

SIMPLY CHARLOTTE MASON PRESENTS

Using Language Well

SAMPLE

*English, Grammar, and Writing Points
from Spelling Wisdom*

by Sonya Shafer

Book 1

Teacher Guide & Answer Key

Confidently teach your student language arts skills through great literature!

Pair *Using Language Well* with *Spelling Wisdom* and you can use the same great literary passages to teach English usage, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and composition along with spelling!

This *Teacher Guide & Answer Key* will help you

- Quickly confirm what your student learned in the *Student Book* through guided discovery and great literature.
- Keep on track with helpful teaching tips and practical reminders based on Charlotte Mason's methods.
- Encourage your student to improve naturally in composition skills step by step.
- Evaluate your student's narrations with confidence using the included rubrics and detailed instructions.
- Be assured your student is growing in language arts skills with Charlotte's simple yet effective methods!



Book 1—Basic Capitalization, Punctuation, and Usage

Contractions • Sentences • Plurals • Possessives • Synonyms, Antonyms, Homonyms •
Capitalization • Punctuation • Alphabetizing • Prefixes and Suffixes

All *Using Language Well* books include English, grammar, and writing points.

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Using Language Well

Book One

English, Grammar, and Writing Points
from *Spelling Wisdom, Book One*

Teacher Guide & Answer Key

by Sonya Shafer

Using Language Well, Book One, Teacher Guide and Answer Key: English, Grammar, and Writing
Points from *Spelling Wisdom, Book One*
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How to Use This Book

Using Language Well, Book One, is designed to be used alongside *Spelling Wisdom, Book One*. You will need both books.

Spelling Wisdom books and *Using Language Well* teacher books are non-consumable and can be reused. *Using Language Well* student books are consumable; you will need one per student.

We recommend doing two lessons per week. At that pace this book will last two years: Lessons 1–70 in the first year, Lessons 71–140 in the second.

Lessons 1–70

- Most lessons take five minutes or less.
- Lessons are designed to be done with the teacher and student together.
- Most of the questions can be answered orally.
- Transcription is assigned as part of the lesson.

Lessons 71–140

- Most lessons take about five minutes.
- Lessons are designed to be completed by the student independently.
- Most of the questions ask for a written answer.
- Dictation is assigned and should be written in a separate notebook.



English Points

Over the course of the lessons, the student will be encouraged to look closely for patterns of punctuation and capitalization in the *Spelling Wisdom* passages. With gentle guidance, he will identify English usage and mechanics guidelines for himself and record his observations in his own words in the English Points Journal in the back of his book. See page 64 for details.



Writing Points

Sprinkled throughout these lessons you will find helpful Charlotte Mason-style guidance for laying a strong foundation and making the transition into written composition. A set of rubrics is included. See page 67 for details.

Answer Key

Lesson 1

1. The student should transcribe the first two-word phrase of the exercise.
2. The student should transcribe the rest of the exercise, being careful to spell every word correctly and use correct capitalization and punctuation. (See page 62 for an explanation of transcription.)

Teaching Tip: Rather than having the student give you his work to check, encourage him to get in the habit of checking his own work. When he has finished transcribing, have him carefully compare the Spelling Wisdom exercise and his own work to look for discrepancies. If he finds any, he should correct them before you look over his work.

Lesson 2


1. The student should transcribe the exercise, being careful to spell every word correctly and use correct capitalization and punctuation.

Teaching Tip: Help your student take his time and do his best work the first time. One way to encourage this good habit is to set the guideline that if his copy is correct and demonstrates his best handwriting, he is done; if it is incorrect or sloppily written, he must start over and transcribe the entire exercise again.

Lesson 3

Teaching Tip: Allow the student time to ponder the sentence. Don't be too hasty to give the explanation yourself.

1. One possible explanation: Be sure that you are living according to what you tell others to do.
2. Other words with one syllable: *what, preach*.
3. The student should transcribe the exercise, being careful to spell every word correctly and use correct capitalization and punctuation.

 *Writing Point:* Oral narration and careful transcription are good foundations on which to build solid composition skills. Make sure your student is transcribing carefully and is giving several oral narrations each week from his history, science,

geography, or Bible readings. (Download the free e-book, Five Steps to Successful Narration, at simplycm.com/fivesteps for helpful how-to's.)

Lesson 4

1. Allow the student time to ponder the sentence. Don't be too hasty to give the explanation yourself. One possible explanation: Be satisfied with the talents and abilities and looks you have been given; you don't need to be the best in everything.

