CHAPTER 10

Bernice Elizabeth Leary (1890–1973): Reading Specialist, Curriculum Researcher, and Anthologist of Children's Literature

By Karla J. Möller

Historical Research Process

WHEN I WAS asked to choose an author from the list of early reading pioneers, I first undertook an Internet search of the reading researchers on the list so I could make an informed choice. Although most of their names were familiar to me, one stood out because (a) I did not know anything about her

Shaping the Reading Field: The Impact of Early Reading Pioneers, Scientific Research, and Progressive Ideas, edited by Susan E. Israel and E. Jennifer Monaghan.
Photo: Courtesy of Iowa Women's Archives at the Univeristy of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

work, and, more important, (b) I discovered an article she had authored titled "Milestones in Children's Books" (Leary, 1970). I assumed that Bernice Elizabeth Leary's focal work, like mine, was in children's literature. She seemed a perfect match.

As I delved more deeply into the archival research, I learned that my children's literature colleagues had also never heard of Leary and that the "Milestones" paper I had found so quickly online turned out to be one of only two of her works that focused specifically on children's literature (the other being Leary, 1943). The only other easily available information was a two-page document on the Iowa Women's Archives website (Rymph, 1992) that contains basic facts about Leary's life. While my subsequent searches through my university's library system and online used-book sellers located over 100 titles attributed to Leary, her line of work became more confusing until I contacted the archival reference librarians at the University of Iowa. With their gracious help, I learned that, although collecting exemplars of children's literature was Leary's passion, her main work was as an editor of children's literature anthologies, as a curriculum development specialist for Madison (Wisconsin) Public Schools, and as an education specialist for the United States Department of the Interior and Office of Education. With further research I learned that Leary's dissertation had become one of the seminal books in the field of reading—*What Makes a Book Readable* (Gray & Leary, 1935)—coauthored by her doctoral advisor William Scott Gray (see chapter 13, this volume). I became fascinated with Leary's multifaceted career.

Unfortunately, materials that would have provided significant documentation of Leary's personal life are limited. There is no record of a diary or journal, and many documents that might have provided insights into her busy life are not available today. Written communications with her publisher were lost while Leary was still alive, as she lamented in a letter later in her life: "Even some of the delightful correspondence I had with dealers is no longer in my possession. The thought makes me sad" (Leary to Newsome, 1972). By the late 1970s, all her close relatives—her parents, sisters, brother-in-law, and lone niece—were dead. Leary never married nor had children. Only in the Main Library Special Collections Department and Iowa Women's Archives—both at the University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City—have been preserved a few letters, some papers, and Leary's complete personal children's literature collection, along with her reminiscences on her family (1958) and later life (1964).

Personal and Professional Life

Born in 1890, Bernice (pronounced /Bər'-nĭs/) Elizabeth Leary challenged traditional gender roles by pursuing a professional career that offered her leadership opportunities in the fields of education and book publishing for over 40 years. Throughout her career Leary was a teacher, an adjunct professor in reading education, an author, a reading curriculum specialist, a literature anthology editor, and a world traveler—at a time when few such opportunities were afforded to women.

Although no biographies of this remarkable woman have been published previously and most of her personal and professional correspondence was not saved, her record as an educator in a range of settings and as a book editor, author, and anthologist leaves a fairly clear paper trail. Leary formed friendships around the world through her work on curricula and texts for both English-language learners and native English speakers, traveling and working in Thailand, the Philippines, India, and post–World War II Germany. Fortunately, in 1968, Leary offered the few letters and papers she had saved, as well as her personal children's literature collection (over 525 books—some 200 early children's books, 150 contemporary children's books, 175 foreign children's books, and over a dozen children's magazines), to the University of Iowa School of Library Science. Most of these materials, along with the acquisition correspondence between Leary and children's literature professor Louane L. Newsome, were sent to the rare books section of the University of Iowa Main Library Special Collections Department, where they are still housed. In 1973, a letter from attorneys for Leary's executor noted a bequest of 500–600 additional books, but requested that the books be left with Leary's sister Iva (then 90 years old) until her death so as not to disrupt Iva's daily routine (Tomasek to Dunlap, 1973). After the Iowa Women's Archives was created as a separate section of the Special Collections Department, the few letters, cards, and additional personal papers that remained were sent there in 1985 and were catalogued by 1992 into the Bernice E. Leary Papers collection (Rymph, 1992).

The openness with which Leary faced life and work shines through her letters, as does her adventurous spirit, love of learning, energy for teaching, compassion, and generosity. It is in one of these letters, in particular, mailed from the Philippines in 1964 when Leary was almost 74, that her approach to living is clearly shown. Leary describes not only the work she was doing

with local educators (extending her visit and working through the weekend to complete the project), but also demonstrates her zest for life and her strong relationships with her students:

> There have been Phil. students who used to be in Madison to be entertained by, too. Yesterday one...[took] me to church at 9:30, to...dinner at noon, on a drive and to her home in the PM...(She's the one to whom I gave my electric sewing machine I'd never used, and furnished with winter clothes, blankets, etc. in a cold Madison winter.) It was good to see her in a new role as a college teacher...(She <u>always</u> had Sat. night supper at my Apt. with other foreign students who...sat on the floor and watched T.V.) I'll see more of them in Bangkok.... Friday and Saturday I spent in Baguio in the northern mountains.... It's...5 or 6 hours from here by trains...and then by car up a tortuous, hair-raising, narrow road, blocked here and there by landslides that we crept over and around, to some 4000 ft. elevation. I was relieved to be safely back...tho I'd loved going back to Baguio, wandering thru the markets, etc. (Leary to Helen, 1964, pp. 1–3)

Born in Ionia, Iowa, USA, on August 19, 1890, to James and Josephine Bell Leary, Leary was the youngest of three sisters, following five years after Iva (born in 1884) and almost three years after Leila May (born in 1887). Known as "Bernie" to her family, Leary grew up content and sheltered and later acknowledged that she and her sisters "owe [our parents] a debt of gratitude for a protected childhood and a parental devotion that few can equal" (Leary, 1958, p. 1). Her father, a first-generation Irish American, and her mother, a fourth-generation English American, moved to Riceville, Iowa, USA, in 1901, where Bernice entered the sixth grade. Her devotion to her parents was clear:

> My father, a tall young man with already graying hair at twenty-two, was one of nine children...My mother...was...an interesting contrast to my father, though she, too was one of a large family. Six years older than he, tiny—about 4 feet 10 inches in height and seldom, if ever, 100 pounds in weight, she was a power in our home—stern where my father was gay, prudent where he was extravagant. A rock-bound Protestant from a Presbyterian father and a Shaker mother, she held her children to the same firm faith. (1958, p. 1)

Leary describes Riceville life as "singularly satisfying" (1958, p. 2). She graduated from Riceville High and taught alongside her sister Leila at

Riceville Elementary until Leila's marriage and subsequent end to her teaching career in 1918. Leary (1958) writes of her early career:

> Teaching seemed an inevitable career...Perhaps because our Irish grandmother had been a teacher. Perhaps because it was the genteel thing to do in our growing up days. At any rate, it was the vocation that all of us pursued without question. (p. 2)

In 1919, Leary left her teaching post to study at Winona State Teachers College in Minnesota. When her mother died suddenly in 1923 after falling down the stairs, Leary returned home and to her teaching position.

