



Fountas and Pinnell Reading Level Characteristics

Instructional Level: With teaching and support, the child can read the text.

Independent Level: Text the child can easily read and understand on his/her own.

A	Readers are beginning to learn how print works and to notice the relationship between sounds and letters. They are learning to look at print from left to right, match the written word with the spoken word in print, read text with one line of print with simple words and on familiar topics, and use illustrations to match the print. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Children must be given the opportunity to read and reread these simple texts <u>with help</u> . Encourage your child to finger point each spoken word to the written word.
B	Readers are learning how print works, developing left to right directionality, firming up word-by-word matching with two lines of print, self-monitoring and attempting to self-correct and use illustrations to match the print. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Continue to provide opportunities to read and reread these simple texts <u>with help</u> while encouraging to finger point each spoken word to the written word. Provide both fiction and nonfiction texts with familiar topics.
C	Readers encounter simple stories and familiar topics with 2-6 lines of print on each page. They smoothly and automatically read from left to right. Pointing is smooth, and the eyes are taking over the process to match the spoken word to the printed word, with less picture support. Readers are consistently monitoring their reading. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Praise children for self-correcting and assist the use of dialogue with the voice.
D	Readers track print with their eyes and process texts with fewer repeating language patterns. They use a range of punctuation and read dialogue. Word by word matching is smooth and automatic. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Children should drop pointing to each word. Attention should be given to word endings.
E	Readers encounter texts with 3-8 lines of print per page. Texts have more complex stories and require more attention to understand. Readers rely more on print with less supportive pictures. Oral reading demonstrates fluency and phrasing with appropriate stress on words. They solve words with regular letter-sound relationships as well as a few irregular words. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Choose text with familiar vocabulary to your child which is likely used in their oral language.
F	Readers are beginning to build knowledge of the characteristics of different genre of texts. They can read both simple and split dialogue. In fiction, they are beginning to meet characters that are more developed. Children are reading without pointing and use appropriate rate, phrasing, intonation and word stress. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Texts may include familiar content that expands beyond home, neighborhood, and school.
G	Readers encounter a wider range of texts. They are still reading texts with 3-8 lines of print per page, but the print is slightly smaller. They are able to give attention to slightly more complex story lines and ideas. They are also able to use a range of word solving strategies as they read while making meaning. Illustrations are generally on every other page and depict multiple ideas. Texts have a few challenging vocabulary words. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Children should be reading for understanding. Encourage self-correcting and rereading.
H	Readers encounter same challenges as Level G; but the language and vocabulary are more complex. The stories are longer and there is less repetition. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Children will begin to read more new texts silently in order to achieve efficient and smooth processing. When reading orally they should be using appropriate rate, phrasing, intonation and word stress.
I	Readers will be processing texts that are mostly short (8-16 pages) as well as some easy illustrated chapter books (40-60 pages) that require them to sustain attention and memory over time. They can effectively process complex sentences and follow text with their eyes without pointing. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Find <u>short</u> chapter books with a single point of view and illustrations to help support the text. Nonfiction text focuses on a single idea/topic.
J	Readers are able to process a variety of texts such as: short informational text, short fiction texts with simple plots, short chapter books and simple biographies. <i>Parent Tips:</i> Children read silently during independent reading. Choose humorous stories typical of childhood experiences.

K	<p>Readers are able to process a wide variety of genres. They will read many illustrated chapter books, including some series books. The demand on reader's memory is increased. Texts have many characters which are more complex. Nonfiction text is organized into a few simple categories.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>As children read orally they should be demonstrating all aspects of fluency: appropriate rate, word stress, intonation, phrasing and pausing. Children should also recognize and use all punctuation appropriately.</i></p>
L	<p>Readers process easy chapter books including some series books. Plots become more sophisticated with fewer illustrations. They learn new content through reading and are required to bring prior knowledge to the process. Children are able to understand multiple perspectives of characters.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Children should be able to solve many complex words including multi-syllable words, contractions, possessives, content-specific and some technical words.</i></p>
M	<p>Readers know the characteristics of a range of genres. Series books and mysteries are often chapter books children are interested in reading. Elaborate plots and multiple characters that develop and change over time are evident in fictional chapter books. Children read shorter nonfiction texts with single topics.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Encourage children to explore chapter books and nonfiction topics they are interested in learning about.</i></p>
N	<p>Readers are able to process a full range of genres. They read special forms of chapter books such as mysteries and series books. Fiction narratives have elaborate plots and multiple characters that change over time.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Children are able to solve words smoothly and automatically in both silent and oral reading.</i></p>
O	<p>Readers have very similar genre characteristics as Level N. They can process complex sentences and solve new vocabulary words, some defined in the text and others unexplained.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Some abstract themes require inferential thinking to gain meaning. At this level children should be able to read and fully understand the text.</i></p>
P	<p>Readers can identify the characteristics of a full range of genres. They are able to understand abstract and mature themes and take on diverse perspectives and issues.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>As children encounter more abstract text it is crucial that it can be comprehended by the child.</i></p>
Q	<p>Readers automatically read and understand a full range of genres. They read special forms such as mysteries, series books, books with sequels, short stories and short informational text. They understand perspectives different from their own as well as settings and people far distant in time and space.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Children are challenged by many longer descriptive words and content specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge and readers' tools, such as glossaries.</i></p>
R	<p>Similar to Level Q, readers encounter special forms which also include diaries and logs. Nonfiction contains multiple topics that go well beyond readers' personal experiences and content knowledge.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Children understand texts in a variety of layouts as well as fonts. They consistently search for information in illustrations and increasingly complex graphics.</i></p>
S	<p>Readers encounter fiction text with complex plots, subplots and multiple story lines. Nonfiction content is particular to preadolescents' interests.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>Children will read text with more challenging themes, some requiring an understanding of cultural diversity, as well as texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues.</i></p>
T	<p>Readers' text will be longer with many lines of print on each page, requiring readers to remember information and connect ideas over a long period of time. Complex fantasy, myths and legends offer added challenge and an increased use of symbolism.</p> <p><i>Parent Tips:</i> <i>As text becomes more challenging, be sure your child is able to understand this complex level of text.</i></p>
U	<p>Characteristics are similar to Level T. Themes present mature ideas, problems of society and human problems such as war, hardship, racism and economic issues.</p>
V	<p>Readers will encounter longer texts requiring them to remember information and connect ideas over many days of reading. Complex fantasy, myths and legends offer added challenge and an increased use of symbolism. Readers also encounter some abstract special forms of literature, such as satire.</p>
W	<p>Readers will encounter mature themes that expand their knowledge of social issues. In addition, they will encounter abstract special forms of literature, such as satire, and literary devices, such as irony. Themes are multidimensional and may be understood at many levels. Readers are challenged by many content-specific and technical words.</p>
X, Y, Z	<p>Although readers may encounter many texts that are long and have complex sentences and paragraphs as well as many multisyllabic words, they may vary greatly because readers are expected to understand and respond to mature themes such as abuse, poverty, sexuality, and war. Biographies offer a range of individuals who may not be admirable, requiring thinking on the part of readers. Text may include archaic language and regional dialect.</p>