

# *Sholes School Teacher's Manual*

## *Updated Edition Fall 2019*

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction	1-2
Suggestions for Teachers preparing for a day at the School	3-4
Why Slates and Copybooks?	5-6
Games	7-8
Lesson Plans	9-19

### Introduction by Janice Byrne

The instructional materials in this Manual are those of a century ago. Derived from original volumes in the Pioneer Sholes School antique textbook collection and from the facsimile texts located at the School, the lessons focus on reading and language arts as the backbone of an elementary education. Because today, in the twenty-first century, most of the classes visiting Pioneer Sholes School are third and fourth grade, sample lessons included in this manual are aligned with Illinois Learning standards in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science and Physical Development for early and middle elementary grades. The emphasis remains on reading and language arts, even though the field trip usually is part of a longer unit on state and local history.

The instructional materials in the Pioneer Sholes School Teacher's Manual are arranged in the order of the typical day in a rural school circa 1900. This order was determined in part through an interview granted by Mrs. Ruth Anderson, the last teacher at what was then known as the Schairer School, previously known as the Sholes School. Mrs. Anderson left the school when it closed in 1947 and spoke to the Pioneer Sholes School Society on September 17, 1980

### **A typical school day:**

The school day began with ringing the bell ten minutes before the children were to enter the building. This was to serve as a signal to enter the schoolyard in an orderly but prompt fashion. The teacher would ring the second or "tardy" bell while standing in the doorway, ten minutes later. The children would line up by gender - boys on one side and girls on the other. Which side remains a point of argument among one room school-house researchers, but all agree that the children would hang their coats or wraps in the cloak room on the side they entered. Lunches were placed either on the shelf above or on the floor below the child's outerwear.

Once inside the classroom, the youngest children sat in the small desks next to the windows, which at Pioneer Sholes School face south. Older children would occupy the desks on the northern side of the room. As soon as all were in the classroom, the teacher would again ring the hand bell signaling the children to sit silently, feet flat on the floor, back straight against the back of the seat, and hands folded on top of the desk.

At the command of "Turn and Stand", all would arise for the morning Opening Exercise, and the academic day would begin. The day would progress as follows with the additions of morning and afternoon recesses as needed.

- Opening Exercises
- Memory Gem
- Reading
- Spelling or Arithmetic
- Lunch and Recess
- Arithmetic or Spelling
- Handwriting and Language
- Memory Work (Younger children dismissed afterward)
- History, Geography or Science (older children only)
- Clean up & dismissal for older children

Organized games were the normal physical education curriculum. Some of these are included in the Games Section of the *Pioneer Sholes School Teacher's Manual*. According to Lou Schairer, who was a student for seven years at Sholes School, traditional athletic activities like baseball, basketball and wrestling took place during recess and lunch times for boys, girls, and teacher alike. Several times a month, a traveling teacher for music and art, and a school nurse visited. Since their schedules varied, all other activity would stop when one of these special instructors arrived and large group activities would take place. Today's teachers have the option of inviting colleagues who would normally teach music, art, or physical education to continue the tradition by joining the group at Pioneer Sholes School for part of the day.

Other information pertaining to preparations for the field trip to Pioneer Sholes School and procedures while there appear at the beginning of this volume.

Special thanks go to Hazel Clauter for compiling the first edition of this manual and to Dr. Barbara Moen and Mrs. Ann Werhane for editorial assistance with this revision.

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## Suggestions for Teachers preparing for a day at the Pioneer Sholes School

### **Items to Bring to Pioneer Sholes School**

For an all-day teacher-led trip each participant should bring:

1. Outdoor clothing appropriate for the weather.
2. Period costumes are encouraged for both boys and girls.
  - Boys – dark color cotton pants, button-up shirts, vests, straw hats, boots, handkerchief
  - Girls – long skirts, button-up blouse, bonnet, apron, boots
3. A sack lunch with foods appropriate for the date represented.
4. A bottle of drinking water to be consumed with lunch.
5. A pre-sharpened pencil.
6. The copybook or notebook paper (made in advance at home or in classroom)

Each visiting teacher should also bring:

1. Drinking water (one or two gallons) and paper cups.
2. Wet wipes for cleaning hands.
3. Garbage bags for trash removal.
4. Lesson plans.

Sholes School and LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve Provide:

1. Use of the school grounds, building, and privies.
2. Facsimile textbooks, slates and slate pencils.
3. Appropriate seating for twenty-two children and three adults.
4. Toilet paper for the privies.
5. A fire extinguisher.
6. A first aid kit
7. Broom & dustpan.
8. A guest book for all visitors to sign.

