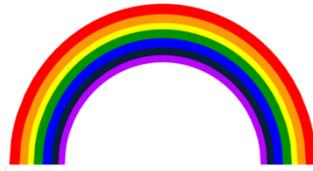


Reading through the book Bands



Reading books are graded by difficulty by reading levels known as Book Bands. Each Book Band has its own colour. The chart shows the progress of an 'average' band of children but no individual child is 'average', so no child makes smooth progress precisely in this way. Children tend to learn in 'fits' and 'starts'; periods of growth followed by periods of consolidation when their progress seems to halt for a while. These consolidation periods are important as your child develops confidence in using and applying their newly acquired skills.

As a rough guide, children are aiming to reach the highest level (lime) at seven and eight years old. Children who read above this level are reading fairly fluently and although some books are still graded above this level, children are reading such a wide range of material that the banding becomes not so important.

The books will vary in a number of ways, including layout, size, vocabulary and length, to give the children a rich diet of literature. The difference between each colour Band is very gradual, so that children do not experience great difficulty moving up through the scheme.

Progress through the bands is not automatic and it is important to ensure that children working in the early bands have secure understanding so that they remain in control of the task and well-motivated as they move on to more challenging texts.

This guidance can only give you a rough idea of the right reading level for your child. There will be a wide range of reading abilities in any school year. As a rough guide, children should be able to read roughly 90% of the words on the page without any problem. If the book is too easy, they can become bored. If it's too difficult, they can become frustrated, and may have to concentrate so hard on reading the words that they lose the enjoyment of understanding the story.

A Word of Caution!

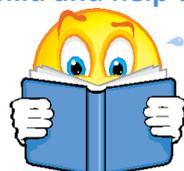
You will be doing your child no favours if you just rush them through books. It is not a race, it is a journey! Children learn at different rates and if the book is too difficult it will soon put them off reading!

Things to remember:

- Do hear your child read every day
- Little and often is more beneficial than a long session once a week
- Think about how long you are reading for – shouldn't exceed your child's span of attention
- Pick your timing carefully – it's best not to embark on a reading session when your child is tired
- Every child is an individual – try not to compare their progress with other children or with brothers and sisters

“Parents can instil a love of reading long before a child goes to school and deepen that love of reading as the child grows up.”

Enjoy reading with your child and help them become lifelong readers.



Book Band	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Lilac							
Pink							
Red							
Yellow							
Blue							
Green							
Orange							
Turquoise							
Purple							
Gold							
White							
Lime							
Copper							
Topaz							
Ruby							
Emerald							
Sapphire							

Lilac level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wordless books that tell a story through pictures alone
Pink Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very first level of reading books which have words. The number of words increases slightly as you work your way through the reading level
Red Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidates learning from previous levels
Yellow level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-fiction titles at this level build on children's interests and encourage discussion
Blue level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slight increase in the number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings
Green Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of words increase again. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages
Orange level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The page count increase to challenge and encourage reading stamina
Turquoise level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'
Purple level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased proportion of longer sentences with more challenging vocabulary
Gold level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary including word play and figurative language
White level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More sophisticated use of narrative voice. Longer sentences separated by commas to encourage developing intonation
Lime level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening range of writing styles
Copper level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child will probably be enjoying silent reading rather than reading aloud. Encourage conversations about the story
Topaz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More sophisticated word play. Understand a story can be told through dialogue and action ('show' instead of 'tell')
Ruby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children can interpret more sophisticated word play and understand a range of narrative styles
Emerald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They will be able to gather information from more than one place in the text and use inference based on what is being shown rather than being told.
Sapphire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising how layers of meaning build in a story and able to discuss how the author has achieved certain effects

