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# NILA BANTON SMITH

1889-1976  
A Bibliography



Leonard Courtney, FSC  
Compiler

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1889-1976  
A Bibliography

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# Introduction

Although Nila Banton Smith's publishing career began comparatively late in life, her productivity continued for more than fifty years. Her writings encompassed virtually every aspect of reading. This considerable body of work may be subdivided arbitrarily into major publications designed to improve the profession of teaching reading, here termed Professional Publications; Instructional Materials; and more timely, topical writings, here listed as Journal/Book Articles.

*American Reading Instruction* was the major achievement of her career. However, for sheer volume, her instructional publications dominate her work. From 1922 until 1976, the span of her professional writing career, Smith regularly published in all the major educational journals.

A lifelong teacher and administrator, Nila Banton Smith never lost touch with the classroom, the student, or the teacher. Everything she wrote was preeminently practical. She was most confident and authoritative when discussing classroom problems, particularly when related to basal reading instruction.

Critical evaluation of her writing remains to be done. This bibliography might serve as a source and inspiration for continuing research.

BLC





Nila Banton Smith



# Chronology

Nila Banton Smith was born in Altoona, Michigan, on October 10, 1889, the only child of George Addison and Ella Banton Smith.

Graduated from Carson City High School	1908
Completed Mount Pleasant Normal School (Central Michigan University)	1911
Completed life certification program, Ypsilanti Normal School (Eastern Michigan University)	1913
Teacher, Central Lake and Ypsilanti, Michigan	1911-1919
Teacher, Supervisor of Reading, Supervisor of Research, Detroit Public Schools	1919-1926
"Critic Teacher," Detroit Teachers College (Wayne State University)	
Ph.B., Phi Beta Kappa, University of Chicago	1926
Fulltime graduate student, Columbia University	1927-1931
Master's, Columbia University	1929
Greensboro (North Carolina) College, Chair of Education	1931-1933
Doctorate, Columbia University; Dissertation titled <i>An Historical Analysis of American Reading Instruction</i>	1934
Whittier College (California), Dean of Education	1933-1937
Published <i>American Reading Instruction</i> , 1934	
Leave of absence, first semester, 1936-1937	
Indiana University (Bloomington), Associate Professor of Education	1937-1939
University of Southern California, Professor of Education	1939-1947



New York City, writing sabbatical	1947-1948
New York University, Professor of Education, Director of Reading Institute	1949-1963
President, International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction (ICIRI)	1949-1950
President, International Reading Association	1963-1964
IRA Citation of Merit	1964
Glassboro (New Jersey) State College, Distinguished Professor	1963-1968
San Fernando Valley (California) State College, Distinguished Service Professor	1968-1969
University of Southern California, Distinguished Professor	1969-1976

Nila Banton Smith died in Los Angeles on December 13, 1976.



## Professional Publications

*An Historical Analysis of American Reading Instruction.* Doctoral thesis, Columbia University, 1934. New York: Silver Burdett, 1934.

*American Reading Instruction: Its Development and Its Significance in Gaining a Perspective on Current Practices in Reading.* New York: Silver Burdett, 1934.

*Adventures in Teacher Education.* San Jose, CA: Stewart, 1937.

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*Future Needs in the Teaching of Reading: Basic Skill Patterns, Kindergarten through Twelve.* Toronto: Copp Clark, 1966.

*Some Approaches to Reading*, with Ruth Strickland. Washington, DC: Association for Childhood Education International, 1969.

*Reading Methods and Teacher Improvement* (Ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1971.

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*Reading Instruction for Today's Children*, second edition, with H. Alan Robinson. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1981.



