

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **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
- A repeating pattern that may change at the end of the book
- Frequent use of sight words to anchor a child’s reading
- Pictures that heavily support the text
- Familiar topics
- Consistent text placement

Here are some examples of this type of book:

- Ollie by Olivier Dunrea
- I Love You Sun, I Love You Moon by Karen Pandell and Tomie dePaola
- I Can Help by Hans Wilhem
- 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

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **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
- Simple sentences
- Repetition of sight words
- Repetitive pattern with 1-3 word changes per page
- Pattern may vary on first and last pages
- Dialogue introduced
- Pictures that heavily support the text
- Familiar topics
- Consistent text placement

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 Ziefert

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

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
- Simple sentences
- New punctuation may appear
- Repetition of sight words
- Compound words
- Multi-syllabic words
- Regular spelling patterns
- Repetitive pattern with 1-3 word changes per page
- Pattern may vary on first and last few pages
- Dialogue introduced
- Illustration labels in factual books
- Picture that heavily supports the text
- Familiar topics
- Text placement consistent on bottom or top of page

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Bears in the Night, by Stan and Jan Berenstain
- 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
- Wheels, by Annie Cobb
- Where's Al?, by Byron Barton
- All By Myself, by Mercer Mayer

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level E

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

- 2-5 lines per page
- More complex language and ideas
- More characters
- Repetition of sight words
- Increased variety of sight words
- Repetitive pattern with 2-4 word changes per page
- Pattern may vary on first and last few pages
- Dialogue introduced
- Illustration 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
- Less regular spelling
- Full range of punctuation

Here are some examples of this type of book

- 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
- Wake Up, Sun!, by David Harrison

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

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 more distant from local knowledge of the everyday world
- Themes may include realistic stories, human and animal fantasy, simple folktales and informational texts
- Language reflects written rather than spoken language
- Full range of punctuation
- Increasing variety of sight words
- Greater variety in vocabulary
- Some unusual language patterns
- Longer sentences
- More lines of text on a page
- Shorter books 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

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

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 who require more understanding
- 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
- Longer sentences
- Many sight words
- Regular and irregular spelling patterns
- More difficult sight words are introduced
- Greater quantity of multisyllabic words
- 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
- When You Were a Baby, by Ann Jonas

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

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 moves from highly familiar experiences to 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
- Full range of sight words
- Events and language structures do not repeat
- Moderate picture support
- Characters learn and change
- Story events require interpretation
- Size and placement of text varies
- More lines of text
- Pictures appear on most pages

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 Aki
- What Game Shall We Play?, by Pat Hutchins
- Where Are You Going, Little Mouse?, by Robert Kraus
- You’ll Soon Grown Into Them Titch, by Pat Hutchins

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

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 30-40 pages
- Size of the font is smaller
- Complex word solving required
- Multi-syllabic words embedded in longer sentences and paragraphs
- Texts call for sustaining interest and meaning over several reading periods
- Illustrations enhance meaning, little support for precise word solving
- Pictures appear on most pages
- Characters and story require interpretation
- There is a great deal of dialogue
- No reliance on pattern

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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Spot’s Birthday Party, by Eric Hill

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level J

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

- A mix of frequently encountered words, and some technical words
- 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
- Illustrations enhance meaning, little support for precise word solving
- Pictures appear on most pages
- Characters and story require interpretation
- There is a great deal 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
- 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

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level K**

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

- Short chapters
- Paragraph spacing introduced
- Stories have multiple episodes related to a single plot
- Greater variety in writing styles
- Dialogue is sometimes unassigned, (students must infer who the speaker is)
- Complex word solving required
- Multi-syllabic words embedded in longer sentences and paragraphs
- Texts call for sustaining interest and meaning over several reading periods
- Illustrations on most pages, but less important to the story
- Characters and story require interpretation

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Nate the Great, series by M. Weinman Sharmat
- Clifford the Big Red Dog, by Norman Bridwell
- Clifford, the Small Red Puppy, by Norman Bridwell
- Commander Toad, serried by Jane Yolen
- Corduroy, by Don Freeman
- The Cat’s Burgular, by Peggy Parish
- Dinosaur Time, by Peggy Parish
- Frog and Toad are Friends, by Arnold Lobel
- Frog and Toad Together, by Arnold Lobel
- If You Give a Mouse a Muffn, by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- Sheila Rae the Brave, by Kevin Henkes
- Surprise Party, by Pat Hutchins

