

1926

# A survey of the needs of eighth grade pupils in the Samuel Adams District (Jeffries Point, East Boston)

---

<https://hdl.handle.net/2144/7458>

*"Downloaded from OpenBU. Boston University's institutional repository."*

HEALEY

Upstairs  
378.744  
B0  
A.M. 1926  
he

**Boston University  
College of Liberal Arts  
Library**

THE GIFT OF The Author

June, 1926

Upstairs  
378.744  
B0  
A.M. 1926  
fr

Ideal  
Double Reversible  
Manuscript Cover  
PATENTED NOV. 15, 1898  
Manufactured by  
Adams, Cushing & Foster

28-6½

\* \* \* \* \*  
\*  
\* BOSTON UNIVERSITY \*  
\*  
\* GRADUATE SCHOOL \*  
\*  
\* Thesis \*  
\*  
\* A Survey of the Needs of Eighth Grade \*  
\* Pupils in the Samuel Adams District \*  
\* (Jeffries Point, East Boston) \*  
\*  
\* Submitted by \*  
\*  
\* Mary Helena Healey \*  
\*  
\* (B.S. in Ed. - Boston University - 1925.) \*  
\*  
\* In partial fulfilment of requirements for \*  
\*  
\* the degree of Master of Arts \*  
\*  
\* 1926. \*  
\*  
\* \* \* \* \*

BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
LIBRARY

English language - Study and Teaching  
English language - For foreigners  
Boston - Samuel Adams School  
Series



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2013

<http://archive.org/details/asurveyofneedsof00heal>

Liptons  
378.144  
BO  
4 M 1926

Outline of A. M. Thesis

Title: A Survey of the Needs of Eighth Grade Pupils in the Samuel Adams District (Jeffries Point, East Boston).

I. Introduction:

- A. Statement and Discussion of Problem.
- B. Information as to Character of District, - Types of Pupils, - Grading of Pupils etc.
- C. Sources from Which Information Was Obtained and How Obtained.

II. Plan of Content and Motivation of Eighth Grade English

(Based on A. B. C.):

A. Content:

1. Proportion of Time Given to Oral and Written English.
2. Oral English:
  - a. Difficulties met by Foreign-speaking Pupils, - Pronunciation, Enunciation, Limited Vocabulary. Foreign Sentence Construction, etc.
  - b. Devices for Correcting These Errors.
  - c. Grammar as a Means of Correcting Errors.
  - d. Training and Practice in Connected Talking.



### 3. Written English:

- a. Kind and Amount of Written Work to be Required.
- b. Training and Practice in Practical Uses of Written English.
- c. Exercises in Directly Useful Technicalities of Written English, including Spelling.

### B. Motivation:

1. Definition of term "Motivation". Value and Need of Motivation.
2. Application of Principle of Motivation to Eighth Grade English.

## III. Conclusion:

### A. Summary of:

1. Methods Used in Determining Language Needs in a Foreign District.
2. Statement of Language Needs (Oral and Written).
3. Recommendations for Meeting These Needs:
  - a. Stressing of Oral English.
  - b. Formation of Specific Language Habits.
  - c. Cultivation of Habit of Critical Evaluation of Work by Pupil -- Use of Standards.
  - d. Vitalizing or Motivating of the English Work.

## IV. Bibliography.



A Survey of the Needs of Eighth Grade  
Pupils in the Samuel Adams District  
(Jeffries Point, East Boston)

I. Statement and Discussion of Problem:

The problem set for solution in this study is (1) to determine the needs in oral and written English of eighth grade pupils in an Italian district and (2) using these as a basis, to plan for the content and motivation of the course in English.

The teaching of oral and written English in a district of this type presents many problems. With the knowledge of its difficulties, however, comes the sense of its supreme importance, so that the teacher who attempts to teach English can never lose faith in the value of what she is teaching. Daily life crystallizes continually into language and the individual's ability to translate his thoughts into suitable speech determines, to a large extent, his influences and power in the society of which he is a part.

The eighth grade in a junior high school is an acknowledged part of secondary education, and as such, the "Cardinal principles of secondary Education" apply to it. Briefly stated these are: (a) Health (b) Command of the Fundamental Processes (c) Worthy Home Membership (d) Civic Efficiency (e) Vocational Efficiency (f) Worthy Use of Leisure Time and (g) Ethical Character. Evaluating oral and written English in the light of these principles, we find that directly or indirectly, they are factors in the realization of each of them.



The English teacher is very directly and very intimately concerned with the second aim. In achieving this second aim, - Command of the Fundamental Processes - the ability to speak, to read and to write is recognized as fundamental and of the utmost importance. Knowledge or power in other subjects is definitely accelerated or retarded by the pupil's ability to read, write and speak intelligently.

Oral and written English as tool subjects should be taught with direct reference to their service as mediums of communication, of interpretation and as means of gathering information. The aim of each is utilitarian, - to give correctness, force and a certain degree of fluency in speaking and writing. This study is based upon the assumption that the oral and written English work in an eighth grade in a district of this type should prepare the students for the kind of speaking and writing they will be called upon to do in life.

It is the function of the teacher of oral and written language to train in organizing thought and expressing ideas by those means and in those forms that the average man and woman use. The speaking of the average man and woman is conversation, stories, exposition and argument. The school, therefore, should provide abundant and thorough training in those forms.

It is much more important that the school should give pupils ability to talk well than it is that it should give them the ability to write well. This is simply because people talk more than they write. Few people write much, but all people



talk a good deal. Spoken English is in evidence every day of their lives and very often their success in business and in their intercourse with other people depends upon their power to speak well. Oral English is concerned with every life activity that demands expression in words, whether it be a game on the play-ground, a chat at a friend's house; conversation on the street, in stores and offices, at picnics or at the moving pictures; or in any school exercise regardless of the subject with which it deals.

It is undoubtedly true that written language has received an emphasis entirely out of proportion to the need it fills in the life of the average citizen. When school days are over we are rarely called upon to express ourselves through the medium of writing except in correspondence. Even the man or woman in the professions will find the power to speak fluently of greater importance than the power to write well. As soon as the rigid test of practical value is applied to written English, courses of study become materially reduced.

A. Information as to Character of District,-  
Types of Pupils, Grading of Pupils:

The district referred to in this study is located in what is known as the "first section" of East Boston. The school population of this district is about ninety-seven percent Italian or of Italian parentage, one percent Swedish and Norwegian and about two percent English-speaking, - of American, Irish or English parentage.

In five eighth grade classes containing two hundred



twenty pupils only thirteen were found who came from homes where English is spoken by the parents. In some of these Italian homes the parents can understand a little English and can speak it brokenly and English is spoken by older brothers and sisters, but in the main the conversation carried on in the home is in Italian.

