

Reading Through The Book Bands

There are general guidelines about which book bands should be covered within each National Curriculum level. By the end of Term 1 in year 2, children working at the average level should be reading books in turquoise or purple bands. Please remember however that children learn in different ways and make progress at different times. It is possible that there may be seven year olds on book band red and five year olds on book band turquoise.

As a rough guide, children are expected to reach the highest level (lime) at seven or eight years old. Children who read above lime 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/number stage 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 is particularly important for children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

Obviously this guidance can only give 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 at least 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.

Children reading rainbow level will be deemed 'free readers'.

A Word of Caution!

You will be doing your child no favours if you rush them through books. It is not a race, it is a journey! Children learn at different rates just as they learn to walk, dress themselves etc. at different rates. Reading must not be treated as a competition. If children are rushed through the books they will not achieve the enjoyment and understanding necessary. Books that they find too difficult 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 - the amount of reading time 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 your child's progress with other children or with brothers and sisters.

"Parents can instill 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.



How to Support Your Child With Their Reading:

Pink book band – stage 1

For children just starting to read. Children are getting used to reading from left to right and matching spoken words to written words. Usually no more than 10 pages with up to 5 words on a page.

Pink A

Working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum
Aligned to Phase 2 Letters and Sounds

- Locate title
- Open front cover
- Turn pages appropriately
- Understand that left page comes before right
- Understand that we read from left to right
- Use meaning together with repeated language patterns (syntax) to predict the storyline
- Match spoken word to written word
- Use a few known words to assist own reading

Pink B

Working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum
Aligned to Phase 2 Letters and Sounds

- Locate title, open front cover, turn pages appropriately
- Understand that left page comes before right
- Use meaning together with repeated language patterns (syntax) and some letters to read simple text
- Match spoken word to written word (1:1 correspondence)
- Use a few known words to check own reading
- Read a simple CVC word in the text from left to right

Red book band – stage 1+ and 2

The second step up the ladder as children gain a little more confidence and may know some words by sight. Usually no more than 15 pages with 1 sentence per page.

Working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum
Aligned approximately with Phase 3 Letters and Sounds

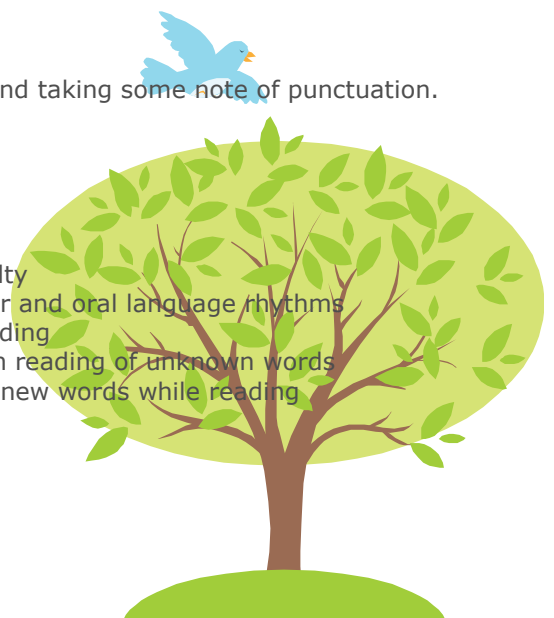
- Locate and recall title
- Consolidate secure control of one-to-one matching on a wide range of texts
- Use known words to check and confirm reading
- Solve simple CVC words by blending phonemes from left to right and check for meaning and correct syntax, ie, does it make sense and sound right?
- Start to read more rhythmically or use phrasing while maintaining track of text
- Repeat words, phrases or sentences to check , confirm or modify own reading

Yellow book band – stage 3

Children are beginning to read more varied sentence structures and taking some note of punctuation. Usually no more than 15 pages with 1 or 2 sentences per page.

