

ELEMENTS OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY
STELLA S. CENTER
WALTON JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
NEW YORK CITY

AND
ETHEL E. HOLMES
PRINCIPAL OF WYMAN SCHOOL
DENVER



ALLYN AND BACON
BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO
ATLANTA SAN FRANCISCO DALLAS

COPYRIGHT, 1930
BY ALLYN AND BACON

RTN

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

PREFACE

Elements of English Composition is addressed particularly to pupils of senior high school age, whether they are in the first year of a four-year senior high school or the third year of a junior high school. It continues the course in English begun in *Elements of English*, Books One and Two. However, this third book is a complete, independent text, reviewing the material of the first two books and giving additional material adapted to the needs of more mature pupils.

Elements of English Composition provides a complete program of English study, the different phases being arranged in chapters that treat each division of the subject fully. Each chapter is in turn broken up into small convenient units that lend themselves to a flexible program of English activities adapted to individual teaching.

The subject of informal English, so often neglected, is presented fully. The theory, the illustrations, and the program of pupil activities are presented in a way that facilitates the teaching of conversation, discussion, story-telling, and informal speech making. The various levels of English are treated simply and frankly, with due recognition of the place of informal, idiomatic speech in everyday activities.

The composition activities, both oral and written, are closely related to life situations which confront the

pupil almost every day. The pupil's coöperation is secured, because each activity is motivated.

There is an abundance of illustrative material, varying in difficulty to meet the needs of pupils of different ability. This material is selected from the best contemporary literature.

In the presentation of the theory and in the program of pupil activities, modern educational method is inherent. *Elements of English Composition* is the outgrowth of years of experience in the classroom and experimenting with pupils of widely varying abilities. The actual classroom procedure is indicated in the suggestions for pupil activities.

The pictorial illustrations serve to remind pupils that their own experiences are valuable sources of material for oral and written composition. They are encouraged to observe and reflect; their minds are thus enriched and their emotions and imagination cultivated.

S. S. C.
E. E. H.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	3
Exercises	8
Measuring Your Work	8
PART ONE: WHEN YOU SPEAK AND WRITE IN- FORMALLY	
INTRODUCTION	13
The Growth of the Language	13
Informal Speech	15
Characteristics of Informal Speech	16
Factors of Informal Speech	16
Exercises	18
CHAPTER I. CONVERSATION	21
Materials of Conversation	21
Exercise	21
The Importance of Conversation	21
Exercises	22
The Purpose of Conversation	22
Exercises	23
Characteristics of Conversation	23
Choosing a Subject of Interest to Others	25
Catching the Ball	25
Listening and Seeming-to-Listen	25
Listening and Seeming-not-to-Listen	25
The Good Listener	26
Exercise	27
Returning the Ball	27
Exercises	29
Observing Conventionalities	30
Observing Conventionalities of Manner	30
Being Agreeable	31
Avoiding Interruptions	31
Exercise	32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Observing Conventionalities of Speech	32
Choosing the Appropriate Level	32
1. Colloquial English	32
2. Literary English	33
3. Slang	33
4. Technical English	33
5. Dialectal English	34
Exercise	34
Adapting the Voice	36
Use of the Telephone	37
Exercises	37
Review Exercise	39
CHAPTER II. DISCUSSION	40
The Purpose of Discussion	40
Exercise	40
Characteristics of Discussion	40
Stating the Object Clearly	43
Being Accurate	44
Keeping to the Point	46
Keeping the Point of View	47
Summarizing	49
Personal Characteristics	49
Avoiding Monopoly	49
Admitting Ignorance	49
Being Impersonal	50
Exercises	50
Review Exercise	54
CHAPTER III. INFORMAL NARRATION AND EXPLANATION	55
Informal Narration	55
Characteristics of Good Story Telling	56
Selecting a Point of View	56
Exercise	58
Expressing a Mood	58
Exercise	59
Considering the Audience	59
Exercise	60
Telling the Story	60
Pulling Back the Curtain	61
Exercise	62

TABLE OF CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
Making Events March	62
Exercises	64
Making the Story Vivid	67
Exercises	68
Closing the Curtain	69
Exercises	69
The Anecdote	72
Examples of Anecdotes	72
Exercise	73
Review Exercise	74
Informal Explanation	74
Characteristics of a Good Explanation	74
Finding the Point of Difficulty	75
Having an Orderly Arrangement	76
Being Accurate	76
Adapting Your Explanation to Your Audience	77
Exercise	78
Review Exercise	79
 CHAPTER IV. INFORMAL WRITING	 80
Characteristics of Social Letters	80
Adapting the Letter to the Reader	80
Beginning Right	81
Revealing Individuality	83
Giving a Unified Impression	85
Quoting Conversation	87
Parts of a Letter	91
Indention	92
Punctuation	92
Abbreviations	93
Outside Address	93
Letter Paper	94
Exercises	94
The Informal Note	98
Exercises	98
Review Exercise	98