Leary left Riceville a final time in 1926, enrolling at the University of Chicago and earning her Bachelor's of Philosophy (PhB) in 1930, her MA in 1931, and finally her PhD in Education on August 25, 1933. To support her studies, she had worked as an elementary school principal in LaGrange, Illinois, USA, and as a university research assistant. She had also received scholarships (Leary, 1964, pp. 1–2). Her dissertation, supervised by William Scott Gray, was titled *Elements of Reading Materials Contributing to Difficulties in Comprehension on the Part of Adults* (1933). When it was published as a book with Gray as first author, under the title *What Makes a Book Readable* (Gray & Leary, 1935), it was hailed as a seminal work and received an award from the National Research Association "for being the most outstanding research of the preceding five years" (Leary, 1964, p. 2). After this success, "opportunities for writing, editing, and publishing came fast," Leary added (p. 2).

Leary's career after her doctorate was rich and varied. She worked first in Washington, DC, as a curriculum specialist for the United States Office of Education. During the 1930s, she was active in survey research for United States Department of the Interior and the Office of Education, reviewing curricula (Leary, 1937) and documenting the organization and function of school systems, state departments of education, and institutions of higher education (Leary, 1938). Following these jobs, she worked on a survey of schools in New York state (Gray & Leary, 1939), "where for months I visited and evaluated schools in country, town, and city" (1964, p. 1).

From 1942 through 1955, "when she was not involved in government service" (Noble, n.d., p. 1), Leary was the Director of Curriculum for Madison Public Schools in Wisconsin (see Leary, 1943/1949a, 1947/1951).

She continued to publish on reading education, often in books associated with Gray. She wrote a chapter on difficulties in reading material for a book edited by Gray (Leary, 1940), an article on the role of literature in school instruction (Leary, 1943), and a couple of chapters for the prestigious yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education—one on problems associated with content (Leary, 1948) and the other on interpreting the reading program to the public (Leary, 1949b). The 1940s also saw Leary's first foray into children's literature in a coauthored book titled *Growing With Books: A Reading Guide* (Leary & Smith, 1947).

Professional recognition also came to Leary in the area of writing instruction. The National Conference on Research in English (NCRE; now NCRE/NCRLL) was an organization founded in 1932 by members of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in an effort to focus attention more squarely on English teaching at the elementary level, which some NCTE members felt had been neglected (Petty, 1983, pp. 5–6). While leading scholars in reading and English education were forming NCRE, Leary had been completing her doctorate with Gray. Gray, one of the few elementary-focused members of NCTE at the time, was heavily involved in NCRE. By the mid-1940s, Leary was already the author of many publications on elementary education. She was elected president of NCRE for the year 1947–1948, and at the NCRE's 1953 meeting she was a keynote speaker, presenting a paper entitled "Literature for Children in a Troubled World" (Petty, 1983, p. 49).

During this same period, Leary's interest in children's literature evolved into another facet of her career. As early as 1936 Leary had been a junior editor for Harcourt Brace's three-volume Discovery series for students in the middle and high school grades. By 1941, she was the sole editor of the seventh anthology of *Best Short Stories for Boys and Girls* for ages 10 and up (a Row, Peterson and Company imprint) that contains selections "from current juvenile magazines over a twelve-month period" (Row, Peterson, 1941, p. 3). Four years later, Leary became chairwoman of the editorial board for Cadmus Books, a division of the publishing house of E.M. Hale. During her tenure there, Leary coedited a 10-volume literature anthology series titled Through Golden Windows that was designed for use in U.S. public schools and covered five subject areas each for grades K through 4 and grades 5 through 8. While still chairing the editorial board for the E.M. Hale division, she also served as a junior editor for the 1950/1955 three-volume Row,

Peterson Reading-Literature series for high school students and as senior editor on six of the seven-volume J.B. Lippincott Time to Read series (1953–1957) geared toward elementary students.

During the 1940s and early 1950s, Leary traveled to Europe and Asia to work on "curriculum and textbook changes" (Leary, 1958, p. 3) that "led to the publication of much-needed books in the Far East...[and] promoted greater understanding of other people" (p. 3). Leary wrote in 1958, "Five assignments abroad—to Germany in 1947 and again in 1948, to Thailand, in 1954–5 and again in 1956–7 with shorter periods to India and Vietnam, and to the Philippines in 1955–6, have been extremely gratifying" (1958, p. 3). As family friend Mary Noble (n.d.) wrote in a brief overview of Leary's life, Leary spent the two postwar years in Germany "helping prepare new textbooks and setting up writers' workshops for children's books at the request of the military government" (p. 1). Leary (1964) emphasized the need for German writers and publishers after the war to have support preparing textbooks "for a new and more democratic school system" (p. 2). She extended her work preparing textbooks for schools during other foreign appointments for the U.S. State Department that required the long trips to, for example, Thailand (five months for one trip; a year for another), the Philippines (eight months), and India (five months).

Well after her formal retirement as a curriculum specialist for the Madison, Wisconsin, USA, school system in 1955, Leary was in demand for books on reading and writing instruction. In the early 1960s she continued writing curricular materials, including the New Reading Skilltext series, along with its workbooks and teacher's edition (Johnson, Young, Leary, & Myers, 1961; Young, Leary, & Myers, 1961a, 1961b, 1961c, 1961d, 1961e). From 1960 through 1964, she worked as an advisor for content on the English for Today series (Slager, 1962–1967)—a set of six books "for the teaching of English to junior and senior high school students in foreign countries" that was "sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) for the United States Information Agency" (Leary, 1964, p. 2). After completing this project, Leary wrote that now her "retirement will really begin in earnest" (p. 2). However, through 1967 she remained chairman of the editorial board for Cadmus Books of E.M. Hale (p. 2).

Throughout these years of publishing and editing, Leary remained a teacher. She wrote,

> All along the way there was the teaching of summer school in Emory University, the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the University of Wisconsin. Thousands of elementary school teachers received their training—good or bad, from me. I hope some of it was good. (1964, p. 1)

She also taught short courses and workshops in universities across the United States.

In 1961, Leary moved from Madison to live with her sister Iva, also a retired schoolteacher, in Webster City, Iowa, USA. Living a comfortable life "with church and civic responsibilities, gardening, and reading" (Leary, 1964, p. 3), Leary continued to travel in the United States, the Philippines, Thailand, and Hong Kong. She retired with Iva to the Mayflower Retirement Home in Grinnell, Iowa, USA, in late 1967 after a "nearly fatal automobile accident" (Wood, 1973, p. 3).

