

LANGUAGE LESSONS

FOR TODAY

GRADE 2



MY FATHER'S
WORLD®

Language Lessons for Today is adapted from *Primary Language Lessons* by Emma Serl, American Book Company, 1911, with significant revisions, updated language and examples, and additional new content.

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Introduction

Language Lessons for Today follows the Charlotte Mason method of language arts instruction that encourages children to explore and expand upon the language that they already know. Learning to use language better to communicate with others becomes the reason for study, rather than analyzing language for purely academic reasons. We believe a study of language arts must go beyond grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling. These are servants that lead to a higher goal—the art of communication: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Young children learn best about their language by hearing it and producing it. Through short, interactive, teacher-led lessons, *Language Lessons for Today* gives children an opportunity to improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Their powers of observation and elocution are enhanced through simple picture study and conversation lessons. Their exposure to fine examples of our language by hearing short stories and poems read aloud and by memorizing or retelling those increases their understanding of sentence structure and improves their vocabulary. Copying a passage introduces them to the rules of mechanics, grammar, and spelling in a gentle and natural way. An introduction to the function of words in earlier years provides a foundation for the study of the parts of speech in later years.

Informal language arts lessons for vocabulary, composition, listening comprehension, and handwriting are found in the history, science, and Bible activities in My Father's World curriculum. *Language Lessons for Today* is a resource that fits well with My Father's World curriculum; add spelling for a well-rounded language arts program.

This book is designed to be non-consumable to keep the cost lower as books may be reused. Even more important, this format encourages oral (instead of written) lessons. Children love the one-on-one time with parents/teachers. Oral lessons allow the adult to give immediate feedback on errors, focus on the student's needs, and modify the lesson (or add more explanation) when needed. Consumable workbooks tend to be done independently without immediate feedback if an error is made. Oral lessons can also focus on specific language concepts without the stress of writing. For many students, the labor of handwriting keeps them from learning the actual concept you are trying to teach!

The short, focused lessons generally take about 15 minutes to complete. Plan to complete three lessons a week. Simply open the book and read the lesson to the children. They will answer many of the questions orally. When written responses are required, use notebook paper and file the sheets in a 3-ring binder. Younger children may find it easier to write on every other line when using notebook paper.

The lessons may be used exactly as written or adapted for a child's specific needs and learning style. Many of the lessons that seem to require written work are easy to adapt so that a child simply answers orally. This is especially important with a younger child who finds writing too laborious. Also, you may increase *or* decrease the amount of written work in lessons based on how much writing the child is doing in other subjects that day.

Preface from Original 1911 Edition

The object of this little volume is to lead children of the second and third grades into the habit of speaking and writing the English language correctly. To accomplish this, the author has prepared a drill book which emphasizes the reproduction of many of the short stories current in our literature, and also introduces practice exercises to familiarize the pupils with correct forms. Beginning with simple, graduated exercises, they are continued until a general principle is inductively reached.

It is assumed that the child will learn to speak and write correctly by imitation if the proper forms are presented to him. Accordingly much attention is given in this book to expressions frequently misused, as for example, troublesome verb forms. The lessons are designed, as well, to awaken and sustain children's interest in natural objects, and to put them in sympathetic relations with living things.

The author has written from the standpoint of the child, and in language that the child can readily comprehend. The book, too, is so unconventional that the Suggestions to Teachers, which follow, are all that is necessary to guide the novice in the successful use of it.

—J.M. GREENWOOD

Kansas City, Mo.

Explanation of Lesson Types

You will encounter a variety of lessons in *Language Lessons for Today*, some of which may be new to you and are described below:

Picture Study (See Lesson 1) — One of the purposes of picture study is to increase the power of observation. Many of the pictures in this book are copies of the works of great artists. You read the questions, and the children answer by looking carefully at the picture. Prompt them to use complete sentences when answering. A few suggestive questions are given with each picture. You may supplement these with a few questions of your own.

Copywork (See Lesson 2) — The purpose of copywork is to familiarize students with spelling, mechanics, and usage while practicing handwriting. Have them copy part or all of the selection on appropriate handwriting or notebook paper. If you

find the copywork too long in a lesson, then assign just a part of it, or allow more than one day to complete it.

