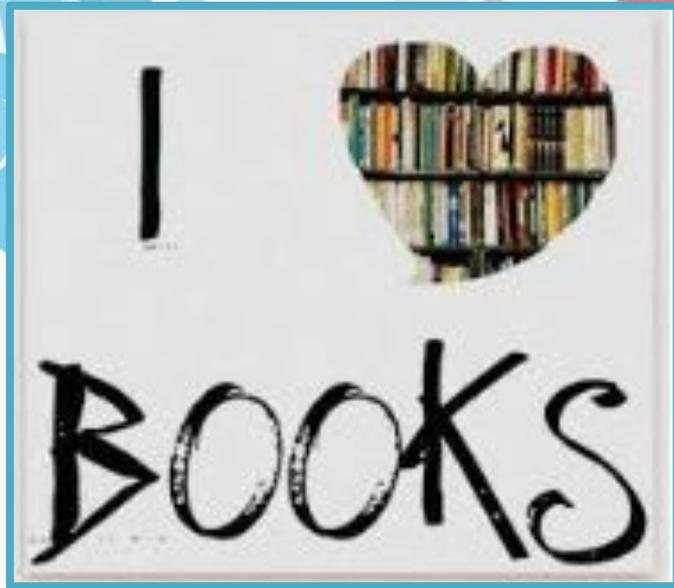


Curriculum Cafe



Angie Rosen

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Little Silver School District

Let's Talk About Leveled Books!

Markham Place Media Center

February 27, 2019

Tonight's Cafe Agenda

1. What do the levels mean?
2. Why were levels created?
3. How should they be used and by whom?
4. How should levels **NOT** be used?
5. How do we instill the love of reading and books in our children?

What are levels

..... and what do they mean?

Reading Level Correlation Chart

| Grade Level | DRA | F & P | Reading o-z.com | Lexie |
|-------------|-------|-------|-----------------|------------|
| K | 1-2 | A | AA | — |
| | | B | A | |
| | | C | B | |
| | | C | C | |
| 1 | 3-4 | D | D | 190L-530L |
| | | E | E | |
| | | F | F | |
| | | G | G | |
| | | H | H | |
| | | I | I | |
| 2 | 5-8 | J | J, K | 420L-650L |
| | | K | L | |
| | | L | M | |
| | | M | N, O | |
| 3 | 9-12 | N | P, Q | 820L-820L |
| | | O | R, S | |
| | | D-P | T | |
| | | P | U | |
| 4 | 13-16 | Q-R | V | 740L-940L |
| | | R-S | W | |
| 5 | 17-20 | T-U | X | 830L-1010L |
| | | U-V | Y | |

Dr. Megan Rozen
www.readinglevel.com

What Are Some Criteria for Leveling Books?

No single aspect or characteristic of text can be used to evaluate reading material. In placing a text along a gradient of difficulty, many factors are considered.

After the NJSLs were developed levels adjusted.
(ie: Kindergarten is now levels A-D)

How are books Leveled?

Factors considered when leveling a text include but are not limited to the following:

- ❖ Length —
- ❖ Layout —
- ❖ Structure and Organization —
- ❖ Illustrations —
- ❖ Words —
- ❖ Phrases and Sentences —
- ❖ Literary Features —
- ❖ Content and Theme —



How are books Leveled?



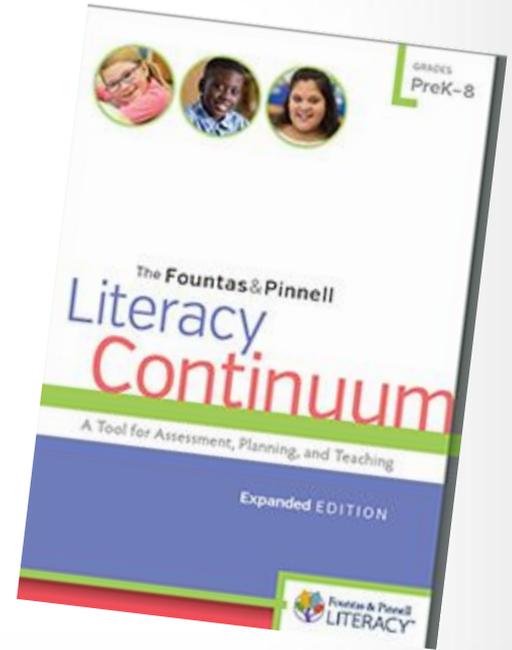
- **Quantitative Leveling:** Systems like the [Lexile Framework](#) leveled texts through computer programs that measured dimensions like text length and complexity.