Many of the homes are supplied with Italian newspapers and magazines and the topics of the day are read and discussed in Italian. A number also have American newspapers. These are read by the children in English, loosely translated into Italian and discussed.

English is used by the pupils during the time which they spend in school, on the play-ground, in the library and at the moving pictures. Most of their shopping for groceries and provisions is done at local stores kept by Italians and consequently these transactions are carried on in Italian. Their church services are largely conducted in Latin, with the sermon and instruction being given in Italian. Thus it may readily be seen that English is practically a foreign language to a very great number of these pupils and the great problem of the English teacher is to provide work which will meet their particular needs.

These eighth grade pupils are grouped according to their intelligence ratios as determined by the results of the "Terman Group Tests of Mental Ability -- Form B - Grades 7-12". The brighter pupils are placed in what is known as the "foreign language" section. In addition to the regular program of studies



they take Italian for one period of forty-five minutes every day. The non-foreign language pupils are divided into two groups, - an average and a slow group. The pupils in the bright group have intelligence ratios varying from 105 to 133, - those in the average group from 75 to 105 and those in the lower section from 28 to 80. In some cases individual tests were given and adjustments made in the grouping of pupils who, in the opinion of their teachers, seemed to have more ability than their intelligence ratios indicated.

These eighth grade pupils range in age from 12 yrs. - 1 mo. to 16 yrs. - 5 mos. Many of the pupils in the average and lower groups are over-age according to the mental age equivalents in terms of the Stanford-Binet Scale.

The parents of most of these pupils belong to the laboring class.\* The school has had to try to educate them away from the idea of taking their boys and girls out of school when they reach the age of fourteen.

The providing of industrial courses, business courses and trade schools has helped very materially to reduce the number who now leave at the end of the eighth year. This has been particularly noticeable in the case of the girls who have been electing and attending the Girls' Trade School and the High School of Practical Arts in large numbers.

The percentage of pupils from this district who choose the academic or college course in high school is very small. The pupils and their parents are of the opinion that trade or business

\*See list on page # 40.



training is more suited to their needs and makes them wage earners more quickly. This is a factor of the utmost importance as many of their families are very large and the economic pressure is great.

The girls who leave to go to work usually go into the candy, shoe and rubber factories where they become sorters and packers, check-girls, errand girls and floor girls. Many become bundle girls in the department stores. Some who can sew well go to work in tailor shops; others secure home permits.\*

The boys become Western Union messengers, errand boys, office boys, order boys, factory workers, helpers in stores and delivery boys on trucks.

B. Sources from which Information Was  
Obtained and How Obtained:

1. Oral English:

In attempting to find out what the course in Oral English for these pupils should include (1) a study was made by the teacher of their conversation during their free periods in the school yard and in the school room before the opening of each session. These periods of observation covered approximately forty-five minutes daily for a period of two school weeks, from October 19 to October 30, 1925.

(2) A study was made of their conversation during the vocational guidance period. The eighth grade classes meet once a month for a period of forty-five minutes for vocational guidance. This period was selected by the teacher because it is one in which the pupils are very much interested and in which they speak very freely and frankly.

\* See tabulation of Occupations - Pages # 41-42.



In each of these studies the teacher listed the errors and defects and noted the frequency of these among the different pupils. The pupils were not conscious that their speech was being observed.

(3) The pupils were taken into the experiment and the teacher explained to them that she was trying to plan some work which would help them to improve their speech. The pupils were asked to help and it was suggested that they observe their own speech and the speech of their classmates and make a report of the number of errors which they noticed each day for one week. They were given slips of paper and asked to write down the errors which they heard and after each to put a figure indicating the number of different pupils whom they heard making the error. These reports were collected every day. At the end of the week the reports were discussed and a class report\* made showing the errors and the frequency of the error.

## 2. Written English:

In determining the needs of these eighth grade pupils in written English the following methods were used:- (1) Without any preliminary steps the pupils were asked to select one of the following topics and write a composition upon it:

- a. The Best Moving Picture I Ever Saw.
- b. An Accident.
- c. How I Can Earn Money.
- d. My Favorite Story.
- e. Why I Am A Boy Scout.

\* See page # 43.



- f. How I Learned to Swim.
- g. My First Trip in an Aeroplane.
- h. My Dog's Best Trick.

The teacher examined these papers, listed the errors and noted the frequency of these errors among the different pupils. The pupils were not told that their papers were being written for the purpose of determining the errors which they made.

(2) A survey was made of the writing done in English by the older brothers and sisters of the pupils (16-30 years) and also of the writing done by the parents if they could write in English. In taking the older brothers and sisters ranging in age from sixteen to thirty, it may seem as if the teacher had chosen a selected group to study, but this choice was made entirely upon the basis of availability, as very few of the parents or older adults in these families can read or write in English.

This study was carried on over a period of two weeks, November 3 to November 13, 1925. The aim was to find out how much writing is actually done in adult life in business and social relations, of what it consists and what the school can do to fit the pupils for what they are likely to be called upon to do in life outside of school.

The purpose of the study was explained to the pupils in order to arouse their interest and to secure more intelligent cooperation. The pupils were given mimeographed questionnaires on which to make their reports and these reports were collected every day. The following is a copy of the questionnaire:



Pupil's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Done in English by Parents  
and by Older Brothers and Sisters.

- I. By Parents.  
II. By Brothers and Sisters.

Age \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Kind of Writing Done:

- A. Letter:  
    Friendly  
    Business
- B. Post Card
- C. Bill or Statement
- D. Money Order
- E. Any Other Kind

## Directions to pupils:-

1. Put a check after I or II to show who did the writing.
2. Check the kind of writing done.
3. If the kind of writing done is not included in the given list, write it in under E.
4. If you have no writing to report upon for the day, fill in your name and the date and pass in the questionnaire unchecked.



Analysis of Results of Studies

Errors and Defects Noted in Teacher's Study  
of Oral Speech (1 and 2) - pages #6 and #7.

These errors and defects may be grouped under the following headings:-

(1) Sentence structure:

Foreign construction, - use of double subject, -  
misplaced modifiers. Colloquialisms.

(2) Verb errors:

Wrong tense, wrong verb form, wrong verb.

(3) Pronoun errors:

Ex: Me and him, - It is me, - mines for mine.

(4) Use of double negative:

Ex: I haven't none.

He didn't give me nothing.

(5) Use of adverb instead of negative form of verb:

Ex: I never done it. for "I didn't do it".

(6) Errors in pronunciation and enunciation:

Ex: fin <sup>h</sup> ished	for finished
lectric	" electric
lastic	" elastic
ezacly	" exactly
talkin'	" talking
cloz	" clothes
jogafry	" geography
libery	" library
winder	" window
kin	" can
cuz	" because
wid	" with



## (7) Limited vocabulary:

Ex: Use of "swell", "grand", "slick", "great" to express pleasure, approval or appreciation. Use of "fierce", "awful", "punk", "terrible" to express disapproval or dislike. Very dependent upon slang expressions to convey meaning.

