

EASY READING AND  
CONVERSATION

## HINTS FOR THE TEACHER

1. We have usually employed new words in such a manner that their meaning becomes obvious through the context. The teacher should continue in the same way, *i.e.* explain by means of striking examples (illustrating clearly not only the signification of the word but also the manner of using it) rather than by a theoretic definition;<sup>1</sup> if, however, the latter has to be resorted to, the teacher must be careful to use only words and expressions perfectly known to the student.

2. Whenever a new word or expression has been introduced, the teacher must ask such questions as oblige the student to employ the new word in the answer, always helping him if he hesitates.

3. The teacher should never ask the student whether he has understood; for the latter is certainly not able to decide whether he has a correct understanding or not. Instead of it, the teacher by his questions must make the student employ the new words in a manner that shows clearly what meaning the word conveys to him.

4. When explaining an idiomatic expression, the teacher must not analyse it and explain the single words, but take the entire expression as a whole. Analysing such expressions introduces difficulties that in reality do not exist.

5. Words that have a number of different meanings should at first be treated with regard to the meaning they have in the phrase in question. Abstract words

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<sup>1</sup> Keep always in your mind that: *longum iter est per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla.*

(as for instance: live,<sup>1</sup> know, think, hope, fear) should at first be taken in their popular sense—as children would understand them—and *not in their scientific* or perhaps etymological signification.<sup>2</sup>

6. Before beginning the reading of a piece the teachers should give the oral introduction in which the important part of the new vocabulary is explained by object lessons or by association of ideas. During these oral introductions the books should be closed and the student drilled by questions and answers until he is made familiar with the new expressions through the ear before he sees and reads them. No waste of time need be feared in treating each subject three times (1, in the oral introduction; 2, in the reading piece; 3, in the exercise), for in speaking a language thorough familiarity with the most useful expressions is more necessary than a large vocabulary.

<sup>1</sup>“To live” could be explained as follows:

“Can I move? Can I see and hear? Do I breathe? (Yes.)  
“Can the table move? Can it see and hear? Does it breathe? (No.)

“Why can I move? etc. Because I live.

“Why can the table not move? Because it does not live (it is not alive).”

“To know” I explain by asking: “Can you tell me how much money I have in my pocket? You cannot tell me. Why can you not tell me? Because you do not know it; you have not seen it.

“You know what you have seen—what you have heard—what you have learned. Do you know the name of this book? You do. How do you know it? You have seen it. Do you know who is in the other room? Do you know what I am doing? How do you know it?”

<sup>2</sup>Very often this popular or elementary understanding of a word is historically the correct one. Life is akin to motion; compare: lebhaft, vif, lively, quick, vif-argent, quicksilver = living or moving silver. To know is to have found out; there fore *είδον* and *είδω*—*videre* and *wissen*, etc., etc.

## THE CLOCK AND THE WATCH

### ORAL INTRODUCTION

Here is a watch, there is a clock.

It is one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock. It is a quarter past four, half-past four, five o'clock, five minutes past six, twenty-five minutes to six, twenty minutes to six, a quarter to seven, five minutes to seven, seven o'clock, eight o'clock, etc. What time is it? It is five o'clock, etc.

You come here at eleven o'clock. You leave at twelve o'clock. You eat at one o'clock. At what time do you come here? At what time do you leave? At what time do you eat?

One hour contains sixty minutes. There are thirty minutes in half an hour. There are fifteen minutes in a quarter of an hour. How many minutes are there in one hour? In half an hour? In a quarter of an hour?

*As large as, larger than, the largest of all*

The clock is larger than the watch. The watch is smaller than the clock. The pencil is longer than the match. The match is shorter than the pencil. The blackboard is wider than the door. The door is narrower than the blackboard. My book is as large as your book. The box is not so large as the book; it is smaller. This book is larger than all the others; it is the largest. Is the red book larger than the green book? Is the watch as large as the clock? Is my coat longer than my waistcoat? etc. Which is the largest book?

*As good as, better than, the best of all*

*As bad as, worse than, the worst of all*

The rose smells good; it smells better than the tulip. Does the rose smell better than the tulip? Does the tulip smell as good as the violet? Which flower smells the best of all? Is black coffee good? Is coffee with sugar better than coffee without sugar? Has gas a bad odour? Has gas as bad an odour as ink? Does gas smell worse than ink?

You have a good pen; it writes well. My pen is bad; it writes badly. Does your pen write well? Does this knife cut well? Does this pencil write better than the other? etc.