### **Rules for Children at Pioneer Sholes School**

The general rules of the visiting school are in effect as always.

1. Children enter the school when the teacher gives permission, not before.
2. Coats and hats belong on the hooks in the cloakroom.
3. Lunches may be placed on the shelves or the floor of the cloakroom as space permits. Do not remove the antique lunch pails from the shelves.
4. Children should not bring backpacks to Sholes School.
5. Only the teacher or docent may ring the bell.
6. No gum is permitted inside the building.

7. The facsimile textbooks are for reading only. Written work must be done on the slate with slate pencil or in the copybook.
8. After using the privy, dispose of toilet paper in the pit. Clean hands with the wet wipes provided by the teacher inside the school. Dispose of wet wipes in the trash.
9. Please leave the building as clean or cleaner than you found it.

### **Tips for the Teacher and accompanying Adults**

1. The light switch is hidden in the exterior doorjamb inside the cloakroom. Use the lights only if it is too dark to see without them.
2. The thermostat is hidden behind the north door to the classroom. Adjust it for comfort, then return it to a lower setting before leaving the building.
3. Behind the north door to classroom are the first-aid kit, paper towels, broom and dust pan.
4. The fire extinguisher is behind the south door to the classroom.
5. An adult may open the window shades. Be sure to close before leaving.
6. Be careful with the doors to the bookshelves. Only adults should open or close them.
7. The wood-burning stove is non-operational. Do not attempt to build a fire.
8. All outdoor play must be supervised. Keep children inside the fenced area, and off the fence, rocks, cellar doors, etc.
9. Should you and the children leave the building grounds for part of the day, lock the door and take the key with you.
10. Dial 911 on your cell phone in case of emergency.

### **Sholes School Checklist of Chores**

- Erase blackboards and slates. Do not wash.
- Return textbooks to the bookcases, sorted by level.
- Collect slate pencils and return them to the container on the teacher's desk.
- Collect all trash and place it in garbage bag to take back with you.
- Pull window shades down.
- Sweep floor.
- Check cloakroom for personal items left behind.
- Be sure lights are turned off.
- Remove trash.
- Lock door and return the key to the lock box. Be certain to clear and re-enter the four-digit code before you place the cover on the lock box.

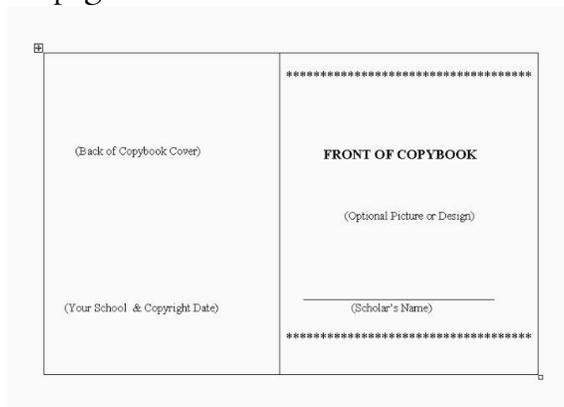
## Why Slates and Copybooks? (Illinois Learning Standards 3.C.2b, 5.C.2a, 26.B.2d, 27.B.1)

*Note: Making the copybooks in the home classroom will help children learn about the necessity for conserving paper in the nineteenth century and will provide a souvenir following the visit.*

Before the middle of the twentieth century, paper was a precious commodity reserved for important governmental, business, and studently functions. Costly to produce and difficult to ship, paper products were simply too expensive to be used indiscriminately in public schools. Therefore, most seatwork was done with slate and slate pencil. The slate would be checked at recitation time, wiped clean with a soft rag, and then reused for the next study session. The slate pencil, not to be confused with the chalk used on the chalkboard, is a slender rod of pressed clay held like a wooden pencil. Although the slate pencil breaks easily under pressure, it is popular with visitors reenacting a day in a one-room school.

The copybook, pen, and ink were reserved for more permanent work in the last and previous century. The teacher would write a line, perhaps of spelling words or arithmetic problems, in the student's copybook, and the student would then copy the material repeatedly until the work was committed to memory. This form of rote learning, now deemed as punitive, was then common practice. The use of the copybook (and an accompanying pencil) can be a valuable part of the school day, and the book itself becomes a souvenir for the youthful visitor.

Traditionally, copy books were made by hand using pen knife, darning needle, linen thread, and cut paper. Today, the same effect can be achieved using a paper punch, waxed cotton thread and two weights of legal sized paper. The heavier weight stock makes the cover to the copybook; the lighter weight stock makes the pages on which to write.



