogg adopt?

Passepartout understood; he was seized with mortal anxiety.

“Where are we?”

Commonplace Book

A commonplace book entry should be half to a full page long. Today, choose a passage from a work of fiction. With your instructor's approval, this can be from either school reading or free reading. If you cannot think of a passage that you enjoy or that means something to you personally, then copy the opening paragraphs from today's literature reading.

Dictation

These were the only words he uttered during the journey. Aouda, cosily packed in furs and cloaks, was sheltered as much as possible from the attacks of the freezing wind. As for Passepartout, his face was as red as the sun's disc when it sets in the mist, and he laboriously inhaled the biting air. With his natural buoyancy of spirits, he began to hope again. They would

reach New York on the evening, if not on the morning, of the 11th, and there was still some chances that it would be before the steamer sailed for Liverpool.