

**A FIRST READER**

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A First Reader by Florence Bass

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**FLORENCE BASS**

# **A FIRST READER**



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**D. C. HEATH & CO., PUBLISHERS**

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## INTRODUCTION

In this book the words are developed from the beginning, in order that pupils may have a definite list of words in mind from which to recall the sounds of letters.

Words which pupils are not able to recall from previous work are at first taught as wholes, either from association with objects, pictures, or actions, or from the sentences in which they are used.

Phonic drill, separate from the reading lesson, should be given for practice (1) in listening for sounds in spoken words; (2) in learning to recognize the printed letter representing the sound; and (3) in making the written form.

For example, at the close of Lesson II, children know the words "see" and "swim," and how to write them. They should listen for the first sound which they hear in these words. The teacher may pronounce many words containing this sound, such as "so, say, sit, save, sell, us, miss, class, grass, sand, sun," etc., having the children tell whether they hear "s" (sound of s) first or last. The pupils should write the words "see" and "swim," and point to the part that represents "s" (sound of s). They should also learn to recognize the printed letter that stands for the same sound. Similar drill should be given on each new sound as it is introduced.

The children will soon learn a sufficient number of sounds to enable them to find out some of the new words for themselves. Gradually fewer words need to be told, as pupils will be able to "sound them" with but little help.

So carefully have the words been introduced that there are only about eighty words in the entire book that need to be learned as wholes. By the time the pupil reaches page 88, he has had all the sounds necessary to enable him to sound any word when properly marked.



When children forget the sound of any letter or digraph, they should be referred back to the word from which they first learned it. A list of these words, kept on the board and used for reference in such cases, will be found helpful. As each new sound is given, the word from which it is learned may be placed on the board for future reference.

As this list is built up, the letter that represents a new sound may be underlined. For example, "f" is learned from "fish" very early in the work, and no attention is then paid to the rest of the word. Some time afterward the child returns to this word, and learns the sound of "sh."

Children remember most easily object, action, and quality words. The following words, which are used early in the book, contain all the sounds which the pupil must learn:—

see	have	fish	horse	red
swim	buzz	bird	baby	six
run	jump	girl	ice	the
peep	quack	cat	chick	brown
is	say	wing	boy	fast
like	go	cube	noise	white
fly	are	house	cage	yellow
look	come	moon	hair	three
	talk		doll	

These words may be used in a great variety of easy sentences. They should be learned thoroughly, so that the child may return to them readily for sounds that he may have forgotten. They should also be written by the pupil, as they contain all the letters of the alphabet.

The objects first introduced in this reader are such as can be brought into the schoolroom or such as will appeal to the children's memory. The first twelve lessons take up the study of several familiar animals,—their color, what they can do, etc. These animals are contrasted and compared with one another and with the child.

Many plays and talks of children are introduced. These, it is believed, will not only interest the little pupils, but will also aid in

securing natural expression, and will afford an opportunity for making use of the childlike vocabulary.

The speakers' names given in small type in the margin will cause no confusion in the reading, but will give the children a better understanding of the lesson, and will enable them to read it with certain parts assigned.

Variety in the reading matter is secured by the introduction of old stories and fables, by lessons on some of the forces of nature, and by "memory" poems.

Only enough of script has been used in this book to familiarize the children with the letters and to insure their ability to recognize new words in written form, so that the teacher may always use them freely in supplementary sentences upon the blackboard.

Frequent reviews are given as long as children must depend upon remembering words as wholes. After that point is passed, set reviews are not needed, as the sounds learned are constantly reviewed in each lesson.

The lessons on pages 46 and 47 contain not only many words which are already familiar, but also several words testing the child's ability to pronounce without help new words containing the sounds he has learned. After this, simple words which will present no difficulty to the child are sometimes used without being included in the list at the beginning of the lesson.

Diacritical markings are introduced only when they are needed. As long as but one sound of a letter is used, no marking is given. When a second sound is learned, something is needed to indicate it. Silent letters and digraphs are marked when necessary. When final "e" makes the vowel long, no marking is required.

There are on an average about four new words on a page; yet the First Reader child at the end of the course is able to recognize easily over a thousand words.

Some children learn to read easily. Others take their first steps in reading haltingly and with difficulty. It is to the latter class and their patient guides that this book is sent. May it afford some help and pleasure on their toilsome road.

THE AUTHOR.