Teaching Tip: It might be interesting for the student to know that this saying is from Aesop's fable about a peacock who wanted to have the voice of a nightingale in addition to his other attractions.

2. Words with two syllables: *Content, cannot.*
3. The student should mention five of these words with one syllable: *be, with, your, one, first, in.*
4. The word with four syllables is *everything* (though many people mistakenly pronounce it with only three).
5. The student should transcribe the exercise, being careful to spell every word correctly and use correct capitalization and punctuation.

Lesson 5

1. Allow the student time to ponder the sentence. Don't be too hasty to give the explanation yourself. One possible explanation: A worker deserves to be paid for his work.
2. Guide the student to understand that the words do not make sense in those orders.

Encourage the student to compose his or her own definition of a sentence that contains the idea that a sentence is a group of words that gives a complete thought and makes sense. (Note: This definition will be elaborated on when the student begins to study English grammar [in *Using Language Well, Book 2*], but it is sufficient for now.)

3. The student should transcribe the exercise, being careful to spell every word correctly and use correct capitalization and punctuation.

Lesson 6

1. The student should read the exercise.

Teaching Tip: Most of these lessons can be done orally, leaving only the transcription to be written.

About *Using Language Well, Book 1*

Using Language Well, Book One, takes a rich literary and contextual approach to learning English.

The lessons center around great literature—classic books, Scripture, poetry, famous quotations, historical references—which feeds the student’s mind with great ideas and cultivates his taste for excellent writing.

The student is guided to look closely at the literary passages and see if he can deduce the rules of capitalization and punctuation from his own observations. This contextual approach of discovering the rules for himself is much more interesting than just being given a list of rules to memorize.

The emphasis is on seeing correct models of capitalization and punctuation in the literary samples, so the student gets to know them well. He is challenged to examine the passages, identify the capitalization and punctuation, and explain the reasons for their use in those places. Repeatedly seeing and explaining the correct patterns builds confidence and makes it easier for the student to spot anything in his own writing that deviates from proper usage.

The lessons require only five minutes twice a week. Each lesson focuses on discovering or reviewing just one or two English Points. The short lessons make it easy for the student to give full attention, and the small-but-constant touches in English mechanics and usage result in long-term retention.

Spelling is taught with the same great literature passages (provided in *Spelling Wisdom, Book One*), using the methods of transcription and dictation. Such an approach to spelling in context keeps the student’s interest level high and sets up a lifelong habit of looking at how words are spelled as he reads. (See more about transcription and dictation on the next page.)

The student is encouraged to progress in composition at his own pace. Composition is taught first through oral narration, which gives the student practice in organizing his thoughts and communicating them without all the additional trappings of writing. Once the student is comfortable and fluent in oral narrations, he transitions to writing his narrations. These narrations are not separate language arts assignments but are an expected response to the student’s history, geography, Bible, or science readings from good literary books on those topics. *Using Language Well* helps you gently fine tune his narrations according to what he has learned in the lessons.

A Word about Transcription and Dictation

Charlotte used a natural progression to develop students' writing and spelling abilities. They start with copywork, carefully copying a word or sentence letter-by-letter as they strengthen muscle memory and build fluency. They see words spelled correctly and used in context with correct capitalization and punctuation as they practice their handwriting.

Copywork naturally leads to transcription, for soon the student begins to look for ways to be more efficient in his writing assignments. Rather than look at each letter, write it, then look back for the next letter, the student starts to look at an entire word, get a mental snapshot of it, write it, then look back to make sure he wrote it correctly and look at the next word. The progression moves from looking at and writing letter-by-letter to looking at and writing word-by-word and then phrase-by-phrase before looking back.

Such a progression leads naturally into dictation: studying and writing the entire passage. However, rather than require the student to recall the whole passage from memory, we read it to him as he writes it.

Copywork to transcription to dictation—it's a natural progression.

Using Language Well, Book 1, lessons assign transcription work in Lessons 1–71 and make the change to dictation in Lessons 72–140.

How to Do Dictation

1. Help your student look through the exercise and identify any words that you or he thinks needs his attention in order to spell them confidently.
2. Instruct the student to study the identified words—one at a time—until he is sure he can spell every word in the exercise. This study period may take anywhere from a few minutes to several days, depending on the length of the exercise and the needs of the student. Set aside a little time each day for brief but consistent study of the exercise as needed. (See the next page for suggestions on how to study a word.)
3. When the student is confident that he can spell every word in the exercise, spot check him verbally to make sure. You want to set him up for success! When you are sure he can spell every word in the exercise, dictate the passage to him one phrase at a time, saying the phrase only once. Pause after each phrase is spoken to allow him time to write it. Keep a careful eye on his efforts. If a word is misspelled, quickly cover it with a small self-stick note so its false spelling won't be engraved in the student's mind.
4. After the dictation is complete, the student should study any words that he misspelled and, when he is ready, write the words correctly on the self-stick notes.