## (8) Marked inability to express ideas in connected speech. Failure to speak to the point. Use of long and very much involved sentences.

The following are illustrative of the types of sentences referred to in (1) - page 10.

- a. The boss of my house he won't let me hold no dog in my house. (The landlord will not allow me to keep a dog in my house.)
- b. My mother she says like this can I be dismiss at two-thirty?
- c. I ought to come late because my mother she says better you go to the dispensary first. (I was obliged to come late because my mother said I better go to the dispensary first.)
- d. I was absent yesterday because my mother was sick and she had me necessary at home.
- e. My brother he bunks out and my mother she likes if you'll tell her where she'll close him up. (put him away).
- f. Nobody they don't like Tony because he is a wise guy.



- g. She owns me a dime. I'm going to tell Rosina if she wants to pay me that dime she owns me.
- h. I hit him because he all times talk about my father.
- i. Nicholas he robbed me my ball.
- j. I left mines home.
- k. This is my wrong book for history.
- l. He lives two on top of me. (He lives on the second floor above me.)
- m. She ain't got it, - she forgot it home.
- n. Make me hold your eraser. (Let me take your eraser.)

The following tabulations give the most frequent errors and the number of different pupils noted as making the errors.



TABLE I

Summary of Teacher's Study

<u>Error</u>	<u>No. of Pupils Making Error</u>
1. ain't	74
2. my mother, she said	68
3. ain't got no	66
4. seen for saw	57
5. done for did	54
6. don't for doesn't	46
7. went for gone	41
8. It ain't me (him/her)	40
9. can for may	40
10. them things	38
11. come for came	37
12. sure for yes	34
13. was for were	33
14. give for gave	33
15. is for are	30
16. yous for you (plural)	27
17. I got-ta for (I must)	25
18. me and him	24
19. hold for borrow	18
20. tell for ask	16
21. mines for mine	15
22. all times for always	11
23. make me for let me	9
24. off for from	9
25. more better for better	6

TABLE II

Summary of Pupils' Reports

<u>Errors</u>	<u>No. of Pupils Making Error</u>
1. ain't	112
2. seen for saw	96
3. is for are	88
4. done for did	88
5. went for gone	76
6. was for were	74
7. I ain't him (me/her)	73
8. give for gave	62
9. It is me	58
10. Youse for you (plural)	37
11. mines for mine	24
12. kids for children	22
13. can for may	18
14. don't for doesn't	14
("Italian ways of saying things")	
("Making very bad sentences")	
("A poor way of talking")	
("Too many words and mixed up")	
("Talking with the words all twisted around")	
( 19 pupils reported expressions of this kind. It is possible that they were intended to designate same type of error (that teacher refers to in (1) (page #10.)	



A comparison of the summaries proved interesting. The pupils reported a total of fourteen errors, and twelve of these were included in the teacher's list. They reported a very much larger number of pupils making the errors. This was due probably to the fact that they were associated with their group for a much longer period of time than the teacher was and consequently had greater opportunity to observe the errors. There were eleven errors noted in the teacher's list which did not appear in the pupils' report. There were two possible explanations of these omissions, - (1) it is probable that the pupils were less careful observers than the teacher and (2) they were not conscious of these errors and consequently failed to report them.

The actual range of errors is not very large in either Table I or Table II. Verb errors make up over half of the total number in each summary. The misuse of pronouns and the use of peculiar foreign constructions and colloquialisms make up a large part of the remainder of the errors recorded in the teacher's list. The pupils however, report none of the colloquialisms specifically.

These studies are of value in a number of ways. They furnish the teacher with specific information as to the particular needs of her students, give her an idea of what foundation exists for her work and point out very clearly the lines along which she should plan her work to meet these needs. They are of great value in focussing the attention of the pupils on their own speech, in arousing their interest and in enlisting their efforts to help determine the weak points of the class as a whole and of its



individual members in order that these defects and weak spots may be corrected or strengthened. They furnish very useful data on which to base the course in oral English.

\*\*\*\*\*

Analysis of Results of Studies in Written English

In trying to determine the needs of these pupils in written English two hundred thirteen compositions were examined and the following errors and defects noted:-

- (1) Poor Sentence sense:
  - a. Long "run-on" type of sentence that indicated lack of clear thinking.
  - b. Clauses used as sentences.
  - c. Same type of foreign construction and use of colloquialism that was noted in the oral speech survey.
- (2) Limited vocabulary:
 

Noticeably weak in use of adjectives.
- (3) Grammatical errors:
  - a. Lack of power in use of verb forms an outstanding weakness.
  - b. Misuse of pronouns, - similar to that noted in speech survey.
- (4) Errors in capitalizations and marks of punctuation:
  - a. Apostrophe wrongly used in possessive plurals.  
Frequently omitted altogether.
  - b. Apostrophe omitted in contractions.  
ex: doesn't, don't.
  - c. Commas used at end of sentence.



## (5) Errors in arrangement of papers.

Margins and paragraphs omitted.

## (6) Errors in spelling of common words:

Ex: comming	for	coming
allmost	"	almost
quitely	"	quietly

An examination of these six types of errors show that only three are new forms of error. The first three show the same kind of error which was noted in the speech survey. This is significant. Pupils write as they have been accustomed to talk. If they are lacking in strong sentence sense this defect shows up very plainly in their written work. Many times failure to use capitals and periods in written English is largely due to bad oral habits. If pupils do not possess the sentence sense, their written work is sure to contain many omissions of capitals and periods, and consequently many misuses of the comma. The teaching of written language, so far as correctness goes, offers but few difficulties over and above those which are met with in the teaching of oral language. There are certain problems dealing with the mechanical side such as arrangement of paper, penmanship and punctuation which are not present in oral English, but in the main, the basis of all good written English work is laid in good oral work.



Summary of Report of Writing Done in English

I. Number of reports submitted in two weeks = 2128 (218 families)

II. Kind of Writing Done:

A. Letters:

Friendly	a. Parents	4)	
	b. Brothers and Sisters	15)	19

Business	a. Parents	4)	
	b. Brothers and Sisters	29)	33

1. To milkman to change order (1 person)

2. To insurance agent to call (1 person)

3. To WNAC requesting a radio program (1 person)

4. Answer requested to puzzle which had been submitted (1 person)

5. Advertisements:

Auto to sell 1 person

House to sell 2 persons

Stores for rent 4 persons

Lost dog 1 person

Answers to advertisements for employment -21 persons

B. Post Card	a. Parents	0)	
	b. Brothers and Sisters	9)	9

C. Bill or Statement:

Bills	a. Parents	2)	
	b. Brothers and Sisters	5)	7

D. Money Orders	a. Parents	3)	
	b. Brothers and Sisters	8)	11

E. Any Other Kind:

a. Telegram - Brother 1

b. Night Letters - Brothers and Sisters 3

c. Addressing packages sent by parcel post	a. Parents	2
	b. Brothers and Sisters	10

d. Signing name and date for goods received in stock room - Brothers and Sisters - 8

e. Filling out library slips- Brothers and Sisters- 7

The summary indicated to what a limited degree written English is used by adults in a community of this type. Their chief use for it is in their business and social correspondence.