Family friend and librarian emeritus Mary Noble described Leary as a person of "great dignity" who also "didn't lack a sense of humor" (personal communication, July 29, 2005). Leary was tall and slender, always a "gracious hostess" whose "meals were very well organized and...more formal than [Noble] was used to. She had been accustomed to entertaining more extensively." Noble continued:

> She had definite ideas about appropriate dress for certain occasions and often had clothes tailored for herself from fabrics she'd acquired in Thailand or wherever. She came to Iowa City once for a Friends of the Libraries annual dinner...and she arrived in what was to me a very attractive dress or suit which I assumed she'd wear to the dinner that evening, but she changed into something else for that and was mildly appalled to think I expected her to wear the traveling outfit. (personal communication, July, 29, 2005)

Despite this formality, Leary was not constrained by traditional notions of womanhood. She did not marry in a time when most women were expected to do so. And, as Noble shared with me,

> A Bernice memory...came back to me over the weekend when I happened to see a bit of the 60's movie "Cleopatra" on...Saturday. This must have first come out when Bernice was living in Grinnell, and she invited my parents and me to visit her and drive to Des Moines to see it. What a big

> deal! I guess it had been pretty controversial in some ways, with some female nudity or near nudity. Anyway, after we'd seen the film, I remember being surprised that she commented that she didn't find the nudity offensive—she thought the bodies were beautiful. Good for her! (personal communication, October 3, 2005)

Leary died on March 20, 1973, and was buried in Riverside Cemetery, where her mother and father, and later Iva, were also interred.

Philosophical Beliefs and Guiding Principles

Leary's philosophy of reading is evident in her children's anthologies, her curriculum work, and her professional research. In the foreword to *Adventure Bound* (Persing & Leary, 1936a), the first book in the Discovery series, Leary and her coeditor Chester Persing mention that they hope their work will "answer the pressing need for special materials for pupils who, because of immaturity of interest or ability, react negatively to traditional literary content" (p. v). They continue with the hope that "the book will furnish remedial reading for the retarded pupil—the one who had grown book-shy from long struggling with traditional subject matter" (p. v). Although these volumes were written for middle class, European American children, the notion that reading materials should be geared toward children at all and the focus on reading with ease for understanding, pleasure, and participation in discussion were positive steps in reading instruction.

Adventure Bound (Persing & Leary, 1936b), the first book in the Discovery series, includes selections that were "chosen by the pupils themselves over a period of four years when their reading contacts were not restricted to the purely literary and when hundreds of books were always available in the classrooms for sampling or intensive reading" (p. v). The editors wrote: "*Adventure Bound* is an obvious departure from the usual literature text" in that it "provides no experience with literary masterpieces" but instead "builds upon the needs of pupils and upon those reading experiences which they have found interesting and desirable" (p. v). The book "is not concerned with the experiences which teachers have *thought* all pupils should enjoy" (p. vi; italics in original), but on texts recommended by readers for their peers.

Leary's later curriculum work—specifically monographs on developing word meaning (Leary, 1943/1949a) and a sight word vocabulary (Leary, 1942; Leary, 1947/1951)—built on her belief that teaching and learning

reading should to be fun and engaging. Leary (1943/1949a) advocated learning experiences that allowed children to "taste, touch, hear, see, or manipulate the things for which a word stands" to give "the word reality and meaning." (p. 1). Emphasis was on "first-hand experiences, observations, and discussions" (p. 1). Use of visual aids, read-alouds, and projects centered on children's interests were encouraged. Leary's curriculum provided for "wide reading in library or classroom without subject-matter limitations" as well as "wide reading around a single center of interest" (p. 3). She highlighted promoting interest in words by encouraging students to use context clues to determine meaning and, in reverse, to illustrate multiple meanings of individual words by contextualizing the words in writing.

Vocabulary development was also furthered in Leary's work by studying the history of words; exploring figurative language; focusing on substituting more specific words for more general ones and less frequently used words for overused ones; and teaching word meanings directly by classifying, categorizing, chunking, and focusing on compounds, prefixes, suffixes, and analogies as well as synonyms and antonyms. Leary's group wrote, "Developing the habit of searching the context clues for meaning should begin early and continue throughout school, from sentence context to the context of a whole book or of a writer's total writings" (1943/1949a, p. 8).

In her later monograph on "sight vocabulary," Leary (1947/1951) emphasizes games that aid children's remembering of words already introduced through engaging literature in ways that would "stimulate most children to maximum effort" (p. 2). Leary supported first and foremost engaging children in reading and learning words through reading and being read to from "gay, lively, appealing stories" (p. 2). Although she believed that many words can and will be learned in the context of the stories, she acknowledged that children needed additional practice to develop fluency. In addition, she realized that quite a few words in English "have meanings that are vague and elusive" (p. 2), such as *who*, *of*, and others. These, as well as more concrete nouns, could be better remembered by children, Leary argued, if, after reading the words in a meaningful context, children played a range of games focused on vocabulary practice.

Leary (1943/1949a) clearly understood that multiple factors affect how a child creates meaning with text. She discussed factors such as

> the child himself, his home and environment, his experiences in life, his intelligence, his ability to organize experiences and give them meaning,

> the kind of instruction he has had in school, the breadth of his reading, and a number of personal and school factors. (p. 1)

This work connected to her philosophy that learning should take children's interests into account to enhance motivation. It reinforced her commitment to supporting reading development by offering engaging structures for meaningful practice: "If the material is interesting and meaningful, or if the purpose for reading is important and vital, the likelihood of forgetting [vocabulary] is decreased" (1947/1951, p. 2).

Leary's philosophy overall was that (European American) children's interests and experiences must be included as an important part of the curriculum; that learning is best done in a fun and engaging atmosphere; that reading outside the "traditional" literary canon is potentially beneficial, especially for students who struggle with learning for a variety of reasons; and that material is most easily processed and learned when it is introduced within interesting reading materials and also practiced through language games and activities.

Although Leary did not author a monograph on word analysis, this omission was due to the fact that the committee had previously addressed word analysis prior to Leary's tenure in Madison. Rather than focusing on a single method—the look-and-say method, for example—Leary advocated a holistic method for teaching reading with extensive reading aloud, individual reading in a range of books, building meaning through context, practicing vocabulary with games and drills with words drawn from texts read, and using visual aids and children's experiences to enhance comprehension (including creating experiences with the children through hands-on projects and field trips). She advocated studying words with children, using categorization, dictionary use, analogy, direct teaching of meaning, attention to compound words and derivatives, and other methods. She seemed to be advocating true whole language teaching—teaching reading as a meaningful, complex system for creating and conferring ideas, some pieces of which can be absorbed through extensive reading and listening to texts and other parts that must at times be taught explicitly.

Contributions to the Field of Reading

Although Leary accomplished much in her life, this celebration of her contributions looks at three intertwined areas: her work as (1) an academic, (2) a

curriculum specialist, and (3) a book editor. The connecting thread was her interest in engaged and meaningful learning. As a book editor she sought to produce reading materials for children that spoke to their needs, interests, and abilities so reading instruction would be both enjoyable and a learning experience. Her goal was very modern: to create lifelong, self-motivated readers.

