

## Guidance for reading at home with your children



### We've bought hundreds of new reading books to share at home with children after half-term!

We've also taken hours to set up a new, clearer book banding so that teachers and parents can understand the different stages of reading books by the coloured stickers on the sides.

Below is a guide to explain how the books progress in difficulty.

Below that is a more detailed description of what to expect from each level, examples of questions to ask children whilst reading with them, and a list of targets to help prepare them to move on.

We don't expect or want children to race through levels, instead we believe it's important for them to have read a wide range of texts that they can access, so that they build their confidence and a love of reading and discovery.

We're committed to hearing children read in school, both as part of a class and individually. **We ask that all children are heard reading for ten minutes each day**, and that you record their progress once a week in their home reading diaries.

We'd love to see pictures of children enjoying these new books at home, please [tweet](#) any pictures you'd like to share to [@VicParkAcademy](#)

Book band level and colour	Words	Phonics phase	National curriculum (guide)
0 Lilac	0		
1 Pink	under 25	Phase 2	
2 Red	25-80	Phase 3	R Summer secure
3 Yellow	80-120	Phase 3/4	
4 Blue	100-200	Phase 4/5	Y1 Autumn
5 Green	200-300	Phase 5	Y1 Spring
6 Orange	300-450	Phase 5/6	Y1 Summer secure
7 Turquoise	450-600	Phase 5/6	
8 Purple	600-850	Phase 6	
9 Gold	85-1100	Phase 6	
10 White	1100-1500		
11 Lime	1500-2000		Year 2 Summer Secure
12 Brown	Over 200		
13 Grey			Year 3 Summer secure
14 Dark blue			Year 4/5 Summer secure
15 Dark red			Year 6 Summer secure
16 Black			

## Level 0

Wordless books that tell a story through pictures alone. These help children to develop speaking and listening skills through creating and telling stories.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encourage looking at pages in order, talking about left hand page before right hand page.
- Talk about what is happening on each page, rather than just talking about the pictures and what they can see.
- Tell you who or what the book is about.

**Example targets:** hold a book correctly, look at pages in the correct order, know the difference between words and pictures, understand that each letter is different, say who/what the book is about, talk about the pictures and create their own stories.

## Level 1

First level of reading books with words.

Support children reading at this level:

- Read the words carefully – ask children to sound and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually all words become part of children's sight memory, so they won't have to sound out.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than just focusing on what is happening on each page.

**Example targets:** listen carefully to stories, follow the words on a page in the right direction, tell a familiar story in their own words, know that letters have different sounds, and recognise HFW.

## Level 2

Increased number words and pages, slightly more complex story plots. Complexity reinforced through inference and prediction using visual clues.

Support children reading at this level:

- Read the words carefully. Most should be recognised or sounded out. Ask children only to sound out and blend the words they can't read yet.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out.
- Make a story out the whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Children to tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

**Example targets:** find the title of the book, use illustrations to help them understand what is happening in a story, if they are unfamiliar with a word – try to think of a word that would make sense in that sentence, know what a full stop is, use phonemes to read words.

### Level 3

These books require some inference skills from the reader and have more variation in sentence structure, including sentences with more than one clause.

Support children reading at this level:

- Give 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 pics or first letter.
- Give 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.

**Example targets:** retell a story from memory, read a book without pointing at the words (unless they get stuck), blend phonemes together to understand a word, use punctuation such as ? """, work out what is going to happen next, notice and correct some of their mistakes.

### Level 4

Slightly increasing number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. May use ellipses and other punctuation. Story plots may be more complex, including more than one event, and stories less dependent on picture clues.

Support children reading at this level:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to.
- Look at 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 that way.
- Show you how they find particular things that interest them in nonfiction books.

**Example targets:** talk about a story in their own words, notice and correct some mistakes, answer questions about the story to show a level of understanding, read words such as some, little, when and out

### Level 5

Number of words increases again. Stories have wider characters and events, which develop over a number of pages. Sentences may include lists of things or actions, and adverbs used to begin sentences.

Support children reading at this level:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads.
- Look at punctuation marks. May need to model how to read a page paying attention to punctuation.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting that way.
- Show you how they find particular things that interest them in nonfiction books.

**Example targets:** talk about each character, start to read fluently using full stops and commas, notice rhyming words even if unfamiliar with them, read text in unusual layouts such as speech bubbles and lists, use non-fiction features, think about overall plot and how story may end

### Level 6

Pages increase to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased use of dialogue to encourage reading with expression. May include complex sentences 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.

Support children reading at this level:

- Listen to them read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. Revisit the page at the end of the session to check certain words.
- Remind them of useful strategies if they can't read a word – sounding out the word under their breath silently, or dividing a longer word into syllables. Don't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book.
- Encourage 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.
- Talk about how characters are feeling.

**Example targets:** read longer sentences that use conjunctions, read three syllable words, use punctuation correctly when reading aloud, split a story into beginning middle and end to talk about, know what fact fiction and NF means

### Level 7

Include an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'. More print than pictures. These 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.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encouraging children 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.
- Talk 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.

**Example targets:** read a sentence aloud with correct expression, fluently read long sentences and paragraphs, know why certain types of punctuation are used and how it affects the sentence, decode unusual words by using the sounds they already know.

## Level 8

These include an increased proportion of longer sentences with a more challenging vocabulary. Some have short chapters to challenge and encourage reading stamina. They include longer and more complex sentences. 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.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encouraging children 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.
- Talk 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.

**Example targets:** read silently in their head for longer periods, sound out most unfamiliar words as they read, explain their feelings on a book

## Level 9

Books include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary, including word play and the introduction of figurative language. Some 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. When levelled correctly to ensure success, even at this level, the texts will provide just the right level of challenge to encourage children to maintain their progress.

Support children reading at this level:

- 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.

**Example targets:** read silently and aloud with confidence, use punctuation to read clearly, talk about the way a story was written

## Level 10

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. Texts at this 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.

Support children reading at this level:

- 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.

### Level 11

These 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 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.

Support children reading at this level:

- 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.

### Level 12

Children reading at this level should be able to: interpret more sophisticated word play and puns, distinguish the narrator’s voice in a fiction story, understand a story that is told through dialogue and action to ‘show’ instead of ‘tell’ the plot.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encourage children to talk to you about what is happening in the part of the book they have read: can they tell you what is happening in their books?
- Ask questions which make the children go back to the book to find answers.

### Level 13

Children reading at this level are able to interpret more sophisticated word play and puns. They should be able to: explain a character’s motivations, discuss the points of view of the character and narrator, and better understand a range of narration styles.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encourage children to talk to you about what is happening in the part of the book they have read: can they tell you what's happening in their books?
- Ask questions which make the children go back to the book to find answers.

#### Level 14

Children reading at this level should 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. Books are wrote in a more subtle way than previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with reading and alert to the language and vocab being used.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encourage children to talk to a peer also reading the book. If you skim read the book first, you could prepare some questions for a mini book group.
- Before listening to them read, ask the ch to find and note down some particular information. Could relate to the plot or something like a really good descriptive passage.

#### Level 15

Children reading at this level should 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 and tension and are able to discuss how the author has achieved the effects.

Support children reading at this level:

- Encourage children to talk to you about what is happening in the part of the book they have read: can they tell you what's happening in their books?
- Ask questions which make the children go back to the book to find answers.