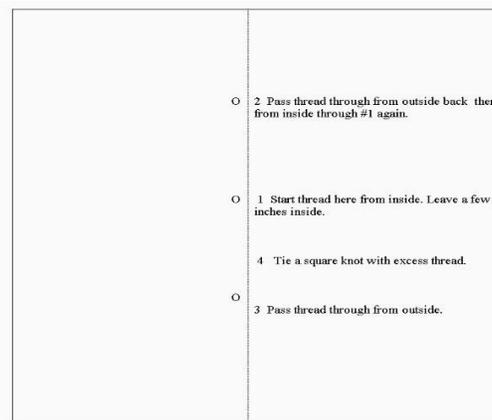
**Goal:** To make a copybook for each student to use during visit to Sholes School

### **Materials:**

- Three or four sheets of light to medium weight legal sized copy paper for each book.
- One sheet of heavier legal sized copy paper for each book.
- Waxed thread (cotton or linen) or waxed dental floss.
- Broad winged paper punch

## Procedures:

1. Select a design for the cover. Include a line for the student's name. Lay out the cover design horizontally, with the back cover to the left and the front cover to the right.
2. Using the heavier of the two legal sized paper stocks selected for the cover, photocopy the cover design for each book to be made.
3. Take three sheets of lighter weight stock for each copybook. Fold horizontally precisely in half. Do this separately for each sheet so the creases are sharp and the pages precisely divided.
4. Measure precisely one-quarter, one-half, and three-quarters of the way down along the crease of one of these pages. Lightly mark these points with pencil.
5. Place all sheets, including the cover, together with the pencil markings facing you.
6. Use a paper punch to produce symmetrical holes where the measured marks are located.
7. Take a length of thread - about twenty-four inches long. Run it from the middle hole of the page side of the copybook through to the cover side. Leave six inches hanging inside book.
8. Run the thread from the cover side through the top hole to the page side.
9. Pass the thread back through the middle hole to the outside of the cover.
10. Pass the thread through the bottom hole from the cover through to the page side of the book.
11. Pick up the excess thread hanging on the inside and tie a square knot to secure the thread.
12. Trim excess thread if desired.



## Product Evaluation:

Use the copybooks and pencil during your day at Sholes School. Each student should keep his or her own copy as a memento.

Thanks to Storrowtown Village Museum, West Springfield, Massachusetts, Nancy Powers and Ann Haverstock of Geneva, Illinois for ideas on copybook design.

**Games** (*Illinois Learning Standards 19.A.1,2; 19.B.2; 21.A.1a*)

**Goals:** group activity, memory, reciting,

**Materials:** handkerchief, beanbag or an appropriate substitution

**Procedures:** Instructions for each game is below. Games may be played indoors or out. These schoolhouse and yard games are derived from: Bancroft, Jessie H. *Games for the Playground, Home, School and Gymnasium*. New York: Macmillan, 1915.

### KALEIDESCOPE

The players are seated, with the exception of four or five who stand in front. Each of the standing students is given the name of a color. He then states that color. The seated players close their eyes. Then the standing players rearrange themselves. The seated students open their eyes. The one called upon must now recite the names of the colors in the order in which the standing players are now arranged. For example, red, green, blue, yellow rearrange themselves to yellow, red, blue, green.

For older students, use the names of geographical features, titles of books, peoples first names, names of wildflowers--possibilities are endless--and the movement is very useful for kinesthetic learners.

### THE MINISTER'S CAT

This is an alphabet game that can be played forward and backward. The first player chooses an adjective beginning with a to describe the Minister's cat. For example, "The minister's cat is an avaricious cat." The second player repeats the words of the first, then adds an adjective beginning with b, such as "The minister's cat is an avaricious, brazen cat." The play continues all the way through the alphabet, and may reverse from z to a, if the letter x is excluded.

### HAND OVER HEAD BEAN BAG RACE

A beanbag is placed on the front desk of each row. On the signal, the first student picks up the beanbag holds it over his head and drops it on the desk behind him. The student in the second desk immediately picks up the beanbag, holds it over his head, and drops it on the desk behind him. The last student in the row catches the bean bag, stands and immediately hops to the front of the row where he takes the first seat, and the remaining students in the row each move back one seat. The procedure is repeated until each student in the row is back to his original seat. The first row to finish is the winner.

