

LANGUAGE LESSONS

FOR TODAY

GRADE 6



MY FATHER'S
WORLD®

Language Lessons for Today is adapted from ***Intermediate Language Lessons*** by Emma Serl, American Book Company, 1914, as well as portions of *The Mother Tongue* by Sarah Louise Arnold and George Lyman Kittredge and *The Mother Tongue Book II* by George Lyman Kittredge and Sarah Louise Arnold, The Athenaeum Press, 1900, with significant revisions, updated language and examples, and additional new content.

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SAMPLE

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.

Through short, interactive, parent-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 picture study and conversation lessons. Their understanding of sentence structure and vocabulary increases as they are exposed to fine examples of our language (short stories and poems read aloud). 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 and composition for a well-rounded language arts program.

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 your child. He will answer many of the questions orally. When written responses are required, use notebook paper and file the sheets in a 3-ring binder.

This book is designed to be non-consumable to keep the cost lower as families reuse the book. Even more important, this format encourages oral 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 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 your child simply answers orally. This is especially important with

a 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.

Many lessons have directions such as “Fill the blanks” or “Tell...” which allow the option of written or oral answers. Lessons that are specific with directions such as “Write...” should generally be completed as written, but this is at the teacher’s discretion.

Preface from Original 1914 Edition of Intermediate Language Lessons (excerpt)

The purpose of this book is to aid pupils to speak and write the English language correctly.

Attention is called to the following features: Literature studies, not only in poetry, but also in fine prose selections. Letter writing on subjects that appeal to child life. Drill on correct forms of speech and words often misused. Many exercises to increase the pupil’s vocabulary. The various forms in composition, including description, narration, conversation, and debate. Both reproduction and original work in oral and written composition. Sequence and careful gradation in arrangement of lessons. The careful treatment of capitalization and punctuation. Observation lessons which furnish material for talking and writing.

The oral composition in connection with the observation lessons not only aid the pupil in telling readily and accurately what he has seen, but give him self-possession and train him to logical thought.

When an essential fact is taught, the pupil is given practice in using the fact again and again, through dictation, reproduction, and original composition.

You will notice that this volume contains a more focused study of the parts of speech and begins with an analysis of sentences. This is in keeping with Charlotte Mason’s advice for age-appropriate grammar lessons.

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:

Poems (See Lesson 4) — A variety of poems are studied and read aloud this year. We encourage you to help your child memorize some of these poems, even if it’s just a portion of the poem. Poetry memorization helps a child 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.

All of these selections should be read to and discussed with the child whether they are memorized or not.

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. Children can often memorize much more than we think if we approach the task positively and give support and encouragement.

Picture Study (*See Lesson 7*) — 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 your child answers by looking carefully at the picture. Prompt your child 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, especially if the subject particularly interests your child.

Narration (*See Lesson 7*) — Before you begin, remind your child to listen carefully and be ready to tell the story or selection in his own words when you are finished reading. Don't worry if your child gives an incomplete narration. If your child is new to narration, you may ask your child a few guided questions to help him remember the basic plot of the story. Narration takes practice and will improve over time.

Narration can be either oral or written. For oral narration, the student simply listens to you read the story or selection aloud, and then he retells it.

Copywork (*See Lesson 13*) — The purpose of copywork is to familiarize the child with spelling, mechanics, and usage while practicing handwriting. Have your child copy part or all of the selection on appropriate handwriting or notebook paper. If you find the copywork too long in a lesson, then have your child copy just a part of it, or let him take more than one day to complete it.

Dictation (*See Lesson 13*) — Let the child see the book as you discuss the more difficult words and the punctuation. Point out words that are difficult to spell and practice them. Then remove the book, and slowly read the first sentence aloud. Have the child repeat the sentence aloud and then write it. You may break up the sentence into smaller phrases if needed. Continue the dictation, phrase by phrase or sentence by sentence. Poems can be presented one line at a time.

You will need a **dictionary** for some of the lessons.

Lesson 20

Pronouns

A word used in place of a noun is a ***pronoun***.

Some words stand for nouns. A word which is used instead of a noun is called a pronoun. It stands for the person or thing which the noun names. Words such as *I*, *he*, *her*, and *ours* are pronouns. Can you say several more?

Find the pronouns in the following selections.

1. The spider climbs upon a post and spins a little thread. As soon as he makes enough of it to carry him, he floats off with it on the breeze.
2. Dear little blossoms down under the snow,
You must be weary of winter, I know.
3. "Will you walk into my parlor?" said the spider to the fly.
4. Love your neighbor as yourself.
5. They shook the depths of the desert gloom with their hymns of lofty cheer.
6. Do not run after happiness; seek to do good and you will find that happiness will run after you.

