

Edward L. Thorndike Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78042879>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012141>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012
Revised 2023 August

Collection Summary

Title: Edward L. Thorndike Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1900-1938

ID No.: MSS42879

Creator: Thorndike, Edward L. (Edward Lee), 1874-1949

Extent: 100 items

Extent: 7 containers

Extent: 2.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78042879>

Summary: Educator. Articles, lectures, speeches, and research notes relating to Thorndike's studies in educational psychology.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Lorge, Irving, 1905-1961. Semantic count of English words. 1938.

Thorndike, Edward L. (Edward Lee), 1874-1949.

Thorndike, Edward L. (Edward Lee), 1874-1949. Semantic count of English words. 1938.

Subjects

Educational psychology.

English language--Semantics.

English language--Word frequency.

Titles

Edward Lee Thorndike papers

Occupations

Educators.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Edward L. Thorndike, educator, were given to the Library of Congress by his daughter, Frances Cope (Mrs. Thomas Cope), in 1966 and 1968.

Processing History

The papers of Edward L. Thorndike were arranged and described in 1970. The finding aid was revised in 2012 by Marilyn Weissman. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Edward L. Thorndike is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Edward L. Thorndike are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Edward L. Thorndike Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1874, Aug. 31	Born, Williamsburg, Mass.
1895	A.B., Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.
1897	M.A., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1898	Ph.D., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1899-1940	Professor of educational psychology, Institute of Educational Research, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1900	Married Elizabeth Moulton
1912	President, American Psychological Association
circa 1917-1918	Helped develop Alpha-Beta tests for the U.S. Army during World War I
1922-1940	Director, Division of Psychology, Institute of Educational Research, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1934	Elected president, American Association for the Advancement of Science
1937	Became president of Psychometric Society
1949, Aug. 9	Died, Montrose, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Edward Lee Thorndike (1874-1949) span the years 1900-1938. The collection includes a word list entitled *A Semantic Count of English Words*, a collaborative work with main author Irving Lorge, as well as articles, lectures, speeches, some research notes, and a few items of correspondence.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is organized by type of material and by title or topic therein.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Book, <i>A Semantic Count of English Words</i> , main author, Irving Lorge (missing the letters F, J, and K), 1938
BOX 2	Correspondence, 1907, 1909, 1938
BOX 2	Article file
BOX 2	"Association of Certain Combinations of Sounds with Pleasant and Unpleasant Meanings"
BOX 2	"The Careers of Scholarly Men in America"
BOX 2	"Descartes' Psychology"
BOX 2	"Education for Initiative and Originality"
BOX 2	"Estimates of the Relative Frequencies of Different Meanings of English Words"
BOX 2	"An Experimental Market"
BOX 2	"Failure of the Ministry to Attract Men of Scholarship"
BOX 2	"The Feminization of American Education"
BOX 2	"Good and Bad Laws"
BOX 2	"Influence of the Study of Latin upon English vocabulary"
BOX 2	"Measuring Reading Availability" "Morality"
BOX 2	"Psychological Notes on the Motives for Thrift"
BOX 2	"Psychology: What Is It?"
BOX 2	"The Relative Frequency of English Noun and Verb Forms"
BOX 2	"Schoolteacher in the War"
BOX 2	"Scientific Personnel Work in the Army"
BOX 2	"The Teaching Staff of Secondary Schools in the United States"
BOX 2	"University and the War"
BOX 2	"Value of Research to Education"
BOX 2	"Vocational Guidance"
BOX 3	Research notes
BOX 3	Children's books
BOX 3	An early experiment with tests for the selection of clerical workers
BOX 3	Eisner on German laws
BOX 3	Elimination, causes of
BOX 3	Of Elizabeth Gilboy
BOX 3	Engineering school students
BOX 3	Eugenics
BOX 3	Human reasoning about quantities and numbers
BOX 3	Intelligence
BOX 3	Income and fecundity in German cities
BOX 3	Language monograph
BOX 3	Machine guidance clerical test
BOX 3	Needed research in education
BOX 3	New methods in arithmetic
BOX 3	Notes for <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> articles
BOX 3	Practice series notebooks
BOX 4	Relative frequency of English words and verb forms

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 4	Slang
BOX 4	Word lists
BOX 4	Word Study
BOX 4	Unidentified (5 folders)
BOX 5	Lecture and speech file
BOX 5	"The Careers of College Women"
BOX 5	"Factor Analysis"
BOX 5	"How Fast Can You Read?"
BOX 5	"Increasing Knowledge about Economics and Business"
BOX 5	"Individual Differences"
BOX 5	"Measurement of Intelligence"
BOX 5	"Mental Fatigue"
BOX 5	"Mental Work and Fatigue"
BOX 5	"Need for Educational Guidance"
BOX 5	"The New Associationism in Psychology"
BOX 5	"Plan for the Study of the Human Individual"
BOX 5	"The Psychology of Alcohol"
BOX 5	"The Psychology of Reading"
BOX 5	"The Psychology of the Self-Educated Man"
BOX 5	"Reading as Reasoning"
BOX 6	"Recent Developments in Educational Measurements"
BOX 6	"Scales for Measurements in Education"
BOX 6	"School Dictionary"
BOX 6	"Science Teaching"
BOX 6	"The Standardization of Instruments of Instruction"
BOX 6	"The Teacher and the Great War"
BOX 6	"The Unconscious"
BOX 6	Unidentified
BOX 6	Reprints and clippings
BOX 6	"Diversity of Vocabulary and the Harmonic Series Law of Word-Frequency Distribution"
BOX 6	"Education for Initiative and Originality"
BOX 6	"Eugenics"
BOX 6	"The Failure of College Women to Marry"
BOX 6	"Fatigue in a Complex Function"
BOX 6	"Mental Fatigue"
BOX 6	"The Original Nature of Man"
BOX 6	"The Permanence of Interests and Their Relation to Abilities"
BOX 6	"The psychology of Thinking in the Case of Reading"
BOX 6	"The Resemblance of Young Twins in Handwriting"
BOX 6	"The Use of Original Tendencies"
BOX 6	"Valuations of Certain Pains, Deprivations, and Frustrations"
BOX 7	Printed matter
BOX 7	Workbooks (4 vols.)