



Swalecliffe Community Primary School
Child first, pupil second

Reading Bands at Swalecliffe School

The following is a guide to our reading bands at how you might support your child at each 'level'.

The questions can be used alongside these ideas.

	Pink a
	Pink b



The number of words in this band increases slightly as your child progresses through this level. Many of these books encourage early phonics and use of pictures.

How to Support

Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they cannot yet read, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory'.
- On second and third reading of the book, encourage more pace with less focus on sounding out.
- Ask them to tell you something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

	Red a
	Red b

Red level books have a slightly increased number of words or pages with slightly more complex story lines.

This growing complexity is reinforced through development of inference and prediction using visual literacy.

How to Support

As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Most words can be recognised or sounded out. Ask your child to sound out or blend only the words they cannot yet read not every word. Your child's 'sight memory' will be increasing.
- On second and third reading of the book, encourage more pace with less focus on sounding out.
- Ask them to tell you something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

	Yellow
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New learning in Yellow includes a slightly increased number of words and a move away from familiar experiences. Non-fiction builds on children's interests and encourage discussion around the photograph.

Yellow books require some inferencing skills (e.g. for humour) and have more variation in sentence structure.

How to Support

As they read aloud, you can help them by:

- Giving them time to sound out words they don't know. If they struggle, encourage them to try sounding.
- Give them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
- Ask them what is happening in the book, encouraging them to make links to events in previous pages.



	Blue
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These book have a slightly increased number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. They may use more varied punctuation. Story lines are more complex, including more than one event, and the stories may be less dependent on picture clues.

How to Support

Your child is developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select books at the library or in book shops as well as these from school. As they read, encourage them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads when needed.
- Look at punctuation marks. You may want to model a page paying attention to full stops and question marks.
- Ask your child to tell you about the characters and explain why they might be acting in a certain way.

	Green
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Again, the number of words increases. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages.

Sentences may include lists of actions, and adverbs are used to begin sentences.

The growing complexity in story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction.

How to Support

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads when needed.
- Look at punctuation marks. You may want to model a page paying attention to full stops and question marks.
- Ask your child to tell you about the characters and explain why they might be acting in a certain way.

	Orange
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Page and word count increases in this band to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased use of dialogue to encourage expression.

These books introduce some complex sentences and include italics to show emphasis. Slightly more literacy language is used. Children are increasingly encouraged to infer meaning in order to gain full enjoyment from the story.

How to Support

Your child is beginning to read with more independence. You can help them by:

- Listening to them read aloud. If they make mistakes but they keep the sense of the text don't interrupt. You can 'revisit' mistakes at the end.
- Remind them of useful strategies if they cannot read a word (like sounding under their breath or dividing longer words into syllables).
- Encourage expression.
- Talk about how characters are feeling.

	Turquoise
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These books use an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs. There is an increased proportion of space allocated to print rather than pictures.

Words have been chosen for appropriateness and impact rather than decodeability. Paragraphs begin to develop.

How to Support

You can help by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listen to some pages aloud, encourage use of expression and paying attention to punctuation.
- Talk about how events in the book relate to each other.

	Purple
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These books include an increased proportion of longer sentences with more challenging vocabulary. Some have short chapters.

Purple books include longer and more complex sentences. Story features such as plot, character and setting are developed in more detail, and text in non-fiction books.

How to Support

- Encourage them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listen to some pages aloud, encourage use of expression and paying attention to punctuation.
- Talk about how events in the book relate to each other.

	Gold
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Gold books include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary, including word play and the introduction of figurative language (like simile). Some books have longer chapters for more sustained reading.

Children on this band are confident, independent readers who can tackle increasingly complex language, story structures and text layout.

How to Support

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or a section at a time, rather than the whole book in one session. You can support by:

- Asking them to read some pages aloud so that you can enjoy hearing them read with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place. Talk about the words used.
- Ask for regular updates about what is happening in the book.
- Talk about how much they enjoy a book or a type of book.

	White
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In these books, there is a more sophisticated use of narrative voice. Commas are used in longer sentences to encourage intonation. Some books have longer chapters.

Stories at this level encourage children to empathise with characters, consider why they behave as they do. Children can also think about how characters change during the course of the story. Non-fiction books are divided into sections and there is increased layout of the information.

How to Support

- Asking them to read some pages aloud so that you can enjoy hearing them read with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place. Talk about the words used.
- Ask for regular updates about what is happening in the book.
- Talk about how much they enjoy a book or a type of book.

	Lime
with spots	Lime (with Spots)

Lime books include a widening range of writing styles and an increased variation in sentence structure.

Children are able to interpret more sophisticated word plays and puns. The narrator’s voice in a story may be distinguished from the characters’ voice. The story is often told through dialogue and action to ‘show’ instead of ‘tell’ as the plot develops therefore requiring more inference.

How to Support

Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk about their reading. You can still help by:

- Asking them to read some pages aloud so that you can enjoy hearing them read with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place. Talk about the words used.
- Ask for regular updates about what is happening in the book.
- Talk about how much they enjoy a book or a type of book.
- Discuss which parts of the book they particularly enjoyed and why? How did the writer make these parts enjoyable?

NB: Lime with Spots is a 'special' band for the most confident readers in Year 2 whilst still being age appropriate.



At this level, children should be able to:

- ❖ Interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns.
- ❖ Distinguish the narrator's voice in a fiction story from characters voices through figurative and literacy language
- ❖ Understand that a story is told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' the plot

How to Support

Your child may enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively. You can help by:

- Continuing to make time available for regular quiet reading sessions.
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of a reading session. Can they tell you what is happening in their book?
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continue to read aloud at bedtime to develop their love of reading.



Children will be 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 the narrator.
- ❖ Better understand a range of narration styles.

How to Support

Your child may enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively. You can help by:

- Continuing to make time available for regular quiet reading sessions.
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of a reading session. Can they tell you what is happening in their book?

- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continue to read aloud at bedtime to develop their love of reading.



Children will 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. This allows for greater complexity in building character and setting.



How to Support

- Continue to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find or note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage, three words which are adventurous; two words to use in your next piece of writing; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship...
- Ask children to summarise what they have read.
- Discuss any words or ideas in the book that your child found tricky.



Children will 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 or tension and are able to discuss how the author achieves the effects.

How to Support

- Continue to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find or note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words to use in your next piece of writing; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship...
- Ask children to summarise what they have read.
- Discuss any words or ideas in the book that your child found tricky.



These books are particularly challenging. Many are KS3 secondary school texts or 'classics'. Themes and language will be much more complex.

How to Support

- Continue to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find or note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words to use in your next piece of writing; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship...
- Ask children to summarise what they have read.
- Discuss any words or ideas in the book that your child found tricky.