| <i>Grade Level</i> | <i>Former Lexile Range</i> | <i>CCSS Lexile Range</i> | <i>CCSS Lexile Bands</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 nd | 396-610L | 420-650L | 420-820L |
| 3 rd | 606-800L | 520-820L | |
| 4 th | 701-900L | 740-940L | 740-1010L |
| 5 th | 801-1000L | 830-1010L | |
| 6 th | 876-1050L | 925-1070L | 925-1185L |
| 7 th | 951-1105L | 970-1120L | |
| 8 th | 1011-1155L | 1010-1185L | |
| 9 th | 1106-1250L | 1050-1260L | 1050-1335L |
| 10 th | 1126-1305L | 1080-1335L | |
| 11 th – 12 th | 1186-1355L | 1185-1385L | 1185-1385L |

- **Qualitative Leveling:** This type of leveling is done by humans, and while it considers things like text length and complexity, it also takes more nuanced qualities into consideration, like whether a text delivers information in a purely straightforward way or contains multiple levels of meaning. One popular qualitative system is Fountas and Pinnell's [Text Level Gradient](#).

Why do we use leveled texts?

- ◆ One size does not fit all
- ◆ Students need to develop reading skills at their own pace
- ◆ Grouping students for learning in leveled texts is based on data assessment that reflects student need
- ◆ Learning to read is done in stage of readiness
- ◆ More personalized and precise approach to monitor a child's progress
- ◆ Provides success which impacts a love of reading



The Literacy Continuum



A description of the specific behaviors that can be observed in proficient readers, writers, and language users

Across grade levels, across the levels of texts, across context... a thorough roadmap of where they have been and where they are going

Readers at Level 1

At level 1, readers process text that are mostly short (sixteen pages), as well as a few easy illustrated chapter books (fifty to sixty pages) that require them to sustain attention and memory over time. They encounter compound sentences and some other long sentences of more than fifteen words that contain prepositional phrases, adjectives, adverbs, and clauses. Readers can effectively process these complex sentences and, in addition, automatically recognize a large number of words. Readers use word-solving strategies for complex spelling patterns, unrecognizable words, phrasal contractions, possessives, and many words with inflectional endings. They read many texts silently, following the text with their eyes and without pointing. In oral reading, they reflect appropriate rate, word stress, intonation, phrasing, and pausing. Readers process texts with multiple characters and episodes. In fiction texts they can identify the setting, the story problem, and how it is resolved. They can identify character attributes and linkages and detect change (although at this level characters are not fully developed). They learn new content from expository texts and notice when a writer uses underlying structures such as description, temporal sequence, question and answer, and chronological sequence. Readers use academic language to talk about texts.

Selecting Texts: Characteristics of Texts at Level 1

GENRE

- Fiction
 - Realistic fiction
 - Traditional literature (folklore, fairy tale, fable)
- Actual history
- Nonfiction
 - Expository texts
 - Simple narrative nonfiction
 - Procedural texts

FORMS

- Some series books
- Picture books
- Beginning chapter books with illustrations
- Simple plays
- Reader theater scripts

TEXT STRUCTURE

- Narrative texts with straightforward structure (beginning, series of episodes, and an ending)
- Narrative texts with multiple episodes, with episodes that may be more elaborate, and with less repetition of similar episodes
- Text books with very short chapters, each with narrative structure
- Some text-to-texts: e.g., cumulative tales, story arcs