READING AND CONVERSATION

A clock is larger than a watch. The former stands on the mantelpiece or hangs on the wall; the latter you carry in your pocket. A clock is made of wood, of bronze, or of marble; a watch is of gold or silver. On my watch you see three hands: a large one which points out the minutes, a smaller one pointing out the hours, a very small one pointing out the seconds. One hour contains sixty minutes, and a minute contains sixty seconds. Twenty-four hours make a day. If you look at a watch or a clock, you see what time it is. Look at my watch. It is now half-past ten. Your lesson begins at ten o'clock, and it ends at eleven; it lasts one hour. In this room there is a clock. It does not go; it has stopped. Will you wind it up, please? Here is the key. Set it please; it is twenty minutes to eleven. You set it too slow; you put it at twenty minutes past ten. My watch goes very well. It is just right; it is neither fast nor slow. What time is it now? It is exactly eleven o'clock, and therefore your lesson is ended.

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EXERCISE

1. What do we speak about in the preceding reading-piece? 2. Is there a clock in this room? 3. Where is it? 4. Have you a watch? 5. Is it in your pocket? 6. Where do we put a clock? 7. What time is it now? 8. At what time does your lesson begin? 9. At what time does it end? 10. How long does it last? 11. How many minutes are there in an hour? 12. How many hours are there in a day? 13. How many seconds does a minute contain? 14. Is this clock going? 15. Has your watch

stopped? 16. Does your watch go if you do not wind it up? 17. With what do you wind a clock? 18. Is your watch fast? 19. Is my watch slow? 20. Is a clock larger than a watch? 21. Is the table larger than the chair? 22. Is the wall longer than the blackboard? 23. Is the window as wide as the door? 24. Is my coat longer than my waistcoat? 25. Have ladies longer hair than gentlemen? 26. Is a lady's hat more beautiful (prettier) than a gentleman's hat? 27. Is New York the largest city in America? 28. What is the name of the largest city in Europe?

29. Is water good to drink? 30. Is wine better than water? 31. Which is the best to drink, water, wine, or tea? 32. Does cheese smell bad? 33. Does it smell worse than ink? 34. Do you speak English well? 35. Do you speak it better than French? 36. Is your pronunciation good? 37. Which do you speak best, English, French, or Spanish? 38. Who speaks better, you or your teacher? 39. Can you write as well as I? 40. Are your eyes good? 41. Can you see well? 42. Can Mr. Berlitz see well without spectacles? 43. Can he see better with them?

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THE YEAR

ORAL INTRODUCTION

There are twenty-four hours in a day. Seven days make a week. The seven days are: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. What are the seven days of the week? How many hours are there in a day? How many days are there in a week? 7 days make a week; 30 or 31 days make a month; 365 days make a year.

A year has 12 months—52 weeks—365 days. How many days are there in a month? How many weeks are there in a year? How many months are there in a year?

The names of the months are: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December. We are now in the month of September. In what month are we now? To-day is September the fifteenth. To-day is Wednesday. This is the month of September, last month was August, next month will be October. *To-day is Wednesday; yesterday was Tuesday, to-morrow will be Thursday.* To-day is the fifteenth, yesterday was the fourteenth, to-morrow will be the sixteenth. What day of the month is it to-day? What day of the month was yesterday? What day of the month will to-morrow be? Is to-day Wednesday? Was yesterday Tuesday? On what days do you take lessons?

There are four seasons in a year: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. March, April, and May are in Spring; June, July, and August are in Summer; September, October, and November are in Autumn; and December, January, and February in Winter. In what season are we now? Which season comes before Winter? Which season comes after Winter? In what month does Autumn begin? In what month does Winter end? Which month precedes April? Which month follows July?

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#### READING AND CONVERSATION

Three hundred and sixty-five days form a year. The year is also divided into twelve months and into fifty-two weeks.

A week consists of seven days, which are called: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. During six days of the week we work; one day each week, on Sunday, we do not work; Sunday is a day of rest.

The names of the months are: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December. Some of the months have thirty-one days, some have thirty, but February has twenty-eight days.

Every fourth year, February has twenty-nine days. Such a year is called a leap year.

In a year there are four seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. March, April, and May are in Spring; June, July, and August are in Summer; September, October, and November are the Autumn months; and Winter contains the months of December, January, and February. Can you tell me what season it is now? It is Winter. This season lasts till the twenty-first of March, and then Spring begins. *To-day is the fifteenth of January, yesterday was the fourteenth, to-morrow will be the sixteenth.* If you want to see what day of the week or what day of the month it is, you look at a calendar. Look here, this is a calendar. Last year, in nineteen hundred and twenty-five, the first of January (New Year's Day) was on a Thursday; this year, in nineteen hundred and twenty-six, the first of January was on a Friday, and next year, in nineteen hundred and twenty-seven, it will be on a Saturday. To-day, the ninth of January, is Saturday, and as to-morrow will be Sunday, this is the last lesson this week; the school is closed on Sundays.