### A TISKIT, A TASKIT

One player walks clockwise outside the circle with a handkerchief. Other players move clockwise as they sing:

A tiskit, A taskit,  
A green and yellow basket;  
I wrote a letter to my love  
And on the way I dropped it.  
I dropped it, I dropped it,  
And on the way I dropped it.  
One of you has picked it up  
And put it in his pocket;  
It isn't you --it isn't you-

The last line is repeated until the player with the handkerchief cries, "It's YOU!" He drops the handkerchief behind one of the players who must pick it up and immediately start around the outside of the circle clockwise. The player who dropped the handkerchief attempts to return to the opening first by moving counterclockwise. The one who is left out takes the handkerchief for the next round.

## LOOBY LOO

Another is another old singing game with motions., the lyrics for "Looby Loo" are:

Here we dance, looby, looby, looby.  
Here we dance, looby, looby, light.  
Here we dance, looby, looby, looby, loo,  
Every Saturday night.

Put your right hand in  
Put your right hand out  
Give your right hand a shake, shake, shake.  
Hikumbooby round-about.

Here we dance, looby, looby, looby, etc.  
Put your left hand in, etc.  
Put your right foot in. . . etc. .

The entire circle rotates first to left for the first line of each chorus, then to right for the second line, left, then right again. Each player spins completely around on the line "Hikumbooby round about." This is a very ancient game with a rich folk history.

## Lesson Plans

The follow pages provide suggested lesson plans. Use as many of these activities as possible to ensure an authentic school day experience.

1. Opening Exercises
2. The Memory Gem
3. Course of Study with McGuffey's Readers
4. Multiple Level Classroom
5. Arithmetic #1
6. Arithmetic #2
7. Spelling
8. Handwriting
9. Language
10. Geography
11. Science

## 1. Opening Exercises

**Goals:** to understand the historic perspective of the school, to identify historical facts and interpretations of those facts, to master procedures for orally sharing observations through simple speech activities.

**Procedures:**

- Once the teacher rings the small hand bell all students must be seated silently, their feet flat on the floor, backs straight in the seats, and hands folded neatly on top of their desks.
- Teacher asks the students to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance - to the **forty-four-star flag**.
- During the pledge, the teacher and adult volunteers deliberately omit the words "under God" which were added in the 1950's.
- When students are again seated the teacher can lead a short history discussion using some of these sample questions:
  - Why are there only forty-four stars in this flag?
  - Which states were still territories in 1901?
  - How old was the Pledge of Allegiance in 1901?
  - When were the words "under God" added to the pledge?
  - What other patriotic symbols do you see in the room?
  - How is this schoolroom different from the one where you normally attend class?
  - What items in the cloakroom do you see that we no longer use in schools today?
  - What purpose did the water bucket serve?
  - Why do we not share drinking cups in modern schools?

**Recitation and Evaluation:** When responding, the student must raise his or her hand and wait to be recognized. Then he will stand, address the teacher as "M'am" or "Sir" as appropriate, and

finally give his oral response. This method is to be used throughout the school day, as it was a century ago.

**Closure:** In the original one-room classroom, students and teacher would end with a patriotic song such as "America" or "The Star-Spangled Banner." The day then would follow the assignments on the chalkboard or written in the individual student's copybook the afternoon before.

## 2. **The Memory Gem** (*Illinois Learning Standards 2.B.1a, 24.B.1, 24.A.3c*)

**Goals:** One of the purposes of American public education has always been inculcation of social values, morals, and healthy practices. Today such instruction often takes the form of social studies or "wellness" classes. In the day of the one room school it typically belonged in the part of the day dedicated to copy work and recitation. For a modern class visiting the one room school, such copy work also acquaints students with the use of slate and slate pencils.

### **Materials:**

- Sample memory gems are scattered throughout the various levels of the *McGuffey's Eclectic Readers*, including "How Doth the Little Bee," (*Second Eclectic Reader*, p. 48), "Beware of the First Drink" (*Third Eclectic Reader*, p.111) and "Try, Try Again" (*Fourth Eclectic Reader*, p. 28).
- Others can be taken from poetry anthologies, volumes of famous quotations, or philosophic texts, such as Emerson's "Self Reliance."
- Slate and slate pencils, chalk and chalkboard.

### **Procedures:**

- For the memory gem exercise the teacher writes a single short passage or poem on the chalkboard before the students arrive in the morning. The teacher should write the use cursive writing printing was not popular at the time.
- The students can read the memory gem upon entering the classroom.
- Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the teacher asks the students to remove their slates and rag erasers from their desks.
- Next, the students copy the memory gem exactly as it appears on the chalkboard without breaking the slate pencil.

