

**LESSONS IN
ENGLISH:
BOOK ONE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649630103

Lessons in English: Book One by Fred Newton Scott & Gordon A. Southworth

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Cover @ 2017

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FRED NEWTON SCOTT & GORDON A. SOUTHWORTH

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BY

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REVISED EDITION

BENJ. H. SANBORN & CO.

CHICAGO

NEW YORK

BOSTON

1916

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PREFACE

IN the Preface to the 1906 edition occurs the following paragraph:

“Although these books contain much that is new and unhackneyed, they are not untried. The material which they contain has been tested in many schools under widely different conditions, and has been found workable. The Lessons in English do not come before the school public, therefore, as strangers knocking at the gate and waiting to be introduced: they appear rather as familiar friends renewing old acquaintance and seeking a wider recognition in a circle where they have already made their standing good.”

These words may now be fittingly repeated in presenting the revised edition of 1916. They are as true now as they were then. In the past ten years, however, the test referred to has been enormously extended. It has been applied in tens of thousands of schools, under the eyes of hundreds of thousands of teachers, in the case of millions of school-children. It is therefore to a greatly enlarged circle, though still to a circle of old acquaintances, that the revision primarily makes its appeal.

In the work of revising, the aim has been on the one hand to retain all of the features that long trial has shown to be effective in the class-room, but on the other hand to add sufficient new material to give to the text freshness and

variety. It is hoped that in many particulars the new edition will be found to be an improvement on the old.

A feature that has for obvious reasons been retained is the division into two books, — an elementary and a more advanced book. Book I contains abundant material for use within the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Book II is intended to cover the work of the seventh and eighth grades.

In the preparation of Book I the design has been —

(1) To create a liking for good literature by presenting worthy selections to be read, studied, copied, and learned.

(2) To help children to talk and write more freely about the many things that they see or know. To this end suggestive questions have been asked, in order to stimulate thought, to develop clear ideas, and to enable the learner to report more readily, both orally and in writing, what he has discovered. Provision has been made for a great amount of practice in talking and writing. Pains have been taken also to give life, point, and interest to the exercises in composition by varying the method of presentation, and particularly by providing a definite reader or hearer to whom the pupil may address himself.

(3) To make children more and more observing — especially in the field of natural science — thus adding to their knowledge, and leading them to find out for themselves. For this purpose many illustrations are set before the children for descriptive and imaginative writing, and help is given in the form of leading questions.

(4) To make correct expression habitual, by calling for frequent repetition of the right forms, and by constantly suppressing the wrong.

(5) To secure the use of correct written forms by giving

models for imitation, and by leading up to simple rules for the use of capitals, punctuation-marks, and word-forms, with examples and much work for practice.

(6) To give some acquaintance with the elementary principles of grammar.

Book II is divided into two parts, Grammar and Composition. In Part I the aim has been to place before the student an orderly and intelligible statement of the principles that determine the relations of words and the structure of sentences, and at the same time to furnish exercises for practice in the application of those principles.

In the beginning of Part I considerable attention is paid to the sentence as the structural unit in the use of language, because a knowledge of its elements and their relation one to another must logically precede any detailed study of words and their forms. The parts of speech are treated in this connection to give an intelligent idea of the composition and character of the elements of sentences, as well as to show that classification and inflection depend upon use.

Following a section on Sentence-Building and Sentence-Analysis, the inflection and syntax of the parts of speech are treated in considerable detail. In this part of the work, teachers will, of course, discriminate between what is to be learned and what is given only for reference. Attention is called to the treatment of case; to the unusually full presentation of infinitives and participles; to the tabulated summaries at the close of chapters for purposes of review; and to standard literary selections for study.

Throughout the grammar, sentences for illustration and analysis are given in abundance. That the student may learn that the rules that govern form, structure, and good usage are general in their application, they have been inten-

tionally drawn both from literature and from the language of ordinary intercourse.

The exercises are uniformly constructive in character, and many of them call for the writing of original sentences exemplifying the principle or use under consideration.

The nomenclature has been revised in accordance with the tendency represented by the Report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Nomenclature.

Part II is a systematic course in composition, continuing on a higher plane the work pursued in the lower grades. It is not intended to be merely an addendum to the grammar, nor a series of talks about rhetoric. It provides for continuous and progressive practice in those kinds of writing and speaking which are most suitable for children at this stage of their school life.

Though both composition and grammar contribute in greater or less degree to the same end — the ability to use language intelligently and efficiently — yet they differ essentially in their character and method of treatment. For this reason, in the arrangement of the book no attempt has been made to intermingle exercises in composition with work in grammar. The lessons in Part II have been so framed, however, that they may either be assigned in connection with Part I or may be used as an independent course.

In both composition and grammar special emphasis has been laid on the choice of the proper word. The natural tendency of young people towards looseness in the use of words and phrases, has been discouraged by pretty close adherence to the usage of those who are striving to maintain the highest standards.

Since no small part of the value of a textbook lies in the tone in which it is written and the resultant attitude which

it tends to create on the part of both pupil and teacher, especial attention has been paid in the framing of these books to the matter of form. To be simple but not childish, to be stimulating but not galvanic, to be thorough but not nagging, to be straightforward and business-like but not obtuse to the call of feeling and imagination — such has been the ideal. But it must be confessed that nothing is more difficult than to catch just the right note. In how far these books have succeeded or failed in this important particular must be left to others to determine.

To the following authors and publishers indebtedness is here acknowledged for permission to use copyrighted material: To Miss Margaret Lee Ashley, and Harper and Brothers for the poem "The Wind," which originally appeared in Harper's Magazine; to Harper and Brothers for the illustration *Weapons and Utensils of the Cliff Men*; to Charles Scribner's Sons for Dr. Henry van Dyke's "Four Things"; to the Houghton Mifflin Co. for selections from J. T. Trowbridge's "Midsummer" and "Midwinter," and John Muir's "The Story of My Boyhood and Youth"; to the Whitaker & Ray Company for Joaquin Miller's "Columbus"; to Mr. James Whitcomb Riley and the Bobbs-Merrill Company for "The Prayer Perfect"; to the Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co. and William H. Hayne for a selection from Paul Hamilton Hayne's "Will and I"; to Mr. A. W. Mumford for permission to reproduce the picture of the Baltimore Oriole's Nest; to P. J. Kennedy & Sons for John Boyle O'Reilly's "A Builder's Lesson"; to Mr. Mitchell Kennedy for Father Tabb's "Fern Song," and to the John Lane Company for "The Shadow," by the same author.

Especial thanks are due to the host of teachers in all parts of the country who have been so kind as to make suggestions