

Independent (“Just Right”) Reading Descriptions Level 5

Characteristics of Level 5 Books

- Wide range of genre and forms - including historical fiction & short stories - some collections that have interrelated themes or build a single plot across the book
- In information texts, texts with multiple topics and categories within them; prior knowledge often required
- Fiction texts contain settings requiring knowledge of content, others' experiences; address important problems, social issues, challenging themes; *complex plots with subplots and/or multiple storylines; content appealing to preadolescents*
- Various ways of showing characters' attributes; multiple characters to understand; factors related to their change are less explicit and obvious; memorable characters have both good and bad traits that change over time
- Complex plots with numerous episodes & time passing; many stories have moral lessons close to the end of the story & many have parallel or circular plots
- Some texts - abstract themes & lessons requiring inferential thinking to derive; many ideas and themes require an understanding of cultural diversity
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors
- Long strings of unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred; long stretches of descriptive language important to understanding setting, characters
- Extensive use of figurative language important to understand plot
- *Words that are seldom used in oral language and are difficult to decode*
- New vocabulary in fiction largely unexplained, while content-specific words are mostly defined in text, illustrations or glossary
- Vocabulary words are used figuratively/to show an abstract idea and/or must be figured out from context in order to fully understand the story

Characteristics of Readers at Level 5

- Can remember information in summary form over chapters, a series of short stories, or sequels in order to understand larger themes (& report in organized way)
- Make connections between characters in different texts (setting, problem, person)
- Can explain how an author supports particular points in a text
- *Can express changes in ideas or perspective after and while reading*
- Will vary the pace of reading, as needed; will form questions & search for answers
- Can read and understand the connotative & figurative meaning of words
- Can process texts with dense print
- Can solve complex multisyllable (3+) words (vowels, phonograms, affixes, etc)
- Can identify and use words with multiple meanings, or difficult proper nouns
- Can infer characters' feelings/motivations, using cause/effect, dialogue, or what other characters say about them; can manage multidimensional characters
- Can take unfamiliar perspectives when interpreting about characters

Sample Texts - Level S

All-Star Examples: *Matilda, A Taste of Blackberries, From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, The Great Gilly Hopkins, Journey To Jo'burg, Trouble River, In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson*

Books titles at my level include:

TITLE	AUTHOR
The Dollhouse Murders	Wright, Betty Ren
The Robe Of Skulls	French, Vivian
Granny Torrelli Makes Soup	Creech, Sharon
The Sea Of Monsters	Riordan, Rick
The Onts	Greenburg, Dan
The Pirate, Big Fist, And Me	Cosson, M.J.
The Young Man And The Sea	Philbrick, Rodman
Uncle Jed's Barbershop	Mitchell, Margaree King
A Maze Me: Poems For Girls	Nye, Naomi Shihab
Project Mulberry	Park, Linda Sue
The Penderwicks (trilogy)	Birdsall, Jeanne
Mosquito Bite	Siy, Alexandra and Kunkel, Dennis
Owls	Markle, Sandra
Three Good Deeds	Vivian Vande Velde
Warriors Series: Books 1-6	Eric Hunter
Weeping Werewolf, The	Bruce Coville
Which Witch?	Eva Ibbotson
Awake and Dreaming	Kit Pearson
Bell, the Book, and the Spellbinder, The	Brad Strickland
Borrowers, The	Mary Norton
Brave	Irene William Steig
Cricket in Times Square, A	George Selden
Dragon of Lonely Island, The	Rebecca Rupp
Dragons of Deltora Series	Emily Rodda
Island of the Aunts	Eva Ibotson
My Teacher is ... Series	Bruce Coville
Perloo the Bold	Avi
Caleb's Choice	Wisler, G. Clifton
Children Of The Longhouse	Bruchac, Joseph
Facing West	Kudlinski, Kathleen V.
Mississippi Bridge	Taylor, Mildred D.
Tales From Homeplace	Dale, Shelley
The Friendship	Taylor, Mildred D.
Uncle Jed's Barbershop	Margaree King
In The Year Of The Boar And Jackie Robinson	Lord, Bette
Letters From Rifka	Hesse, Karen
When Jessie Came Across The Sea	Hest, Amy

*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

Nancy Giansante is a librarian who keeps a leveled book list at her website: <http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante>
This site is searchable by grade level suggestions, titles, and author names.