Oral Composition (*See Lesson 3*) — These lessons can look simple, but we encourage you not to skip any. Oral composition lessons help develop the thought process needed later for written composition. If students give one- or two-word answers, you can provide good models by answering similar questions with complete sentences.

Poem to Memorize (*See Lesson 4*) — Poetry memorization helps children internalize excellent models of the English language. A child who memorizes vocabulary words and sentence structure in poems will more easily use those words and structures in daily conversation.

We encourage you to help your students memorize some of the poems in this book. (You may choose just the first part of the poem if it seems too long.) When the book requires a poem to be memorized, spread that work out for the whole week. Students do not need to memorize all the poems in the book, but we do encourage you to stretch their abilities and expect some memorization. All of these selections should be read aloud to the students and discussed whether they are memorized or not. Children can often memorize much more than we think if we approach the task positively and give support and encouragement. Our children enjoyed the reward of calling Grandma and reciting the memorized poem or stanza.

Some children memorize poems easily and quickly and need minimal adult assistance. However, many children will need more adult guidance. You might post the poem on a wall or the refrigerator, and read the poem together once or twice daily for a week.

Oral Narration (*See Lesson 11*) — The children simply listen to you read the story aloud, and then let one or more retell it. Before you begin, remind the children to listen carefully and be ready to tell the story in their own words when you are finished reading. Don't worry if a child gives an incomplete narration. If your children are new to narration, you may ask a few guided questions to help them remember the basic plot of the story. Narration takes practice and will improve over time.

Poem to Read Aloud (*See Lesson 12*) — These poems are to read aloud to the students. They are not memorized but simply enjoyed.

Observation Lesson (*See Lesson 15*) — This is an opportunity for students to learn to put their thoughts clearly into words.

Dictation (*See Lesson 39*) — Let students look at the book as you discuss the more difficult words and the punctuation. Point out difficult words to spell and practice them. Then remove the book, and slowly read the sentence aloud. Have the students repeat the sentence aloud and then write it. You may break up the sentence into smaller phrases if needed.

Lesson 4

Poem to Memorize

» *Teacher: Before teaching today's lesson, read the information about Poem to Memorize on page 9.*

Who Has Seen the Wind?

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you:
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I:
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

What is this poem about? What happens in this poem?
What does this mean— “the trees bow down their heads”?
When and why do you bow your head?

Listen while I read this poem again. Close your eyes and imagine the tree and the leaves.

Lesson 13

Questions

You have already learned about sentences that are statements. Can you tell me a statement about a pickle?

There are other kinds of sentences, too. This sentence is a question:

What color is the sun?

Here are more sentences that ask questions:

How many monkeys are in the tree?

Why did you hide the shoe?

When is your birthday?

What do you notice at the end of these questions? A question always ends with a question mark.

Ask a question about a dog.

Ask a question about a horse.

Ask a question about the moon.

Find two questions in any book. Copy them or read them aloud.

Lesson 37

Picture Study—Snowy Owl

What is the name of this picture? What do you see in the picture?

Who is the artist of this picture? John Audubon drew this picture and many other bird pictures in the 1800s, about two hundred years ago!

What time of day do you think it is in the picture? What makes you think so?

Can you guess why this kind of owl is called a Snowy Owl? It is white like snow. It lives in the Arctic where it is cold and snowy. Being white like snow helps this owl find its food, even during the day. It blends in with the snow so that lemmings, rabbits, mice, or other birds do not know they are being hunted. In fact, the Snowy Owl has white feathers from head to toe, almost as though it is wearing a snowsuit. In this way, the Snowy Owl stays hidden, or camouflaged, keeping it safe from its enemies.

What do you notice about Snowy Owls' eyes? Their yellow eyes are big and round. In fact, they are bigger than the owl's brain. They are 35 to 100 times better than your eyes. They can see a mouse that is as far away as the length of two football fields. That is over 600 feet!



John Audubon

SNOWY OWL