II. Plan of Content and Motivation of  
Eighth Grade Oral and Written English:

A. Content:

The content of this course is based:

1. Upon the needs of these pupils as demonstrated in the studies made of their oral and written English.

2. Upon certain needs which were not revealed by the studies made but which, in the author's eight years experience in working with these pupils, have been found to exist. The scope of the work is to be extended and the content enriched to meet the various needs of these pupils as they arise from time to time.

This course is based on the principle that all the oral and written English work in school should prepare the students for the kind of speaking and writing they will be called upon to do in life.

I. Proportion of Time Given to  
Oral and Written English:

The following apportionment of time is recommended:

Oral Speech -  $\frac{2}{3}$  of time assigned English Expression

Written Speech-  $\frac{1}{3}$  of " " " "

On the basis of the demands made in life this apportionment of time seems reasonable. Adults are rarely called upon to express themselves in writing except in correspondence. There is very limited demand for written expression as compared with the constant need of oral expression in every phase of life, therefore it seems reasonable to give the greater portion of time to that part of the work which is most directly useful in life.

Moreover, it will be remembered that English is practically a foreign language to most of the pupils for whom this



course is planned. They have a very limited opportunity to use the language and to hear it correctly used, so it is desirable to give as much time as possible to the phase of the work that is most helpful and useful to them.

Furthermore, oral speech forms the basis of good written work and the time which is devoted to securing correct and effective oral speech is directly benefitting the written speech as well.

Many teachers of English and authors of English texts and courses of study are realizing that undue emphasis has been placed upon written expression and are recommending that a greater proportion of time be given to oral English.\*

## 2. Oral English:

### a. Difficulties met by non-English speaking pupils.

These difficulties may be grouped as follows:

- (1) Pronunciation and enunciation.
- (2) Foreign sentence construction.
- (3) Limited vocabulary.

\* The time allotment given on page 18 is based directly upon the studies made of the pupils' needs in oral and written English. The writer was asked by a school principal to give, if possible, a list of recent texts and courses of study which showed a tendency to increase the amount of time given to oral English. The list herewith submitted proved helpful in supporting the writer's apportionment of time:

- Wohlfarth, Julia - Self-Help Methods of Teaching English pp.158-9  
 Davis, J.B. - Junior High School Education - Chap. IX - pp.140-1  
 McGregor, Laura - Supervised Study in English- Chap.V - pp.121-2  
 Mahoney, John J.- Standards in English - Part 1 - pp. 12-13.  
 Course of Study in English - Grades V- VIII, Board of Education,  
 Buffalo, New York - pp. 59.  
 West Virginia Course of Study for Junior and Senior High Schools,  
 1923 - pp. 34-35.



(1) Many of the difficulties in enunciation and pronunciation which non-English speaking pupils have are due to the fact that they do not hear the sounds correctly - that is, they are not conscious of them. It often happens that the first impression of a word which a pupil receives was a wrong one and this impression has been strengthened by long-continued use so that the pupil does not know that he says it incorrectly and fails to note that his pronunciation is different from that of another person.

As a rule, incorrect pronunciation results from imitation. On the play-ground, on the street or wherever he comes in contact with people, the pupil hears the incorrect form and adopts it as a matter of course. The mispronunciation may be due to ignorance or it may be due altogether to careless habits of speech.

Some errors in pronunciation are due to the fact the pupil has carried over some of the errors which he makes in his native speech. The Italians frequently drop final syllables and sounds in their own language and show a tendency to do it in speaking English.

(2) Foreign sentence construction:

Some of these constructions are used by the pupils because they think in terms of their own language. To illustrate, - "My mother had me necessary at home" is almost a literal translation of an Italian idiom.



Other errors of this type are due to imitation. They hear errors of this kind constantly and do not recognize them as errors. These pupils live in a neighborhood where very few people speak good English and they imitate what they hear.

We hear double subjects and misplaced modifiers put into sentences for the sake of emphasis. Very often the structure of the sentence indicates that the pupil has not thought it through before attempting to say it.

(3) Limited vocabulary:

This lack may be traced to their environment. They hear such words as "swell" and "grand" used to describe anything which is satisfactory or pleasing and "fierce" and "terrible" to designate what is disagreeable or unpleasant and they adopt them as a matter of course and use the latest slang to supplement these words. Sometimes the pupils do not feel the need of speaking correctly. They manage to make themselves understood and have the feeling that they can "get by" without any trouble. It frequently happens that pupils have a very hazy notion of what constitutes a good choice of words. They have a feeling of indifference to or even antagonism against correct speech, - a feeling that beyond a certain narrow limit correct speech is "sissy"; that the latest slang is infinitely more to be desired; that admired adults do not use it; that it is a stilted unnatural school-room form of speech. To the teacher this means that if English is to be successfully taught it must be, to use an expression of to-day, "sold" to the pupil.



The vocational guidance period furnishes an excellent opportunity in which to demonstrate the practical value of good English. In making a study of the personal qualifications which are desirable in the various occupations, the pupils can be led to see that the ability to speak English correctly and with confidence is a valuable asset in business relations. This makes a very strong appeal to them.

b. Devices for correcting these errors:

The first step in the process of establishing a correct speech habit is to focus the attention of the pupil upon the right form. Some linguistic mistakes are due to the fact that the pupil has never apprehended clearly the spoken word; still more are attributable to the further fact that for years his ears have been assailed by the incorrect form until he has unconsciously woven <sup>it</sup> into the fabric of his speech. Today we are hearing a great deal about education by exposure, and nowhere is this very potent kind of training more effective than in the matter of speech. "Language is caught, not taught". We have always believed this with reference to the bad things in speech. We must remember that it is true with reference to the good things as well. Consequently, the teacher must skillfully introduce to the mind through the ear and eye the correct form which she wishes to make a part of the pupil's permanent possession. Then through interesting, varied and intensive drill, she must assure it a place among his unconscious but thoroughly established habits of speech.



