

**THE STANDARD SPELLER:  
CONTAINING EXERCISES FOR  
ORAL SPELLING, ALSO  
SENTENCES FOR SILENT SPELLING**

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The Standard Speller: Containing Exercises for Oral Spelling, Also Sentences for Silent Spelling  
by Epes Sargent

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**EPES SARGENT**

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THE  
STANDARD SPELLER;

CONTAINING  
EXERCISES FOR ORAL SPELLING;  
ALSO,  
SENTENCES FOR SILENT SPELLING

BY WRITING FROM DICTATION.

IN WHICH THE REPRESENTATIVE WORDS AND THE ANOMALOUS WORDS  
OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARE SO CLASSIFIED AS TO INDICATE  
THEIR PRONUNCIATION, AND TO BE FIXED IN THE  
MEMORY BY ASSOCIATION.

BY  
EPES SARGENT,

AUTHOR OF "THE STANDARD SPEAKER," AND THE STANDARD SERIES OF READERS.



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## P R E F A C E.

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SINCE we learn the orthography of words mainly in order to be able to write them correctly, it is matter for surprise that the practice of silent spelling by writing words from dictation is not resorted to more generally in instruction. Experienced teachers are well aware that many learners "will spell a word orally with accuracy, who, if they had been made to write it, would have blundered. In England, as we learn from Mr. G. F. Graham, author of an improved manual of English Spelling, "the old practice of making pupils repeat words arranged in columns is now nearly superseded by the far preferable plan of Dictation Exercises." Mr. Smart, the eminent lexicographer remarks, that "the ordinary, and perhaps the shortest way of learning spelling is by the eye, in the same manner that we learn pronunciation by the ear." The testimony of many eminent American teachers in support of these conclusions might be quoted.

The present volume has been prepared with the view of combining the advantages of oral spelling with silent spelling, by writing. Some simple introductory exercises are first given, followed by sentences for writing, some of which are in script type, that may be transcribed by pupils requiring the practice.

In Part Second, words for oral spelling are classified according to their prominent elementary vowel sounds. Following these are classes of words illustrating the vowel sounds in unaccented syllables, penultimate and final, and the difficult consonant sounds and substitutes. These are followed by exercises on words containing silent letters; on homophonous words; Rules for Spelling; words alike in form, but differing in accent; Prefixes and Affixes; the contractions in common use; the singular and plural forms of the possessive case, &c.

For convenience of reference, the words for spelling, presented in large type, are in alphabetical order; and the teacher will not use

the book long before he will find the great advantages of this in enabling him to turn readily to a given word. In copying the dictation exercises, the pupil can always satisfy himself in regard to the pronunciation or syllabication of an exemplifying word, by referring to it in the paragraph of a corresponding number in large type. Orthoëpy and orthography are thus simultaneously taught, as they should be, and this without resort to arbitrary marks and figures which are either not heeded at all, or are a stumbling-block and a mystification to the young. A few italicized letters are all that are used to indicate one of the dual sounds of *g*, *n*, *s*, and *t*, or the presence, in a few instances, of a silent letter.

It has been objected by some one to the system of classification that it makes spelling "too easy and mechanical a process;" that the learner having a formula for an entire class of words, or for the most difficult portions of them, may trust too much to the key thus supplied to his memory, and not give sufficient attention to the spelling of each particular word. Abundant experience has proved that the objection is imaginary and fallacious. Any system by which we render a difficult task less difficult must, in the nature of things, be an advantage. By classification we fix an object in the memory, by making it one of a group, instead of an isolated anomaly. In using the present work, the skillful teacher will, moreover, by frequent reviews, and by *skipping* from one class of words to another, make the exercises as miscellaneous as can be desired, *after* the way has been smoothed by classification.

In instances where authorities differ in regard to the spelling of words, we have generally presented both Webster's and Walker's orthography: giving precedence to that of the former, as more sanctioned by usage in the United States. It is obvious that the fact of the existing variance ought to be made familiar to the young; but the teacher is left at liberty to enjoin upon his pupils whichever mode he may prefer.