Gray and Leary (1935) claimed that "objective evidence" had shown "the chief handicap to increasing the reading efficiency of new literates lies more often in a lack of readable materials than in serious disability of the learners" (p. 5). In *What Makes a Book Readable: With Special Reference to Adults of Limited Reading Ability—An Initial Study*, they report results of a survey asking reading professionals what they believed were the main factors significantly affecting a book's readability for an adult audience. Their question required a follow-up: "For whom?" (p. 5). The respondents agreed that the most important factor was a reader's high level of interest in the book's content. Next came the style of the text, then the format, and last the organization. The authors made it clear that the study focused only on one aspect of readability—text difficulty—and within that aspect only on "difficulty when reading is done for the purposes of obtaining a general impression of what is read" (p. 9). For this particular study, Gray and Leary noted that "classification of materials as 'easy' or 'difficult' for readers of limited ability is based solely on structural elements without regard for such qualifying factors as interestingness, familiarity of content, or purpose of reading" (p. 9). This study was an initial approach. Gray and Leary warned, "Whatever interpretations are made of the findings presented throughout the report must be in keeping with the qualifications already stated. Interpretations beyond these limitations are wholly unjustified" (p. 10).

Leary's later work focused on providing readers with material that was readable with regard to the vocabulary and structures used while also addressing key areas she did not investigate in her dissertation: interestingness, familiarity of content, and purpose. In an effort to motivate students to become readers, Leary eschewed a reliance on literary classics in favor of materials more popular from a child's perspective. Her emphasis was also on having an abundance of reading materials to promote fluent reading habits.

This emphasis had already appeared in a chapter on reading instruction in elementary schools, in which Gray and Leary (1939) had reported on a massive survey undertaken of schools in New York State. They argued that

the school was responsible for providing "purposeful, challenging, and enriching" (p. 282) reading activities. The authors continue,

> [The school] should promote the development of habits of intelligent, fluent reading, including critical thinking and evaluation; it should develop power in applying what is read, thus contributing to intelligent self-direction and social reconstruction; it should broaden and deepen interests that will contribute to the wholesome use of leisure time and to enriched and stable personalities; and it should provide a broad common culture and an appreciation of finer elements in American life. (pp. 282–283)

For the survey, data were obtained on the reading achievement of sixth graders from elementary schools in 50 communities in New York State (Gray & Leary, 1939). More "intensive" (p. 283) follow-up surveys were undertaken of schools in seven communities. Gray and Leary examined New York State curricular materials; organization and methods of instruction and teacher preparation; use of materials and community resources such as library, radio, and so on; and observation of 310 classrooms in 72 schools whose "achievement in reading as revealed by the initial survey presented characteristics which merited special consideration" (p. 284).

Gray and Leary (1939) outlined five levels of elementary school reading instruction, ranging from Level I, representing "a narrow, formal type of instruction which...gave major emphasis to mastery of the mechanics of reading rather than to the broader ends which reading may serve in a child's life" (p. 285), to Level V, which provided the most integration with students' interests and cross-curricular reading. Level II "provided an enriched program of purposeful activities during the reading period in which the methods and materials used are adapted to the carrying needs and interests of pupils" (p. 285). Level III built on the previous level by adding wide reading across all school-based activities. Programs at Level IV added to these elements reading materials across subjects and activities that were organized "in terms of units, problems or centers of interest" (p. 286).

Most schools evaluated in this survey of 310 New York State elementary school classrooms were found to be at Level I (61.9%), while 19% were at Level II. Some schools deviated from the structure by incorporating advanced activities from, for example, Level IV, while neglecting rather than building on the formal guidance in reading that typified Level I. In their discussion of these results, Gray and Leary describe connections between instructional

context, quality, and achievement and focused on issues that still needed to be addressed:

> Significant relationships were found between the level of achievement of the pupils and such factors as the breadth and vitality of the reading program, the quality of the teaching, the appropriateness and adequacy of the reading materials available, and the efficiency of the supervision.... *The fact that the achievements of the pupils varied largely with conditions that are subject to the control of the administrators, supervisors and teachers should prove a stimulus to constructive endeavor in every classroom....* The vast majority of the schools have advanced somewhat beyond the traditional type of teaching which prevailed three decades ago and are making praiseworthy effort to improve the breadth and vitality of their teaching.... Unfortunately, the chief purpose of far too many of the reading activities that are provided is to improve the mastery of basic reading habits rather than to broaden the interests of pupils, extend their experiences, and stimulate good thinking. (Gray & Leary, 1939, pp. 287–288; emphasis added)

The authors discovered that a significant amount of what they labeled "reading deficiency" was related to "conditions which could be overcome or eliminated" (Gray & Leary, 1939, p. 288). Although they noted that some "deficiencies" were "due largely to conditions over which the schools could exercise no direct control, such as the home background and environment of the pupils, and limited learning capacity" (p. 287), they made it clear that this was the smaller factor and that the onus of teaching children to their capacity fell on the shoulders of the schools, which in turn needed more support from the state in the form of class reading materials, "stimulating and informative" professional development bulletins (p. 289), and a central professional education center that provided support for teachers as well as curricular and practical guidance from the normal schools in the state.

Avoiding a blame-the-home and a blame-the-teacher approach, Gray and Leary (1939) found classrooms with insufficient numbers of books, deficient housing facilities, and inadequate schooling opportunities for preschool 5-year-olds. They described the failure of some schools to become informed about students' needs and to modify instruction based on objective assessments. Another issue was "the more or less universal tendency to teach all pupils of a class as a unit, thus failing to adapt instruction to individual needs with resulting increase in the number of cases of reading deficiency" (p. 295). The coauthors offered suggestions for improvement, including broadening

readers' visions, promoting "social enlightenment" (p. 296), and encouraging leisure-time reading. They expanded views of reading instruction to include wide reading and reading across the content areas—teaching basic instructional aspects along with guidance in reading literature, reading in other subject areas, and free-choice recreational reading. They called for teaching reading through high school and offering enriching activities and material tied to students' interests and needs, taught through differentiated instruction.

Another key suggestion Gray and Leary (1939) made was to move from a reading readiness model to one that works to prepare students: "The problem cannot be solved merely by postponing the time for beginning reading. The solution lies...in the provisions of training and experiences which prepare pupils to engage successfully in simple reading activities" (pp. 298–299). Although Gray and Leary argue for a wide array of reading materials in classrooms to create "more opportunities for extending the experience of pupils and for broadening their interests" (p. 300), there is no mention of diversifying the reading selections with respect to their portrayal of gender, race, or ethnicity.

