



KINETON GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SOLIHULL

## **Book Bands**

### **What do Book Band levels mean?**

Reading books are graded by difficulty by reading levels known as Book Bands. Each Book Band has its own colour. The chart below gives an indication of the range of Book Band levels at which most children will be reading as they progress through primary school.

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Band</b>	<b>Colour</b>	<b>Old NC Level</b>	<b>Phonics</b>
	0	Lilac	W	Phase 1
	1	Pink	W	Phase 2
	2	Red	W	Phase 3
ELG S+	3	Yellow	1 (c)	Phase 3-4
	4	Blue	1 (c/b)	Phase 4-5
	5	Green	1 (b)	Phase 5
Y1 Exp+	6	Orange	1 (b/a)	Phase 5-6
	7	Turquoise	1 (a)	Phase 5-6
	8	Purple	2c	Phase 6
	9	Gold	2b	Phase 6
	10	White	2a	
Y2 Exp+	11	Lime	3c	
	KS2	Brown	3c/3c	
	KS2	Grey	3a//4c	
	KS2	Dark Blue	4b/4a	
	KS2	Dark Red	5c/5b	

## **Lilac Level (0)**

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.

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Lilac level books**

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:

- 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.

## **Pink Level (1A and 1B)**

Pink level is the very first level of reading books which has words. The number of words increases slightly as your child progresses through the reading level.

### **Learning Opportunities:**

- ◆ Locate title
- ◆ Open front cover
- ◆ Turn pages appropriately
- ◆ Understand that left page comes before right
- ◆ Understand that we read print from left to right
- ◆ Match spoken word to printed word (one to one correspondence)
- ◆ Locate familiar words and use them to check own reading
- ◆ Use the meaning of the text
- ◆ Use language patterns (syntax)
- ◆ Predict the story line and some vocabulary

### **Text Characteristics:**

- ◆ Natural language following children's speech patterns
- ◆ A short, simple, highly predictable text involving familiar objects and actions
- ◆ Repetitive sentence structures including high frequency words
- ◆ Illustrations that provide full and direct support for the text
- ◆ Reasonably large print size with clear spaces between words
- ◆ Fully punctuated text in the same position on each page

### **Strategy Check:**

- ◆ Point at every word

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- ◆ Know that print carries meaning and is read from left to right
- ◆ Attempt and practise one-to-one correspondence
- ◆ Read a range of familiar and common sentences independently
- ◆ Read and write a high frequency word

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Pink level books**

Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:

- 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 a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

## Red Level (2)

Red level books have a slightly increased number of words, an increase of pages and slightly more complex story lines. The growing complexity in the story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction using visual literacy. All of the books introduce new sets of characters which are revisited throughout the level.

### Learning opportunities

- ◆ Locate and recall title
- ◆ Have secure control of one-to-one matching
- ◆ Use known words to check and confirm reading
- ◆ Start to read more rhythmically or use phrasing while maintaining track of print
- ◆ Repeat words, phrases or sentences to check, confirm or modify own reading
- ◆ Predict from meaning, syntax and print to solve new words

### Text characteristics

- ◆ Slightly longer, highly predictable text involving familiar objects and actions
- ◆ Repetitive sentence/phrase patterns including high frequency words
- ◆ Sentences short, clear and straightforward following children's speech patterns
- ◆ Illustrations provide full and direct support for the text
- ◆ Simple story development (fiction text)
- ◆ Non-fiction texts may have more than one type of print format
- ◆ Reasonably large print with obvious spaces between words
- ◆ Full range of punctuation

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Red level books:**

Your child is beginning to learn how to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Most of the words can be recognised or sounded out. 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 a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

## **Yellow Level (3)**

New learning in Yellow level books includes a slightly increased number of words and a move away from familiar experiences. Yellow books require some inferencing skills from the reader, e.g. for humour, and have more variation in sentence structure, including sentences with more than one clause.