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- One Hundred Ways of Teaching Silent Reading for All Grades*. New York: World Book, 1925. (Reprint, Darby Books, 1981.)
- Reading Activities in the Primary Grades*, with Grace Storm. Boston: Ginn, 1930.
- The Unit-Activity Reading Series* (Ed.). New York: Silver Burdett, 1935-1956. (Preprimer through sixth grade, teachers' manuals, revisions.)
- Learning to Read: A Basic Reading Program* (Ed.). New York: Silver Burdett, 1945-1947. (Preprimer through third grade, teachers' manuals, revisions.)
- Read Faster and Get More from Your Reading*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1958. (Reprint, *Speed Reading Made Easy*, Warner Books, 1983.)
- Be a Better Reader*, fifth edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1958-1984. (Grades 4-12 with annotated teachers' additions. Numerous revisions.)
- Graded Selections for Informal Reading Diagnosis, Grades 1-3*, with instructional staff of Reading Institute, New York University. New York: New York University Press, 1959.
- Bobbs-Merrill Best of Children's Literature* (Ed.). Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1960-1968. (Six volumes with teachers' manuals, revisions.)
- Graded Selections for Informal Reading Diagnosis, Grades 4-6*, with Anna Harris. New York: New York University Press, 1963.
- Faster Reading Made Easy*. New York: Popular Library, 1963.



## Journal/Book Articles

- "Experiment to Determine the Effectiveness of the Detroit Standard Practice Tests in Reading." *Detroit Journal of Education*, June 1922, 48-52. Also published in *Journal of Educational Research*, 7, March 1923.
- "Investigation of the Uses of Arithmetic in the Out-of-School Life of First Grade Children." *Elementary School Journal*, 24, April 1924, 621-626.
- "An Investigation of Children's Interests in Different Types of Stories." *Detroit Educational Bulletin*, 9, February 1926, 3-4.
- "Practical Measures for Unifying Kindergarten and First Grade." *Childhood Education*, 3, May 1926, 409-417.
- "The Present Situation in Phonics." *Elementary English Review*, November-December 1927, 278-281.
- "Matching Ability As a Factor in First Grade Reading." *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Educational Conference*, Research Bulletin No. 12. Detroit, MI: Board of Education, 1927, 58-62. Also published in *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 19, November 1928, 560-571.
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- "Recognizing Reading Readiness at All Levels." *Reading Teacher*, 5, November 1951, 7-10.
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- "What Have We Accomplished in Reading? A Review of the Past Fifty Years." *Elementary English*, 38, March 1961, 141-150.
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- "Should We Encourage More Creativity in Developing Measuring Devices for Reading Research?" In J. Allen Figurel (Ed.), *Changing Concepts of Reading Instruction*. New York: Scholastic Magazines, 1961, 159-163.
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- "Development of Taste in Literature, I." *Elementary English*, 39, November 1962, 702-709, 718.
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- "Today's Issues in Perspective." *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Reading Institute*. Philadelphia: Temple University, 1966.
- "Reading: Seventy-Five Years of Progress. In H. Alan Robinson (Ed.), *Reading: Seventy-Five Years of Progress. Supplementary Educational Monographs*, No. 96. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, 3-12.
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- Good Practice*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1967, 75-82.
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- "President's Report: A Report of the Long Range Planning Committee," with H. Alan Robinson. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 3, 1968, 421-423.
- "Prospectives in Reading Instruction: Past Perfect? Future Tense?" *Elementary English*, 45, April 1968, 440-445.
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- "The Future of Current Issues in Reading." In Nila Banton Smith (Ed.), *Current Issues in Reading*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1969, 464-487.
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- "Research in Reading: Trends and Implications." *Elementary English*, 48, March 1971, 320-327.
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- "Strategies for Improving the Teaching of Decoding Skills." In Nila Banton Smith (Ed.), *Reading Methods and Teacher Improvement*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1971, 1-19.
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- "Reading Instruction: Present and Future Needs and Trends." Paper presented at the International Reading Association Convention, New Orleans, 1974.
- "Child Nutrition in a Changing World." *Childhood Education*, 51, January 1975, 142-145.
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Note: There is no assurance that this listing of Dr. Smith's writings is complete; undoubtedly some publications, including reprints, have escaped our investigation.