In her 1949 chapter on "Interpreting the Reading Program to the Public," Leary discusses the need to create communication between schools and the communities they serve. Although a valuable goal, Leary's suggestions reveal a condescending attitude toward parents in poor districts and a blindness to the needs of families living in poverty. For example, instead of focusing on economic factors that might preclude parents being able to afford warm clothing and medical care, Leary seems to assume that parents living in poverty did not love and care for their children and suggested parents might

> need to be shown how important it is to take their children off the streets, to provide them with better food, clothing, and sleeping conditions, to give them needed medical care, love, and protection, and to insure them security and happiness. (1949b, p. 327)

Despite her biased approach, Leary's main focus was on educators translating the educational process so parents were included. She wanted families to be welcomed in the schools and classrooms, both through formal invitations and informal visits. In this chapter Leary also advocates the "three-track plan" (p. 331) that was begun in Madison schools around 1945. Although this system is still used in many schools today, it has been restructured by many

others because of the obvious drawbacks of labeling children's reading ability as high, medium, or low so early in life. At the time, however, it was a move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching reading.

Concerned with readability in her doctoral dissertation, Leary seemed afterward to focus much more intensely on engagement and motivation as central to efforts to teaching reading in schools. A critic of books published for children, Leary understood the appeal of the chapbooks of the early 18th century that although "filled with doggerel verse, and condensed crude, and vulgar stories,...were loved by children and eagerly bought for 'a penny plain, tup pence colored'" (1970, p. 4). In contrast, she branded the "reactionary publications of the Puritans" such as James Janeway's *Token for Children* (1676) as "cheap broadsides and fear-burdened" texts (p. 4) and wrote of *The New England Primer* (Ford, 1897/1962; Harris, pre-1690) of the late 1600s: "Through its miserable little pages the Puritans aimed to promote goodness on earth and joy in the Hereafter as well as to teach children to read" (p. 4). Leary preferred adventure stories that would capture children's imagination. This approach is clearly evident in her coedited literature anthologies.

Leary's (1955a) goal for her Reading-Literature series—and for her other anthologies—was for children to "gain some understandings of human nature by observing the ways of human beings through the eyes of observant authors" (p. 6). It was her hope that a young reader would see him- or herself as a "representative of humanity, trying to achieve better attitudes and higher ideals. Through materials that he can read and understand and enjoy, he will also acquire an at-homeness with books that will promote personal confidence and security" (p. 6). Leary created this series to be used as a tool that "stimulates rather than weakens creative teachers, that suggests rather than restricts, that is neither too much nor too little, that respects rather than disregards the ingenuity and sincerity of teachers" (p. 6). In her foreword to *Your World* (Reading-Literature series, book one; Leary, 1955a), Leary argues that the way to engage children with reading is to offer them material full of interesting experiences, variety, fun and laughter, and the security of friends (pp. 5–6). With regard to the final point, Leary writes,

> Does a child cherish inferiorities? Does he feel that life is not treating him right? Has he weak and tender spots that make him feel resentful? If so, he must come to see that there are real ways of solving problems, without bullet-proof body, anti-gravitational control, or super-dynamic energy. (p. 6)

In her foreword to the second Reading-Literature anthology (Eberhart, Swearingen, & Leary, 1955b), Leary (1955b) emphasizes the question, "What is America—for me?" (p. 6). She wanted children to "ask themselves this question, not with any superior, chauvinistic intent, but with an earnest desire to find an honest, inspiring answer" (p. 6). She felt the texts included would "help them to raise such a question and to arrive at a living, human way of thinking and feeling about America" (p. 6). Likewise in the third anthology (Eberhart, Swearingen, & Leary, 1955c), Leary (1955c) mentions her hope that "by reading about other people" a child would "grow in his understanding of them, their pattern of living, problems, and values. With this understanding will come sensitivity, sympathy, insight, tolerance, and the ability and willingness 'to put himself in the other person's shoes'" (p. 5).

Leary's interest in connecting to children's lives and focusing on engagement and readability were and are key issues in reading education, but missing was any demonstration of an understanding of diversity, even as applicable at the time. Her living, human approach was focused on whiteness and Christianity as the norms for goodness. In the second volume of the Discovery Series (Miller & Leary, 1936), a story is introduced as follows: "In your church or Sunday school you have been told of the men and women who have gone as missionaries to distant lands to carry the comforts of religion to heathen or backward peoples" (p. 167). In addition, Miller and Leary's (1936) selection of literature featuring heroes and adventurers in world travels and scientific study focuses exclusively on the achievements of white males. By the following year, in volume three of the Discovery Series, Persing and Leary (1937) did include both women and men who became champions in their time. (Ten of 24 chapters were by women about women.) However, none of the stories featured African Americans, and the one on Eddie Cantor depicted him in blackface on the first page. No later editions of this volume were published. In the third Reading-Literature anthology (Eberhart et al., 1955c), black African characters are subordinated to a white male child: "But I was white and must be obeyed, even though they knew I didn't know what I was doing" (p. 609). The interests addressed in the stories and the human relations furthered were those of white students exclusively and of males predominantly.

Selections for the anthologies emphasized the inevitability of progress within a white Eurocentric notion of superiority over native peoples, who were presented as savages who attacked unsuspecting whites and inevitably

had to perish in the face of white progress and civilization (e.g., Eberhart, Swearingen, & Leary, 1955a, pp. 343–346). In another story, to demonstrate that a Native American male child had earned a white male child's acceptance, the former was stripped of his Native identity and labeled white: "He was white. It didn't matter how many Indian ancestors Monty had had, he was white clear through" (Eberheart et al., 1955b, p. 487).

Although forward-thinking in many ways, Leary failed to speak to the issues of race and racism prevalent in some selections she chose, taking instead a Eurocentric approach toward literature selection that Larrick (1965) describes in her groundbreaking article "The All-White World of Children's Books" (see also Larrick, 1995). Larrick's paper—inspired by a 5-year-old African American girl who asked the author why the children in the books she read were all white—remains a classic in the field. If Leary had extended her focus on understanding and personal growth to issues of racism, classism, and sexism, her work would fit well with many educators' understandings today. By 1955, when many of Leary's books had been published, the need for books to include positive images of African Americans was already clear. There had been loud calls for decades by African American and European American scholars for issues of diversity to be addressed directly in literature studies. However, in Leary's coedited anthologies, the maintenance of cultural and racist biases of the time was unquestioned.

This lack of focus on the social, historical, cultural, and political ramifications of reading and response in Leary's coedited work stands in contrast to writings of other scholars of the day (e.g., Rollins, 1941; Rosenblatt, 1938, 1946). Leary's contemporary Charlemae Hill Rollins, an African American library administrator and educator who lived from 1897 to 1979, attended and taught at Howard University and worked at the Chicago Public Library starting in 1926 (African American Registry, 2005). In charge of the children's department from 1932 through 1963, Rollins was in Chicago while Leary was enrolled at the University of Chicago. Rollins was an advocate for books featuring African Americans in nonracist ways and urged that they be published and used in schools. Rollins' edited book, *We Build Together: A Reader's Guide to Negro Life and Literature for Elementary and High School Use* (1941), offers an "unprecedented bibliography of acceptable depictions of minorities in children's books" (Chicago Public Library Digital Collections, n.d.).

