

## Levels A-J



Dear Parents,

Happy end of the school year! Though the school year is ending, our hope is that your child's reading life continues throughout the summer. The Darien Elementary Schools are working with the Darien Public Library to support families in achieving that goal. The library has a high level, comprehensive summer reading program that is engaging and interactive. Since our mission is that our students read and read a lot, we do not require **any specific book or book list**. Instead, we are asking them to read and record books that they enjoy and make sense for them. That is, books that are 'just right' for them. The library will provide an interactive and motivational electronic reading log for recording time and pages read. You can find the information on the [library's website](#).

Research has shown that children make the most progress in reading when they read books that are on their level and read every day (Allington, McGill-Franzen). A book that is the 'just right' level provides work for the reader, but not so much work that the reader loses the ability to maintain comprehension. By reading 'just right' books, readers learn what comprehension feels like and will then seek that level of understanding whenever he/she reads.

In order to support parents with the understanding of what readers should be able to do at each level, we have included a description of the reading work for each of the levels. Ask your

child questions related to those areas to see how well she/he is doing. Also provided is a list of titles that are on each level in a variety of genres. (Picture books also come in a variety of reading levels. They can include advanced reading levels.) To determine the reading level of any specific book, just google the title and 'guided reading level' and usually the level will be listed.

Happy Reading!

Cory Gillette, Literacy and Social Studies Program Director

[cgillette@darienps.org](mailto:cgillette@darienps.org)

***Readers Who Read Just Right Books at Level A/B***

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics  
“just right” for him or her:***

- 1-2 lines of text
- Simple sentence structure/story line
- A repeating pattern that may change at the end of the book
- Many high frequency words are included to anchor a child’s reading
- Pictures heavily support the text
- Familiar topics
- Text is at the same place on every page
- Generous space between words so children can point to words as they read

**Here are some examples of this type of book:**

- On Market Street by Anita and Arnold Lobel
- Let’s Go Visiting by Sue Williams
- Ollie by Olivier Dunrea
- I Love You Sun, I Love You Moon by Karen Pandell and Tomie dePaola
- I Can Help by Hans Wilhelm
- Best Friends by Marcia Leonard
- I Like Mess by Marcia Leonard
- Cat on the Mat by Brian Wildsmith
- Pig Picnic by Golden Books and Patricia Hubbell
- How Many Fish? Caron Lee Cohen
- Snow Day by Mercer Mayer
- Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert
- Hoptoad by Jane Yolen
- Noses by Melanie Mitchell
- Shapes by Donna Herweck Rice
- See the Monkeys at the Zoo by Santina Bruni
- Beans by Gail Saunders-Smith
- City Street by Kara Stewart
- Wind by Marion Dane Bauer
- My Dog Likes Me by Bobbie Kalman
- On Market Street by Arnold Lobel
- Go by John Serrano
- Lions by Clara Reade
- Giraffe Can Laugh by Kerri O’Donnell
- Is it Big or Little? by Sheila Rivera
- What I See by Holly Keller
- Animal Show by Jill Eggleton

***Readers Who Read Just Right Books at Level C***

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics  
“just right” for him or her:***

- 1-2 lines per page
- Most sentences are simple, but some have more complex structure
- Includes high frequency words and easily decodable words
- Repetitive pattern with 1-3 word changes per page
- Pattern may vary on first and last pages
- Dialogue introduced and pictures heavily support the text. The reader needs to focus on pictures and words.
  
- Familiar topics
- Text is in the same place across the book

**Here are some examples of this type of book:**

- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, by Bill Martin Jr.
- Going to Grandpa's, by Marilyn Frankford
- Halloween Masks for Monster, by Virginia Mueller
- I See Monkeys, by Deborah Williams
- It's Football Time, by Diana Geddes
- I Went Walking, by Sue Williams
- Is It Time? by J.G. Campbell
- Little Sister, by Robin Mitchell
- My Dream, by Brian Woodsmith
- Now We Can Go, by Ann Jonas
- Rainbow of My Own, by Don Freeman
- Scary Monsters, by Kate Eifrig
- Sports, Feathers and Curly Tails, by Nancy Tafuri
- Swing, Swing, Swing, by G. Tuchman & S. Dieterichs
- Toot, Toot, by Brian Wildsmith
- A Trip to the Aquarium, by Carol Kloes
- What a Tale! by Brian Wildsmith
- What Am I? by Deborah Williams
- Where's the Halloween Treat? by Harriet Ziefer
- Can it Fly? by Bobbie Kalman
- Money by Kristen Sterling
- The Sad Princess by Lynne Benton
- In All Directions by Marcia Freeman
- What Can We See in Nature? by Caroline Hutchinson
- Postcards from Barney Bear by Rozanne Lanczak Williams
- It's Football Time by Diana Geddes

