

# Hazel Loring Wins Washburn Memorial Award for Excellence in Education

The **1982 Washburn Memorial Award for Excellence in Education** has been presented to Hazel Logan Loring of Birmingham, Michigan, specifically for her valuable new booklet, *Reading Made Easy with Blend Phonics for the First Grade*.

In announcing the award, President Rubicam said, "This is quite a lovely story, because it is so unusual to find one who says she does not want to be any part of a vested interest, and as a life-long teacher, she would not allow something she was planning to publish to be sold.

"We tried to convince her that it would be just great if someone wanted to put it on the market so that parents and teachers could get it. 'No,' she said, 'as a teacher I should not earn money from this. It is a service, and a privilege for me to make it available.'

"Well, we couldn't persuade her otherwise, but she was so dedicated, and had such a good idea, that we said, 'All right, then, form a non-profit organization and they you can give it away.' That is what she did, and many of you know that darling Hazel organized the *Logan Institute for Educational Excellence* (Logan was her maiden name) so that her little booklet, *Reading Made Easy with Blend Phonics for First Grade* could be made widely available.

"It was a great surprise to us that Hazel's booklet has received high praise from elementary and upper level teachers as well as administrators. This is wonderful!

"Hazel began her career in 1923-24. After time out to raise a family, she returned to the college classroom and earned her B.S. in Education from Wayne State University. She returned to teaching in 1960-70.

"We deeply regret that dear Hazel can't be with us here tonight, although she has assured us she would be here in spirit. She has had a slight heart experience and has been taken to the hospital.

"I telephoned her before I left Arizona. She answered the telephone herself and told me she is doing well and has her loving family around her.

"Hazel doesn't yet know she has won the Washburn award this year, and we are certain – particularly under the circumstances – that it will give her great pleasure. It will be mailed off to her immediately.

"We are all thrilled by Hazel's book, and by the reception it is getting all over the country. This shows what can be done. Hazel's valuable little booklet can be the means of having teachers learn just what phonics is and what phonics can do."

Copied on 1/24/06 by Donald L. Potter from page 5 of *The Reading Informer*, Vol. 10, No. 1 – Sept, 1982. *The 21st Annual Conference of the Reading Reform Foundation*, July 9-11, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

# WATSON WASHBURN MEMORIAL AWARD

*for excellence in education*

presented by

The Reading Reform Foundation

at Toronto, Ontario, Canada

July 10, 1982

to

## HAZEL LOGAN LORING

This annual award is given to a lovely, gracious lady with a determined, unselfish dedication to the premise that all children can be taught to read.

We honor Hazel Loring specifically for her valuable new booklet, *Reading Made Easy with Blend Phonics for the First Grade*.

She has sent more than 5,000 copies of this booklet to Michigan teachers and thousands more to teachers all across the nation, all free of charge. She also has prepared a letter explaining how non-profit groups can be established in other states for free distribution of the booklet, and has arranged that these groups may purchase the booklets at cost.

The booklet, designed to help classroom teachers incorporate intensive phonics into any reading program, has received high praise from elementary and upper level teachers and administrators.

Hazel Loring began her teaching career in 1923-24. After time out to raise a family, she earned a B.S. in Education from Wayne State University and returned to the classroom in 1960-70.

She joined the Reading Reform Foundation in 1978, and attended her first RRF Conference at Princeton in 1979. At Princeton she so impressed us all with her verve and determination that she was awarded an RRF certificate for "Dedication to Literacy" at the Champaign Conference in 1980, the same year she became Michigan State Chairman for RRF.

We love her recent statement: "My heart goes out to the inadequately prepared teacher who is under attack, and I think it is high time that the spotlight should be turned on the professors of education who, while profiting handsomely from the situation, are really responsible for perpetuating the anti-phonics power base in the schools."



President



This picture appeared in the Sept, 1982 issue of *The Reading Informer*. I used my digital camera set on "Page Mode" to get the best picture I could manage. It is impossible to get really good image quality from a newspaper quality picture.

It was my privilege to retype Loring's *Reading Made Easy for First-Grade with Blend Phonics* and publish it on my website [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) on May 28, 2003.

