

A BASIC SIGHT VOCABULARY OF 220 WORDS, COMPRISING ALL WORDS, EXCEPT NOUNS, COMMON TO THE WORD LIST OF INTERNATIONAL KINDERGARTEN UNION, THE GATES LIST, AND THE WHEELER-HOWELL LIST

CONJUNCTIONS	they	where	some
and	this	why	ten
as	*those	yes	the
because	us		three
but	we	ADJECTIVES	two
if	what	a	warm
or	*which	all	white
	who	an	yellow
PREPOSITIONS	you	any	
about	your	*best	VERBS
after		*better	am
at	ADVERBS	big	are
by	again	black	ask
down	*always	blue	ate
for	around	both	be
from	away	brown	been
in	*before	*clean	bring
into	far	cold	buy
of	fast	*eight	call
on	first	every	came
over	here	*five	can
to	how	four	carry
under	just	full	come
*upon	much	funny	could
with	never	good	cut
	no	green	did
PRONOUNS	not	hot	do
he	now	kind	does
her	off	*light	*done
him	once	little	don't
his	only	long	draw
I	out	many	drink
it	so	new	eat
*its	soon	old	fall
me	then	one	find
my	there	*own	fly
*myself	today	pretty	found
our	*together	red	gave
she	too	right	get
that	up	round	give
their	very	*seven	go
them	*well	*six	*goes
these	when	small	going

\* The twenty-seven words marked with asterisks were included in only two of the lists.

VERBS— <i>Cont.</i>	like	ride	thank
got	live	run	think
grow	look	said	*try
had	made	saw	*use
has	make	say	walk
have	may	see	want
help	must	shall	was
hold	open	show	*wash
*hurt	*pick	sing	went
is	play	sit	were
jump	please	sleep	will
keep	pull	*start	wish
know	put	stop	work
laugh	ran	take	would
let	read	tell	*write

with "read." The numbers under ten belong with the other numbers listed. For this reason these twenty-seven words are included in the basic list; they add a few that do not belong but more that seem as important as others on the list.

It is to be especially noted that this basic sight vocabulary includes no nouns. Nouns cannot be of universal use because each noun is tied to special subject matter. If new subject matter is used, new nouns must be used. Unfortunately, teachers have spent a great deal of energy in teaching the nouns in primers as sight words, and then, as the later books take up new materials, new nouns must be used and not those that have been learned. Perhaps one reason that many children in the intermediate grades do not know by sight the words on this basic list is that the emphasis on sight teaching has been on nouns instead of on these "tool" words. Some few nouns, such as "thing" or "man," do recur a great deal, but in the case of most nouns the rule applies that they are "local" to a particular activity or interest. The nouns common to the three lists are mainly local to young children's interests and to first-grade activities. They are in no sense basic to all elementary-school reading. That the reader may see this fact for himself, the list of nouns is given on page 460.

It is not claimed that the basic list of 220 words includes all the words that the elementary-school pupil should know by sight; the claim is only that he should at least know these. Consequently, when a child in any grade is found lacking in sight vocabulary, he should be tested to see which of these words he does know and should then

be trained to recognize instantly by sight the words that he does not know. For this purpose small cards with the words printed in primer type on both sides are most convenient. The cards can be flashed before the pupil by the teacher or by another pupil, any unknown word named for the subject by the tester (who sees the word on the reverse of the card), and the pack gone over again and again until all 220

95 NOUNS COMMON TO THE THREE WORD LISTS BUT NOT  
RECOMMENDED FOR A BASIC SIGHT VOCABULARY

apple	day	home	school
baby	dog	horse	seed
back	doll	house	sheep
ball	door	kitty	shoe
bear	duck	leg	sister
bed	egg	letter	snow
bell	eye	man	song
bird	farm	men	squirrel
birthday	farmer	milk	stock
boat	father	money	street
box	feet	morning	sun
boy	fire	mother	table
bread	fish	name	thing
brother	floor	nest	time
cake	flower	night	top
car	game	paper	toy
cat	garden	party	tree
chair	girl	picture	watch
chicken	goodbye	pig	water
children	grass	rabbit	way
Christmas	ground	rain	wind
coat	hand	ring	window
corn	head	robin	wood
cow	hill	Santa Claus	

words are known with certainty. A daily record of words known can be used to show the learner a curve that indicates how he is improving. When the pupil recognizes these 220 words instantly and easily, he will have a "capital" of word knowledge with which he can attack any reading matter and, with guessing from context and perhaps some help from sounding, get something out of it. If his sounding is weak, training in that skill will complete the remedial process, and the pupil will be able to do the learning from books that school work demands.