Another Leary contemporary was European American English professor Louise Rosenblatt, a scholar who completed her doctoral work in 1931 and

addressed issues of diversity directly in her 1946 issue of *English Education* that focused on the theme of intercultural education. Although most interculturalists promoted assimilation and did not go beyond a superficial implementation of multiculturalism in schools, a variety of authors wrote about the role that the "teaching of language and literature" could play in "nourishing the democratic appreciation of each human being as an individual, unobscured by any group label—racial, religious, national, social, or economic—which may be applied to him" (Rosenblatt, 1946, p. 285). In many respects interculturalists reinforced stereotypes, depicting people of color condescendingly and equating the prejudice they faced with that which white European voluntary immigrants faced. Despite their limitations, however, most interculturalists were aware of larger institutional forces and emphasized community outreach, honest portrayals of weaknesses in U.S. democracy, and the use of children's books to explore prejudice.

Despite emphasizing the use of literature that connected to students' lives and interests and engaged them in reflecting on their world, Leary did not refer to this then-current work, nor did she include any African American characters in the Time to Read series she edited (first published in 1953; see "For Further Reading" at the end of this chapter) until the revised 1968 edition. In Leary, Reichert, and Reely's 1968 edition of Finding Favorites, a few minor characters, such as a postal worker in one scene in a story and a child in the background on a carousel in another story, were drawn as African Americans, rather than as the European Americans of two earlier editions. In only one story, the last in the book, were the main characters changed from a middle class European American nuclear family to an African American one. This was one year after Rollins' book (1967) had been released in its third edition by the NCTE.

Lessons for the Future

Leary's lasting legacy could lie in our acknowledging how long the field has known, and not fully acted on, her understanding of why children struggle with reading: "The very existence of reading deficiencies is evidence of discord between reader and book—of failure to get the right book into the hands of the right pupil" (Leary, 1940, p. 273). She explored through her research and attempted to provide through her editorship reading material that might "attack the problem of fitting reading materials to the needs and abilities of each student" (p. 274).

Another part of Leary's legacy is that she was always questioning things, even aspects of conventional wisdom. For example, she suggested drawing on the judgment of experts to match books and readers but noted that even when experienced teachers are able to determine the relative difficulty of the material, "judging the suitability of particular materials for particular students" is quite another [matter]" (1940, p. 276). Leary understood that often books chosen as suitable by adults are not the books children would choose to read. Leary suggested drawing on quantitative measures of written text difficulty (often referred to as "readability formulas") but at the same time challenged the measures as by definition limited and at best partial solutions:

> The very nature of the method prevents [such measures] from going far enough. They are necessarily limited to those elements which lend themselves to quantitative analysis and statistical treatment, to the exclusion of other qualitative, intangible, and more or less subjective elements which seem inextricably involved in difficulty. To this extent, they fail to give a true picture of difficulty. Perhaps because they are quantitative and exact, these findings, more than any others, are open to misinterpretation. (p. 277)

Leary noted that often relationships of multiple variables are misunderstood, and even by using regression analysis there is no absolute to be discovered.

> Frequently, the index of difficulty obtained through the use of this device is interpreted as absolute, without regard to the individual reader whose interest and zeal in reading a given selection may compensate for inadequacies in his reading ability and carry him over some, if not all, of the difficulties inherent in the material. (Leary, 1940, p. 277)

Leary's main concern was to find ways to make "reading function more effectively...through a more harmonious relationship between readers and books" (1940, p. 300). This implies that teachers must "know student-readers—their reading abilities and habits, their reading interests and preferences, their previous reading experiences, their special interests, activities, and hobbies, their prejudices, opinions, and preconceptions, everything about them that may influence comprehension in reading" (p. 300). Knowing this, Leary suggested, a teacher could then explore the difficulty level of the book with a particular reader in mind.

If following Leary's guidelines in the "most logical order" (p. 300), a teacher would first "observe the format" of a text before considering "the type of subject matter and literary form" and evaluating the book's content for "the quality of ideas presented" (p. 301). The teacher would then "judge the degree of compactness of the ideas and the facts presented" (p. 301), determining whether there was too much information contained in any particular passage for the reader to process with ease. The teacher would also need to "observe the author's choice of words" (p. 301), assessing the linguistic complexity of the material at the word and sentence levels as well as its balance of literal and inferential or figurative meaning. The book's level of difficulty could be in part determined by "sampling the book, analyzing the passages for significant elements, and applying a formula of prediction" (p. 302) from among the early readability formulas available. Finally, and key to understanding the complex nature of the idea of "difficulty" in written text, a teacher must "synthesize the facts pertaining to the difficulty of the book under consideration and relate them to what is known about the reader in order to determine whether the book is suited to his interests, abilities, and purpose" (p. 302).

With regard to reading selections and talk around text, both Leary and Rosenblatt would be in tune with many literacy scholars today. In *Literature as Exploration*, first published in 1938, Rosenblatt (1938/1995) discusses the need to move away from a traditional, one-right-answer-provided-by-the-expert focus on literature and literary response. Leary repeatedly (in her forewords to her coedited Discovery Series and Reading-Literature anthologies) argued that children should have opportunities to read what interests them, even if it is not what adults would prefer children read. Leary's chosen reading material might qualify for what Rosenblatt calls "popular 'trashy' works" (1978/1994, p. 143):

> Despite the differences between the readings of great or technically complex works and the readings of popular "trashy" works, they share some common attributes: the aesthetic stance, the living-through, under guidance of the text, of feelings, ideas, actions, conflicts, and resolutions beyond the scope of the reader's own world. (p. 143)

In addition, although stuck in a prejudiced mindset with regard to race, gender, and class, Leary was forward-thinking in her emphasis on what Rosenblatt later called the transactional nature of response (Rosenblatt,

1938/1995, 1978/1994). Leary (1955c) emphasized repeatedly that readers must integrate what they read into their "own pattern of living" for reading to be a complete process (p. 6). This idea called for teachers to create spaces for students to "use what is read in floor talks, panel discussions, debates, conversations, themes, plays, and other forms of communication" to guide themselves to "more mature thinking and acting" (p. 6).

Interestingly, although many issues related to difficulties students face with regard to reading and studying literature are discussed in Leary's (1948) contribution to the National Society for the Study of Education's yearbook and in the chapter from which it was adapted that was coauthored with Gray (Leary & Gray, 1940), Rosenblatt's 1938 groundbreaking work on this topic—*Literature as Exploration*—is not cited in either paper.

After researching Leary's life and work, my clear impression of her is that she was a highly intelligent, hard-working, and generous woman who had a wonderful sense of adventure. She was a person who took responsibility for and reaped the rewards of making her own choices and following her own interests, while also maintaining close family ties and supporting students and teachers, whether they were in her classes, her community, or abroad. Family friend and librarian emeritus Mary Noble agrees (personal communication, July 29, 2005). Noble also emphasized Leary's sense of humor and proper etiquette, noting that Leary "was a close family friend during [her] later years and a kind of mentor to me as I was going through college and starting my job here in the Libraries" (personal communication, December 16, 2004).