Working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum
Aligned with Phases 3/ 4 of Letters and Sounds

- Follow print with eyes, finger pointing only at points of difficulty
- Take more note of punctuation to support the use of grammar and oral language rhythms
- Cross-check all sources of information more quickly while reading
- Note familiar words and phonemes and use these to help with reading of unknown words
- Search for information in print to predict, confirm or attempt new words while reading
- Notice relationships between one text and another
- Predict in more detail



Blue book band – stage 4

Children are becoming more confident at reading longer and more varied sentences. Usually no more than 15 pages with 2 or 3 sentences per page.

Working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum
Aligned with Phases 4/ 5 of Letters and Sounds

- Move through text attending to meaning, print and sentence structure flexibly
- Self-correct more rapidly on the run
- Re-read to enhance phrasing and clarify precise meaning
- Solve new words using print information and understanding of the text to try alternative pronunciations
- Identify constituent parts of unfamiliar words to read correctly
- Manage a greater range of text genre
- Discuss content of the text in a manner which indicates precise meaning

Green book band – stage 5

Children are starting to read quite fluently and take note of punctuation. Usually about 20 pages with 3 or 4 sentences per page.

Working within level 1 of the National Curriculum
Aligned with Phase 5 of Letters and Sounds

- Read fluently with attention to punctuation
- Solve new words using print detail while attending to meaning and syntax
- Track visually additional lines of print without difficulty
- Discuss and interpret character and plot more fully
- Use contents page and glossary in non-fiction books and locate information

Orange book band – stage 6

Children are starting to read longer and more complex sentences and can understand a range of punctuation. Usually about 20 pages with 4 or 5 sentences per page.

Working towards level 2
Aligned with Phases 5/ 6 of Letters and Sounds

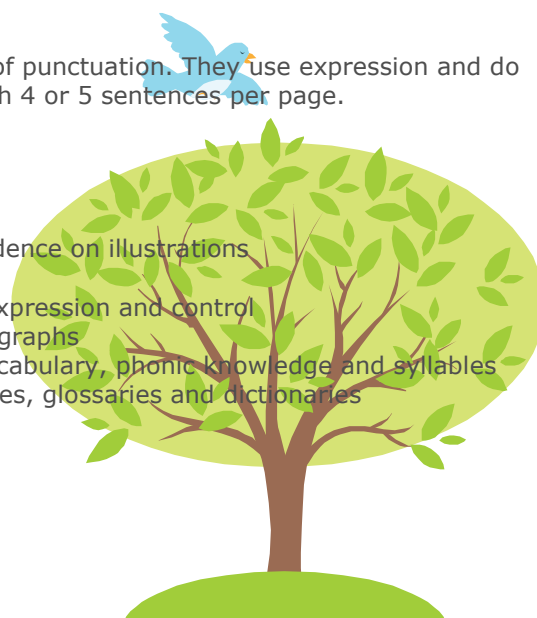
- Get started on fiction after briefer introductions without relying on illustrations
- Examine non-fiction layout and use the contents page to select which sections of a book to read
- Read longer phrases and more complex sentences
- Attend to a range of punctuation
- Blend phonemes in unfamiliar words more fluently, cross checking with meaning and syntax
- Search for and use familiar syllables within words to read longer words
- Infer meaning from text, check information in text with illustrations, particularly non-fiction, and comment on content
- Begin to use appropriate terminology when discussing different types of text

Turquoise book band – stage 7

Children can read complex sentences fairly fluently, taking note of punctuation. They use expression and do not rely on illustrations to help them. Usually about 20 pages with 4 or 5 sentences per page.

Working towards level 2 of the National Curriculum
Aligned with Phases 5/ 6 of Letters and Sounds

- Extract meaning from the text while reading with less dependence on illustrations
- Approach different genres with increasing flexibility
- Use punctuation and layout to read with a greater range of expression and control
- Sustain reading through longer sentence structures and paragraphs
- Tackle a higher ratio of more complex words using known vocabulary, phonic knowledge and syllables
- Find a way around alphabetically ordered texts such as indexes, glossaries and dictionaries



Purple book band – stage 8

Children might read silently or quietly at quite a rapid pace, taking note of punctuation. Usually about 25 pages with 5 to 10 sentences per page.

