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# Guide to the Leonard Bloomfield and Clarence L. Barnhart Collection 1930-2010



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## **Descriptive Summary**

<b>Identifier</b>	ICU.SPCL.BLOOMBARN
<b>Title</b>	Bloomfield, Leonard, and Clarence L. Barnhart. Collection
<b>Date</b>	1930-2010
<b>Size</b>	2.75 linear feet (6 boxes)
<b>Repository</b>	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
<b>Abstract</b>	This collection includes documents relating to the research and publication of Leonard Bloomfield and Clarence L. Barnhart's linguistic approach to teaching children to read titled Let's Read – a Linguistic Approach. Further, it also includes documents related to the publication of the revised edition. The collection contains materials dating from the 1930s to 2010, with the majority of materials originating from the 1950s -1960s.

## **Information on Use**

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Citation**

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Bloomfield, Leonard, and Clarence L. Barnhart. Collection, [Box#, Folder#], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

### **Historical Note**

This collection includes materials relating to Leonard Bloomfield and Clarence L. Barnhart's linguistic program to teach children to read. Leonard Bloomfield was an accomplished American linguist who taught at the University of Chicago for many years. Clarence L. Barnhart was a lexicographer who studied at the University of Chicago under Bloomfield's direction. In a meeting between the two men, Barnhart remarked that he was going to begin teaching his son to read. Bloomfield responded with an outline of a program detailing the way he thought children should be taught to read. While the program was unsuccessful for Barnhart's son, the two men began working together and further developing the reading program, Let's Read – a Linguistic Approach.

Bloomfield and Barnhart's program attempts to develop the "alphabetic habit". By placing similar sounding words together throughout the books, the reader is introduced to patterns within vocabulary. Let's Read was published in 1961, after the death of Bloomfield in 1949. The work is composed of Bloomfield's original ideas and illustrations. After Bloomfield's death, Barnhart continued to work on the program along with the help of his sons. Following its original publication, other members of the Barnhart family continued to work on the program, resulting in a revised edition in 1993 and a second edition in 2010.

## **Scope Note**

This collection includes materials relating to the original publication of Let's Read, as well as its revised edition. The collection is divided into two series: Let's Read Manuscript and Related Documents, and Let's Read Revised Edition Documents. The materials date from 1933-2010, with the majority of materials dating from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s. The collection provides insight into the research behind the program, the individuals involved in the process, as well as the challenges of publication and research.

Series I, Let's Read Manuscript and Related Documents, contains Bloomfield's original primer with illustrations establishing the program, manuscript pages of all six books, a folder of illustrations used within the program, copies of other introductory readers, research materials, marketing brochures and newsletters, program responses from various individuals, as well as correspondence both to and from Barnhart.

Series II, Let's Read Revised Edition Documents, contains manuscript pages, edited pages, academic articles relating the story of the Bloomfield program, as well as copies of the 1991 revised edition of Let's Read as well as an unopened, still wrapped copy of the 2010 publication of Let's Read Second Edition.

## **Subject Headings**

- Bloomfield, Leonard, 1887-1949
- Barnhart, Clarence L. (Clarence Lewis), 1900-1993
- 
- Reading -- Phonetic method
- Readers (Primary)
- 

## **INVENTORY**

### **Series I: Let's Read Manuscript and Related Documents**

This series contains all documents relating to the original publication and research of Bloomfield and Barnhart's Let's Read – a Linguistic Approach. It contains some of Bloomfield's original materials, such as articles describing his research, as well as his original primer of Let's Read with

illustrations. In addition the series includes documents detailing Barnhart's continued struggle with the research and publication of the program. These documents include correspondence with various individuals who became involved in the program, as well as other academics, educators, teachers, tutors, and parents who provided responses concerning the program. Further, the series includes documents relating to research concerning the program, both from Barnhart and other academics, particularly those from Wayne State University and Syracuse. In addition the collection include materials relating to the marketing and promotion of the program, in the form of brochures and newsletters.

**Box 1**

**Folder 1**

Bloomfield articles, 1933-1949

**Box 1**

**Folder 2**

Bloomfield's Primer with pictures, undated.

**Box 1**

**Folder 3**

Children's Reader by Bloomfield Intro and Book 1 Manuscript, 1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 4**

Children's Reader by Bloomfield Book 2 and 3 Manuscript, 1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 5**

Children's Reader by Bloomfield Book 4 Manuscript, 1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Children's Reader by Bloomfield Book 5 Manuscript, 1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**

Children's Reader by Bloomfield Book 6 Manuscript, 1939

**Box 1**

**Folder 8**

Illustrations, undated.

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

Reading is Fun, 1947

**Box 2**

**Folder 2**

Reading is Fun, 1949

**Box 2**

**Folder 3**

Reading Mechanics Book 5 Part 1, 1952

**Box 2**

**Folder 4**

Reading Mechanics Book 5 Part 2, 1952

**Box 2**

**Folder 5**

Reading Mechanics Book 6 Part 1, 1952

**Box 2**

**Folder 6**

Elementary English, 1962

**Box 2**

**Folder 7**

A Beginning Reader, 1964

- We Can Read Books 1-6 Part 1, 1945

**Box 3**

**Folder 1**

Program Responses from Educators and Administrators, 1960-1964

**Box 3**

**Folder 2**

Program Responses from Teachers, 1962-1965

**Box 3**

**Folder 3**

Program Responses from Tutors, Persons in Publishing, Parents, 1960-1964

**Box 3**

**Folder 4**

Program Responses from Davis, 1956-1959

**Box 3**

**Folder 5**

General Correspondence, 1958-1960

**Box 3**

**Folder 6**

Velma McKay and Miquon School Correspondence, 1959-1960

**Box 3**

**Folder 7**

Fowler and Newcomb Correspondence, 1958-1959

**Box 3**

**Folder 8**

General Correspondence, 1965-1966

**Box 4**

**Folder 1**

Let's Read Reading Plans and Suggested Lessons, 1964-1966

**Box 4**

**Folder 2**

Newsletters and Brochures, 1964-1975

**Box 4**

**Folder 3**

Negotiations and Symposium 1959-1960

**Box 4**

**Folder 4**

Early Research and Writing, 1963

**Box 4**

**Folder 5**

Writings, 1963-1965

**Box 4**

**Folder 6**

Research and Aims of Project, 1964-1966

**Box 4**

**Folder 7**

Syracuse Project, 1965-1966

**Series II: Let's Read Revised Edition Documents**

This series contains documents related to the publication of the revised edition of Bloomfield and Barnhart's Let's Read – a Linguistic Approach. This includes notes and correspondence concerning editing and publication, a manuscript of the revised edition, and copies of the revised books.

**Box 1**

**Folder 1**

Notes, reading exercises, manuscript, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 2**

Manuscript pages 30-117, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 3**

Manuscript pages 118-174, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 4**

Manuscript pages 175-215, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 5**

Manuscript pages 216-285, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Manuscript pages 287-360, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**

Manuscript pages 361-425, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 8**

Manuscript Notes and Index, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 9**

Edits, 2009

**Box 2**

Let's Read Books 1-9, 1993