You can see a video example of how to do a dictation lesson at <http://spellingwisdom.com>.

How to Study a Word

You may want to work with younger or uncertain students to teach them how to study an unfamiliar word, as outlined below. Older students or students more accustomed to using the method below may study independently.

- Copy the word carefully, making sure it is spelled correctly.
- Look at the word until you can close your eyes and see it spelled correctly in your mind.
- Practice writing the word from memory only if the teacher is nearby to immediately erase any misspellings.

Along with Charlotte's method of visualizing the word, we might add one or two study techniques for students who like to use their other senses in the learning process.

- Say the letters aloud in order while looking at the word.
- "Write" the word with your first finger on a sheet of paper or other smooth surface, being careful to look at the word and spell it correctly.
- Fingerspell the word.
- Construct the word with magnetic letters or letter tiles.



English Points Journal

When your student finishes *Using Language Well, Book 1*, the journal in the back of his book should have the following English Points recorded in his own words.

Capitalization Guidelines

Capitalize

- The first word of a sentence
- The first word in each line of poetry
- Days of the week
- Names or words that refer to God
- Months of the year
- The word *I* when it refers to a person
- Titles
- Proper names
- Initials

Do Not Capitalize

- Compass directions
- Seasons

Punctuation Guidelines

Use a period

- At the end of a statement sentence
- At the end of an initial
- At the end of an abbreviation

Use a question mark at the end of a question sentence

Use a semicolon to connect two complete thoughts that are closely related

Use an apostrophe

- To show possession with 's
- To take the place of missing letters in a contraction

Use an exclamation point to denote intense emotion

Use quotation marks

- To enclose the words that were said
- To denote words and their definitions
- Use single quotation marks to set off quoted material inside double quotation marks

Dialogue punctuation

- If the dialogue tag is after the quoted material: “Quoted material,” dialogue tag.
- If the dialogue tag is before the quoted material: Dialogue tag, “Quoted material.”
- If the dialogue tag splits one sentence into parts: “Quoted,” dialogue tag, “material.”
- If the dialogue tag is between two sentences: “Quoted material,” dialogue tag. “Quoted material.”

Use a comma

- Between items in a series
- To separate the day and year in a date
- After a direct address

Use a colon

- To separate chapter and verse in a Bible reference
- When you want to explain or clarify further

Spelling Reminders

Making singular words plural

- Most words: add *s*
- Words that end in a consonant + *y*: change the *y* to *i* and add *es*
- Other words (words that end in *ch*, *s*, *sh*, *x*, or *z*): add *es*
- Some words that end in *f* or *fe*: change the *f* or *fe* to *v* and add *es*

Writing Points Rubrics for *Using Language Well, Book 1*

The following rubrics are designed to guide your student in implementing observations from transcription and dictation passages into his written narrations, one point at a time.

This Teacher Guide will outline when to introduce each rubric in sequence. Give your student a copy of the Student Version (the one without the points columns) and briefly go over the added expectation. (The Teacher Version has each new expectation highlighted in **boldface text**.) Explain that from now on he will be responsible to implement that guideline in his written narrations.

Use the Teacher Version of the rubrics to help you evaluate his written compositions (narrations). Do not show the scores to your student; the awarded points are merely to help you track your student's progress over time. Hold him responsible only for the items listed on the rubric in hand; more guidelines will follow, one at a time, in subsequent rubrics (throughout all of the *Using Language Well* books).

Whenever you find an instance that the student missed a guideline in his written narration, do not mark it directly; simply write in the margin the two-letter abbreviation of the section on the rubric that contains the missed guideline. For example, if the student did not capitalize the first letter of a sentence, write "MC" in the margin near the line the non-capitalized sentence is on. Show the paper to your student and explain that the "MC" stands for *Mechanics: Capitalization*. He needs to look in that section of his rubric, determine which guideline he violated, and edit his writing to adhere to the missed guideline. If he narrates some events out of sequence, write "SL" in the margin near that place in his composition, indicating the *Style: Logical* section of the rubric; if he leaves out a key point, write "CT" to refer to the *Content: Thorough* section. In each instance, simply place your two-letter marker near the part to which it pertains and direct your student to the section of the rubric that contains the missed guideline. Let him refer to his list of reminders, determine what needs to be changed, and edit his writing accordingly, himself. This process will encourage him to critique his own work and not depend on you to tell him what to do.