### **Recitation and Evaluation:**

- Once this is achieved, a short recitation of the memory gem and its meaning(s) should take place. To encourage several different responses the teacher should call first upon a volunteer, then ask, "Who has another interpretation?"
- Responding students must stand, address the teacher as "Ma'am" or "Sir" and explain. Once everyone who wishes to speak has had the opportunity to do so, the teacher tells the

students to study the memory gem as time permits because they will be asked to recite it from memory at the end of the day.

- The chalkboard is then erased, but the students still have their copies on their slates. When the end of the school day comes, the entire class recites the memory gem in unison.

### 3. Course of Study with the McGuffey's Eclectic Readers

The *McGuffey's Eclectic Readers* were first used in 1836 and are still considered as one of America's most famous pedagogical tools. The revised edition with the 1879 copyright date, available in facsimile at Sholes School, may not have been done under the original author, W.H. McGuffey, but it was developed out of the same concept as the earlier editions.

In every level from Primer to Sixth Reader, pupils are presented a steady stream of moral lessons including kindness to animals, adherence to Christian principles, allegiance to country, good manners, and consideration of others. The virtues presented to American youth were the prime values in which Americans professed to believe.

One reason for the popularity of the *McGuffey's Readers* was that reader level and age (grade) were not synonymous. This was especially true in the nineteenth century as students took time off for farm chores. For example, the *Third Reader* has a story title "Beware of the First Drink," suggesting that a fifteen or sixteen-year-old student might get no further than the *Third Reader*. Another reason for the books' popularity was the logical progression from simple to more difficult material. From the *Primer* upward new words were presented so that the child gained an ever-widening vocabulary. With pictures abounding, the books were visually interesting.

The title word *Eclectic* means that the stories and rhymes were culled from a wide range of literature. Thus, the selections included poetry and prose selections about history, philosophy, and science. Spelling and penmanship exercises were included as were phonics charts and tables showing the use of punctuation marks. Books were routinely read aloud, so there was concern for enunciation, syllabification, and the use of diacritical marks to achieve them were emphasized.

Both the *McGuffey's Eclectic Readers* and *The McGuffey's Eclectic Spelling Book* are available in facsimile at better bookstores and on-line. Sholes School has ample sets of both texts for visiting classes to use. Please show care when using the books as they are the property of our historic museum.

- **Reading Sample Lesson Plan** (*Illinois Learning Standards 1.B.1d, 1.B.2c, 1.B.2d*)

**Goal:** to have the students experience reading instruction as it was done circa 1990.

**Materials:** *McGuffey's Eclectic Educational Series, Revised Edition*. New York: American Book Company 1907-1921.

**Procedures:**

- Select the levels of *McGuffey's Readers* appropriate to the students' reading levels in the class. For example, students reading at third grade level would use *McGuffey's* level one or two. Those at or above fourth grade level might use *McGuffey's* level three or four. Adult volunteers might be assigned *McGuffey's* level six, which is high school level literature.
- Divide the class into three or four groups, with no more than eight children in a group and with no one working at or above his frustration level.
- Assign from these passages:
  - *Primer*: study and read aloud pages 16 & 17
  - *First Reader*: lesson XXIX, pages 36 & 37
  - *Second Reader*: lesson XXI, pages 46 -48
  - *Third Reader*: lesson III, pages 18 -19, or lesson XXIV, pages 62-64.
  - *Fourth Reader*: lesson III, pages 29-34, or lesson XXXIX, pages 110-112.
  - *Fifth Reader*: lesson III, pages 44-48, or lesson XI, pages 63-66.
- Assign seat work from *Spelling Books*, copy work and memorization of "Memory Gem", and math problems on chalk board for students to do when they have finished their silent study of the reading lesson but are not in the recitation group.

**Recitations and Evaluations:** Meet with each group or assign adult volunteers to meet with some of the groups. Hear the oral recitation from each group. At the end of the reading period, have "older students" check the seatwork.

- **A Choral Exercise** (*Illinois Reading Standards 4.A.1a, 4.A.2a, 4.B*)

**Goal:** To have students experience reading aloud in unison for pleasure.

**Procedure:** Using the same reading groups as in the above reading exercise, have students prepare "Song of the Bee" from *The Second Reader*, pages 49-51; and "The Blacksmith" from *The Third Reader*, pages 38-39.

**Recitation and Evaluation:** Call in turn each group to the front of the room for the reading in unison. Applaud.

**Note:** This is especially fun if the adult volunteers are assigned a poem from *The Fifth Reader* or *The Sixth Reader*.

- **A Blab School Exercise** (*Illinois Reading Standards 1.A.21 and 1.B.1 a, b, c*)

**Goal:** to recognize different purposes for reading, experience a different mode of reading, and to develop coping strategies when interference takes place.