### **Learning opportunities**

- ◆ Follow print with eyes, finger-pointing only at point 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 letter clusters and use these to get to unknown words e.g. look > took
- ◆ 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

### **Text characteristics**

- ◆ Some repetition of phrase patterns, ideas and vocabulary
- ◆ More variation of sentence structure
- ◆ Story lines include more episodes following a time sequence
- ◆ Some literary conventions along with familiar oral language structures
- ◆ Stories may involve imaginary happenings in framework of familiar experiences
- ◆ Non-fiction texts still use personal experience & children's language patterns
- ◆ Illustrations still support the text quite closely

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Yellow level books**

Your child is now beginning to read with more confidence. As they read aloud, you can help them by:

- Giving them time to sound out words they don't know. If they still struggle, encourage them to try sounding out the whole word first, rather than guessing from the pictures or from the first letter.
- Giving them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
- Asking them to talk about what's happening in the book, encouraging them to make links to events on previous pages.

## **Blue Level (4)**

Blue level books have a slightly increased number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. They may use ellipses and other punctuation. The story lines are more complex, including more than one event, and the stories are less dependent on picture cues.

### **Learning opportunities**

- ◆ 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 along with attention to meaning
- ◆ Use analogy with known vocabulary to solve new words
- ◆ Manage a greater variety of text genre
- ◆ Discuss content of the text in a manner which indicates precise understanding

### **Text characteristics**

- ◆ Greater variation in sentence patterns and content
- ◆ Literary language integrated with natural language
- ◆ Any repeated language patterns are longer or act as refrains
- ◆ More lines of text on page, sometimes up to 6 or 8 lines
- ◆ Stories have more events
- ◆ Non-fiction texts include some abstract terms and impersonal sentence structures
- ◆ Pictures support story line rather than convey precise meaning so closely
- ◆ More similar-looking words appear in text

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Blue level books**

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 by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- 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 in the story 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.

## Green Level (5)

The number of words increases slightly in Green level books. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages. Sentences may include lists of things or actions, and adverbs are used frequently to begin sentences. The books begin to use capital letters to support reading with expression. The growing complexity in the story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction using visual literacy.

### Learning opportunities

- ◆ 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
- ◆ Manage effectively a growing variety of texts
- ◆ Discuss and interpret character and plot more fully

### Text characteristics

- ◆ Varied and longer sentences
- ◆ Little or no repetition of phrases
- ◆ More varied and larger number of characters involved
- ◆ Events sustained over several pages
- ◆ May have larger number of words on page
- ◆ Less familiar or specialised vocabulary used
- ◆ Illustrations may provide only moderate support for the text

### PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Green level books

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 by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- 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 in the story 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.

## Orange Level (6)

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. Orange Level books introduce some complex sentences (use of 'if', 'so' and 'because') and include italics to show emphasis. Slightly more literary language is used. Children are increasingly encouraged to infer meaning from the text in order to gain full enjoyment from the story.

### Learning opportunities

- ◆ Get started without relying on illustrations
- ◆ Read longer phrases and more complex sentences
- ◆ Attend to a range of punctuation
- ◆ Cross-check information from meaning, syntax and print on the run
- ◆ Search for and use familiar syllables within words to read longer words
- ◆ Infer meaning from the text

### Text characteristics

- ◆ Stories are longer – 250-300 words
- ◆ Increased proportion of space allocated to print rather than pictures
- ◆ Illustrations support overall meaning of text
- ◆ More literary language used
- ◆ Sentence structures become more complex
- ◆ Non-fiction texts contain more formal sentences and a widening range of unfamiliar terms

### PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Orange level books

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:

- Listening to them when they read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. You can revisit that page at the end of the session to check certain words.
- Reminding them of useful strategies if they can't read a word, for example:
  1. Sounding the word out silently, under their breath
  2. Dividing a longer word into syllables, or looking at the word without an –ing or an –ed endingDon't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book.
- Encouraging some use of expression, especially for character-speech in fiction books. You may wish to model reading some pages aloud for your child to copy.
- Talking about how characters are feeling.