Teaching Tip: Though the lessons in this Teacher Guide will suggest when to introduce each new guideline and rubric, do not move on until your student has demonstrated consistent improvement on the current guideline. It is more important that your student make progress at his own pace than that he keep up with the suggestions in this book. Your goal is for him to grow as a writer, not to become overwhelmed and give up. Introduce each new rubric as he is ready and disregard the pace set in these plans if needed.

1.1 Rubric for Beginning Writers

Content: to communicate knowledge	
Thorough	I have included the key points.
Accurate	The facts I have stated are correct and demonstrate that I have read and understand the material.
Original	I have used primarily my own words.
Mechanics: to communicate clearly	
Capitalization	I have capitalized the first letter of each sentence.
Spelling	I have spelled the words correctly.
Style: to communicate effectively	
Assignment	I have written in a narrative style, as assigned.
Logical	My narrative relates the story's events in the correct sequence.
Cohesive	I have focused on the topic and not wandered away from it.

1.1 Rubric for Beginning Writers, Teacher Version

- Record your student's scores here so you can track his progress and know when he is ready to move on to the next rubric.
- Write the date in a scoring column and the matching date at the top of your student's paper for an easy reference tag.
- Start with 10 points in each category. Subtract 1 point for each infraction. Stop at 0.
- Store the dated narrations in a notebook for future reference.

	Possible Points	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Content: to communicate knowledge						
Thorough	Key points are included.	10				
Accurate	Facts are correct. Demonstrates that the student has read and understands the material.	10				
Original	Student uses primarily his own words.	10				
Mechanics: to communicate clearly						
Capitalization	At the beginning of each sentence.	10				
Spelling	Subtract 1 point for each misspelled word. Stop at 0 points awarded.	10				
Style: to communicate effectively						
Assignment	Written in narrative style, as assigned.	10				
Logical	Narrative relates the story's events in the correct sequence.	10				
Cohesive	Focused on the topic. Does not wander.	10				
TOTAL Awarded Points		80				

A Complete List of English Points Presented in *Using Language Well, Book 1*

- Abbreviations
- Antonyms
- Common names vs. proper names
- Complex alphabetizing (same beginning letters)
- Composition: narrative and expository
- Compound words
- Contractions
- Dictation
- Dictionary skills
- Homonyms
- Identifying paragraphs
- Identifying stanzas in poems
- Irregular plural nouns
- Plural possessives
- Plurals formed by adding *s*
- Plurals formed by adding *es*
- Plurals formed by changing the *f* or *fe* to *v* and adding *es*
- Plurals formed by changing the *y* to *i* and adding *es*
- Possessives
- Prefixes
- Root words
- Sentences
- Simple alphabetizing (by first letter)
- Spelling
- Subject and predicate (complete)
- Suffixes
- Syllables
- Synonyms
- *They're* vs. *Their* vs. *There*
- *Too* vs. *To*
- Transcription
- Types of sentences: question, command, statement, exclamation
- Using *A* and *An*

Capitalization

- Capitalize the first word of a sentence
- Capitalize the first word in each line of poetry
- Capitalize the days of the week
- Capitalize names or words that refer to God
- Capitalize the months of the year
- Capitalize the word *I* when it refers to a person
- Capitalize proper names
- Capitalize titles
- Capitalize initials
- Do not capitalize compass directions
- Do not capitalize seasons

Punctuation

- Use a colon to separate chapter and verse in a Bible reference
- Use a colon when you want to explain or clarify further
- Use a comma between items in a series
- Use a comma to separate the day and year in a date
- Use a comma after a direct address
- Use a period at the end of a statement sentence
- Use a period at the end of an abbreviation
- Use a period at the end of an initial
- Use a question mark at the end of a question sentence
- Use a semicolon to connect two complete thoughts that are closely related
- Use an apostrophe to show possession with 's
- Use an apostrophe to take the place of missing letters in a contraction
- Use an exclamation point to denote intense emotion
- Use quotation marks to enclose the words that were said
- Use quotation marks to denote words and their definitions
- Use single quotation marks to set off quoted material inside double quotation marks
- Dialogue punctuation if the dialogue tag is after the quoted material
- Dialogue punctuation if the dialogue tag is before the quoted material
- Dialogue punctuation if the dialogue tag splits one sentence into parts
- Dialogue punctuation if the dialogue tag is between two sentences