Now it is noon and you can go home to your luncheon; the lesson is ended. For Monday next please write a great many exercises.

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#### EXERCISE

1. How many days are there in a year?
2. How many weeks make a year?
3. When does the year begin?
4. When does it end?
5. Which is the first, the third, the fifth, the eighth month of the year?
6. Which is the month before the last?
7. What are the names of the seven days of the week?
8. Which is the last day of

the week? 9. What day is it to-day? 10. Was yesterday Sunday? 11. Will next Friday be the fifteenth? 12. On what days do you come here? 13. How long do you remain here? 14. How long does your lesson last? 15. What day of the month is it to-day? 16. What day of the month will next Monday be? 17. What day of the month was it last Thursday? 18. Will to-morrow be the end of the month? 19. In what season are we now? 20. How many months does a season last? 21. What are the names of the summer months? 22. What is the name of the season which follows Winter? 23. Are we now in Spring? 24. Which is the day that precedes Sunday? 25. What time is it now? 26. On which days do you work? 27. Do you work on Sunday? 28. Does your teacher give lessons on Sunday?

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## DAY AND NIGHT

### ORAL INTRODUCTION

*The sun, the moon, the stars*

The sun is in the sky. We see the sun during the day. We see the moon and the stars during the night.

During the day we can see well because it is light. During the night we cannot see well, because it is dark. If I pull down the window shade (if I close the shutters), it is dark in the room.

During the night it is dark and we must light the gas. In this room there is gas (electricity). I light the gas. I turn out the gas. I turn on the electricity. I turn it off.

Where is the sun? In the sky. When do we see the sun? During the day. Can we see the sun during the night? No. What do we see during the night? The moon and the stars. Can you see well when it is dark? No. Can you see when it is light? Yes.

When do we light the gas, during the day or at night? Have we gas or electricity here? We light the gas with a

match. Have you a match? Here is a match. Please light the gas. Give me a match, please. Thank you.

The sun rises; the sun sets. In the morning the sun rises, in the evening it sets. The day commences in the morning and ends in the evening. The night commences in the evening and ends in the morning.

When does the sun rise? In the morning. When does the sun set? In the evening. At what time does the sun rise in Summer? At 4 o'clock (5 o'clock); it rises early. At what time does it rise in Winter? At 7 o'clock (8 o'clock); it rises late. Are the days long in Summer? Are the days long in Winter? Why are the days long in Summer? Because the sun rises early. Are the nights long in Winter? Why are they long? Because the sun rises late.

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### READING AND CONVERSATION

The twenty-four hours are divided into two parts: day and night. During the day we can see well, because it is light; but during the night it is dark, and, if we want to see, we must light the gas or turn on the electricity.

You say it is too dark here to read at present; very well, here is a match; light the gas. Now the gas is burning; it illuminates the room. Is it light enough for you now? Can you see well? Gas does not give a very good light; therefore large halls are lighted by electricity, which gives a more agreeable light.

Daylight comes from the sun, which is in the sky. Look through the window. Do you see the blue sky above us? During the night the sun is not visible; we cannot see it, but we can see the moon and the stars. There are so many stars that we cannot count them.

The beginning of day is called morning and the end is called evening. In the morning the sun rises; in the evening it sets. The place where the sun rises is called East, and the place where it sets is called West. At twelve o'clock noon the sun is south of us. The point

opposite the South is called North. East, West, South, and North are the four cardinal points.

In summer the sun rises very early, at four or five o'clock, and the days are therefore very long; but in Winter it rises at seven o'clock, or still later, and the days are then very short.

During the day we work. At night we go to bed. We sleep until morning and then we get up, dress ourselves, and breakfast.

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### EXERCISE

1. How do we divide the twenty-four hours? 2. During what part of the twenty-four hours is it light? 3. Is it dark now? 4. From where does the daylight come? 5. Where is the sun? 6. Does the sun shine during the night? 7. How is this room lighted in the night? 8. What do we do at night in order to see? 9. What do you see in the sky during the night? 10. What are the names of the four cardinal points? 11. Where does the sun rise? 12. Where does it set? 13. At what time does it rise at the beginning of Spring? 14. Does the sun set early in Summer? 15. At what time does it set now? 16. In what season are the days the longest? 17. Are the nights at present longer than the days? 18. Can you see when it is dark? 19. When do we light the gas? 20. With what do we light the gas? 21. When do you go to bed? 22. In what do you lie when you are asleep? 23. What do you do in the morning? 24. At what time do you get up? 25. Do you get up earlier in Summer than in Winter? 26. I dine at 8 o'clock; do I dine late? 27. Do I dine later than you? 28. At what time do you breakfast? 29. How many hours a day do you work?