The plan adopted in some spelling-books, of arranging columns of words of cognate signification as synonyms, has not, for good reasons, been followed. In nine cases out of ten the words presented as such are not strictly synonymous; and the young learner, from being taught so to regard them, acquires a habit of confounding shades of difference, fatal to precision in the use of language.

In the syllabication of words, we have aimed at exhibiting their roots, prefixes, and affixes, *as far as this can be done, without misleading the learner as to the pronunciation.* In effecting this desirable



compromise, perfect consistency, as all lexicographers admit, cannot be attained.

Different modes of using the exercises have been employed with success. The teacher may give out an entire sentence from the dictation exercises, and require pupils to spell every word orally; or he may require them to copy the sentential exercises several times on a slate, and then to write them down from dictation. If the learner is sufficiently advanced, he may be directed to form sentences himself, containing the words presented in large type. The black-board may be used with good effect in drilling a class. Words may be written, divided by hyphens, the accented syllables marked, and a line drawn through the silent letters, should there be any. A pupil may be called upon to do this; and should he make an error, other members of the class may indicate it in any manner the teacher may prefer. It may be well to vary the mode of instruction, in order to keep the attention awake, and give the attraction of variety to lessons.

The mere reading of the sentential exercises, in accustoming the eye to the form and length of words, will be found a most important aid in fixing the orthography in the memory; and if these exercises were used in no other way, they would still be valuable adjuncts to the spelling-book.

Homophonous words present some of the greatest difficulties to young learners; and the list of such words, with exercises upon them, will be found unusually complete in this work. Their meaning is generally sufficiently indicated in the sentences in which they are introduced.

The power of the accentual mark, of the hyphen, &c., should be thoroughly explained to the learner before he enters upon words of more than one syllable. It will be seen that where the accent is used the hyphen is omitted as superfluous; the accentual mark indicating not only the accent, but the syllabic division. In words where the accent falls on the last syllable, the accentual mark is generally omitted, as its omission after the preceding syllable or syllables sufficiently shows that the accent must necessarily fall on the last syllable.

## TABLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SOUNDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### VOWEL SOUNDS.

1. That of <i>a</i> in <i>fether</i> . 2. " <i>a</i> " <i>fat</i> . 3. " <i>a</i> " <i>fate</i> . 4. " <i>a</i> " <i>fall</i> . 5. " <i>e</i> " <i>meta</i> . 6. " <i>e</i> " <i>mst</i> .	7. That of <i>i</i> in <i>fit</i> . 8. " <i>o</i> " <i>not</i> . 9. " <i>o</i> " <i>not</i> . 10. " <i>u</i> " <i>bull</i> . 11. " <i>oo</i> " <i>fool</i> . 12. " <i>u</i> " <i>but</i> .
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### VOWEL OR CONSONANT SOUNDS.

8. That of <i>w</i> in <i>wet</i> .	14. That of <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i> .
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### CONSONANT SOUNDS.

15. That of <i>h</i> in <i>hot</i> , an aspirate, or simple breathing. 16. " <i>ng</i> " <i>king</i> , a nasal consonant sound. 17. " <i>m</i> " <i>man</i> , a liquid nasal consonant sound. 18. " <i>n</i> " <i>not</i> , " " " 19. " <i>l</i> " <i>let</i> , a liquid consonant sound. 20. " <i>r</i> " <i>run</i> , " " "	
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### COGNATE CONSONANT SOUNDS.