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level L

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

- Full pages of text
- Font is smaller, more print on the page
- More complex sentences
- More specialized vocabulary
- Many multi-syllabic words
- More difficult layout, sentences end in middle of lines and continue from one line to the next
- Illustrations used to extend meaning
- Table of contents, captions, index, and glossary in factual books
- Can have breaks in dialogue

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Amelia Bedelia (series) by Peggy Parish
- Brigid Beware, by Kathleen Leverich
- Cam Jansen (detective series), by David Adler
- Deputy Dan and the Bank Robbers, by Joseph Rosenbloom
- George and Martha (series), by James Marshall
- Horrible Harry and the ...(series), by Suzy Kline
- Hungry, Hungry Sharks, by Joanna Cole
- Katy and the Big Snow, by Virginia L. Burton
- Little Penguin’s Tale, by Audrey Wood
- Make Way for Ducklings, by Robert McCloskey
- Marvin Redpost (series), by Louis Sachar
- Miss Nelson is Missing, by Harry Allard
- Pee Wee Scouts (series), by Judy Delton
- Pinky and Rex and the...(series) by James Howe
- Triplet Trouble and the...(series) by Debbie Dadey and Marcia Jones
- Whistle for Willie, by Ezra Jack Keats
- The Wind Blew, by Pat Hutchins

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level M

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

- Many full pages of text without illustrations
- Text has more print with narrower word spacing
- More complex sentences
- More specialized and expanded vocabulary
- Chapters are longer
- Topics of information are widely varied
- New information contains elaboration
- Many multi-syllabic and technical words
- Most technical terms explained and illustrated
- Illustrations are usually black and white, used to extend meaning
- Table of contents, captions, index, and glossary in factual books
- Tables, charts, and graphs

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Aliens Don't Wear Braces, by Debbie Dadey and Marcia Jones
- Aliens for Breakfast, by Jonathan Etra and Stephanie Spinner
- The Art Lesson, by Tomie DePaola
- Arthur and the...(series), by Marc Brown
- Baseball Pals, by Matt Christopher
- Bears' Picnic, by Stan and Jan Berenstain
- Blue Ribbon Blues, by Jerry Spinelli
- Blueberries for Sal, by Robert McCloskey
- Camp Sink or Swim, by Gibbs Davis
- Can Do, Jenny Archer, by Ellen Conford
- Catch that Pass!, by Matt Christopher
- A Chair for My Mother, by Vera B. Williams
- The Chalk Box Kid, by Clyde Robert Bulla
- Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, by Judi Barrett
- Dinosaurs Before Dark (Magic Tree House Series), by Mary Pope Osborne
- Junie B. Jones and the...(series), by Barbara Park
- Littles and the...(series), by John Peterson
- The Mitten, by Jan Brett
- Night of the Ninjas (Magic Tree House Series), by Mary Pope Osborne
- The One is the Middle Is the Green Kangaroo, by Judy Blume
- The Secret at Polk Street School, by Patricia Reilly Giff
- Write Up a Storm with the Polk Street School, by Patricia Reilly Giff

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level N**

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

- Longer texts
- Full pages of text
- More complex sentences
- More specialized vocabulary
- Illustrations used to extend meaning
- Topics go well beyond readers’ experiences
- Informational texts require much more content knowledge
- Many technical words usually explained in the text
- Expected to learn about subjects through reading
- Table of contents, captions, index, and glossary in factual books
- Tables, charts, and graphs
- Chapter books contain memorable characters that are well developed and change in response to the events in the story
- Readers begin to empathize with the characters and experience suspense
- Writers use irony and whimsy to create interest
- Characters are revealed through what they say, think and do, as well as through what others say about them
- Can have breaks in dialogue

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Berlioz the Bear, by Jan Brett
- Blackberries in the Dark, by Mavis Jukes
- The Canary Caper, by Ron Roy
- The Enormous Crocodile, by Roald Dahl
- Forever Amber Brown, by Paula Danziger
- Invisible Stanley, by Jeff Brown
- Julian, Dream Doctor, by Ann Cameron
- Key to the Treasure, by Peggy Parish
- The Leftovers: Catch Flies!, by Tristan Howard
- Llama Pajamas, by Susan Clymer
- The Magic Finger, by Roald Dahl
- Max Malone and the Great Cereal Rip-Off, by Charlotte Herman
- Stanley and the Magic Lamp, by Jeff Brown
- You Can’t Eat Your Chicken Pox, Amber Brown, by Paula Danziger