Working at level 2C of the National Curriculum
Aligned with Phase 6 of Letters and Sounds

- Look through a variety of texts with growing independence to predict content, layout and story development
- Read silently or quietly at a more rapid pace, taking note of punctuation and using it to keep track of longer sentences
- Solve most unfamiliar words on the run by blending long vowel phonemes, recognising and using them in longer and more complex words
- Adapt to fiction, non-fiction or poetic language with growing flexibility
- Take a more conscious account of literary effects used by fiction writers, and the formal language of different types of non-fiction
- Begin to make more conscious use of reading to extend speaking and writing vocabulary and syntax

Gold book band – stage 9

Children might read silently or quietly at quite a rapid pace, taking note of punctuation. Usually about 25 pages with 5 to 10 sentences per page.

Working at level 2B of the National Curriculum
Aligned with Phase 6 of Letters and Sounds

- Look through a variety of books with growing independence to predict content and story development, and make full use of non-fiction layout
- Read silently or quietly at a more rapid pace, taking note of punctuation and using it to keep track of longer sentences
- Solve most unfamiliar words on the run by blending long vowel phonemes, recognising and using them in longer and more complex words
- Adapt to fiction, non-fiction and poetic language with growing flexibility
- Take a more conscious account of literary effects used by writers
- Make more conscious use of reading to extend speaking and writing vocabulary and syntax
- locate and interpret information in non-fiction

White book band – stage 10

Books might have chapters. Children will read silently most of the time. They are interested in longer texts which they can return to easily after a break. Usually no more than 30 pages and about 10 sentences per page.

Working at Level 2A, working towards level 3.
Letters and Sounds Phases cease to be relevant

- Read silently most of the time
- Sustain interest in longer texts, returning to it easily after a break
- Use text more fully as a reference and as a model
- Search for and find information in texts more flexibly
- Notice the spelling of unfamiliar words and relate to known words
- Show increased awareness of vocabulary and precise meaning
- Express reasoned opinions about what is read and compare texts
- Offer and discuss interpretations of text
- Comment on main characters and how they relate to each other
- Suggest alternatives or extensions to events and actions
- Discuss feelings created by stories
- Retelling of stories is balanced and clear



Lime book band – stage 11

Books might have chapters. Children will read silently most of the time. They are interested in longer texts which they can return to easily after a break. Usually more than 30 pages.

Working at Level 3c + of the National Curriculum

- Begin to read reflectively and to perceive meanings beyond the literal
- Refer to text to support own ideas
- Distinguish main points from examples; fact from opinion
- Devise key questions and words for searching and use several sources
- Begin to read in different ways for different purposes, e.g. skimming for relevance, scanning for specific details, reflective and recursive reading for fuller comprehension
- Compare/contrast work from more than one source
- Read aloud with expression and intonation taking account of punctuation
- Pupils can refer to text layout and organisation
- Pupils show some awareness of the point of view of the author
- Beginning to sustain narrative and investigative reading

Rainbow and Free Readers

Books might have chapters. Children read silently with confidence and perseverance. A wide variety of longer, demanding texts, usually with around 30 - 50 pages.



Learning opportunities:

- Sustain confidence and perseverance when reading longer, demanding texts
- Begin to use deduction and inference with more mature fiction and poetry
- Begin to perceive how an author develops: plot, characters, meanings beyond the literal, figurative language
- Distinguish fact from opinion, point from example, relevant from irrelevant
- Select key points of a text and summarise
- Can refer to the impact of structure and organisation of texts
- Can refer to text to explain their views
- Identify themes
- Identify impact of word choices
- Secure the skills of skimming and scanning and recursive reading
- Pupils can identify the purpose of a text