**Materials:**

- *McGuffey's Eclectic Educational Series, Revised Edition*. New York: American Book Company, 1907-1921.

- Buehler, Huber Gray and Caroline W. Hotchkiss. *Modern Language Lessons*. New York: Newson and Company, 1902.
- Memory gem from earlier in the day.

**Procedures:**

- Ask each student to select a passage from whichever book he or she has been assigned, and/or the memory gem.
- At the signal, everyone is to begin reading *quietly* aloud from the selected passages. At the next signal, all are to stop reading.

**Recitation and Evaluation:**

- Discuss problems pros and cons of this style of "blabbing". Discuss strategies for overcoming distractions.
- Explain how this technique was used to ensure that all students were actually reading from the various texts.
- Students should evaluate the success or failure of the activity.

#### 4. The Multiple Reader Level Classroom

Research of records from one-room schools across the Midwest indicates that during the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, the student population ranged in age from six to seventeen years, with the median age at ten and a half. Typically, all students began at the primer or first reader level regardless of chronological age upon entering school and progressed through the reader levels with several students in the same reader regardless of age. As a result, it was common for students to be grouped into three or four reader levels for instructional purposes. Additionally, the levels would often vary for reading, arithmetic and spelling.

Therefore, for student visitors in the twenty-first century to savor the tone of a day in a one-room schoolhouse, it is important that three or more reader levels be represented. To achieve this, the teacher should divide the group and arrange to have accompanying adult volunteers serve as "eighth graders" who will mentor the students during the seatwork portions of each study period. The teacher can then assign work from the readers, spellers and arithmetic texts by the respective levels, keeping in mind that an individual student may be placed in a different level for each of the subjects noted above. In turn the teacher will call each group up to the teacher's desk, chalkboard, or recitation bench for the recitation period.

It is important for both the teacher and the students to note that neither the levels of the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* nor the *McGuffey's Eclectic Spelling Books* match grade equivalency levels of the twenty-first century. Indeed, a typical rural school student might never progress beyond the third level reader. Thus, when planning for the day the teacher or docent must select materials which are appropriate for the students in the groups, keeping in mind that the selections in the fifth and sixth level readers represent works studied in high school classes today.

Similarly, arithmetic texts were also considered Readers and arranged by level. It was entirely possible for a student to be at a different level in his arithmetic work than in reading or spelling. Much depended on what books were available during the terms in which the student happened to be enrolled and on how many other students could work at the same level. If a student were the only one in his level, chances were good that he would receive instruction at a lower level or in a different subject matter area. Furthermore, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mental math was the norm. Students would drill and recite, copy and solve, listen and calculate without the aid of electronic or mechanical devices. Since many never progressed beyond the third arithmetic level reader at age ten or eleven, mastery of basic mathematical operations had to take place at a very early age lest youngsters lack the requisite skills for entering the world of work.

## 5. Arithmetic #1 – with Slate and Slate Pencil

A student activity involving reader level work in arithmetic.

**Goals:** to solve problems using different operations; to compute using slate and slate pencil.

**Materials:**

- Chalk board
- Slates
- Slate Pencils
- Erasers

**Procedures:** The teacher writes six to ten single and double-digit problems on the chalkboard, the easiest coming first and the most difficult coming last. Do not include the “operation” For example:

1. 5	2. 14	3. 24	4. 37	5. 50	6. 79
4	7	6	29	44	63

The teacher then instructs the students:

*First reader group, find the sums of problems numbers one through six.*

*Second reader group, find the differences of problems one through six.*

*Fourth and fifth reader group, find the products of problems one through six and prove your work.*

*If you need help, raise your hand.*

**Recitation and Evaluation:** After several minutes the teacher then calls forth each grade separately to recite the answers for the assigned operation. By taking turns, each student states one or two responses orally. Of course, other children may be listening (and learning) as every grade is called to recite. Students enjoy the exercise because it not only calls for different mathematical operations, but also gives practice with slate and slate pencil. And the "eighth graders" may have to go back in their memory banks to recognize the terms *sums*, *differences*, and *products*.

## 6. Arithmetic #2 – Textbook Lesson (Illinois Learning Standards 6.A.2, 6.B.1)

Because most of the students visiting Sholes School are in the third grade, the multiple levels of arithmetic study typically achieved in a one-room school are less distinct than at the turn of the last century. However, to carry out the multiple level plan already laid out for reading and spelling instruction, the teacher can once again divide the class into three reader levels and assign work from the photocopies of antique text books kept at Sholes School in the bottom of the book case in the back of the room.