In this work she must enlist every possible aid that springs from the active participation of the pupil. She must take advantage of all the various ways and means of making good English fashionable in the school. At times she will utilize the pupils' keen delight in rivalry by matching the boys against the girls, or one-half of the room against the other. She may pit the class against its own record by marking in graphic form the progress in eliminating an obstinate error, or she may turn to advantage the pupils' passion for clubs by forming a Better English Brigade or a Never Again Club.

Another effective method is to organize a language drive. The pupils should plan the drive and take the lead in all discussion. The pupils discover for themselves what errors are made most frequently in the class. Small tags may be used, each pupil wearing a bunch. When an error is made, the correct form is written on one of the tags, and the tag is surrendered to a committee and preserved by them as a record of the mistake. After a week or two the committee count the number of times each error was reported and the class decide just what errors will be selected for the drive. Two or more teams may be formed and the record of each kept.

Still another way is to have a Good-English Week, when the principal work of the class is to correct a few selected errors. Any pupil caught using one of the wrong forms during the week is tagged for the "hospital section". At the end of the week a program may be arranged. Simple posters may be made by



the pupils, slogans prepared, and rhymes written. Anything that will lend enthusiasm will be valuable. The teacher should aim to arouse a spirit that will desire to make permanent the improvement noted during Good-English Week.

c. Grammar as a means of correcting errors:

The amount of technical grammar which should be taught to these pupils is almost zero. They do not understand it and it does not carry over into their oral and written speech. The teacher, however, should have a knowledge of grammar as it is helpful in giving explanations. Certain grammatical facts are of assistance to the pupil in his efforts to achieve correct sentence structure, exactness in expression and variety in the forms of expression. Common sense dictates that only those topics in technical grammar shall be taught which can be justified on a strictly utilitarian basis. Grammar should be used as a means to an end and should be taught in relation to the problems of oral and written expression which are to be benefitted by it.

d. Training and practice in connected talking:

Oral and Written English are tool subjects, of value, only as they are applied. The English teacher, therefore, must be as much concerned with providing a medium through which principles may be applied as with teaching the technicalities of oral and written speech.



Every school exercise that requires the use of words as a means of expression becomes an informal language lesson. The teacher should appreciate this fact and make the most of her opportunity, so that the pupils' vocabulary and power to express themselves in clear, concise English will grow normally along with their expanding interests. The morning talks; the conversation demanded by constructive work of all kinds; the give and take of ideas in carrying on class projects, all provide opportunity for the best kind of language practice. And while the teacher is definitely holding before herself as one of her aims the cultivation of the pupils' language, the pupils have a more immediate purpose that insures the free use of language.

The direction of the work must be determined by social needs. A few of the social needs of pupils, in a district of this type, will be found in the following list:

- (1) Announcements
- (2) Requests
- (3) Interviews
- (4) Committee work
- (5) Discussions
- (6) Debates
- (7) Conversations
- (8) Entertainments
- (9) Project work:
  - a. Explaining
  - b. Questioning
  - c. Giving directions
  - d. Influencing opinion, etc.



The laying out of the work according to social needs makes the determination of the end or purpose in any work assigned the first thing to be done. This is of the utmost importance as a purpose to work puts meaning into any undertaking. Projects are particularly valuable for the development of language power because they offer so rich an opportunity for worth-while conversation and discussion. Debates in which many pupils participate very briefly furnish an excellent opportunity for training in talking clearly and to the point.

### 3. Written English:

- a. Kind and amount of written English to be required.

This should be determined by the needs, interests and abilities of the pupils and also by the demonstrated need in adult life in the community. The following are taken as the basis of this course.

(1) Every pupil should be thoroughly grounded in the use of the sentence as the unit of thought expression.

\*(2) A working knowledge of the outline is also valuable, as the outline with its topics and sub-topics is in itself an organization of ideas and so becomes a guiding chart in composition writing.

\*(3) The pupil should be able to write a simple story and to make a clear, concise report.

(4) These pupils should be made thoroughly familiar with letter forms of all kinds, and every occasion for actual correspondence of a business or social nature should be utilized.

\* (2) and (3) were not revealed in the survey of needs. Years of experience has proven to the writer that pupils need this work, not only in composition, but in connection with their work in geography, history and civics.



(5) They should be made acquainted with the telegram, the night letter, the money order, the registered letter and the want advertisement.

Only such written work should be required as can be adequately motivated. The letter that is actually to be sent, the story that is to be published in the school paper or read to the group, the individual project that is to be presented to the class or read in the school assembly, are worthy of concentrated effort.

b. Training in practical uses of written English.

Since oral and written language are simply two different mediums for expressing thought, all instruction designed to improve expression by means of the spoken word is likewise a preparation for the use of written language. The thinking that must precede having something worth saying, and the thinking that results in saying it in the most effective way, are the same whether ultimately the thought is to be expressed in spoken or written words. Oral work should form the basis of written work with these pupils because it helps them to organize their thinking. Moreover, it is a very important medium for establishing the sentence sense. The pupil who recognizes thinking as the first step in composition and trains himself to think clearly, passing from thought to thought in an orderly way, will rarely fall into the run-on sentence habit. He will think each sentence through before he begins to write it and before he begins to frame the following sentence. Skill in recognizing the sentence is a fundamental necessity in composition.



The development of skill in written expression should be secured in directly useful and interesting life situations. Letter writing should receive very careful and thorough treatment because it has been demonstrated that it is the most frequently used form of written expression. There are numerous opportunities for writing letters which are actually to be sent. The following is a list of some of the letters written by these eighth grade pupils; (1) the pupils wrote letters at regular intervals to a class-mate who had been sent to the Westfield State Sanatorium (2) a letter was sent to the leader of the school orchestra in a neighboring district inviting the orchestra to play at the school (3) a letter was sent to the Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, requesting samples of Canadian wheat in connection with a geography project. The samples were received and a letter of thanks was sent. (4) letters of sympathy were sent to two pupils who had had a death in the family (5) a letter of thanks was sent to a war veteran who addressed the pupils on Armistice Day (6) pupils sent a letter ordering lantern slides (7) they sent a letter of complaint regarding slides which had been broken in the shipment (8) a letter was sent requesting a deposit of twenty-five library books and enumerating the books desired.

Telegram and night letter forms were procured and imaginary messages sent. The cost of the messages were figured and the time necessary for delivery was estimated. There was a discussion as to when it would be advisable to use each form.

Models should be freely used in a district of this type



as these pupils have very limited opportunities for hearing good English. The model is an effective means of making the English product interesting and of enlarging the vocabulary. It is a medium for training pupils to give attention to the words they read and the words they write, so that they will not be content all the time to put down the first word that comes into their mind.

- c. Exercises in the directly useful technicalities of written English including spelling.