- Underlying structural patterns: description, temporal sequence, chronological sequence, question and answer (expository)

CONTENT

- Content interesting to and relevant for young readers
- Familiar context: e.g., family and home, play, pets, animals, school, food, community, friends, daily activities, the human body, weather, seasons, transportation, machines
- Moderate level of support provided by picture information
- More content that goes beyond students' immediate experience: e.g., different environments and communities, animals of the world
- Some stories with content familiar to students through prior experiences with storytelling, media, and hearing books read: e.g., folktales and fantasy

THEMES AND IDEAS

- Concrete themes close to students' experience: e.g., imagination, courage, fear, friendship, family relationships, self, home, nature, growing behavior, community, peer responsibilities, diversity, belonging, peer relationships, feelings
- Clear, simple ideas easy to identify and understand

- More close to students' experience: e.g., sharing with others, caring for others, doing your job, helping your family, taking care of self, staying healthy, caring for your world, empathizing with others, problem solving, solving differences, expressing feelings

LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES

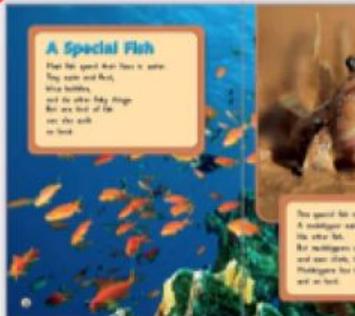
- Some texts with settings that are not typical of many children's experiences
- Plot with conflict and resolution
- Plot that includes multiple episodes
- Characters with names
- Characters that change very little but may do some learning, and some characters revealed over a series of books
- Variety in presentation of dialogue: e.g., dialogue among multiple characters, dialogue with narrator, split dialogue, direct dialogue
- Dialogue usually assigned to speakers, with some unassigned
- Some long stretches of dialogue
- Elements of fantasy: e.g., talking animals or inanimate objects
- Rich mouth of traditional literature and modern fantasy: e.g., struggle between good and evil, magic, fantastic or magical objects, wishes, victory, transformations
- Procedural language
- Language used to make comparisons
- Some descriptive language

SENTENCE COMPLEXITY

- Some longer sentences with more than fifteen words
- Statements and questions
- Variation in placement of subject, verb, adjectives, and adverbs
- Some sentences with clauses or phrases
- Sentences with adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases
- Many sentences beginning with phrases
- Some sentences beginning with subordinate (dependent) clauses
- A few compound sentences joined by conjunctions
- Some complex sentences with variety in order of clauses

VOCABULARY

- Most vocabulary words known by children through oral language, listening to stories, or reading
- Most words that are in common oral vocabulary for younger children (Tier 1)
- A few words that appear in the vocabulary of mature language users (Tier 2)
- Some content-specific words introduced, explained, and illustrated in the text requiring use of context for understanding
- Variation in words used to assign dialogue: e.g., said, asked, cried, yelled
- Many adjectives describing people, places, or things



Example of characteristics and traits in a Guided Reading Book level 1

With this guide from a leveled text teachers have the ability to teach with intention

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Adverbs describing actions

- Simple sentences (words, phrases that clearly relationships and ideas) e.g., and, the, because, after

WORDS

- Mostly one-, two-, and three-syllable words with moderate picture support
- Simple plurals using -s or -es and some irregular plurals: e.g., sheep
- A variety of high-frequency words (100+)
- Words with inflectional endings: e.g., -s, -ing, -ed
- Words with easy spelling patterns (VC, CVC, CVC CVC, CVC, VC, VCC)
- Contractions, possessives, and compound words

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Illustrations of the important content and ideas in the text
- Illustrations that enhance and extend meaning in the text
- Illustrations with details that add interest and sometimes humor
- Illustrations that support interpretation, enhance enjoyment, or are novel but that are not necessary for understanding
- Many short texts with illustrations on every page or page spread
- Some texts with minimal illustrations

