

47. Observing, Listening, and Taking Notes

What are the most precious gifts God has given you? You could name many things, and high on the list would likely be your five senses—sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Think what it would be like not to have these five senses. You would be living in a dark, silent world—never a glowing sunset, never a snowcapped mountain, no rippling creek music or happy voices of loved ones. Suppose you could never taste a bit of food again, or smell the spicy fragrance of leaves in an autumn woods, or feel the soft touch of a baby's hand. What price would you take for your five senses? Surely none, for they are priceless.

One important use of our five senses is observation. Observing things is a needful preparation for writing. Think of your senses as gateways for observing the wonderful works of our great Creator.

Another important use of our five senses is careful listening. We should listen to the beautiful sounds God has put in nature for us to enjoy. We should also listen in order to learn valuable and interesting things from others. The Bible says, "Be swift to hear, slow to speak" (James 1:19). Older people can tell us many things that we could never learn by ourselves. We need to listen carefully when they speak to us.

One more way to use our five senses is by reading. Do you expect that you will ever fly to Tibet? Likely not, but through reading you can be well acquainted with the people, animals, and customs of that country. Reading is a wonderful form of observation that takes us to strange lands and faraway places. You can sit down with a book and travel anywhere in the world without leaving your chair.

Through reading we can discover things that happened many centuries ago and even in eternity past, before the earth

For simple reference, each of the composition lessons is marked by a design along the outside page margin.

Lesson 47

Purpose: (1) To teach that observing and listening are necessary for good writing. (2) To teach some basic points about taking notes. (*Previous experience:* Taking notes by copying key words that give main ideas.)

Oral Review:

1. What is a paragraph? (a group of sentences that develop a single topic)
2. What is the sentence called that tells what a paragraph is about? (the topic sentence)
3. Which margin of a paragraph is kept completely straight? (the left margin)

Presenting the Lesson: Ask students what the five senses are. How many eyes do we have? How many ears? How many mouths? Then we should observe and listen more than we talk! Today we will

learn about being a good writer by observing, listening, and taking notes.

Teach the following points.

1. *To be a good writer, observe carefully.*
 - a. Use your five senses.
 - b. Notice things of God's creation.
2. *To be a good writer, listen carefully.*
 - a. Listen to beautiful sounds God has put in nature.
 - b. Learn from older people.
 - c. Remember facts accurately.
3. *To be a good writer, do much reading.*
 - a. First of all, read the Bible.
 - b. Read many good books to improve your vocabulary and your general understanding. In this way you can learn about far-