It is necessary to drill these pupils thoroughly in the technicalities of written expression such as, the common uses of capital letters, the punctuation marks required in letter forms, the use of the apostrophe in the singular and plural possessive and the use of quotation marks. Many forms of interesting drill should be provided in aiding them to master the mechanics of written expression. The development of skill is largely a matter of drill and drill implies repetition with attention to the subject in hand. Unless the attention is focussed upon the object of the drill exercise, nothing is gained. The drill exercises should be brief and varied in character. The pupil should keep a list of his errors and a record of his progress in overcoming them. The pupil should be taught to use his text as an aid in overcoming these errors and to refer to it whenever he needed help.

Each pupil should be trained to keep a list of all words that he misspells in any written exercise whatever. These are the most important words for the pupil concerned to fix permanently in mind. They should be reviewed very frequently.



B. Motivation.

I. Definition of term "Motivation"  
Value and Need of Motivation.

Motivation means the vitalizing of the work of the pupils by relating it directly with life, thus making it interesting and satisfying. Motivation demands that the situations shall be real and the ends sought genuine and purposeful. It is based upon the doctrine of interest and self-activity and recognizes the child and his development as the central unit of the school's efforts.

Motivation of the pupil's work is accomplished when he sees a good reason for doing the work, when he appreciates its value to him personally and works earnestly to accomplish it. A motive must be provided for the work of the pupil and the stronger the motive, the greater will be the attention given to the work in hand and the more persevering the effort to secure the desired results.

Modern psychologists strongly support the doctrine of interest as a vital factor in the learning process. To be worth anything, school work must be interesting and the pupil must have an impelling motive for doing it. Experiments in psychology have demonstrated that the best work and the most constant improvement are recorded when the interest and attention are genuine and spontaneous. The doctrine of motivation completely discredits the theory of formal discipline and demonstrates that education must become vital and dynamic. It demands that subject matter be used as a means to an end and that the



pupil and his interests should be paramount.

In planning the technique of her work, the teacher's first question is regarding the sources of pupils' motives for mastering subject matter. She finds certain typical goals or ends for which pupils strive. These motives are many and vary somewhat with the maturity and interests of the pupils. Some of the types of motives which can be effectively employed in teaching English expression are:\* (1) earning money (2) competing for rewards or honors (3) playing games (4) entertaining (5) promoting self-development (6) mastering and conquering (7) making things (8) preserving products and making collections (9) advancing one's self in the estimation of others (10) fitting for a life career.

## II. Application of Principle of Motivation to Eighth Grade English:

The teacher's motive in oral and written language work is to cultivate spontaneous self-expression, establish correct speech habits; and to secure a steady growth in the mastery of sentences and in the enlargement of the vocabulary, so that the pupils' speech may be effective. The teacher observes the speech and writing of her class from day to day and their evident needs determines the topics she teaches. Her problem then is to provide situations and opportunities for the pupils to talk and to write to some purpose in connection with something which they really wish to accomplish.

\* Wilson - Motivation of School Work - pp. 48-53.



The following list contains some of the opportunities for motivated work which were utilized in teaching English expression to these eighth grade pupils:-

- (1) The Boston Lodge of Elks offered a prize for the best paper on "The Qualities of a Good Citizen".
  - (a) Pupils wrote to ask terms of contest.
  - (b) They discussed the terms, wrote essays and submitted them. Two pupils received honorable mention.
- (2) A Clean-up Campaign is held in East Boston every year and a silver cup is awarded to the cleanest district.
  - (a) Pupils entered the contest, discussed the matters which needed attention and planned out their campaign.
  - (b) Notices and bulletins were prepared to enlist the cooperation of the younger pupils.
  - (c) Letters were sent to the chairman of the Clean-up Committee stating what had been accomplished and offering reasons as to why they should win the cup.
  - (d) Cup was awarded to them and pupils wrote letters of thanks to the Committee.
- (3) The Children's Museum sends a lecturer once a month to the school to give talks in science and geography. In this connection the pupils:
  - (a) Discussed the lecture list and selected the subject in which they are interested.
  - (b) Wrote letters requesting this lecture.
  - (c) Wrote letters of thanks for the lectures.



- (d) Wrote letters thanking the director for a very fine exhibit of birds and minerals which she had donated.
- (4) The pupils planned and carried out a program of entertainment in connection with the dedication of the Jeffries Point Reading Room.
- (5) Red Cross Activities.
- The pupils carry on correspondence with an Italian and a Belgian School. In this connection the pupils:
- (a) Planned for Christmas boxes to be sent to these schools.
- (b) Wrote for directions for filling and packing the boxes.
- (c) Wrote letters and made Christmas cards to be sent with these boxes. Some of these letters were written in Italian and others in English.
- (d) Fifteen pupils were invited by the Red Cross to appear in costume and ride on the Red Cross float in the Armistice Day parade. The invitation was acknowledged and letters were written regarding appropriate costumes.
- (e) The pupils received an exhibit from the Italian school. They prepared a return exhibit which was displayed in Mechanic's Hall and then sent to Italy. The exhibit included letters, pictures, maps, drawings and samples of hand work. Booklets



were prepared telling about the Jeffries Point Aviation Field, the library, the school orchestra, the East Boston Immigration Station, the Stimson Drydock, foot-ball and base-ball games and their methods of earning money after school hours.

- (6) The pupils dramatized "The Courtship of Myles Standish" to raise money for the Milk Fund.
- (7) The class made booklets containing the correspondence necessary in getting a job.

The motivation of the English work makes it go forward much more steadily, makes conditions of work pleasant and interesting, and secures the attention of the pupils to the task at hand. It lessens problems of discipline and eliminates the drudgery found in preparing assigned lessons which make little or no appeal to the pupils' interest and for which he sees no purpose.

### III. Conclusion:

The following methods of determining the needs in oral and written language of eighth grade pupils in a non-English speaking district have proven useful and practical: (1) a brief survey by the teacher of the pupils' speech during their play-time or free periods when they were not aware that their speech was being noted. Such a survey furnished the teacher with some valuable first-hand information as to the quality of English used by the pupils, the kind and frequency of the errors made and a very definite idea of the foundation which existed for her work. (2) A brief survey by the pupils in which they noted the specific



errors made and the frequency of the errors. This survey was of very great value in focussing the attention of the pupils on their speech and in training them to listen more carefully and critically to the speech of others. It proved to be a very effective means of motivating the drill work in oral expression. (3) In addition to the information gained from the speech surveys made by teacher and pupils, the teacher must have some definite knowledge of the social back-ground of her pupils, some idea as to the linguistic standards of the community and a knowledge of their educational and vocational outlook. (4) A survey of the written work of the pupils proved satisfactory and practical in demonstrating the existing needs of the group in written language. Motives for written expression should be sought in the life of the school and also in the life of the community. A survey of the use made of written English by adults in a district of this type showed that social and business correspondence was the type of written expression which was most frequently used.