Simple sentences in a variety of forms

- Photos and/or drawing with label or captions, diagrams, map

BOOK AND PRINT FEATURES

LENGTH

- Short, usually sixteen pages
- Typically less than 500 words per book (200-300)

PRINT AND LAYOUT

- Print in clear font on pale background, sometimes with "background" (white or light)
- Mostly three to eight lines of text per page
- Sentences beginning on the left and ending near central line
- Some limited italics in print placement
- Margins under pictures that provide important information
- Clear spaces between words
- Print clearly separated from pictures
- Captions under pictures that provide important information

PUNCTUATION

- Use of period, comma, question mark, exclamation mark, and quotation marks
- Ellipses in some texts to indicate that the sentence finishes on the next page

ORGANIZATIONAL TOOLS

- Title, heading

**Fountas and Pinnell
speak out on why they
created their leveling
system...**



“The goal was for teachers to learn about the characteristics of each level to inform their decisions in teaching—how they introduce a book, how they discuss a book, how they help children problem-solve as they process a book. We created the levels for books, and not as labels for children, and our goal was that these levels be in the hands of people who understand their complexity and use them to make good decisions in instruction.”

COMMON MISTAKES WITH LEVELED TEXTS



COMMON MISTAKES WITH LEVELED TEXTS



LEVELING READERS INSTEAD OF BOOKS

Levels are for books, not for kids. Reading is a complex activity influenced by many variables, and students are never at a fixed level.

INSTEAD: Get to know students as readers from many angles, including language, culture, interests, reading history, and insights gained from conferencing.

RESTRICTING CHOICE BASED ON ONE ASSESSMENT

One brief assessment only provides a snapshot of a child's ability and can lead to inaccurate text matching.

INSTEAD: Take multiple factors into account when pairing students with books, such as varied assessments, background knowledge, motivation, and text genre.

INFLEXIBILITY

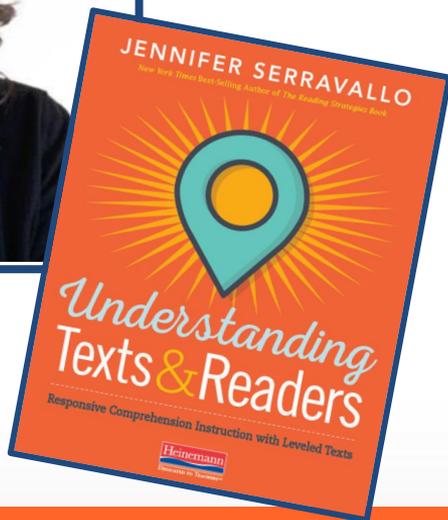
Only allowing students to choose books from a narrow range of levels doesn't take other important factors into account.

INSTEAD: Use levels as a shortcut to knowing some likely features of books, but allow other factors to influence book choices. Talk about books with language that focuses on student goals, not on fixed levels.

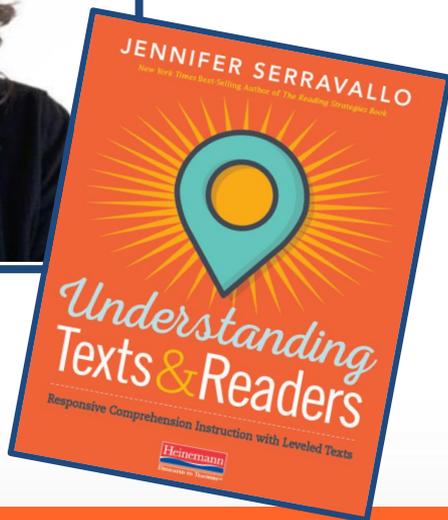
ORGANIZING BOOKS BY LEVEL

When libraries organize books by levels, students' reading identities become focused mostly on level.

INSTEAD: Organize books by topic, genre, author, and other categories related to interest or similarity to other well-loved books. Text levels can be placed on the inside front cover for reference.