**Goal:** To study the concept of the number twelve as a whole number and as a product of its fractional parts.

**Materials:**

- **Level One:** Daniel W. Fish, *Robinson's Shorter Course, First Book in Arithmetic*, Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. New York and Chicago, 1874. Lesson XXX, p. 40.
- **Level Two:** S. A. Felter, *An Introduction to the "Arithmetical Analysis" Designed for the Primary Schools, Containing Mental, Slate, and Blackboard Exercises*. Scribner, Armstrong and Company. New York, *n.d.* Lesson 49, p. 36.
- **Level Three:** Daniel W. Fish, *Robinson's Shorter Course, The Complete Arithmetic, Oral and Written*. American Book Company. New York and Chicago, 1874. Lesson CXXVI, pg. 136

**Procedures:**

- **Level One:** Do numbers 1-17 silently. Write number 18 as directed on your slate.
- **Level Two:** Do numbers 1 and 2 as shown on your slate. Do number 3 aloud with a partner.
- **Level Three:** Make the chart as shown in the middle of the page. Do exercise 2, 3, and 4 aloud with a partner.

**Recitation and Evaluation:**

- **Levels One and Two:** Recite responses to items as directed by the teacher.
- **Level Three:** Demonstrate the use of the chart to the entire class. Each member of the level group recited one side of the chart.

## 7. Spelling (*Illinois Learning Standards 3.A.1, 3.A.2*)

**Goal:** to practice and develop spelling, vocabulary and sentence structure skills

**Materials:** *McGuffey's Eclectic Spelling Book, Revised Edition*. Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. 1879.

**Procedures:**

- Select from the facsimile texts a lesson for each of the reader levels previously determined for the day of the visit: 59, 60, 84, 85, 171, 172, 173, and 174.
- Assign students to copy words and definitions either on their slates or in their copybooks and to study each word carefully.
- Announce that there will be a large group activity at the end of the study period using the words in the spelling lists.

- At the end of the study period (fifteen minutes or so) do one or both of the following activities.

### **Recitation and Evaluation:**

#### **Teakettle**

Students use the list of homophones from *The McGuffey's Eclectic Spelling Book*. Each then makes a sentence, substituting the word teakettle for the homophones in the spelling list. For example, "My *teakettle* is a little *teakettle* because he has a cough." A classmate must then correctly guess and spell the answers *horse* and *hoarse*. That student then takes a turn. By listening to the responses of different level students, the teacher reinforces learning in the same manner as in the one-room schoolhouse.

#### **Spelling Bee**

Students close their *Spelling Books* and copybooks or erase their slates. All stand. The teacher reads from each of the assigned lists, mixing reader levels, and providing correct sentences for each homophone. In turn, the individual student must correctly spell the word from his or her spelling list. Anyone who fails to spell a word correctly is "out" and must sit down. He or she does not get another turn. The last students standing when all words on their respective lists have been exhausted are the winners and may be awarded with a prize if the teacher so desires.

### **8. Handwriting (Illinois Learning Standards 3.1.A)**

**Goals:** to practice handwriting with slate and slate pencil, to learn the importance of good handwriting a century ago, to practice writing words from specific letter choices.

#### **Materials:**

- slate
- slate pencil
- eraser rag
- chalkboard and chalk

**Procedures:** Explain the importance of good handwriting in an age without computers. Explain how good handwriting (or penmanship) was required for many jobs, including secretarial and bookkeeping positions. It often was the key to employment.

- Have children clear desk of everything except the slate, slate pencil and eraser rag.
- Instruct children that they will need five lines of writing on one side of the slate.
- *For line one, make a continuous line of short loops. This is the cursive letter e. (Demonstrate on chalkboard.)*
- *For line two, make a continuous line of tall loops. This is the cursive letter l.*
- *For line three, make a continuous line like tiny corn stalks growing early in the season. Dot the top of each stalk. This is the cursive letter i.*
- *For line four, make a continuous line of taller cornstalks. Cross each one close to the top. This is the cursive letter t.*

- Finally write on the last line as many words as you can that are spelled with only these letters.

### **Recitations and Evaluations:**

- What words have you written? Can you spell them for me?
- Have adult volunteers or "older students" check slates for correctness.

## **9. Language Study** (*Illinois Learning Standards 4.B.1b, 4.B.2a & b, 5.A.2A, 5.C.2a, 16.E.3b,c*)

The following lesson is adapted from Lesson 131 (page 75) of Gordon A. Southworth and F. B. Goddard, *First Lessons in Language*. Boston: Leach, Shewell, and Sanborn, 1891.