The studies of the pupils' speech showed that in oral and written work they needed to have kept before them the conception of a sentence as a unit. The following are the principal <sup>errors</sup> which they made in sentence structure: (a) use of the double subject, (b) misplaced modifiers, (c) peculiar foreign constructions modelled on the idioms of the Italian language. These pupils needed drill on certain specific verb and pronoun errors, on the use of the double negative and of the adverb instead of the verb. They needed much work in enunciation and pronunciation due to the



fact that they speak English only part of the time and have very limited opportunities for hearing good English spoken.

These pupils had need of much systematic work on vocabulary building. As an aid to increasing the vocabulary, the dictionary should be frequently used. This may be supplemented by the study of word lists selected by the teacher from the books studied. It should be further supplemented by the use of models selected from the work in reading. The immediate aim of oral and written English is to give the pupils command of the art of communicating in speech and writing. The specific aims in all oral and written work should be definite and possible of achievement. They should be known to both teacher and pupil.

Oral work should be conducted in intimate relation with written work and should form the basis of all written expression with pupils of this type. Much more time should be devoted to oral than to written expression because the pupils have far greater need for it in their daily lives.

In written English the business and social letter will naturally receive much emphasis. Perfection of form should be insisted upon and the pupils should be taught to use their texts as aids until this is secured. Care should be taken, however, not to emphasize form more than content.

The grammar worth teaching to these pupils is the grammar of use. It is necessary for the teacher to find out what parts and aspects of the subject have actual value to the pupils in enabling them to improve their speech and writing and to ignore all portions which fall outside this category.



Regular work in spelling is necessary in the eighth grade. Drill should be centered upon the words that investigation shows are frequently misspelled by the pupils. The lists should be made up of the class list, gathered from the written work, and the grade list suggested by the work of Ayres and others.

In all types of corrective work in oral and written English, including spelling, the pupils should be taught to keep a graph of their own particular errors, to drill on those errors and to note their own progress in over-coming them.

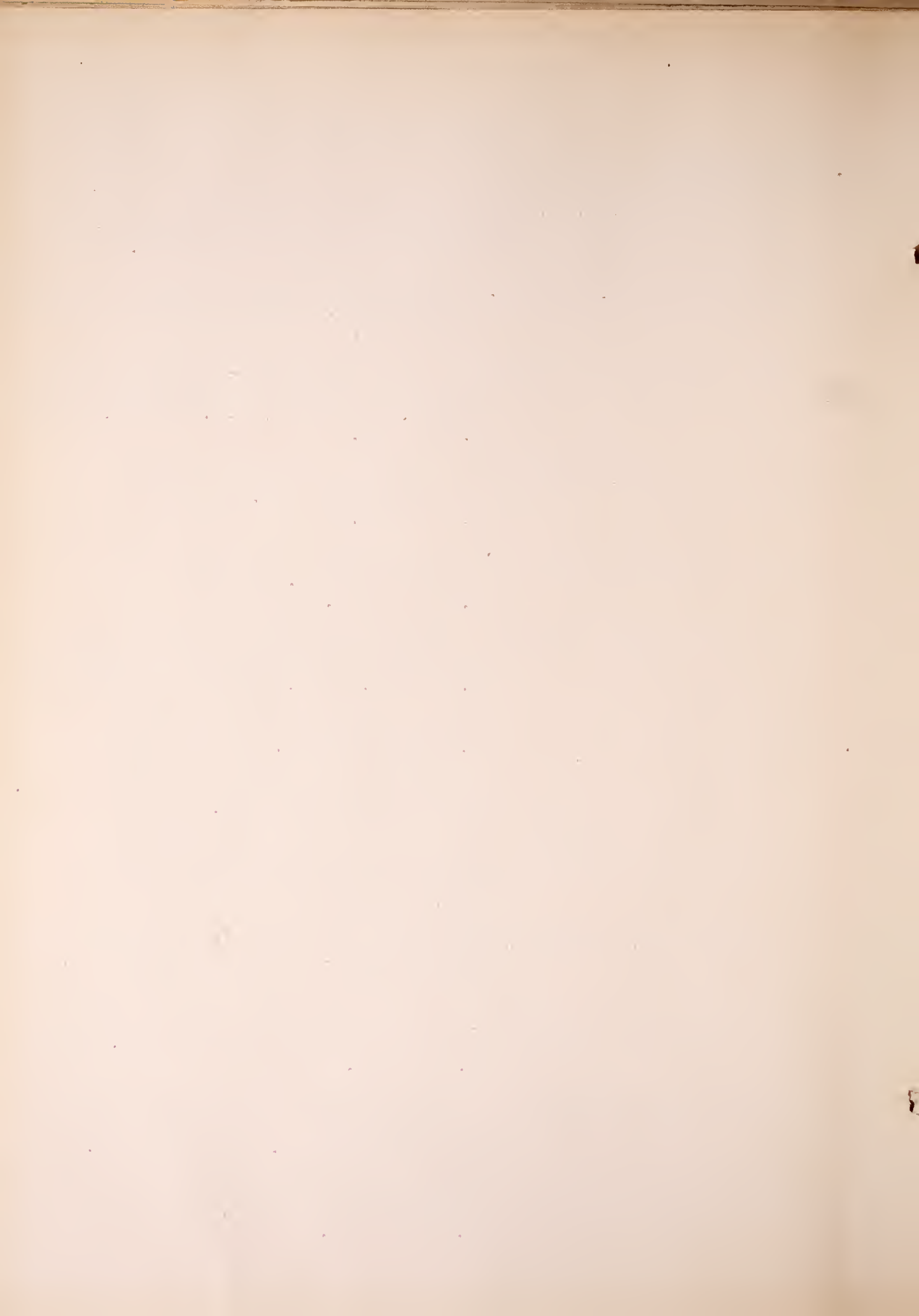
Standards should be used by the pupils in oral and written English to the end that they might know what is excellent, fair or poor and why. They furnish the pupils with a tangible means of evaluating and criticizing their work. They are absolutely essential as many of these pupils have very hazy notions of what constitutes excellence in language expression.

Every effort should be made to appeal to the pupil's interest. The English teaching should involve as many instinctive appeals as possible so that desire and choice is developed and the student on his own initiative learns as much about a subject as he possibly can, getting his theory and his technique in the working out of practical problems and projects. All of the work in English expression should appeal to the pupil as vital and purposeful. This may be accomplished by relating it directly with life and making the ends sought genuine.