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level O

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

- Many light humorous stories
- Sentences continuing over several lines or to the next page
- Full range of punctuation, including dashes and ellipses
- Many words with three or more syllables
- Words with suffixes and prefixes
- More complex sentences
- Some words used figuratively
- Combination of graphics providing information that matches and extends the text
- Multiple characters
- Characters are revealed by what they say, think, and do, as well as through what others say about them
- Most of content carried by the print rather than pictures
- Plots with detailed episodes
- Some text with deeper meaning- still familiar to most readers

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Baby-Sitters Club book series by Ann M. Martin
- Boxcar Children book series by Gertrude Chandler Martin
- Chocolate Fever by Robert Smith
- Laura Ingalls Wilder by Thomas B. Allen
- Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren
- Ramona book series by Beverly Cleary
- Judy Moody book series by Megan McDonald
- Emma book series by Sally Warner
- Secrets of Droon by Tony Abbott
- Henry Huggins by Beverly Cleary
- Pony Pals book series by Jeanne Betancourt
- Goosebumps book series by R.L. Stein
- Runaway Ralph by Beverly Cleary
- Socks by Beverly Cleary
- Chronicles of the Moon book series by Allan Frewin Jones
- Dragon Slayer’s Academy by Kate McMullan

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level P

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

- Many complex content-specific words in non-fiction, mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary
- Many complex multisyllabic words that are challenging to take apart
- New vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context
- Memorable characters, with a variety of traits, who change and develop over time
- Descriptive language providing details important to understanding the plot
- Ideas and themes requiring a perspective not familiar to the reader
- Topics that go well beyond readers’ personal experiences and content knowledge
- Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot
- Full range of graphics providing information that matches and extends the text
- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Ramona book series by Beverly Cleary
- Herbie Jones book series by Suzy Kline
- Gooney Bird Green book series by Lois Lowry
- Poppy’s Return by Avi
- Fantastic Mr. Fox by Roald Dahl
- Hank the Cowdog by John Erickson
- Geronimo book series by Geronimo Stilton
- Bunnicula by James Howe
- Encyclopedia Brown series by Donald Sobol
- Magic School Bus series by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen
- Through Grandpa’s Eyes by Patricia MacLachlan
- Time Warp Trio books by Jon Scieszka
- Gooseberry Park by Cynthia Rylant

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level Q**

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

- Words with a wide variety of very complex spelling patterns
- Words that are seldom used in oral language and are difficult to decode
- Questions in dialogue (fiction) and questions and answers (nonfiction)
- Variety of graphics (diagrams, labels, cutaways, maps, scales with legends)
- Variety in layout of nonfiction formats (questions and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, call-outs)
- Extensive use of figurative language that is important to understanding the plot
- Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot
- Suspense that builds through the events of the plot
- Some more complex fantasy elements
- Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot
- Underlying structures (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problems and solution, cause and effect)

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Five Ancestors book series by Jeff Stone
- Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo
- Poppy and Rye by Avi
- Homework Machine by Dan Gutman
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl
- Witches by Roald Dahl
- Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
- Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
- Rules by Cynthia Lord
- The Meanest Doll in the World by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin
- Dear Mr. Henshaw by Beverly Cleary
- Superfudge by Judy Blume
- Just Juice by Karen Hesse

Helping Your Child Find a "Just Right" Book... **Level R**

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

- Many multisyllabic proper nouns that are difficult to decode
- Many technical words that are difficult to decode
- Words that are used figuratively (metaphor, simile, idiom)
- Variety in layout of nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, call-outs)
- A variety of complex graphics, often more than one on a page
- In illustrated texts, highly complex and artistic illustrations that communicate meaning to match or extend the text (mood, symbolism)
- Long stretches of descriptive language that is important to understanding setting and characters
- Texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues
- Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopic of a larger topic or theme
- Content supported or extended by illustrations in most informational texts

Here are some examples of this type of book

- The Bracelet by Yoshiko Uchida
- Charlotte's Web by E.B. White
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl
- Dunc and Amos books by Gary Paulsen
- Fig Pudding by Ralph Fletcher
- Flying Solo by Ralph Fletcher
- The Great Kapok Tree by Lynne Cherry
- Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
- The House of Wings by Betsy Byars
- How to Eat Fried Worms by Thomas Rockwell
- Nasty, Stinky Sneakers by Eve Bunting
- No More Magic by Avi
- The River by Gary Paulsen
- Strider by Beverly Cleary
- Stuart Little by E.B. White
- The Witches by Roald Dahl

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level S

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

- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas
- Many new vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context or use glossaries or dictionaries
- Many technical words that are difficult to decode
- Many complex plurals, contractions, and compound words
- Some long strings of unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred
- Some more complex fantasy elements
- More difficult layout of informational text, and some fiction texts, with denser format
- Occasional use of less common punctuation (colon, semicolon)
- Some texts with graphics that have scales or legends that require understanding and interpretation
- Some collections of short stories that have interrelated themes or build a single plot across the book
- Some more challenging themes (e.g. war, the environment)
- Content particularly appealing to preadolescents

