

# Student Progress Chart for Eliza Burnz' STEP-BY-STEP PRIMER

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

1. a c t <i>the</i>	2. m my and	3. s <i>on</i>	4. p – s in pl.	5. n	6. f
7. d	8. h	9. i	10. e	11. o	12. l
13. g	14. u	15. <i>ī, ī, ŷ</i>	16. b	17. z	18. light-lined letters: silent
19. v	20. of to	21. r <i>or for nor</i>	22. j	23. w	24. th
25. sh	26. k	27. <i>ē</i> be <i>ēa</i>	28. <i>ā</i> ate, etc.	29. <i>ō</i> go no wo toe <i>hōe fōe bōne</i>	30. y = I lady con. yes
31. <i>ī ŷ</i> <i>pīe bŷ</i> <i>rīde</i>	32. oo boot	33. <i>ū</i> <i>ūse dūe</i>	34. ee	35. ch chief rich	36. <i>āy</i>
37. ai	38. n gang ing ong	39. <i>ñ</i> = ng <i>iñg</i>	40. oi oil oy joy	41. ou ou ow cow <i>ōw lōw</i>	42. <i>ōō</i> - <i>ū fōōt</i>
43. ck	44. <i>ä</i> <i>fär</i>	45. <i>â</i> = <i>ā</i> sounded short <i>âsk lâst</i>	46. au haul aw saw	47. <i>ā</i> = au = aw ball	48. <i>ô</i> = <i>ā</i> but sounded shorter
49. <i>â</i> fare <i>fâir</i> there	50. x = ks six	51. wh why	52. final ce = s used after long vowels <i>cāçe</i>	53. <i>ġ</i> = j age badge	54. final blends ft nt nd rt rn rl st
55. lt ld lb lf lk lp llm	56. beg. blends pl bl fl sl cl gl	57. br- cr dr fr gr pr tr	58. final blends mp mps	59. beg. blends st sk sc sw sgtr shr thr	60. bg s msn sp spl spr scr
61. q	62. ing ings	63. er = ur	64. zh vision measure etc.	65. Stories	66. u + r fur
67. e, i, , + r her bird	68. e-near i de-ny gh=f ed=t	69. a as u some ton; ei ey + r = <i>ā</i>	70. ph = f I before <i>ē</i> , etc.	71. ti si zi c ice = sh & rule x = z irr. words	

Record the date the student masters the lesson in the square. Words in *italics* are to be called at sight in the lessons where they are first presented. Lessons 1 to 62 are Basic. Lessons 63 to 71 are more advanced information, largely for adults. Prepared by Donald L. Potter, 4/21/10. [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net)

## Note from Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter

April 21, 2010

I prepared this “Student Progress Chart” to help me keep track of my students’ progress with Eliza Broadman Burnz’ 1892 *THE STEP-BY-STEP PRIMER: Burnz’ Pronouncing Print*. Dr. Eugene Roth sent me a link to this work in 2009. It shares the same basic viewpoint as Dr. Edwin Leigh, inventor of light-line type that was highly successful in teaching boys and girls to read. Dr. Edwin Leigh’s method of teaching reading was the most successful in the history of reading in America. It is a very great shame that it was eventually pushed out of the classroom by very powerful influences bent on preventing American children from reaching their full intellectual potential.

Burnz’ program is developmentally appropriate student from kindergarten up. It completely eliminates any need for whole-word or phonetic guessing. It reduces the time necessary to get students reading on grade level to a fraction of the time of programs that not use a font, which represents unambiguously all of the English speech sounds. Notice that this modified alphabet does not resort to respelling, it preserves traditional orthography completely intact.

This method is particularly helpful in teaching children to spell since the actual spelling patterns of the words are not altered in any way.

I have used the program successfully to cut the time needed to teach first-graders to read. I can cheerfully testify to its amazing effectiveness.

For more information in older reading programs that can help us improve our modern reading programs, visit the “Education Page” my website: [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net)

Mrs. Elizabeth Brown has collected information on Leigh’s font. Her website is [www.thephonicspage.org](http://www.thephonicspage.org).

Dr. Gene Roth sent me the following theoretical insightful and historically important articles by Eliza Burnz.

## Learning to Spell.

An article in the London *Spectator* in reference to spelling has been widely copied and commented on by the press. The writer says: "We believe that spelling is a special faculty; and that the inability to spell is not due to a lack of brains or to lack of attention, but simply and solely to the non-possession of the spelling faculty."

Does such a statement commend itself to the common sense of people in general and of teachers in particular? Does not such an assertion strike one as pure nonsense? Can we conceive of a special faculty for comprehending and applying an art so inconsistent with rule and reason as is English orthography? A simple sentence which is found on almost the first page of many primers for children, "do go on," shows wherein lies one of the chief difficulties in spelling. Three different sounds are given to that one letter "o." Does the learning to pronounce d-o, *do*, prepare the pupil to spell *too*, *you*, *true*? Having learned that g-o is sounded *go*, will the poor child escape censure if it spells t-o for *toe* or b-o for *bow*? Naming the letters, o-n, gives the pupil the impression that the word should be sounded *own*; and so the reason-destroying; process goes on.

At the same time it is true that "seeing assists the speller." Not, because some persons have a specially "defective vision for spelling," as the *Spectator* thinks, but for the reason that the perception and memory of *form* are so much more active in some persons than in others. In my early days, when Webster's blue-black speller was the main dependence for youngsters, the children spelled the columns of words down, up, and across, naming aloud the letters of each word. They learned to spell by the jingle, and many did well at the exercise; but it was found that their writing, (spelling on paper), did not agree with their vocal spelling. The Word Method of learning to read was discovered twenty years ago, by J. Russell Webb; it soon became popular, and spelling was thereafter taught chiefly by writing. The word-picture, in print and script, was made the basis of learning to write as well as to read. This word method is still the one almost universally employed in the best schools, in connection with pictures.