### **Readers Who Read Just Right Books at Level D**

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics “just right” for him or her:***

- 2-3 lines per page
- Sentences vary in length and are sometimes is carried over to the next page
- New punctuation may appear
- Repetition of high frequency words
- Compound words and multisyllabic words begin to appear
- Regular spelling patterns
- There is a repetitive pattern with 1-3 word changes per page
- Pattern may vary on first and last few pages
- Dialogue is introduced
- Illustration and labels in factual books
- Pictures need to be read along with the words
- Familiar topics
- Text placement consistent on bottom or top of page

### **Here are some examples of this type of book**

- Biscuit Visits the Big City by Alyssa Satin Capucilli (please be aware of the fact that Biscuit books span various levels)
- Bears in the Night, by Stan and Jan Berenstain (of the Berenstain Bears) This is the easier of the series.
- Blue Bug and the Bullies, by Virginia Poulet
- Cat Traps by Molly Coxe
- Chick and the Duckling, by Mirra Ginsberg
- Footprints in the Snow, by Cynthia Benjamin
- Happy Birthday, Danny and the Dinosaur!, by Syd Hoff
- How Many Bugs in a Box?, by David Carter
- I Like Books, by Anthony Browne
- Mud, by Wendy Lewison
- My Messy Room, by Mary Packard
- Noisy Breakfast, by Ellen Blonder
- Old MacDonald Had a Farm, by Carol Jones
- Oops!, by Mercer Mayer
- Sid and Sam, by Nola Buck
- Sleepy Dog, by Harriet Ziefert
- Things I Like, by Anthony Browne
- Solid or Liquid? by Amy S. Hansen
- North, South, East, West by Meg Greve
- Little Red Hen Gets Help by Kenneth Spengler
- Tortise Races Home by Jill Atkins
- Tree Houses by Karen Hoenecke

**Readers who Read Just Right Books at Level E**

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics  
“just right” for him or her:***

- More complex language, ideas and characters than Level D
- Repetition of high frequency words
- Increased variety of high frequency words
- Multisyllabic and compound words
- Dialogue included
- Illustration of labels in factual books
- Moderate picture support
- Familiar topics
- More lines of text on each page
- Text placement consistent on bottom or top of page
- Interesting vocabulary
- Includes more words that are not as easily decodable
- Full range of punctuation

**Here are some examples of this type of book**

- Bugs! Bugs! Bugs! by Bob Barner
- The Baby by John Burningham
- Big Friend, Little Friend by Eloise Greenfield
- Big Eggs by Molly Coxe
- The Blanket by John Burningham
- Five Little Monkey’s Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Chrsitelow
- Foot Book by Dr. Seuss
- A Funny Man by Patricia Jensen
- Go Dog Go by Phillip D. Eastman
- Happy Egg by Robert Kraus
- Herman the Helper by Robert Kraus
- Inside Out, Upside Down by Stan and Jan Berenstain
- Is Tomorrow My Birthday? by Wendy Blaxland
- It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles Shaw
- My Brother, the Brat by Kristen Hall
- My Dad’s Truck by Meredith Costain
- Oh, Cats! by Nola Buck
- Paper Bag Trail by Anne Schreiber & A. Doughty
- The Pet That I Want by Mary Packard
- Spending Money by Tanya Thayer
- Bumble Bees by Cheryl Coughlan
- Snow White and the Enormous Turnip
- Best Friends by Marcia Leonard

**Readers who Read Just Right Books at Level F**

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics “just right” for him or her:***

- Text requires close attention to print
- Concepts may be unfamiliar to students or abstract
- Themes may include realistic stories, human and animal fantasy, simple folktales and informational texts
- Full range of punctuation to enhance meaning
- Increasing variety of high frequency words
- Greater variety in vocabulary
- Some unusual language patterns
- Longer sentences
- More lines of text on a page, smaller print
- May have more technical words