PART TWO: WHEN YOU SPEAK AND WRITE FORMALLY

INTRODUCTION	103
------------------------	-----

	PAGE
CHAPTER V. SPEECHES	105
Characteristics of the Formal Speech	106
Having a Definite Purpose	106
Capturing Attention	107
Holding Attention	108
Preparing a Formal Talk	108
1. Gather a body of material	109
2. Choose appropriate material	109
3. Organize your material with your purpose and your particular audience in mind	110
4. Make use of helpful devices	110
5. Stop when you have finished	113
Listening to Formal Speech	113
Exercise	114
Preparing a Speech	114
Exercise	114
The After-Dinner Speech	115
Exercises	118
Formal Explanation	118
<i>Where and When</i> Fact Questions	120
<i>How, Why, and What</i> Fact Questions	120
Thought Questions	122
Answering in the Form of a Summary	123
Exercises	123
Formal Announcements	124
Exercises	126
Formal Reports	126
Exercises	128
Formal Discussion and Argument	128
Exercise	130
The Formal Introduction	130
Exercise	131
Review Exercise	131
CHAPTER VI. WRITTEN EXPLANATION AND DESCRIPTION	132
Style	133
Unity	136
Exercise	136
Coherence	136
Transition Words	137
Exercise	138

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ix

	PAGE
Written Explanation	138
Characteristics of Written Explanation	140
Kinds of Explanation	140
Exercises	141
Précis Writing	143
Exercise	144
Written Reports	147
Exercises	148
Minutes of a Meeting	148
Exercises	149
Book Reports	149
Exercise	150
Written Announcements	150
Exercises	152
Formal Invitations	152
Exercises	153
Written Description	153
Exercises	155
Review Exercise	160
 CHAPTER VII. STORY WRITING	 161
Kinds of Stories	161
The News Article	161
Exercises	164
The Story of Personal Experience	165
Exercises	165
Letter about a Personal Experience	173
Exercises	174
The Short-story	176
Characteristics of the Short-story	176
Exercises	177
Review Exercise	185
 CHAPTER VIII. WRITING ABOUT BUSINESS	 186
Kinds of Business Writing	186
A Deposit Slip	187
A Check	187
Endorsing a Check	188
A Receipt	188
A Money Order	189

	PAGE
A Promissory Note	189
A Bill	190
Personal Data Blank	190
Personal Interview	191
Memorandum	192
Telegrams	192
Kinds of Telegrams	193
Exercises	194
Letters about Business	194
Business Letters and Social Letters	195
Kinds of Business Letters	195
Examples of Business Letters	195
The Letter Picture	195
Block Style	196
Punctuation	196
Letter Paper	196
The Envelope	196
Exercises	207
Abbreviations	207
Filing	209
Alphabetizing	210
Office Machines	210
Reference Books	211
Review Exercise	212

PART THREE: THE MECHANICS OF READING, SPEAKING, AND WRITING

INTRODUCTION	215
CHAPTER IX. READING	217
Reading Aloud and Silently	217
Two Kinds of Reading Materials	218
Acquiring Skill in Study or Work-Type Reading	218
1. Get the central idea and the divisions of the central idea	218
2. Look for the answer to a question	219
Exercise	219
3. Make a summary of what you have read	220
Exercise	221
4. Restate orally what you have read	221
Exercise	221

TABLE OF CONTENTS

xi

	PAGE
5. Acquire a vocabulary	221
Exercise	221
6. Infer the meaning of new words from the general drift of the whole selection	221
Exercise	221
7. Be fair to the author	222
Exercise	222
Reading Literature	222
Exercise	223
Adapting Speed	223
Exercises	223
Measuring Progress	223
Exercises	224
Reading Clubs	224
Review Exercise	224
CHAPTER X. USING THE LIBRARY	225
Review of the Dewey Decimal System	225
Exercises	227
Keeping the Record	232
Exercises	235
Annotations	235
Exercise	236
Growth through Reading	237
Exercises	237
Review Exercise	237
CHAPTER XI. SPEECH IMPROVEMENT	238
Surveying Your Speech Habits	239
Characteristics of Good Speech	240
Getting Attention	240
Breathing	241
Tone Projection	241
Enunciation	241
Exercises	242
Consonants	243
Nasalizing	243
Exercise	243
Pronunciation	243
Exercise	244
Desiring to Be Heard	244