Jennifer Serravallo in [Understanding Texts & Readers: Responsive Comprehension Instruction with Leveled Texts.](#) shows teachers how to combine their knowledge of text levels and students to assess student comprehension, set goals, and match students with books that are just right for them.

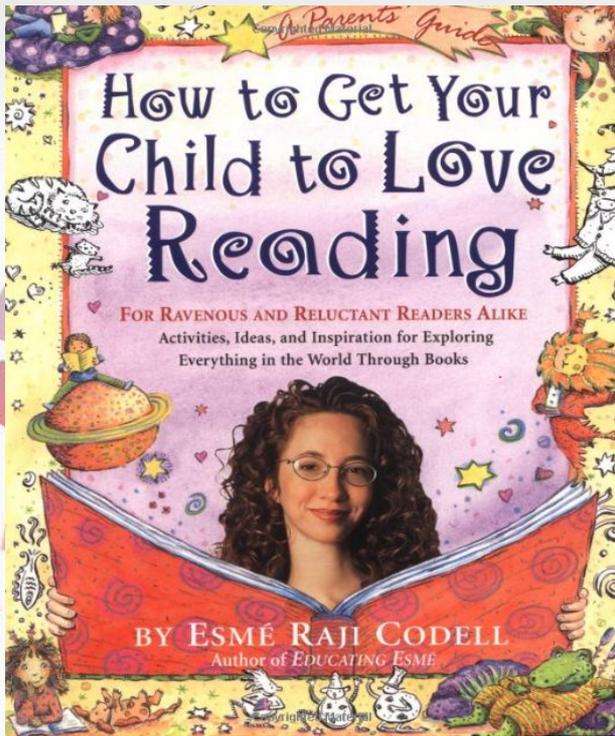


“You’ve got this kid being pushed through because they can maybe decode the text but not because they’re actually getting everything they can from it in terms of comprehension and meaning making....”

Decoding and Word Calling is not reading. Reading is constructing meaning from text.

How to get children to love reading books





- Themes for storytimes
- Book-based birthday parties
- Stories for reluctant readers
- Book groups for boys
- Step-by-step instructions for book parades
- Book related crafts
- Storytelling festivals
- Literature-based radio broadcasts
- Readers' theaters
- Book lists
- subject -driven reading recommendations for science, math, cooking nature, adventure, music , weather, gardening, sports, mythology, poetry, history, etc

Codell's creative thinking and infectious enthusiasm will empower even the busiest parents and children to include literature in their lives!

Raise a Child Who Loves to Read

1. Read to your child from the earliest age.
2. Begin visiting the library regularly (Recommended Children's Books).
3. Don't push your child to learn to read.
4. Read to your child as often as possible.
5. Don't stop reading to him once he learns to read.
Never stop reading to her.
6. Ritualize daily reading time.
7. Help her tackle the next level.
8. Help him improve his reading by alternating pages with him
9. Try smart comics for reluctant readers.
10. Read yourself.



But Not All Kids

Are Motivated to Read

Some kids hate to read ... especially
struggling readers.

More Tips to Help You Motivate a Reluctant Reader

- ❖ Make time for reading.
- ❖ Set aside a regular read-aloud time
- ❖ Create a cozy reading nook for your child.
- ❖ Make sure the reading material isn't beyond your child's reading abilities.
- ❖ Look for a variety of reading material.
- ❖ Have your reluctant reader read easy picture books to younger siblings.
- ❖ Try buddy reading with your struggling reader.
- ❖ Let humor work its magic!
- ❖ Exhibit a love of reading.
- ❖ Provide access to books.



“A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies, said Jojen. The man who never reads lives only one.”

— George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*

These are powerful words, and they speak to the power of reading to open doors to empathy, adventure, and learning. A love of reading doesn't happen automatically though. It needs to be nurtured and guided until it flourishes into a well-read, well-rounded human being.

link



link

The New York Times | Books

Want to Raise Your Child to Love Reading?
Read These Secrets



Start Them Early

How to Grow a Reader

Foster a Family of Readers

Know Your Books