21. That of <i>p</i> in <i>pan</i> , } aspirate. 22. " <i>b</i> " <i>bag</i> , } vocal. 23. " <i>f</i> " <i>fag</i> , } aspirate. 24. " <i>w</i> " <i>wan</i> , } vocal. 25. " <i>t</i> " <i>tin</i> , } aspirate. 26. " <i>th</i> " <i>thine</i> , } vocal. 27. " <i>f</i> " <i>fin</i> , } aspirate. 28. " <i>d</i> " <i>din</i> , } vocal.	29. That of <i>k</i> in <i>kind</i> , } aspirate. 30. " <i>g</i> " <i>gun</i> , } vocal. 31. " <i>s</i> " <i>sin</i> , } aspirate. 32. " <i>z</i> " <i>zeal</i> , } vocal. 33. " <i>sh</i> " <i>shine</i> , } aspirate. 34. " <i>x</i> " <i>sure</i> , } vocal.
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### COMPOUND VOWEL SOUNDS.

1. That of <i>i</i> in <i>pina</i> . 2. " <i>u</i> " <i>cube</i> .	3. That of <i>ou</i> in <i>house</i> . 4. " <i>oi</i> " <i>voice</i> .
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### COMPOUND CONSONANT SOUNDS.

1. That of <i>ch</i> in <i>chest</i> (aspirate).	2. That of <i>j</i> in <i>jest</i> (vocal).
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### MODIFIED VOWEL SOUNDS.

a long before <i>r</i> , as in <i>fare</i> . a intermediate, " <i>fast</i> . e short and obtuse, " <i>her</i> . i " " " <i>fir</i> . u " " " <i>fur</i> . y " " " <i>myrrh</i> .	7. <i>a</i> obscure, as in <i>rival</i> . 8. <i>e</i> " " <i>brier</i> . 9. <i>i</i> " " <i>infinita</i> . 10. <i>o</i> " " <i>actor</i> . 11. <i>u</i> " " <i>sulpha</i> .
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## LETTERS, WORDS, AND SENTENCES.

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**ORTHOGRAPHY** treats of letters and syllables.

The English alphabet consists of twenty-six letters.

Letters are divided into vowels and consonants.

A vowel is a letter which makes by itself a distinct sound.

A consonant is a letter which cannot be distinctly sounded without a vowel.

A, e, i, o, u, are vowels. W and y are vowels when they do not begin a word or a syllable. The remaining nineteen letters are consonants.

W and y are consonants when they begin a word or a syllable.

The letters c, g, and s, do not appear in the preceding Table of Sounds, because as representatives of sound they are not wanted. C is equivalent to s or k; g, to ks; s, to ks. For instance, the words city and can are respectively pronounced *sity* and *ksn*; and the words queen and bow are respectively pronounced *kwēen* and *bōw*.

Of the compound sounds, i long is composed of the first and fifth elementary sounds (the a in father and the e in see), rapidly combined in the pronunciation; u long, of the seventh and eleventh (the i in fit and the ee in feed); oi, of the fourth and fifth (the o in foil and the i in see). CA is the sound of ts; f, of tsk (the twenty-eighth and thirty-fourth elementary sounds).

The union of two vowels in one sound is called a *diphthong*. When both vowels are heard it is called a *proper diphthong*; as ey, in boy. When only one of the vowels is heard it is called an *improper diphthong*; as ee in coat. The union of three vowels in one sound is called a *triphthong*; as iou in view. The diphthongs a and o, pronounced like e long, are used sometimes in words derived from the Latin; but a simple e is now generally used for them in English.

A *digraph* is a union of two vowels, or of two consonants, in one sound.

A *syllable* is a single sound represented by one or more letters; as a, an, and. In every syllable there must be at least one vowel sound.

A word of one syllable is called a *monosyllable*, as just; a word of two syllables, a *disyllable*, as justice; a word of three syllables, a *trisyllable*, as just-i-fy; a word of more than three syllables, a *poly-syllable*, as just-i-fication.

An *elementary sound* is one which is not produced by the union of any two or more sounds.

A *copious sound* is one related to another.

An *aspirate sound* is a whispering or hushing sound, in which the breath is chiefly exercised. A *voiced sound* is one which is produced more by the pure, natural tone of the voice.

A *substitute* is a letter, or combination of letters, representing the appropriate sound of another letter.