Here are some examples of this type of book

- The Borrowers by Mary Norton
- Calico Captive by Elizabeth George Speare
- The Cricket in Times Square by George Selden
- Gift-Giver by Joyce Hansen
- The Great Gilly Hopkins by Katherine Paterson
- Lily’s Crossing by Patricia Reilly Giff
- Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse
- Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China by Ed Young
- Morning Girl by Michael Dorris
- Pinballs by Betsy Byars
- Poppy by Avi
- Trouble River by Betsy Byars
- One-Eyed Cat by Paula Fox
- The Cry of the Crow by Jean Craighead George
- Matilda by Roald Dahl
- Journey by Patricia MacLachlan

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level T**

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

- Wide range of declarative, imperative, or interrogative sentences
- Many words with a large number of syllables
- Words with a wide variety of very complex spelling patterns
- Occasional use of less common punctuation (colon, semicolon)
- Most texts with no or only minimal illustrations
- Black and white illustrations in some fiction texts
- Some obvious symbolism
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors
- Themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- Some complex plots with multiple story lines
- Texts with multiple topics that contain categories and subcategories within them
- Content requiring the reader to take on diverse perspectives (race, language, culture)

Here are some examples of this type of book

- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis
- A Light in the Storm by Karen Hesse
- The Middle Moffat by Eleanor Estes
- Bright Shadow by Avi
- My Daniel by Pam Conrad
- Avi by Lois Markham
- The Black Stallion by Walter Farley
- Blubber by Judy Blume
- Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis
- George Washington's Socks by Elvira Woodruff
- Going Solo by Roald Dahl
- Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh
- Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos
- The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis
- The Magician's Nephew by C.S. Lewis
- Souder by William Armstrong

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level U

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

- Longer (some with more than twenty words) complex sentence structures
- Wide range of declarative, imperative, or interrogative sentences
- Many new vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context or use glossaries or dictionaries
- All parts of speech
- Long, multisyllabic words requiring attention to roots to read and understand
- Some words from languages other than English
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all capitals to indicate emphasis, level of importance, or signal other meaning
- Many texts with very small font
- Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot and character development
- Some long strings of unassigned dialogue from which story actions must be inferred
- Fantasy and science fiction showing struggle of good and evil
- Themes that evoke alternative interpretations

Here are some examples of this type of book

- The Summer of the Swans by Betsy Byars
- Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt
- The View From Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg
- Sky Dogs by Jane Yolen
- Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
- Julie of the Wolves by Jean Craighead George
- Ella Enchanted by Gail Carson Levine
- The BFG by Roald Dahl
- Wrinker by Jerry Spinelli
- Tangerine by Edward Bloor
- The Summer of the Swans by Betsy Byars
- Who Really Killed Cock Robin? By Jean C. George
- The Cat Ate My Gymsuit by Paula Danziger

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level V

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

- Many complex sentences including dialogue and many embedded phrases and clauses
- Words used figuratively or with unusual or hard-to-understand connotations
- Archaic words or words from languages other than English that do not follow conventional pronunciation patterns
- Most texts with no illustrations other than cover jacket or symbolic decoration on margins or at chapter headings
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all capitals to indicate emphasis, level of importance, or signal other meaning
- More difficult layout of informational text, and some fiction texts, with denser format
- Many complex narratives that are highly literary
- Full range of literary devices (for example, flashback, stories within stories, symbolism, and figurative language)
- Themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- Some collections of short stories that have interrelated themes or build a single plot across the book
- Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopic of a larger topic or theme
- Critical thinking required to judge authenticity of informational texts, historical fiction, and biography

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli
- The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle by Avi
- Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O’Dell
- Jip: His Story by Katherine Paterson
- Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech
- A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L’Engle
- The Westing Game by Ellen Braskin
- Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets by J. K. Rowling
- Holes by Louis Sachar
- Dragon Song by Ann McCaffrey
- The Gathering by Virginia Hamilton
- Anne of Green Gables by L. M. Montgomery
- “Series of Unfortunate Events”: The Bad Beginning by Lemony Snicket
- Belle Prater’s Boy by Ruth White

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book...