	PAGE
Reading Aloud	245
Grouping	245
Exercise	245
Getting the Central Thought	245
Exercise	246
Memorizing	246
Exercises	247
Dramatizing	249
Exercise	249
Review Exercise	249
CHAPTER XII. PREPARATION OF WRITTEN ENGLISH	250
Details of Arrangement	250
Paper	250
Ink	250
Penmanship	250
Margins	251
Endorsement	251
Note-books	251
Standards of Measurement	254
Prevision or Planning	256
Revision	256
The Paragraph	258
Topic Sentence	259
Unity	260
Coherence	260
Exercises	260
Outlines	263
Exercise	267
Note-Taking	274
The Sentence	275
Review Exercise	276
CHAPTER XIII. CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION	277
Capitalization	279
I. Tests	279
II. The Use of Capitals	281
Punctuation	284
The Period	284
I. Tests	284
II. The Use of the Period	286

	PAGE
Question Marks and Exclamation Points	288
I. Test	288
II. The Use of the Question Mark and Exclamation Point	288
The Comma	289
I. Tests	289
II. The Use of the Comma	294
The Semicolon	300
I. Test	300
II. The Use of the Semicolon	301
The Colon	303
I. Test	303
II. The Use of the Colon	304
Parentheses and Brackets	306
The Use of Parentheses and Brackets	306
The Dash	307
The Use of the Dash	307
The Apostrophe	307
I. Test	307
II. The Use of the Apostrophe	308
Quotation Marks	309
I. Test	309
II. The Use of Quotation Marks	311
The Hyphen	312
Writing Figures	312
Review Exercises	313
Dictation Exercise	315
 CHAPTER XIV. MEMORIZING	 317
Directions for Memorizing	
1. Understand the meaning of what you are memorizing	317
2. Note relationships, similarities, contrasts, significant facts, construction, and wording	318
3. Practice learning in the way that you expect to use the material	320
4. Distribute your practice	320
5. Learn as a whole	321
6. Determine to remember	321
Exercises	321

	PAGE
CHAPTER XV. WORD STUDY	322
A Study of Borrowed Words	323
Common Latin and Greek Prefixes, Suffixes, Stems	324
Exercise	326
Levels of English	327
Some Classifications	332
Exercises	332
Idioms	333
Figures of Speech	334
Exercise	337
Words as Words	338
Just for Fun	343
Exercises	344
Rules for Spelling	346
Exercises	348
CHAPTER XVI. GRAMMAR AND CORRECT USAGE: PARTS	
OF SPEECH	352
Introduction	352
Parts of Speech	353
I. Tests	353
II. Information about Parts of Speech	355
Nouns	356
I. Tests	356
II. Information about Nouns	360
A. Kinds of Nouns	361
B. Properties of Nouns	360
Pronouns	370
I. Tests	370
II. Information about Pronouns	377
A. Kinds of Pronouns	377
B. Properties	381
C. Order of Pronouns	385
Adjectives and Adverbs	386
I. Tests	386
II. Information about Adjectives and Adverbs	387
Adjectives	387
Adverbs	389
Comparison of Adjectives and Adverbs	389
Degree of Comparison	390
Forming Degrees of Comparison	391

TABLE OF CONTENTS

XV

	PAGE
III. Usage	394
Verbs	397
I. Tests	397
II. Information about Verbs	409
A. Kinds	410
B. Properties	413
C. Verbals	424
D. Conjugations for Reference	427
Prepositions	432
I. Tests	432
II. Information about Prepositions	434
A. Kinds	434
B. Usage	434
Conjunctions	435
I. Tests	435
II. Information about Conjunctions	436
A. Kinds	436
B. Usage	438
Parallel Structure	439
 CHAPTER XVII. GRAMMAR AND CORRECT USAGE: PHRASES, CLAUSES, AND SENTENCES	440
Phrases	440
I. Tests	440
II. Information about Phrases	442
Clauses	446
I. Tests	446
II. Information about Clauses	450
A. Kinds	450
B. Conjunctions	451
Sentences	451
I. Tests	451
II. Information about Sentences	468
A. The Subject	468
B. The Predicate	469
C. Modifiers	470
D. Complements	471
E. Kinds of Sentences	472
Miscellaneous Exercises	478

SUPPLEMENT	PAGE
PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE	485
Review	485
Some Common Practices	488
Parliamentary Phrasing	490
The Motion	491
MEASURING PROGRESS	492
SUGGESTED TERM PLAN	501
INDEX	517