## Turquoise Level (7)

Turquoise level books include an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'. There is an increased proportion of space allocated to print rather than pictures. Turquoise level books include words chosen for appropriateness and impact rather than decodability, with more extended descriptions. Paragraphs begin to develop and more unusual and challenging vocabulary is included.

### Learning opportunities

- ◆ Extract meaning from the text while reading with less dependence on illustrations
- ◆ Approach different genres with increasing flexibility
- ◆ Use punctuation and text layout to read with a greater range of expression
- ◆ Sustain reading through longer sentence structures and paragraphs
- ◆ Tackle a higher ratio of more complex words

### Text characteristics

- ◆ Elaborated episodes and events
- ◆ Extended descriptions
- ◆ More use of literary language
- ◆ May have full pages of print
- ◆ More unusual and challenging vocabulary
- ◆ Illustrations provide a level of support in fictional texts
- ◆ Non-fiction texts contain longer, more formal sentences and a widening range of unfamiliar terms

### PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Turquoise level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- 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.

## Purple Level (8)

Purple level books include an increased proportion of longer sentences, with a more challenging vocabulary. Some Purple books have short chapters to challenge and encourage reading stamina. Purple level books include longer and more complex sentences with the inclusion of complex (i.e. 'when') and simple (i.e. 'and') connectives. Story features such as plot, character and setting are developed in more detail, and the text in the non-fiction books is presented in a variety of ways.

### Learning opportunities

- ◆ 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
- ◆ Adapt to fiction, non-fiction or poetic language with growing flexibility
- ◆ Take more conscious account of literary effects used by writers
- ◆ Begin to make more conscious use of reading to extend speaking and writing vocabulary and syntax.

### Text characteristics

- ◆ Sentence structures become longer and more complex
- ◆ Story plot may be more involved and reflect the feelings of the writer
- ◆ Wider variety of text genre but still illustrated
- ◆ Some books with chapters for more sustained reading
- ◆ Characters are more distinctive and rounded than at earlier levels
- ◆ Widening vocabulary and range of terminology
- ◆ Non-fiction texts cover an increasing curriculum range and different text formats

### PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Purple level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- 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.

## Gold Level (9)

Gold level books include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary, including word play and the introduction of figurative language. Some Gold books have longer chapters for more sustained reading. Children reading at this level are confident independent readers who can tackle increasingly complex language, story structures and text layout.

### Learning opportunities (as for Band 8)

- ◆ 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
- ◆ Adapt to fiction, non-fiction or poetic language with growing flexibility
- ◆ Take more conscious account of literary effects used by writers
- ◆ Begin to make more conscious use of reading to extend speaking and writing vocabulary and syntax.

### Text characteristics

- ◆ **Somewhat more challenging than in Band 8**
- ◆ Sentence structures become longer and more complex
- ◆ Story plot may be more involved and reflect the feelings of the writer
- ◆ Wider variety of text genre but still illustrated
- ◆ Some books with chapters for more sustained reading
- ◆ Characters are more distinctive and rounded than at earlier levels
- ◆ Widening vocabulary and range of terminology
- ◆ Non-fiction texts cover an increasing curriculum range

### PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Gold level books

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- 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 in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- 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.

## White Level (10)

In White level books there is a more sophisticated use of narrative voice. Clauses in longer sentences are separated by commas to encourage developing intonation. Some books have longer chapters for more sustained reading. The stories included at White level encourage children to empathise with the characters and consider why they behave as they do, and how they change during the course of the story. The non-fiction books are divided into sections that require more sustained reading and there is increased challenge in the layout of the information.