30. Do you like to work? 31. Does the moon give as strong a light as the sun? 32. When does the moon shine? 33. Can we count the stars?

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## THE WEATHER

### ORAL INTRODUCTION

The sky is blue or gray. It is gray when it is covered with clouds. The sky is blue; the clouds are gray. What colour is the sky? What is the sky covered with? What is the colour of the clouds?

When there are clouds in the sky, it rains. Rain is water. Rain falls from the sky. In winter it snows. Snow is white. When the sky is blue, it does not rain; the sun shines.

When the sun shines, we have pleasant weather (good weather, fine weather). When it rains or snows, we have bad weather. This is an umbrella. When it rains, I open my umbrella. Have you an umbrella? When do you open your umbrella? What is the colour of the sky when it rains? Does it rain much in April? Does it snow in Summer? What is the colour of snow? With what are the houses and streets covered in Winter? Do ladies open their umbrellas when the sun is shining? No. What do they open? Their sunshades. When do you open your sunshade?

Does the sun shine if the sky is covered with clouds? Is the sun shining now? Do you go out when it is bad weather? What is the colour of the sky in fair weather? What is the colour of the sky when it is bad weather? How is the weather to-day, good or bad?

In Summer you do not wear many clothes, in Winter you wear many clothes. In Summer you open the doors and windows, in Winter you close the windows and doors and sit near the fire; because *in Winter it is cold, and in Summer it is warm*. Do you wear an overcoat in Winter? Is it warm in August? Is it warm in January? Is it warm in the centre of Africa? Is it cold at the North Pole? In which season do you wear thick clothing?

If you wear many clothes, you are (feel) warm. If you go out in Winter without a coat, you are cold (you feel cold). Do we feel warm if we walk in the sun in Summer? Are we

cold if we open the windows in Winter? Do we feel warm if we wear thick clothing in summer?

If the stove is very warm, you cannot touch it; *it is hot*. If the soup is cold, it is not good. If the coffee is too hot, you cannot drink it.

Do you like cold coffee? Touch the radiator; is it cold, warm, or hot? Touch the window; is it cold or warm? Are you cold or warm now? Is it cold or warm in this room?

At the North Pole it is cold in Winter and in Summer; it is *always* cold; it is *never* warm. In New York it is cold in Winter and warm in Summer; it is *sometimes* cold and *sometimes* warm. In Winter it sometimes snows; in Summer it never snows. Does it sometimes snow in March? Yes, it sometimes snows in March. Does it sometimes snow in August? No, it never snows in August. Do you speak French sometimes? Do you ever speak Spanish? (Yes, sometimes; no, never.)

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#### READING AND CONVERSATION

The sky is gray; it is covered with clouds. It begins to rain; large drops of water are falling. Open your umbrella. Now we are protected from the rain, but walking is very unpleasant. The street is covered with water. Let us go back to the house; the weather is too disagreeable for going out.

It is comfortable in this room. We take off our wet clothes and put on dry ones. What a disagreeable day! Look! it is beginning to snow also. The weather is very bad for this season; we are in April but the weather is as in December; it is very cold.

Sit down near the stove to get warm (to warm yourself). The fire is very low. John, put some coal on the fire. Are you warm now? Hold your feet up to the fire to warm them. Do you still feel cold? No, thank you, I am all right now; I am not cold any longer. Take off your shoes; they are wet through. It is very bad to have wet feet.

Let us look out of the window. Do you see that man? He has to hold his hat with his hand, the wind is so strong. This wind makes the weather still more disagreeable. Yes, but it blows away the clouds too; it is not raining so much now.

During April we have a great deal of rain; it rains very *often* and the sun shines very *rarely*. This is very unpleasant. One can *never* leave the house without getting wet and one has *always* to carry an umbrella. Yes, that is so. I go to the South of France during April. There we have sunshine most of the time; it rains *sometimes* but *generally* the weather is pleasant.

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#### EXERCISE

1. What color is the sky when the weather is bad?
2. What is the sky covered with?
3. Is it raining now?
4. What falls from the sky in Winter?
5. Is walking pleasant when the streets are covered with water?
6. What do you carry in your hands to protect yourself from the rain?
7. What does a sunshade protect you from?
8. What kind of weather are we having to-day?
9. Do you go out when the weather is bad?
10. Is it too warm in this room?
11. Is it cold outside?
12. In what months does it snow?
13. Does it often snow in February?
14. Does it sometimes snow in April?
15. Does it ever snow in August?
16. Have we much sunshine in July?
17. Is the sun shining now?
18. Are you cold?
19. With what do we heat our houses in Winter?
20. Do you make a fire in the stove in Summer?
21. With what do we make a fire?
22. With what do we protect ourselves from the cold?
23. Where does the heat come from?
24. Is the sun as warm in Winter as in Summer?