» *Teacher: See page 155 for answers.*

Take out your Parts of Speech envelope you started in Lesson 11.

On one card, write "pronoun." On the back of that card, write "A word used in place of a noun is a pronoun." Also write five pronouns. Have your teacher check your card and help you correct any mistakes.

Look at all the cards you have made – the sides with just one word. Tell your teacher the definition of and five examples of each part of speech. If you have any difficulty, your teacher will review the concepts with you.

Lesson 21

Selection for Study—October

October! Orchard of the year! Ripened seeds shake in their pods. Apples drop in the stillest hours. Leaves begin to let go when no wind is out, and swing in long waverings to the earth, which they touch without sound, and lie looking up, till winds rake them, and heap them in fence corners. The woods are thinner, so that we can see the heavens plainer. The days are calm. The nights are tranquil. The year's work is done. She walks in gorgeous apparel, looking upon her long labor, and her serene eye sayeth, "It is good."

—HENRY WARD BEECHER

Explain: *swing in long waverings, the winds rake them, tranquil, gorgeous apparel.*

She is a pronoun. Who is the *she* in the last sentence?

Complete the following sentences by referring to the quotation above.

1. An exclamation point comes after *October* because ____.
2. A period comes after *pods* because ____.
3. A comma comes after *sayeth* because ____.
4. Quotation marks are placed around "*It is good*" because ____.
5. *It* begins with a capital letter because ____.

Copy the following sentences. Draw a vertical line between the subject and the predicate. Write *S* above the subject and *P* above the predicate.

1. Ripened seeds shake in their pods.
2. Apples drop in the stillest hours.
3. Leaves fall to the ground.
4. The days are calm.
5. The nights are tranquil.
6. The year's work is done.
7. She walks in gorgeous apparel.

» Teacher: See page 155 for answers.

Lesson 67

Picture Study—Starry Night

Vincent van Gogh was born in 1853 in the Netherlands. As a child, he enjoyed drawing, perhaps learning from his artistic mother. His favorite authors were Charles Dickens and George Eliot. Vincent van Gogh was a compassionate man. As a young man, he moved to a coal-mining area in Belgium, where he preached to the people and helped the sick. He drew many pictures of these miners.

Van Gogh developed his own style as an artist, oftentimes immediately painting a person or scene without having sketched or drawn anything. His paint colors were unconventional for the time—bold red, orange, bright yellow, ultramarine, and mauve. In ten years, he created 2,100 artworks, including oil paintings, watercolors, drawings, and sketches. He particularly liked drawing and painting olive trees, cypress trees, wheat fields, and sunflowers. Van Gogh sold only one painting during his lifetime: *The Red Vineyard*.

He often struggled with depression and died in 1890 a poor man. However, in 1901 his mother witnessed a Paris gallery declare Vincent van Gogh a great artist and a genius. Today, van Gogh is considered one of the best Dutch painters, second only to Rembrandt.

1. What do you first notice about this oil painting?
2. How does the sky contrast with the village?
3. What kinds of lines do you see? Use your finger to trace some of them.
4. What do you notice about the tree and the church?
5. What colors does van Gogh use in this painting? What feelings do these colors evoke?
6. Look at the windows. What do you see? What could this symbolize or mean?
7. Look at the sky. Where is the bright yellow used? Why?
8. What do you think van Gogh may have been thinking and feeling as he created this painting?

» *Teacher: See page 173 for answers.*



Vincent Van Gogh

STARRY NIGHT

Lesson 102

Poem—The Touch of the Master's Hand

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,

"Who'll start the bidding for me?"

"A dollar, a dollar. Then two! Only two?

Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;

Going for three—" But no,

From the room, far back, a grey-haired man

Came forward and picked up the bow;

Then wiping the dust from the old violin,

And tightening the loosened strings,

He played a melody pure and sweet,

As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,

With a voice that was quiet and low,

Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"

And he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?

Two thousand! And who'll make it three?

Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice,

And going and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
“We do not quite understand.
What changed its worth?” Swift came the reply:
“The touch of the Master’s hand.”
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd
Much like the old violin.

A “mess of pottage,” a glass of wine,
A game—and he travels on.
He is “going” once, and “going” twice,
He’s “going” and almost “gone.”
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought
By the touch of the Master’s hand.

—MYRA BROOKS WELCH (1921)

Read the poem aloud.

Tell the story of the first four stanzas.

Tell the meaning of the last stanza. What does a “*mess of pottage*” refer to? What does “*going*” and *almost “gone”* mean?

» *Teacher: See page 191 for answers.*

Do one of the following:

- Study a segment of the poem for spelling and punctuation, and then complete a dictation.
- Copy or memorize part or all of the poem.
- Draw an illustration for the poem.