

# Independent (“Just Right”) Reading Descriptions

## Level J

### Characteristics of Level J Books

- Informational texts, simple animal fantasy, realistic fiction, traditional literature (folktales), some *simple biographies* on familiar subjects
- Beginning chapter books with illustrations (*40-75 pages*); *many series, some graphic texts*
- *Chapters connected by character and plot*
- Underlying organizational structures used and presented clearly (description, compare and contrast, problem and solution)
- Some unusual formats, such as letters or questions followed by answers
- *Some ideas/settings new to most children* - some abstract concepts that are highly supported by text and illustrations
- *Some texts, including graphic novels, require the reader to infer the story from pictures or dialogue - more elaboration of characters/traits*
- Some have several points of view
- Varied placement of subject, verb, adjectives and adverbs in sentences
- Texts require *more interpretation* on the part of the reader
- *Many longer and complex sentences* - phrases, clauses, *some parentheses*
- Some complex spelling patterns and letter-sound relationships in words
- Many lines of print on a page

### Characteristics of Readers at Level J

- Able to process a *variety of texts* (short fiction texts, short informational texts, and longer narrative texts that have illustrations, short chapters)
- *Adjust reading strategies as needed* to process different genres
- Process increasingly more complex sentences
- Have a large, expanding sight-word vocabulary
- Able to *quickly apply word-solving strategies* for complex spelling patterns, multisyllable words, and words with inflectional endings, plurals, contractions, and possessives
- Read silently during independent reading
- Oral reading reflects appropriate rate, stress, intonation, phrasing, and pausing

# Sample Texts

## Level J

**All-Star Examples:** *Mr. Putter and Tabby* (series), *Henry and Mudge* (series), *Young Cam Jansen* (series), *Iris and Walter* (series) *Shortcut* (Crews)

**Books titles at my level include:**

TITLE	AUTHOR	TITLE	AUTHOR
Bringing The Rain To Kapiti Plain	Aardema, Verna	<b>Little House (for younger)</b>	Wilder, Laura I
Danny And The Dinosaur	Hoff, Syd	<b>Small Wolf</b>	Benchley, Nathani
Harry The Dirty Dog	Zion, Gene	The Persian Cinderella	Climo, Shirley
Aunt Eater Loves A Mystery	Cushman, Doug	Ming Lo Loves the Mountain	Lobel, Arnold
Big Max	Platt, Kin	Celebrating Chinese New Year:	Drew, Rosa
Detective Dinosaur	Skofield, James	The Tortilla Factory	Paulsen, Gary
<b>Poppleton</b>	Rylant, Cynthia	Shortcut	Crews, Donald
And I Mean It, Stanley	Bonsall, Crosby N.	Apple Pie Fourth of July	Wong, Janet S.
Farmer Brown & Dapple Gray	Brown, Craig	Friends at School	Bunnett, Rochelle
<b>Fox And His Friends</b>	Marshall, Edward	Fire Fighter	Royston, Angela
Ghosts!: Ghostly Tales from...	Schwartz, Alvin	Inclined Planes	Dahl, Michael
The Author on My Street	Cook, Lisa Broadie	The Little Red Hen	Galdone, Paul
<b>Minnie and Moo</b>	Cazet, Denys	Somebody and the Three Blairs	Tolhurst, Marilyn
Goggles!	Keats, Ezra Jack	Beautiful Blackbird	Bryan, Ashley
Oliver Button Is A Sissy	dePaola, Tomie	The Gingerbread Man	Aylesworth, Jim
<b>Little Bear</b>	Menarik, Else H.	Raven: A Trickster Tale from...	McDermott, Gerald
<b>Young Cam Jansen</b>	Adler, David	Fantastic Frogs!	Robinson, Fay
Author: A True Story	Lester, Helen	Great White Shark	Nuzzolo, Deborah
<b>Mr. Putter and Tabby</b>	Rylant, Cynthia	Hammerhead Shark	Nuzzolo, Deborah
<b>Henry and Mudge</b>	Rylant, Cynthia	How a Seed Grows	Helene, Jordan
<b>Froggy</b>	London, Jonathan	How To Make Salsa	Lucerno, Jamie
<b>Buster</b>	Brown, Marc	I Am a Rock	Marzollo, Jean
Where the Wild Things Are	Sendak, Maurice	<b>Living on the Plains</b>	<b>Fowler, Allan</b>
<b>Zelda and Ivy Series</b>	Kvasnosky, Laura M	Neil Armstrong	Rau, Dana M
<b>Space Race</b>	Cowley, Joy	Over in the Meadow	Wadsworth, Olive
<b>The Dumb Bunnies</b>	Pilkey, Dav	Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf	Ehlert, Lois
Nurse Shark (other shark)	Nuzzolo, Deborah	Scaly Animals	Nelson, May
Octopuses (other sea...)	Lindeen, Carol	Sharks	Guiberson, Brenda
On the Open Plains	Marilyn Woolley	Snow	Bauer, Marion
Puppies! Puppies!...	Susan Meyers	The Grouchy Ladybug	Carle, Eric

\*Bold titles are Series books.

**REMEMBER:** You can sometimes find titles at your level or check the level of a book you already have on Scholastic's Book Wizard site. Look for the initials GRL (meaning Guided Reading Level) - this is the level we use at school. [www.scholastic.com/bookwizard](http://www.scholastic.com/bookwizard)

Nancy Giansante is a librarian who keeps a nice leveled book list at her website:

<http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante/>

This site is searchable by grade level suggestions, titles, and author names.