Lilac level	<p>Lilac level books are wordless books that tell a story through pictures alone. They help children to develop speaking and listening skills through creating and telling stories.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Lilac level books</p> <p>Your child is just beginning to discover the excitement of books. Although these books have no words, they are an important introduction to reading. Please encourage your child to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the pages in order and talk about what is happening on the left hand page before the right hand page. • Talk about what is happening on each page, rather than just talking about what they see in each picture. • Tell you who or what the book is about.
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Pink Level	<p>Pink books are the very first level of reading books which have words. The number of words increases slightly as you work your way through the reading level</p> <p>How to support your child reading Pink level books</p> <p>Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. • On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word. • Make a story out of the whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on the page. • Tell you something that happened in the book or about something they found out in the book.
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Red Level	<p>Red level books have a slightly increased number of words and slightly more complex story lines. Children gain a little more confidence and may know some words by sight.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Red level books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory' and they won't have to sound out at all. • On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word. • Make a story out of the whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on the page. • Tell you something that happened in the book or about something they found out in the book.
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Yellow level	<p>At Yellow level, children are beginning to read more varied sentence structures and take some note of punctuation. Non-fiction titles at this level build on children's interests and encourage discussion.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Yellow books</p> <p>Your child is beginning to read with more confidence. As they read aloud, you can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow print with eyes, finger pointing only at points of difficulty • Search for information in print to predict, confirm or attempt new words while reading • Predict in more detail • Give them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
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Blue level	<p>Blue level books have a slight increase in the number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. The story lines are more complex, including more than one event and the stories are less dependent on picture cues.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Blue books</p> <p>Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read you can help them by encouraging them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads if they need to • Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation such as full stops and question marks. • Tell you about what the characters are doing and why they are acting in that way. • Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.
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Green Level	<p>At Green level, the number of words increase again. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages</p> <p>How to support your child reading</p> <p>Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read you can help them by encouraging them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads if they need to • Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation such as full stops and question marks. • Tell you about what the characters are doing and why they are acting in that way. <p>Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.</p>
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Orange level	<p>At Orange level, the page count increases to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased use of dialogue to encourage reading with expression. Children are increasingly encouraged to infer meaning from the text in order to gain full enjoyment from the story.</p> <p>How to support your child reading</p> <p>Your child is now beginning to read with more independence. They should be feeling more confident and will rarely need to sound out words. You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to them when they read out aloud. If they make mistakes, but keep the sense of the text don't interrupt. You can revisit that page at the end of the session to check certain words. • Remind them of useful strategies if they can't read a word: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sounding the word silently under their breath 2. Dividing a longer word into syllables, or looking at the word without and –ing or an –ed ending. <p>Don't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book.</p> <p>Encourage some use of expression, especially for character speech in fiction books. Talk about how the characters are feeling.</p>
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Turquoise level	<p>Children reading at Turquoise level will be meeting an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'. Paragraphs begin to develop and more unusual and challenging vocabulary is included.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Blue level books</p> <p>Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads. • Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks • Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book. • Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.
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Purple level	<p>Purple books have short chapters to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased proportion of longer sentences with more challenging vocabulary.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Purple level books</p> <p>Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads. • Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks • Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book. • Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.
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Gold level	<p>When children reach Gold books, they might read silently or quietly at quite a rapid pace, taking note of punctuation. They are independent readers who can tackle increasingly complex language, story structures and text layout.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Gold level books</p> <p>They need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. You can support them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace. • Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used for the description. • Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book • Talking about how much they enjoy a book or a type of book.
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White level	<p>In White books there is a more sophisticated use of narrative voice. Longer sentences are separated by commas to encourage developing intonation. Some books have longer chapters for sustained reading.</p> <p>How to support your child reading White level books</p> <p>You can support them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace. • Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used for the description. • Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book • Talking about how much they enjoy a book or a type of book. • Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.
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Lime level	<p>Lime level books include a widening range of writing styles and an increased variation in sentence structure. Children read silently most of the time. They are interested in longer texts which they can return to easily after a break.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Lime level books</p> <p>Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk to them about their reading. This reassures them that their reading is still important to you, as well as giving you an opportunity to share an enjoyment of books. You can still help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking them to read aloud some parts of the text which they enjoy. Talk about how the writer made those parts enjoyable. • Talking about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events. • Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book.
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Copper level	<p>Your child will probably be enjoying silent reading rather than reading aloud. Encourage conversations about the story.</p> <p>How to support your child reading Copper level books</p> <p>You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads • Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: Can they tell you what's happening in their book? • Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question. • Continuing to read aloud with your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.
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Topaz	<p>More sophisticated word play. Understand a story can be told through dialogue and action ('show' instead of 'tell')</p> <p>How to support your child reading Topaz level books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads • Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: Can they tell you what's happening in their book? • Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question. • Continuing to read aloud with your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.
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Ruby	<p>Children can interpret more sophisticated word play and understand a range of narrative styles</p> <p>How to support your child reading Ruby level books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads • Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: Can they tell you what's happening in their book? • Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question. • Continuing to read aloud with your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.
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Emerald

They will be able to gather information from more than one place in the text and use inference based on what is being shown rather than being told.

How to support your child reading Emerald level books

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: Can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continuing to read aloud with your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like:
 - A really good descriptive passage
 - Three words which are adventurous
 - Two words that you want to use in your next piece of writing
 - An example of something typical a character says or does
 - How one character's reaction to another shows their relationship

Sapphire

Recognising how layers of meaning build in a story and able to discuss how the author has achieved certain effects

How to support your child reading Sapphire level books

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions and reading your book while your child reads
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: Can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continuing to read aloud with your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like:
 - A really good descriptive passage
 - Three words which are adventurous
 - Two words that you want to use in your next piece of writing
 - An example of something typical a character says or does
 - How one character's reaction to another shows their relationship