Level W

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

- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas
- Words used figuratively or with unusual or hard-to-understand connotations
- Many words with three or more syllables
- Words with a wide variety of very complex spelling patterns
- A wide variety of complex graphics that require interpretation (photos with legends, diagrams, labels, cutaways, graphs, maps)
- Print and illustrations integrated in most texts, with print wrapping around pictures
- Full range of readers’ tools (table of contents, glossary, headings and subheadings, call-outs, pronunciation guides, index, references)
- Multiple characters revealed by what they say, think and do, and what others say or think about them
- Some switching from setting to setting, including time change (often un signaled or signaled only by dialogue)
- Use of symbolism to convey meaning
- Many texts present multiple themes that may be understood in many layers
- Unusual text organizations (e.g., flashbacks)

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick
- The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick
- Dragonwings by Laurence Yep
- The Black Pearl by Scott O’Dell
- Call me Francis Tucket by Gary Paulsen
- Missing May by Cynthia Rylant
- The Orphan Train Adventure Series by Joan Lowery Nixon
- Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor
- Sister by Eloise Greenfield
- Local News by Gary Soto
- Wings by Jane Yolen and Dennis Nolan
- Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level X**

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

- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas
- Many archaic words
- Long, multisyllabic words requiring attention to roots to read and understand
- Most texts with no illustrations other than cover jacket or symbolic decoration on margins or at chapter headings
- Many texts that have scales or legends
- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences
- Some text layouts in columns
- Some long strings of unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred
- Fantasy incorporating classic motifs such as the “quest”
- Wide range of challenging themes that build social awareness
- Critical thinking required to judge authenticity of informational texts, historical fiction, and biography

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Listening for Lions by Gloria Whelan
- Lionboy book series by Zizou Corder
- Double Identity by Margaret Peterson Haddix
- Memoirs of Anne Frank by Alison Leslie Gold
- The Black Pearl by Scott O'Dell
- The Invisible Man by H. G. Wells
- The Yearling by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings
- The Journey that Saved Curious George the True Wartime Escape of Margaret and H.A. Rey by Louise Borden
- Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls
- Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level Y**

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

- Many complex sentences including dialogue and many embedded phrases and clauses
- Many new vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context or use glossaries or dictionaries
- All parts of speech
- Long, multisyllabic words requiring attention to roots to read and understand
- Many complex plurals, contractions, and compound words
- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences
- Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot
- Full range of literacy devices (ex. flashback stories within stories, symbolism, and figurative language)
- Many texts presenting multiple themes that may be understood in many layers
- Wide range of challenging themes that build social awareness and reveal insights into the human condition
- Complex plots, many with multiple story lines and subplots
- Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopic of a larger topic or theme
- Heavy content load in many texts, both fiction and nonfiction, requiring study

Here are some examples of this type of book

- Artemis Fowl by Eoin Colfer
- Jesse by Gary Soto
- The Pushcart War by Jean Merrill
- Russia Eyewitness books by DK Publishing
- The Land of Elyon by Patrick Carman
- Redwall book #5 Salamandastron by Brian Jacques
- Redwall book #8 Outcast by Brian Jacques
- Bird by Angela Johnson
- The Diary of Anne Frank by Anne Frank
- Anne Frank: Beyond the Diary by R. Van der Rol & R. Verhoeven
- The Giver by Lois Lowry
- Bull Run by Paul Fleischman
- The Messenger by Lois Lowry
- My Brother Sam is Dead by James Lincoln Collier
- Where the Lilies Bloom by Vera Cleaver

Helping Your Child Find a “Just Right” Book... **Level Z**

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

- Complex sentences with compound sentences joined by semicolons or colons
- Words used figuratively or with unusual or hard-to-understand connotations
- Long, multiple words requiring attention to roots to read and understand
- More difficult layout of informational text, and some fiction texts, with denser format
- Character interpretation and why they change
- Some texts with heroic or larger-than-life characters who represent the symbolic struggle of good and evil
- Many texts with settings distant in time and space from students’ experiences
- Full range of literary devices (ex. flashback, stories within stories, symbolism, and figurative language)
- Wide range of challenging themes that build social awareness and reveal insights into the human condition
- Texts that explicitly present mature issues such as sexuality, murder, abuse, nuclear war
- Heavy content load in many texts, both fiction and nonfiction, requiring study

Here are some examples of this type of book

- A Day No Pigs Would Die by Robert Newton Peck
- The War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells
- The Pigman book series by Paul Zindel
- Johnny Tremain by Ester Forbes
- Redwall by Brian Jacques
- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain
- The Golden Compass by Philip Pullman
- The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien
- I Am the Cheese by Robert Cormier
- The Pearl by John Steinbeck
- To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
- A Summer Life by Gary Soto
- Night by Elie Wiesel
- Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
- The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton