

# LANGUAGE LESSONS

## FOR TODAY

GRADE 3



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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# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Lesson 1</i> Oral Narration—Fable .....	<b>10</b>
<i>Lesson 2</i> Oral Composition .....	<b>11</b>
<i>Lesson 3</i> Singular and Plural .....	<b>12</b>
<i>Lesson 4</i> Dictionary.....	<b>13</b>
<i>Lesson 5</i> Contractions.....	<b>14</b>
<i>Lesson 6</i> Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>15</b>
<i>Lesson 7</i> Picture Study.....	<b>16</b>
<i>Lesson 8</i> Possessive Words—Whose? .....	<b>18</b>
<i>Lesson 9</i> Possessive Form .....	<b>19</b>
<i>Lesson 10</i> Poem to Memorize .....	<b>20</b>
<i>Lesson 11</i> Copywork.....	<b>21</b>
<i>Lesson 12</i> Copywork.....	<b>21</b>
<i>Lesson 13</i> Parts of a Book.....	<b>22</b>
<i>Lesson 14</i> Possessive Form .....	<b>23</b>
<i>Lesson 15</i> Letter Writing—Thank You.....	<b>24</b>
<i>Lesson 16</i> Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>25</b>
<i>Lesson 17</i> Letter Writing—Thank You.....	<b>26</b>
<i>Lesson 18</i> Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>28</b>
<i>Lesson 19</i> Picture Study.....	<b>30</b>
<i>Lesson 20</i> Words That Help Tell Where (Prepositions).....	<b>32</b>
<i>Lesson 21</i> Writing a Friendly Letter.....	<b>33</b>
<i>Lesson 22</i> Poem to Memorize .....	<b>35</b>
<i>Lesson 23</i> Copywork.....	<b>36</b>
<i>Lesson 24</i> Copywork.....	<b>36</b>
<i>Lesson 25</i> Composition—Autobiography .....	<b>37</b>
<i>Lesson 26</i> Dialogue .....	<b>38</b>
<i>Lesson 27</i> Composition—Dialogue.....	<b>39</b>
<i>Lesson 28</i> Words Opposite in Meaning (Antonyms) .....	<b>39</b>
<i>Lesson 29</i> Action Words (Verbs) .....	<b>40</b>
<i>Lesson 30</i> Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>41</b>
<i>Lesson 31</i> Picture Study.....	<b>42</b>
<i>Lesson 32</i> Oral and Written Narration.....	<b>44</b>
<i>Lesson 33</i> Most—Almost.....	<b>45</b>
<i>Lesson 34</i> Poem to Memorize .....	<b>46</b>
<i>Lesson 35</i> Copywork.....	<b>47</b>
<i>Lesson 36</i> Copywork.....	<b>47</b>
<i>Lesson 37</i> Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>48</b>
<i>Lesson 38</i> Dictation .....	<b>49</b>
<i>Lesson 39</i> Oral Narration and Paragraphs.....	<b>50</b>
<i>Lesson 40</i> Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>51</b>
<i>Lesson 41</i> Words with Same Meaning (Synonyms) .....	<b>52</b>

<i>Lesson 42</i>	Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>53</b>
<i>Lesson 43</i>	Picture Study.....	<b>54</b>
<i>Lesson 44</i>	Sentences—Statements and Questions .....	<b>56</b>
<i>Lesson 45</i>	Sentences—Commands and Exclamations .....	<b>57</b>
<i>Lesson 46</i>	Poem to Memorize .....	<b>58</b>
<i>Lesson 47</i>	Copywork.....	<b>58</b>
<i>Lesson 48</i>	Copywork.....	<b>59</b>
<i>Lesson 49</i>	Reading for Information .....	<b>59</b>
<i>Lesson 50</i>	Quotations and Quotation Marks .....	<b>60</b>
<i>Lesson 51</i>	Oral Narration—Fable .....	<b>61</b>
<i>Lesson 52</i>	Dictation—Quotation Marks.....	<b>62</b>
<i>Lesson 53</i>	Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>62</b>
<i>Lesson 54</i>	Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>63</b>
<i>Lesson 55</i>	Picture Study.....	<b>64</b>
<i>Lesson 56</i>	Go—Went—Gone and Capitalization .....	<b>66</b>
<i>Lesson 57</i>	Oral Narration and Composition .....	<b>67</b>
<i>Lesson 58</i>	Poem to Memorize .....	<b>68</b>
<i>Lesson 59</i>	Copywork.....	<b>68</b>
<i>Lesson 60</i>	Copywork.....	<b>68</b>
<i>Lesson 61</i>	Oral Narration—Fable .....	<b>69</b>
<i>Lesson 62</i>	Written Narration.....	<b>70</b>
<i>Lesson 63</i>	Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>70</b>
<i>Lesson 64</i>	Word Usage (Homophones).....	<b>71</b>
<i>Lesson 65</i>	Oral Narration and Composition .....	<b>72</b>
<i>Lesson 66</i>	Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>73</b>
<i>Lesson 67</i>	Picture Study.....	<b>74</b>
<i>Lesson 68</i>	This—That—These—Those .....	<b>76</b>
<i>Lesson 69</i>	Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>77</b>
<i>Lesson 70</i>	Poem to Memorize .....	<b>78</b>
<i>Lesson 71</i>	Copywork.....	<b>79</b>
<i>Lesson 72</i>	Copywork.....	<b>79</b>
<i>Lesson 73</i>	Oral Narration.....	<b>80</b>
<i>Lesson 74</i>	Vocabulary (Dictionary Usage) .....	<b>81</b>
<i>Lesson 75</i>	Oral and Written Narration.....	<b>82</b>
<i>Lesson 76</i>	Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>83</b>
<i>Lesson 77</i>	Oral or Written Composition.....	<b>84</b>
<i>Lesson 78</i>	Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>85</b>
<i>Lesson 79</i>	Picture Study.....	<b>86</b>
<i>Lesson 80</i>	Word Usage (Homophones).....	<b>88</b>
<i>Lesson 81</i>	Composition .....	<b>89</b>
<i>Lesson 82</i>	Poem to Memorize .....	<b>90</b>
<i>Lesson 83</i>	Copywork.....	<b>91</b>
<i>Lesson 84</i>	Copywork.....	<b>91</b>
<i>Lesson 85</i>	Oral Narration—Fable .....	<b>92</b>
<i>Lesson 86</i>	Written Narration.....	<b>93</b>



<i>Lesson 87</i>	Use of Correct Verb Forms .....	<b>94</b>
<i>Lesson 88</i>	Use of Correct Pronoun Forms.....	<b>95</b>
<i>Lesson 89</i>	Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>96</b>
<i>Lesson 90</i>	Poem to Read Aloud.....	<b>97</b>
<i>Lesson 91</i>	Picture Study.....	<b>98</b>
<i>Lesson 92</i>	Composition—Sentence Types and Quotation Marks.....	<b>100</b>
<i>Lesson 93</i>	Composition .....	<b>101</b>
<i>Lesson 94</i>	Poem to Memorize .....	<b>102</b>
<i>Lesson 95</i>	Copywork.....	<b>103</b>
<i>Lesson 96</i>	Copywork.....	<b>103</b>
<i>Lesson 97</i>	Discussion and Copywork .....	<b>104</b>
<i>Lesson 98</i>	Composition .....	<b>104</b>
<i>Lesson 99</i>	Observation Lesson—Oral Composition .....	<b>105</b>
<i>Lesson 100</i>	Hymn for Study .....	<b>106</b>
<i>Lesson 101</i>	Hymn for Study .....	<b>107</b>
<i>Lesson 102</i>	Hymn for Study .....	<b>108</b>
<b>Answers</b> .....		<b>109</b>



# 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, 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 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 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 and assures a well-rounded language arts program.

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 (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. 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. 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 your 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.

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 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:

**Oral Narration (See Lesson 1)** — The child simply listens to you read the story aloud, and then he retells it. Before you begin, remind your child to listen carefully and be ready to tell the story 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.

**Oral Composition (See Lesson 2)** — 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 your student gives one- or two-word answers, you can provide good models by answering similar questions with complete sentences.

**Poem to Read Aloud** (*See Lesson 6*) — These poems are to read aloud to the student. They are not memorized but simply enjoyed.

**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.

**Poem to Memorize** (*See Lesson 10*) — 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.

We encourage you to help your child 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. Your child does not need to memorize all the poems in the book, but we do encourage you to stretch his abilities and expect some memorization. All of these selections should be read to and discussed with the child 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.

**Copywork** (*See Lesson 11*) — 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.

**Observation Lesson** (*See Lesson 37 and Lesson 40*) — This is an opportunity for the student to learn to put his thoughts clearly into words. If he does not know the answer, answers are provided in the appendix when needed. For some lessons, you may want to read all the answers before asking any questions.

**Dictation** (*See Lesson 38*) — Let the child see the book as you discuss the more difficult words and the punctuation. Then remove the book, and slowly read the sentence aloud. Have the child repeat the sentence aloud and then write it. You may break up the sentence into smaller phrases if needed.

**Dictionary usage** is introduced in several of the lessons. We recommend *Merriam-Webster's Elementary Dictionary*, which is available from My Father's World.

# Lesson 1

## Oral Narration—Fable

» *Teacher: Before teaching today's lesson, read the information about Oral Narration on page 8.*

Listen to this story. Then you will tell it back to me in your own words.

### *The Lion and the Mouse*

A lion was sleeping in his den when a little mouse ran across his face and woke him up. He put out his paw and caught the mouse. He was about to kill the little creature, but the mouse begged so hard for her life that the lion let her go.

Some time later, the lion was caught in a net that the hunters had set. He roared and struggled, but the net was too strong for him to break. The mouse heard him roaring and ran to help him. She nibbled through the cords that held him, and the lion was again free. He was glad that he had saved the life of the little mouse.

*Optional:* Draw a picture of the fable.



# Lesson 2

## Oral Composition

» *Teacher: Before teaching today's lesson, read the information about Oral Composition on page 8. Note that no quotation marks are needed when a conversation is in a dialogue format, as in a play.*

Let's have some fun and act out the story from yesterday. First I will read the story again. (The teacher should read aloud "The Lion and the Mouse" from yesterday's lesson.)

Now let's pretend that the lion and mouse can talk. Let's say what we think the mouse and lion might have said. I will be the lion. You will be the mouse.

### *The Lion and the Mouse*

**LION:** Something woke me up. I wonder what it was. Here is something under my paw. Why, it is a mouse! Why did you wake me up?

**MOUSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LION:** I am going to eat you.

**MOUSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LION:** Why should I let you go?

**MOUSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LION:** I will let you go this time, but don't wake me again.

\* \* \*

**LION:** Help me! Help me! I'm caught in a hunter's net and I can't get out! Roar!!

**MOUSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LION:** Oh, thank you, mouse. You are tiny, but your heart is brave and kind.



# Lesson 4

## Dictionary

» *Teacher: You will need a dictionary to teach this lesson. If you don't have one, you might teach this lesson later using a dictionary at the public library.*

Today you will learn how to use a dictionary. Dictionaries are special books that include many words and their definitions, or meanings. A dictionary lists words in ABC order, or alphabetical order. Can you say the alphabet in order?

Look at the three words below. They are not in alphabetical order. Notice the first letter of each word. Let's say the words in alphabetical order.

dog  
fish  
cat

Now can you say these words in alphabetical order?

man  
bug  
stop

Find all six of the words above in a dictionary.

» *Teacher: Give the student as much help as he needs. If he is able, teach him to use the guide words in the top corners of the dictionary page and to look at the second and third letters to find words.*

You can use the dictionary to look up the meanings of words you don't know. You can also use the dictionary to check if you are spelling a word correctly. If you are learning vocabulary words in school, now you know how to look them up in a dictionary.



# Lesson 10

## Poem to Memorize

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

### ***Blind but Happy***

O what a happy soul am I!  
Although I cannot see,  
I am resolved that in this world  
Contented I will be.

How many blessings I enjoy  
That other people don't.  
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,  
I cannot and I won't.

—FANNY CROSBY

Fanny Crosby, an American poet and song writer, was blind from infancy. She played the piano and guitar and wrote over 8,000 hymns. Fanny set a beautiful example of how Christians should respond to the difficult things that happen in life.

# Lesson 43

## Picture Study

What type of room is this? How is this room like your bedroom? How is it different?

What items do you see in the picture?

Where does the person put his clothes? Do you see the pegs on the wall?

Why do you think a pitcher and large bowl sit on the dressing table?

Many years ago, people could not turn on a faucet to get water. They had to haul water from a river, a well, or other water source. This pitcher and bowl were used to wash someone's hands and face.

Vincent van Gogh painted the bedroom at his Yellow House in Arles, Rouches du Rhone, in France. The French name he gave this painting was *La Chambre a Coucher*, which simply means "the room for a bed" or "the bedroom." The room must have had an unusual shape because van Gogh painted it to look like a trapezoid with unusual angles. He did not paint it in the shape of a rectangle like your bedroom is probably shaped.

Today Paris, France, is known for art and clothing. It has many beautiful palaces, monuments, buildings, and churches. People can visit Paris to see famous paintings at the Louvre Museum. Many people in Paris think it is exciting to go to plays, ballets, and operas.





*Vincent van Gogh*

BEDROOM IN ARLES