Leary's blend of formality and adventure in her personal life may be used as a metaphor for her professional work as well. In many ways Leary clearly recognized dilemmas of her time, being adventurous in her recommendations to increase interest and motivation in children as readers by moving from traditional offerings to those selected by children for children. Her main concerns in her coedited anthologies were about interest level and readability, broadly defined: "The traditional literary selections offer three handicaps for a pupil who has reading difficulties: they often do not arouse his interest; they may be too mature in context or subtle in expressions; and they may be structurally too difficult" (Persing & Leary, 1936a, p. vi). Despite this forward-thinking approach to her understanding of readability as more than a quantitative measurement of words, Leary remained more constrained by the traditional race and class privileges afforded her throughout her career when

it came to addressing specifically the racial injustices and sociopolitical dimensions of learning that were being discussed in her day and before her time.

Leary (1940) asked wonderful questions that would still today push the field of reading education further. (Below I have combined some of hers with my own.) These questions are relevant as increasing numbers of books today are leveled—marked by colored dots or numbers so making decisions about what to read is removed from the reader's sphere. Perhaps within our zeal over the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, we are leaving past wisdom behind and disconnecting readers from personally and socially meaningful reasons to read. By overprogramming reading choices for children, we may be leaving their interests behind—as well as their rights and responsibilities as readers to know how to select books based on their interests, needs, and abilities, and how to extend those interests with material that may challenge their thinking.

Reflection Questions

1. "Do materials present the same degree of difficulty when read for different purposes" (Leary, 1940, p. 303), and how might this have an impact on students who are reading what may be familiar content but in the context of a high-stakes test?
2. "How is the absolute difficulty of a selection affected by a reader's impression that the selection is easy or hard" (Leary, 1940, p. 302), and "how may students be guided in choosing for themselves materials of appropriate degrees of usefulness?" (p. 303).
3. "To what extent is a reader's interest in a selection related to his [or her] ability to read the selection satisfactorily" (Leary, 1940, p. 303), and what is the precise nature of this relation?
4. How can both interest and ability be stimulated by texts that may be unfamiliar to a child of a particular cultural group in such a way that embracing the world's diversity through texts becomes increasingly possible in public school settings?
5. In what ways can we all as educators be aided in seeing and addressing our biases (with regard to race, class, gender, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.) when they are by definition often transparent to us in their "normalcy" within our worldview?

REFERENCES

African American Registry. (2005). *Windy City educator, Charlemae Rollins*. Retrieved May 7, 2005, from http://www.aaregistry.com/african_american_history/935/Windy_city_ educator_Charlemae_Rollins

Chicago Public Library Digital Collections. (n.d.). *Charlemae Hill Rollins, 1950s*. Retrieved September 13, 2005, from http://www.chipublib.org/digital/chiren/instrollins.html

Eberhart, W., Swearingen, I.D., & Leary, B.E. (1955a). *Your world*. [Reading-Literature series, book one] (Rev. ed.). Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Eberhart, W., Swearingen, I.D., & Leary, B.E. (1955b). *Your country* [Reading-Literature series, book two] (Rev. ed.). Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Eberhart, W., Swearingen, I.D., & Leary, B.E. (1955c). *Your life* [Reading-Literature series, book three] (Rev. ed.). Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Ford, P.L. (Ed.) (1962). *The New England primer: A history of its origin and development with a reprint of the unique copy of the earliest known edition and many facsimile illustrations and reproductions*. New York: Teachers College. (Original work published 1897)

Gray, W.S., & Leary, B.E. (1935). *What makes a book readable: With special reference to adults of limited reading ability—An initial study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gray, W.S., & Leary, B.E. (1939). Reading instruction in elementary schools. In L.J. Brueckner *The changing elementary school* (pp. 282–305). New York: Inor.

Harris, B. (Comp.). (pre-1690). *The New-England primer* (20th-century reprint facsimile edition). Boston: Ginn.

Janeway, J. (1676). *A token for children: Being an exact account of the conversion, holy and exemplary lives, and joyful deaths of several young children*. London: Dorman Newman. (Reproduction of original in the Bodleian Library)

Johnson, E.M., Young, W.E., Leary, B.E., & Myers, E.A. (1961). *Pat, the pilot* [New Reading Skilltext series]. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Larrick, N. (1965, September 11). The all-white world of children's books. *Saturday Review, 48*, 63–65, 84–85.

Larrick, N. (1995). The all-white world of children's books. In O. Osa (Ed.), *The all-white world of children's books and African American children's literature* (pp. 1–12). Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Leary, B.E. (1933). *Elements of reading materials contributing to difficulties in comprehension on the part of adults*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, Chicago.

Leary, B.E. (1937). *A survey of courses of study and other curriculum materials published since 1934* (Bulletin 1937, No.13 of the United States Department of the Interior and Office of Education). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Leary, B.E. (1938). *Curriculum laboratories and divisions: Their organization and functions in state departments of education, city schools systems, and institutions of higher education* (Bulletin 1938, No. 7 of the United States Department of the Interior and Office of Education). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Leary, B.E. (1940). Difficulties in reading material. In W.S. Gray (Ed.), *Reading in general education: An exploratory study* (pp. 272–306). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Leary, B.E. (Ed.). (1941). *Best short stories for boys and girls: Seventh collection*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Leary, B.E. (1942). *Reading monograph, no. 30*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Leary, B.E. (1943). Literature in school instruction. *Review of Educational Research, 13*, 88–101.