### Learning opportunities

- ◆ Read silently most of the time
- ◆ Sustain interest in longer text, 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
- ◆ Offer and discuss interpretations of text

### Text characteristics

- ◆ Widening range of genre and writing style
- ◆ Story line or theme may be sustained over a longer period of time with chapters or sub-sections of text
- ◆ Sentences structures may be longer with more subordinate phrases or clauses
- ◆ Characters may be more fully developed
- ◆ More than one point of view expressed within the text
- ◆ Information or action may be implied rather than spelled out
- ◆ Texts may contain more metaphorical or technical language
- ◆ Non-fiction texts placed in a broader context and include more detailed information

### PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading White level books

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- 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 in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- 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.

## **Lime Level (11)**

Lime level books include a widening range of writing styles and an increased variation in sentence structure, including –ing clauses and longer sentences with more than two clauses. Children reading at Lime level are able to interpret more sophisticated word plays and puns. The narrator's voice in a fiction story may be distinguished from the characters' voice through figurative, idiomatic and literary language. The story is often told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' as the plot develops.

### **Learning opportunities**

- ◆ Use experience of reading a variety of material to recognise text types and predict layout and general content
- ◆ Read silently most of the time, adjusting speed of reading to suit material and monitoring the precise meaning
- ◆ Rerun to make different interpretations of dialogue, more complex sentences, unfamiliar language, etc
- ◆ Sustain interest in longer texts, returning easily to them after a break
- ◆ Make use of blurbs, chapter headings, glossaries, indexes and procedural texts to search for and locate information quickly and accurately
- ◆ Take notes and devise ways to remember the meaning and spelling of unfamiliar words
- ◆ Express reasoned opinions about what is read, and compare texts
- ◆ Investigate and identify the styles and voice of a range of different text types including plays, poetry, narrative, procedural and explanatory texts

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Lime level books**

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:

- Asking them to read aloud some parts of the text which they particularly enjoy. This may include action or description. Talk about how the writer made those parts so 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.

## **Brown Level (12)**

At this level, children should be able to:

- interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns
- distinguish the narrator's voice in a fiction story from the characters' voices through figurative, idiomatic and literary language
- understand a story that is told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' the plot

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Brown level books**

Your child may well not want to read aloud to you any more because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively and not just pass their eyes over the words. You can help them by:

- 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 to your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

## **Grey Level (13)**

Children reading at Grey level are able to interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns. At this level, they should be able to:

- explain a character's motivations
- discuss the points of view of the character and the narrator
- better understand a range of narration styles

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Grey level books**

Your child may well not want to read aloud to you any more because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively and not just pass their eyes over the words. You can help them by:

- 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 to your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

## Blue Level (14)

Children reading at Blue level will be able to gather information from more than one place in the text and use inference based on what is shown rather than being told. This allows for greater complexity in building character and setting.

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Blue level books**

The books at this level are written in a much more subtle way than in previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using. This level is more advanced than many books that are sold to adults but these stories are not intended to be just 'leisure reads'. Although your child should enjoy them, the books need the reader to be fully alert and willing to learn.

You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Suggest that your child invites friends who are also reading the book to a 'Book Group'. If you skim-read the book first – or ask your child's teacher – you can prepare some questions for the book group to discuss.
- 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 you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship ... There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to know the book yourself, but just serve to alert your child to its possibilities.

## Red Level (15)

Children reading at Red level will be able to synthesise information from different places in a text. They are beginning to recognise how layers of meaning allow for the build-up of humour or tension and are able to discuss how the author has achieved the effects.

### **PARENT ADVICE: How to support your child reading Red level books**

The books at this level are written in a much more subtle way than in previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using. This level is more advanced than many books that are sold to adults but these stories are not intended to be just 'leisure reads'. Although your child should enjoy them, the books need the reader to be fully alert and willing to learn.

You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Suggest that your child invites friends who are also reading the book to a 'Book Group'. If you skim-read the book first – or ask your child's teacher – you can prepare some questions for the book group to discuss.
- 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 you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship ... There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to know the book yourself, but just serve to alert your child to its possibilities.