**Here are some examples of this type of book**

- Across the Stream by Mirra Ginsberg
- Amy Loves the Snow by Julia Hoban
- Are You My Mommy? by Carla Dijs
- A Birthday in the Woods by Lynn Salem & J. Stewart
- A Bug, a Bear, and a Boy by David McPhail
- Cookie’s Week by Cindy Ward
- A Dark, Dark Tale by Ruth Brown
- Friendly Snowman by William Joyce
- Harry Takes a Bath by Harriet Ziefert
- Herman the Helper Lends a Hand by Robert Kraus
- Hooray for Snail by John Stadler
- Is This You? by Ruth Krauss
- Just Like Daddy by Frank Asch
- Marmalade’s Nap by Cindy Wheeler
- Pizza Party! by Grace Maccarone
- Rosie’s Walk by Pat Hutchins
- SHHH by Kevin Henkes
- Shoveling Snow by Pat Cummings
- Thank You, Nicky! By Harriet Ziefert
- Who Will Be My Friends? by Syd Hoff
- Puppy Mudge Series by Cynthia Rylant
- Animal Habitats by Margaret MacDonald
- We Honor American by Laura Young
- From Ice to Stream by Susan Ludlow

**Readers who Read Just Right Books at Level G**

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics “just right” for him or her:***

- Several episodes within a plot line
- Variety of characters are introduced
- Challenges in ideas and vocabulary
- Story line completely carried out by text
- Texts are longer, requiring readers to remember information and action over a longer reading time
- Little support through repetition and longer sentences
- More difficult high frequency words are introduced
- Greater quantity of multisyllabic words
- Vocabulary may be technical and require content knowledge
- Variety of styles of print and text layout
- Illustrations support and extend meaning

**Here are some examples of this type of book**

- The Big Fat Worm by Nancy Van Laan
- Biscuit by Alyssa Satin Capucilli
- Boris Bad Enough by Robert Kraus
- The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss
- Cat and Dog by Else H. Minarik
- The Dog by John Burningham
- Each Pear, Each Plum by Allan & Janet Ahlberg
- The Great Race by David McPhail
- Jason’s Bus Race by Harriet Ziefert
- Just for You by Mercer Mayer
- Mine’s the Best by Crosby Bonsall
- More Spaghetti I Say by Rita Gelman
- A New House for Mole and Mouse by Harriet Ziefert
- No Mail for Mitchell by Catherine Siracusa
- Rabbit’s Party by Eve Bunting & E. Sloan-Childers
- Sheep in a Jeep by Nancy Shaw
- Three Cheers for Hippo by John Stadler
- Three Kittens by Mirra Ginsberg
- Titch by Pat Hutchins
- Freight Train by Donald Crews
- Miss Smith’s Incredible Storybook by Michael Garland
- Snowballs by Lois Ehlert
- No David! by David Shannon
- Water Bugs by Helen Frost
- City Shapes by Helen Frost
- I Want to be an Astronaut by Byron Barton



## **Readers who Read Just Right Books at Level H**

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics “just right” for him or her:***

- Longer and more varied texts
- Content that is either within the children’s experience or adds only little new information
- Literary language
- Some poetic language
- Greater range of vocabulary
- Frequent use of multisyllabic words and full range of high frequency words
- Story events require some interpretation
- Size and placement of text varies
- More lines of text

### **Here are some examples of this type of book**

- Bee My Valentine by Miriam Cohen
- Captain Cat by Syd Hoff
- A Clean House for Mole and Mouse by Harriet Ziefert
- Danny and the Dinosaur Go to Camp by Syd Hoff
- Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- If I Had An Alligator by Mercer Mayer
- It’s George! by Miriam Cohen
- Just Me and My Dad by Mercer Mayer
- A Kiss for Little Bear by Tana Hoban
- Old Hat, New Hat by Stan and Jan Berenstain
- Oliver by Robert Kraus
- A Picture for Harold’s Room by Crockett Johnson
- Put Me in the Zoo by Robert Lopshire
- Sammy the Seal by Syd Hoff
- Seven Little Monsters by Maurice Sendak
- We Are Best Friends by Alike
- What Game Shall We Play? by Pat Hutchins
- Where Are You Going, Little Mouse? by Robert Kraus
- You’ll Soon Grow Into Them Titch by Pat Hutchins
- Biscuit’s Big Friend by Alyssa Satin Capucilli,
- Happy Birthday Danny and the Dinosaur! By Syd Hoff
- Shoo, Fly Guy! By Ted Arnold
- Bad Hair Day by Suan Hood
- The Teeny Tiny Woman, by Harriet Ziefert
- Anansi Spider's Thin Legs, by Vanessa York
- Morris the Moose, by B. Wiseman
- Little Critter Sleeps Over, by Mercer Mayer
- Tale of a Tadpole by Karen Wallace
- 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School by Angel Shelf Medearis

**Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book**  
**Readers who Read Just Right Books at Level I**

***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics “just right” for him or her:***

- Stories range from 8-16 pages with smaller font
- Some easy illustrated chapter books of 50-60 pages
- Complex word solving required
- Familiar content and some new content that typically children would not know
- Multi-syllabic words embedded in longer sentences and paragraphs
- Books call for sustaining interest and meaning over several reading periods
- Events in the text are more highly elaborated
- Illustrations enhance meaning, little support for precise word solving
- There is a great deal of dialogue

**Here are some examples of this type of book**

- Barney’s Horse by Syd Hoff
- The Lighthouse Children by Syd Hoff
- Bike Lesson by Stan and Jan Berernstain
- Clifford’s Family by Norman Bridwell
- Dragon Gets By by Dav Pilkey
- Dragon’s Fat Cat by Dav Pilkey
- A Friend for Dragon by Dav Pilkey
- Goodnight Owl by Pat Hutchins
- Hattie and the Fox by Mem Fox
- Hiccups for Elephant by James Preller
- Jim Meets the Thing by Miriam Cohen
- Jim’s Dog Muffins by Miriam Cohen
- Just a Mess by Mercer Mayer
- Just Grandma and Me by Mercer Mayer
- The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn
- McDuff Moves In by Rosemary Wells
- There’s a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer
- Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus
- The Napping House by Don and Audrey Wood
- Noisy Nora by Rosemary Wells
- Toby and the Big Red Van by Annette Smith
- Oliver and Amanda and the Big Snow by Jean Van Leeuwen
- Living in a Desert by Allan Fowler
- The Elves and the Shoemaker by Libby Brereton
- The Quilt by Ann Jonas
- The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle
- Spot’s Birthday Party by Eric Hill
- Water as Liquid by Helen Frost

***Readers who Read Just Right Books at Level J***  
***As a reader, your child would be likely to find books with the following characteristics “just right” for him or her:***

- A wide range of high frequency words, and some technical words
- Chapter books (most approximately 40-75 pages)
- Non-fiction texts are typically shorter (approximately 24-36 pages)
- Some books offer challenge in presenting new information or use literary language
- Complex word solving required
- Multi-syllabic words embedded in longer sentences and paragraphs
- Texts call for sustaining interest and meaning over several reading periods
- Variety of dialogue
- Dialogue signaled by speaker (said, cried, answered)

**Here are some examples of this type of book**

- Henry and Mudge, series by Cynthia Rylant
- Mr. Putter and Tabby, series by Cynthia Rylant
- Clifford and the Grouchy Neighbors by Norman Bridwell
- Cilfford Takes a Trip by Norman Bridwell
- Clifford Visits the Hospital by Norman Bridwell
- Owl and Home by Arnold Lobel
- Mouse Soup by Arnold Lobel
- Mouse Tales by Arnold Lobel
- Days with Frog and Toad by Arnold Lobel
- The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
- Jillian Jiggs by Phoebe Gilman
- The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins
- Franklin Plays the Game by Paulette Bourgeois and Brenda Clark
- The Little Red Hen by Paul Galdone
- Bear Shadow by Frank Asch
- Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss
- Charlie Needs a Clock by Tomie de Paola
- Curious George and the Ice Cream by M. Rey
- Father Bear Comes Home by E.H. Minarik
- Little Fireman by Margaret Wise Brown
- Stone Soup by Ann McGovern
- Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
- Adventures of Snail at School by John Stadler
- I Can Read with My Eyes Shut! by Dr Seuss
- As The Crow Flies: A First Book of Maps by Gail Hartman
- Sun Up, Sun Down by Gail Gibbons
- The Statue of Liberty by Lucille Recht Penner
- Curious George and the Birthday Surprise by H.A. Rey