IV. Bibliography:

- (1) Charters, W. S. - "Curriculum Construction"  
Macmillan Co. - 1923 - Chap. IV - V -  
VI - VII - X -XIV - XV - XVII.
- (2) Wohlfarth, Julia H. " Self-Help Methods of Teaching English"  
World Book Co. - 1926 - Chap. V - VI -  
IX - X - XI.
- (3) Department of Interior - Bulletin 1923 - No. 43 - "Games  
and Other Devices for Improving Pupils'  
Speech". Charters, W.W. - Paul, Harry G.  
pp. 42 - 88.
- (4) Bolenius, Enima - "The Teaching of Oral English"  
J. B. Lippincott Co. - 1916  
pp. 1 - 112.
- (5) Harvey & Allen - "The Mastery of English" - Bk. I  
J. C. Winston Co. - 1925  
pp. 201 - 294.
- (6) McGregor, A. Laura - "Supervised Study in English for  
Junior High School Grades" - Macmillan  
Co. - 1921. - pp. 1 - 58 - 149 - 217.
- (7) O'Shea, M.V. - "Everyday Problems in Teaching" - 1921  
pp. 264, 265, 267.
- (8) Mahoney, John J.- "Standards in English" - World Book Co.  
1918 - pp. 136 - 156.
- (9) Wilson, (Guy M.  
(Harry B. "The Motivation of School Work" -  
Houghton Mifflin Co - 1922  
Chap. IV - VI.
- (10) Hawley, Mattie L. "The Teaching of English in the Junior  
High School" - Houghton Mifflin Co. 1924  
pp. 59 - 68
- (11) Leonard, Sterling A. "English Composition as a Social  
Problem" - Houghton Mifflin Co. - 1924.  
pp. 78 - 97.
- (12) Stratton, Clarence - "The Teaching of English in the  
Junior High School" 1923 Ed I.  
Harcourt Broce Co. - pp. 39 - 58.
- (13) Davis, Calvin O. "Junior High School Education"  
World Book Co. - 1925.  
pp. 136 - 160.



- (14) Flagg, Mildred Buchanan - "Community English"  
Macmillan Company - 1921.  
pp. 1 - 90.
- (15) Cooley, Alice Woodworth - "Language Teaching in the  
Public Schools" - Ed. I - 1923  
pp. 43 - 68.
- (16) O'Shea, M.V. - "Linguistic Development in Education"  
Macmillan Company - 1907.  
pp. 232 - 277.
- (17) Hinsdale, B. A. - "Teaching the Language Arts".  
D. Appelton Company - 1909  
Chap. I, II, III, V, VI, VIII,  
XVI.
- (18) Simons, Sarah A. - "English Problems in the Solving".  
Scott Foresman Co - 1920.  
pp. 71 - 111.
- (19) Canby & Opdycke - "Elements of Composition".  
Macmillan Co. - 1921  
Chap. X - XI - XII.
- (20) Baker & Roehm - "Spoken English and How to Teach It".  
Rand McNakky Company - 1925.  
pp. 59 - 83.
- (21) Department of Interior Bureau of Education - Bulletin  
1917 - No. 2. "Reorganization  
of English in Secondary Schools"  
Hosie, James F. - Compiler  
pp. 11 - 42.
- (22) Board of Education, Buffalo, New York - 1924 - "Course of  
Study in English" Grades V-VIII  
pp. 8 - 103.
- (24) Board of Education, Chicago, Ill. - Department of Educa-  
tional Standards and Statistics  
"English in the Elementary  
Schools" - Bulletin No. 21- 1923



Occupations of Parents

The following is a list of the occupations of 196 fathers and 62 mothers:

<u>Fathers</u>		<u>Mothers</u>	
Auto mechanics	3	Court Interpreter	1
Bakers	4	Factory workers	47
Barbers	7	In Moving picture House	1
Cabinet Makers	1	Storekeepers	4
Fireman	1	Ticket collector	1
Fishermen	9	Waitress	5
Freight handlers	33	Washwomen	3
Fruit peddlers	5		
Icemen	4		
Laborers	58		
Longshoremen	39		
Painters	3		
Policeman	1		
Poolroom managers	5		
Sailors	7		
Shoe makers	8		
Store Keepers	7		
Watchman	<u>1</u>		
	196		



High School Choices and Occupations  
of Grade VIII Pupils - 1924

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
96	87	174

BOYSTo High Schools - 65

## 1. East Boston High:

Academic Course	0
Business	" 12
Industrial	" 34
	<u>46</u>

## 2. Charlestown High:

Electrical Course	8
-------------------	---

## 3. Brighton High:

Automobile Mechanic	9
---------------------	---

## 4. English High:

Business Course	2
-----------------	---

To Work:

1. Western Union Messengers	5
2. Office boys	4
3. Errand boys	7
4. Factory workers	3
5. Order boys	5
6. Helpers in stores	4
7. Delivery boys	2

GIRLSTo High Schools - 58

## 1. East Boston High:

Business Course	29
-----------------	----

## 2. Trade School for Girls:

	25
--	----

## 3. High School of Practical Arts:

	4
--	---

To Work:

1. Packers (candy factory)	11
2. Floor girls	4
3. Sorters (candy)	5
4. Check girls	2
5. Errand girls	2
6. Home permits	2



High School Choices and Occupations  
of Grade VIII Pupils - 1925

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
91	86	181

BOYSTo High Schools - 63

1. East Boston High:
 

Academic Course	1
Business       "	23
Industrial     "	25
	49
  
2. Charlestown High:
 

Electrical Course	5
-------------------	---
  
3. Brighton High:
 

Automobile Mechanic	7
---------------------	---
  
4. English High:
 

General Course	1
----------------	---
  
5. Latin:
 

General Course	1
----------------	---

To Work:

1. Helpers in stores (selling) 7
2. Western Union Messengers 7
3. Errand Boys 4
4. Barbers' helpers 2
5. Order boy 1
6. Floor boys 4
7. No record of work 3

GIRLSTo High Schools - 58

1. East Boston High:
 

Academic Course	2
Business       "	32
	34
  
2. Trade School for Girls:
 

	20
--	----
  
3. High School of Practical Arts
 

	4
--	---

To Work:

1. Bundle girls 5
2. Check girls 4
3. Errand girl 1
4. Tailor shops 6
5. Home permits 5
6. No record of work 2



Class Report on Speech Errors - Section D.

1.	ain't	41
2.	seen for saw	38
3.	done for did	35
4.	is for are	27
5.	went for gone	19
6.	was for were	16
7.	yous for you	15
8.	give for gave	13
9.	don't for doesn't	11
10.	mines for mine	11

---

HOW MANY OF THESE ARE YOU MAKING?



BOSTON UNIVERSITY



1 1719 02487 3954

NOT TO BE TAKEN  
FROM THE LIBRARY

28-6½

Ideal  
Double Reversible  
Manuscript Cover  
PATENTED NOV. 15, 1898  
Manufactured by  
Adams, Cushing & Foster