But the typewriting machine has shown that the word method also fails to make good spellers. Why? Because there is no analytic comparison made between the word—the *spoken* word, and its written or printed representation. The children are not sufficiently instructed in speech. I mean that they are not taught the elementary sounds which compose the spoken language, *before* they are introduced to letters as the representatives of those sounds. Nor are they afterwards taught the art of reading by means of fonetic books, the letters of which show a correspondence between sound and sign. It may be said that this is impracticable. It is with the ordinary primers and readers, but not with books printed with "Leigh's Pronouncing Orthography" or the newer "Pronouncing Print." In using these books the pupil sees which letters have a meaning and which are silent. The attention is called to the agreements and disagreements between the spoken word and the printed. And it is to the habit thus formed, of *close attention to particulars*, that good spellers can be made, both in the primary schools and in the higher departments.

Dr. Harris, now commissioner of education at Washington, was for many years superintendent of the schools of St. Louis. He had Leigh's pronouncing orthography books used in the primary schools. In a letter which he wrote as an introduction to "Circular No. 8, 1893," he says, that by the use of these books the "children not only learned to read rapidly but they *learned to spell the ordinary spelling* much more correctly than other pupils. This was due to the tact that *they noticed the silent letters* more carefully. These children *learned logical habits of analysis*, and were more intelligent in regard to the meaning of what they read than others." In this circular, Dr. Harris gives a specimen of Leigh's print. The pamphlet is a history of the spelling reform, and is sent free on application to the bureau of education, Washington, D. C.

Notwithstanding the excellent results achieved with the Leigh print, it has gone out of use in the New York and even in the St. Louis schools; principally, I think, on account of so many letters being modified in shape. Its failure to satisfy teachers led to the invention of "Pronouncing Print" which produces the same results without new or oddly shaped letters.

In using a pronouncing primer, the child does not name the letters, but reads by sound; pronouncing the under letter when the upper letter does not indicate the right sound, and omitting to sound the letters in skeleton type. After reading a lesson, the words are written by the pupil, who draws a line across the silent letters but does not write the under ones. Words having under or silent letters are *written many times*. Afterwards, all the lesson is written in the ordinary way without any marks. The pupil thus learns to spell with the understanding as well as the memory.

Eliza B. Burnz

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*The School Journal*, Volume 49, No. 11.

E.L. Kellogg & Co., Sept 29, 1894. Page 264.

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[http://books.google.com/books?id=x\\_kBAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA264](http://books.google.com/books?id=x_kBAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA264)

## Learning to Spell.

Eliza B. Burnz.

In Mr. Torrey's "Typewriting Department" of *The Stenographer* for April, he invites its readers to theorize on that "mysterious phase of education" known as "spelling." It may appear inconsistent for one who is a decided opponent of the current orthography to take interest in the better learning of that crooked art; but since it is sound ethics to give help in any direction that help is needed, provided no mischief is intended, I offer my better plan of learning to spell.

The theory of the *London Spectator*, that "spelling is a special faculty," must be regarded by every one who has carefully studied the subject, as pure nonsense. Can we conceive of a special faculty for comprehending and applying a manner of spelling that is wholly absurd and inconsistent? The simple sentence which is found on almost the first page of primers for children, "do go on," shows wherein lies one of the chief difficulties in spelling. Three different sounds given to that one letter "o." Does the learning to pronounce d-o *doo*, prepare the pupil to spell *you, few, true*? Having learned that g-o is sounded *go*, will the poor child escape censure if it spells t-o for *toe* or b-o for *bow*? Naming the letters o-n gives the pupil the impression that the word should be sounded *own*; and so the reason destroying process goes on.

At the same time, as Mr. Torrey says, "seeing assists the speller." Not, because some persons have a specially "defective vision for spelling," as *The Spectator* thinks, but for the reason that the perception and memory of *form* are so much more active in some persons than in others. In our early days, when Webster's blue-back speller was the main dependence for youngsters, the children spelled the columns of words down, up, and across, naming aloud the letters of each word. They learned to spell by the jingle, and many did well at the exercise; but it was found that their writing (spelling on paper), did not agree with their vocal spelling. Then the "word method" of learning to read was invented by Webb; it soon became popular, and spelling was thereafter taught chiefly by writing. The word-picture, in print and script, was made the basis of learning to write, as well as to read. This word method is still the one almost universally employed in schools.

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In spite of the excellent results achieved with Leigh's Print it has gone out of use, even in the St. Louis schools; principally, I think, on account of its many new letters. Its failure led to the invention of Burnz' Pronouncing Print, which produces the same results without new or oddly shaped letters. The following is a specimen of it:

Of do done was  
says eye one bird  
eat high know use

In using the Pronouncing Primer, the child does not name the letters but reads by sound; pronouncing the *under* letter, which is added when the upper letter does not indicate the right sound, and omitting the letters in skeleton type. After reading the lesson, the words are written by the pupil, who draws a line across the silent letters but does not write the under ones. Words having under or silent letters are *written many times*. Afterwards all the lesson is written in the ordinary way without any marks. The pupil thus learns to spell with the understanding as well as the memory.

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The Stenographer, Volume 5, Number 8, Philadelphia:  
Stenographer Publishing Co., June 1894, pages 584-585.

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<http://books.google.com/books?id=A9YGAAAAYAAJ&pg=RA9-PA584>