**Goals:** To use research materials to locate information and to incorporate that information into a coherent paragraph.

### **Materials:**

- Pioneer Sholes School internet site
- Pioneer Sholes School grounds and building
- List of building and grounds features provided below

### **Procedures:**

- Before visiting Pioneer Sholes School, brainstorm questions about the building, site and historic context. List these in writing on chalkboard and have children copy for future reference.
- Before visiting Pioneer Sholes School, log onto the website (ppfv.org). Have students locate answers to questions formulated earlier during the brainstorming session.
- On the day of the visit to Pioneer Sholes School discuss:
  - The fence around the school yard
  - The locations of the privies
  - The cupola and bell
  - The cloak room and its furnishings
  - The two entrances to the classroom
  - The desks and the reasons for their arrangement
  - The stove and its use
  - The slates and slate pencils
  - The dunce cap and stool
  - The textbooks
- Assign students to write a one paragraph description of either the interior or exterior of Sholes School in their copybooks. Specify that the paragraph must be at least five sentences in length.

**Evaluation and Recitation:** When finished, ask several students to stand and read the paragraph aloud. Check for correct English mechanics, especially sentence structure.

## **10. Geography Lesson** (*Illinois Learning Standards 17.A.1b, 17.A.2b, 17.C.1a, 17.C.2a*)

**Goal:** To encourage map study and to learn the names of major bodies of water forming the boundaries of the State of Illinois.

**Materials:**

- A wall map of the United States or a globe.
- Monteith, James. *First Lessons in Geography: on the Plan of Object Teaching*. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1872, pp.12-13, 46- 47. (Facsimile copies of the text are available at Pioneer Sholes School.)

**Procedures:**

- Call the attention of the class to the globe or map displayed.
- Ask each of the questions in Lessons VI and VII of Monteith's text.
- Permit the student to raise his hand, stand when called upon, and then to recite his response.
- Praise or correct as appropriate.
- Using the wall map or the map on page 46 of Monteith's text, have the students draw the map of Illinois on their slates or in their copybooks.
- Have students label all bodies of water forming Illinois boundaries.
- Add the Illinois and Fox Rivers and label.
- Place a star marking Springfield, the capital city.

**Evaluation:**

- Check for correct shape of the state
- Check for correct placement of the Mississippi, Ohio and Wabash Rivers
- Check for correct placement of the Illinois and Fox Rivers
- Check for placement of Springfield near middle of state.

**11. What, No Science Lesson?** (*Illinois Learning Standards: 12 A, 12 B, 12 E, 13 B, 16 E, 17B*)

Years ago, students in rural elementary schools were exposed to very little scientific inquiry. One may ask why, but the answer is relatively simple. Because the students were usually farm children, they learned the principles of biology, meteorology and physics at home.

For example, former Pioneer Sholes School students describe learning about the relationships of weather and crops from their earliest years, and of helping with planting before they were old enough to enter school. Others describe how a tire swing taught them about the period of the pendulum and--a pitchfork, the mechanical advantage of a first-class lever.

All that has changed today as Illinois becomes increasingly urban and suburban. Therefore, it is important for children attending a day at Sholes School to experience its rural character. Here are some simple activities teachers have provided for this purpose:

- Have the bus driver drop off the students at the barn so they can see the rural setting and walk back to school. Ask them to observe sights and sounds enroute. Discuss these--and why the bell is louder outside than inside the school.
- Take a short field trip--literally into the field surrounding the schoolyard. If you come early in spring talk about why the field has been burned. Later, identify native prairie plants found there. Compass plant, Big Blue Stem, and coneflowers are easily located.
- Watch for wildlife. Blue birds occupy the bird houses in spring and summer; bob-o'links (an Illinois rare species) frequent the pine trees in the school yard; red tail hawks hunt field mice and rabbits; and deer graze freely nearby. (Bring field guides.) What do you see? Where? Describe the identifying characteristics and behaviors.
- Watch the weather. Chart the temperature throughout the day. (Bring your own thermometers.) How does the temperature change? Why? What other weather phenomena does the class observe? Is it always windy at Sholes School? Why?
- During the lunch break, hike to one of the other eco-zones to observe different flora. Discuss how and why the oak grove is different from the prairie restoration, for example.
- Go across curriculum to discuss how different cultures have utilized plants and animals found at the forest preserve. For example, Native Americans processed acorns as a major food source, used moth mullein as a moccasin liner, and drank an herbal tea made from sumac berries.
- Record observations in the copybook.