I first heard of Loring's booklet from Bob Sweet. Robert W. Sweet, Jr. Co-Founder and Former President of *The National Right to Read Foundation* wrote this stirring recommendation for *Reading Made Easy with Blend Phonics*, in his 1997 article, "The Century of Miseducation of American Teachers:"

An effective answer to illiteracy ... Let me offer a less costly, and more effective answer. I have here a twenty-five-page booklet called *Blend Phonics* written by Hazel Loring, a master teacher born in 1902, who taught under both the "whole word" and phonics systems. The legacy she has left us is powerful. Within the pages of this little booklet is the cure of illiteracy as we begin the twenty-first century. ... If every pre-service reading teacher, every reading supervisor, every kindergarten, first- and second-grade teacher in America had the information contained in Hazel Loring's 25-page booklet and taught it this fall, there would be such a dramatic decrease in illiteracy in this country that the national media would be forced to take note."

I say, "Amen," to Mr. Sweet's glowing recommendation. I am very please to report that tens of thousands of parents and teachers have already downloaded my retyped edition of Hazel's booklet. As long as the [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) website is in existence, Hazel Logan Loring's powerful method will continue its powerful mission of providing a definitive answer to illiteracy. Following Hazel's inspiring example, "it is a service, and a privilege for me to make it available" for FREE download.

My friend, Charlie Richardson, told me that he has given away a "zillions of copies" of Hazel's booklets. He even sent me one. I have published an informational document by Mr. Richardson, "The Alphabet Code & How it Works." Note especially the last section, "Sample Hierarchal Sequence for Teaching: Start with the simple and frequent, and work toward the complex and less frequent." This "Hierarchal Sequence" is based on Loring's *Blend Phonics* sequence.

On 11/11/07, I went Online with the [www.blendphonics.org](http://www.blendphonics.org) website with the ardent desire of seriously promoting Mrs. Loring's pamphlet as a viable solution to America's illiteracy problem.

Donald L. Potter  
Odessa, TX

# Further Notes from Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter

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## My experience:

I obtained my first copy of Hazel Loring's *Reading Made Easy with Blend Phonics for First Grade* in 1999 and published it on my [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) website on May 28, 2003, but did not teach it until 2007. I had many other excellent commercial programs that had enabled to have good success with all my students so I was slow to switch to a simple 35-page pamphlet with a complete yet minimalist teachers' manual. I first taught it to a first-grader who was completely retarded in reading due to his Whole Language reading instruction. He made fabulous progress and became an excellent reader. I then started using it with whole classes and individuals.

## Whole Language failure

I taught in elementary bilingual public school during the Whole Language era when efforts were made to sweep phonics out of the classrooms. I distinctly recall when our excellent handwriting and spelling books were removed from the classroom.

Whole Language was based on the theory that children would learn to read as they learn to talk by mere exposure to the language in meaningful text. The theoretical foundation was laid by Ken Goodman (of psycholinguistic guessing fame and miscue analysis) and Frank Smith (*Understanding Reading*, 1971). The theory sounded very good on paper but was falsified by Keith Stanovich and other researchers, who, interestingly, had initially set out to verify the theory.

Unlike the look-say era criticized by Samuel Blumenfeld in his 1973 *The New Illiterates*, Rudolf Flesch's 1955 *Why Johnny Can't Read*, and Charlies Walcutt's 1958 *Chaos and Cure in Reading*, Whole Language (at least in its pure form advocated by Goodman and Smith) dispensed entirely with phonics instruction. Some Whole Language advocates later morphed into *Guided Reading* and *Balanced Literacy*. Margaret Moustafa developed an approach called "Whole to Part Phonics," in contrast with "Part to Whole Phonics." She believed that students naturally use onset-rime to teach themselves the sound-to-symbol correspondences through mere exposure to the language.

Marilyn J. Adams explains the problems with Whole Language in her 1991 article, *Why Not Phonics and Whole Language*.

<http://donpotter.net/pdf/why-not-phonics-and-whole.pdf>

Here is a link to Hazel Loring's *Reading Made Easy with Blend Phonics for first Grade*.

[http://donpotter.net/pdf/reading\\_made\\_easy\\_with\\_blen.pdf](http://donpotter.net/pdf/reading_made_easy_with_blen.pdf)