Leary, B.E. (1948). Meeting specific reading problems in the content fields. In N.B. Henry (Ed.), *Forty-seventh yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education: Part II—Reading in the high school and college* (pp. 136–179). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Leary, B.E. (Ed.). (1949a). *Developing word meaning: A report by the Vocabulary Committee of the Madison Public Schools, 1942–1943*. Madison, WI: Curriculum Department of the Madison Public Schools. (Original work published 1943)
Leary, B.E. (1949b). Interpreting the reading program to the public. In N.B. Henry (Ed.), *Forty-eighth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education: Part II—Reading in the elementary school* (pp. 317–343). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Leary, B.E. (1951). *Word-games for developing a sight vocabulary*. Madison, WI: Curriculum Department of the Madison Public Schools. (Original work published 1947)
Leary, B.E. (1953, November). *Literature for children in a troubled world*. Paper presented as keynote speaker at the meeting of the National Conference on Research in English, Atlantic City, New Jersey.
Leary, B.E. (1955a). Foreword. In W. Eberhart, I.D. Swearingen, & B.E. Leary, *Your world* [Reading-Literature series, book one] (Rev. ed., pp. 5–6). Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.
Leary, B.E. (1955b). Foreword. In W. Eberhart, I.D. Swearingen, & B.E. Leary, *Your country* [Reading-Literature series, book two] (Rev. ed., pp. 5–6). Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.
Leary, B.E. (1955c). Foreword. In W. Eberhart, I.D. Swearingen, & B.E. Leary, *Your life* [Reading-Literature series, book three] (Rev. ed., pp. 5–6). Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.
Leary, B.E., (1958). *The history of the Leary family*. Unpublished personal essay in Bernice Leary Papers, 1878–1977, Box 1, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Leary, B.E. (1964). *Since 1924: A resume of the last forty years*. Unpublished personal essay in Bernice Leary Papers, 1878–1977, Box 1, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Leary, B.E. (1970). Milestones in children's books. *Books at Iowa, 12*. Retrieved September 6, 2004, from http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/spec-coll/Bai/leary.htm
Leary, B.E. & Gray, W.S. (1940). Reading problems in content fields. In W.S. Gray (Ed.), *Reading in general education: An exploratory study* (pp. 113–185). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
Leary, B.E. to Helen. (1964, February 24). In Bernice E. Leary Papers, 1878–1977, Box 1, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Leary, B.E., to L.L. Newsome. (1972, March 25). In Bernice E. Leary, 1891–1973: To/from Mrs. Louane Leech Newsome. Ten Letters: 8 Jan 1968–25 March 1972, Main Library Special Collections Department, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Leary, B.E., & Smith., D.V. (Eds.). (1947). *Growing with books: A reading guide* (rev. ed.). Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.
Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1953). *Finding favorites*. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.
Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M. K. (Eds.). (1968). *Finding favorites* (Rev. ed.). Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott.
Miller, H.A., & Leary, B.E. (Eds.). (1936). *New horizons* [Discovery series, book two]. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).
Noble, M.E. (n.d.). *The Leary family in Riceville*. Unpublished essay in Bernice E. Leary Papers, 1878–1977, Box 1, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Persing, C.L., & Leary, B.E. (1936a). A preface for teachers. In C.L. Persing & B.E. Leary (Eds.), *Adventure bound* [Discovery series, book one] (pp. v–vii). New York: Harcourt, Brace.
Persing, C.L., & Leary, B.E. (Eds.). (1936b). *Adventure bound* [Discovery series, book one]. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
Persing, C.L., & Leary, B.E. (Eds.). (1937). *Champions* [Discovery series, book three]. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Petty, W.T. (1983). *A history of the National Conference on Research in English*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English. Retrieved December 10, 2004, from http://education.nyu.edu/teachlearn/research/ncrll/History/Petty.pdf

Rollins, C.H. (Ed.). (1941). *We build together: A reader's guide to Negro life and literature for elementary and high school use*. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English.

Rollins, C.H. (Ed.). (1967). *We build together: A reader's guide to Negro life and literature for elementary and high school use* (3rd ed.). Champaign, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Rosenblatt, L.M. (1938). *Literature as exploration*. New York: D. Appleton-Century.

Rosenblatt, L.M. (1946). Foreword. *The English Journal*, *35*, 285–287.

Rosenblatt, L.M. (1994). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1978)

Rosenblatt, L.M. (1995). *Literature as exploration* (5th ed.). New York: Modern Language Association of America. (Original work published 1938)

Row, Peterson. (1941). Preface (by the publishers). In B.E. Leary (Ed.), *Best short stories for boys and girls: Seventh collection* (p. 3). Evanston, IL: Author.

Rymph, C.E. (1992). *Finding aid to Bernice Leary Papers, 1878–1977, at Iowa Women's Archives*. Retrieved December 10, 2004, from http://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu/iwa/findingaids/html/LearyBernice.htm

Slager, W.R. (Ed.). (1962–1967). *English for today series: Six volumes and teacher texts produced for the National Council of Teachers of English*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tomasek, F.W., to L.W. Dunlap. (1973, October 12). In University of Iowa Dunlap Gift Series, Main Library Special Collections Department, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

Wood, A.A. (April 1973). *The Mayflower log*, *17*, 1–4. In Bernice E. Leary Papers, 1878–1977, Box 1, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

Young, W.E., Leary, B.E., & Myers, E.A. (1961a). *Nicky* [New Reading Skilltext series, teacher's edition]. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Young, W., Leary, B.E., & Myers, E.A. (1961b). *Nicky* [New Reading Skilltext series workbook]. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Young, W.E., Leary, B.E., & Myers, E.A. (1961c). *Nicky* [New Reading Skilltext series]. Columbus, OH: Charles Merrill.

Young, W.E., Leary, B.E., & Myers, E.A. (1961d). *Uncle Funny Bunny* [New Reading Skilltext series workbook]. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Young, W.E., Leary, B.E., & Myers, E.A. (1961e). *Uncle Funny Bunny* [New Reading Skilltext series, teacher's edition]. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

FOR FURTHER READING

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958a). *Adventures here and there* [Through Golden Windows series, book four]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958b). *American backgrounds*. [Through Golden Windows series, book eight]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958c). *Children everywhere*. [Through Golden Windows series, book six]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958d). *Fun and fantasy* [Through Golden Windows series, book two]. Eau Claire: WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958e). *Good times together: Stories and rhymes of fun and laughter* [Through Golden Windows series, book five]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958f). *Man and his world* [Through Golden Windows series, book ten]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958g). *Mostly magic: Best-loved fairy tales, folk tales and rhymes* [Through Golden Windows series, book one]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958h). *Stories of early America: From before the white man came to Daniel Boone, Buffalo Bill and the winning of the West* [Through Golden Windows series, book seven]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958i). *Through golden windows: Ten-volume set*. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958j). *Wide wonderful world: The wonders of nature* [Through Golden Windows series, book nine]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Beust, N., Fenner, P., Leary, B.E., Reely, M.K., & Smith, D.V. (Eds.). (1958k). *Wonderful things happen: Adventures everywhere* [Through Golden Windows series, book three]. Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale.

Eberhart, W., Swearingen, I.D., & Leary, B.E. (1950a). *Your country* [Reading-Literature series, book two]. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Eberhart, W., Swearingen, I.D., & Leary, B.E. (1950b). *Your life* [Reading-Literature series, book three]. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Eberhart, W., Swearingen, I.D., & Leary, B.E. (1950c). *Your world* [Reading-Literature series, book one]. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Leary, B.E. (Ed.). (1941). *Best short stories for boys and girls: Seventh collection*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1953). *Finding favorites*. [Time to Read series, book four]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1953). *Making friends*. [Time to Read series, book two]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1953). *Skipping along*. [Time to Read series, book three]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1954). *Helping others*. [Time to Read series, book five]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Leary, B.E., Reichert E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1954). *Sailing ahead*. [Time to Read series, book six]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Leary, B.E., Reichert, E.C., & Reely, M.K. (Eds.). (1954). *Moving forward*. [Time to Read series, book seven]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Miller, H.A., & Leary, B.E. (Eds.). (1936). *New horizons* [Discovery series, book two]. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Persing, C.L., & Leary, B.E. (Eds.). (1936). *Adventure bound* [Discovery series, book one]. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Persing, C.L., & Leary, B.E. (Eds.). (1937). *Champions* [Discovery series, book three]. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Reichert, E.C., & Bracken, D.K. (1957). *Bucky's friends*. [Time to Read series, book one]. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott.

Shaping the Reading Field

The Impact of Early Reading Pioneers, Scientific Research, and Progressive Ideas

Susan E. Israel **E. Jennifer Monaghan**
EDITORS

INTERNATIONAL
Reading Association
800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139
Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA
www.reading.org