

Matching Book Levels to Literacy Behaviors and Word Study Skills: A Guide Sheet for Teachers

There should be a strong relationship between the leveled books that children read and their instruction in literacy strategies and skills that they receive. Understanding the literacy behaviors and word study skills that are essential at each text range is important for continued success for children's continued success in literacy development. For it is when a child demonstrates the mastery of the skills and strategies within a text range, that he or she will likely be ready to move into the next range of texts.

The following eight charts describe the literacy and word study behaviors that should be the emphasis of instruction at particular reading levels. They are designed to be a tool for helping teachers match students with appropriate levels of text. When a child moves to a new text level, it is important to provide instructional support. This support can take place within a mini-lesson, guided reading groups, or at an individual conference. It is especially important that interventions for students struggling with reading should be aligned with the student's instructional reading level and promote mastery of the literacy and word study behaviors at that text level.

Each chart is divided into three columns. The left column represents the overarching literacy traits self-monitoring and book understanding are found at each text level. The middle column represents the literacy

behaviors that teachers would want to see students consistently using while reading books within this text level range. The right column represents word study behaviors aligned with both the traits and literacy behaviors in the previous columns.

This document is intended to be used by classroom teachers and interventionists to guide instruction, rather than as a checklist. Behaviors are listed in a developmental sequence so that skills and strategies mastered at earlier stages are presumed to be in place as the child moves through later stages. The compilers of this document recognize that these are guidelines and every child should be looked as a unique reader and writer. A student, at times, may exhibit behaviors that cross a range of different text levels.

Ideas for this document stand on the shoulders of longitudinal research described in a wide range of professional literature, including materials from the Teacher's College Reading Writing Project, Developmental Reading Assessment materials authored by Joetta Beaver, Words Their Way by Templeton, Bear, Invernizzi, Matching Books to Readers and Phonics Lessons, both by Irene Fountas & Gay Sue Pinnell. Along with these resources, the compilers of this document drew on years of classroom teaching experience with a range of grade-level experience.

Traits	Literacy Behaviors	Word Study Behaviors
Emergent Behaviors	Readiness	Emergent Stage
	Students will...	Skills:
	Identify the front and back of book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent left-to-right directionality • Produce rhymes and alliteration (happy, sappy, pappy) • Identify most letter/sound relationships • Blend sounds they hear into a known word • Segment the initial sound in a word • Orally understands concepts of bottom, above, below, front, back, etc... • Identify most letter names (upper and lower case) • Knows most of the letter/sound relationships • Identifies a few words that are important to their name, mom, I, etc...
	"Read" a story their own way	
	Use book language in their "reading" or retelling	
	Understand that print moves horizontally across a page	
Distinguish between print and pictures		

Traits	Levels 1-3	Emergent to Early Letter Name Stage
	Students will...	Skills:
Self-Monitoring	Demonstrate one to one voice to print match	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the concept of a word: 1:1 matching • Understand the concept of a letter and a word • Locate the first and last letters of a word • Locate first and last word of a sentence • Understand that one spoken word matches one group of letters • Fluently knows letter names and sounds (upper/lower case) • Can blend letter-sounds they see in print into a known word • Segment a word they hear into its component sounds • Notices errors • Uses ABC chart/letter book to help solve words
	Locate a known word	
	Know a small core (15-18) of high-frequency words that can be read fluently and can be used to self-monitor, or check on himself	
	Reread by returning to the beginning of the sentence	
	Read with expectation that books make sense and sound right	
	Problem solve new words using the beginning sound and picture	
	Use meaning cues from pictures and oral language structure to gain information when problem-solving a word	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Understand that the print carries the message	
	Know where the story begins	
	Understand that print moves horizontally and vertically through a page	
	Move to the beginning of the next line when they reach the last word on a line of print (return sweep)	
	Understand that the title gives information about the content of the book	
	Understand that books convey thoughts and ideas	
	Understand and use oral language concepts to talk about printed language (first, last, beginning, middle, end, ...)	

Traits	Levels 4-7	Early to Mid Letter Name Stage
	Students will...	Skills:
Self-Monitoring	Use eyes to track text instead of finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on known word to make new words: <i>play-plays, play-playing</i> • Know the difference between a vowel (V) and a consonant (C) • Explore consonant sounds represented by consonant diagraphs at the beginning and end of a word (sh, ch, th, ph, and wh) • Explore consonant clusters that blend two consonant sounds (bl, cl, gl, fl, pl, pr, br, dr, gr, tr, cr, fr, sl, sn, sp, st, sw, sc, sk, sm,) • Recognize that vowels have two sounds (short, long) • Recognize and use short vowel sounds in words • Every syllable has a vowel • Know some long vowel patterns- when an “e” is at the end of the word the vowel is long (CVCe) • Explore word families consisting of two letters (an, am, at, ap, ad, in, ip, ig, it, ug, ut, og, ot, op, ed, et, en) • Able to read “ing” at the end of words • Understand that adding “s” means more than one • Understand that changing the beginning or the end of a word can make a new word (CVC)
	Know a core (18-30) of high-frequency words that can be read fluently and can be used to self-monitor, or check on himself	
	Use meaning and oral language structure to read fluently and with phrasing (<i>I ran vs. I runned</i>)	
	Reread (by checking picture) to search for meaning	
	Read fluently; problem solving on one or two difficult words using beginning and ending sounds; may cross-check with the picture	
	Search through the difficult word from left to right and decode the word by blending sound by sound	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Identify an important part of the book: who (characters), what (events), where (setting)	
	Demonstrate understanding by talking about text after reading	
	Preview book before reading, constructing tentative meaning	
	Re-reads to cross-check first letter with meaning and structure cues	
	Retells a story in logical and sequential order	

Traits	Level 8-13 Students will...	Mid to Late Letter Name Stage Skills:
Self-Monitoring	Read fluently with phrasing; problem solving on one or two unknown words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that changing the middle sound of a word makes a new word (CVC pattern) • Understands that “y” at the end of a word represents a vowel sound • Recognize and use endings that add <i>ed</i> to an end of a word makes three sounds /t/, /ed/, /d/ • Recognize and use word families consisting of two letters (an, am, at, ap, ad, in, ip, ig, it, ug, ut, og, ot, op, ed, et, en, ing) • Recognize and use consonant sounds represented by consonant diagraphs at the beginning and end of a word (sh, ch, th, ph, and wh) • Recognize and use consonant clusters that blend three consonant sounds (scr, squ, str, thr, spr, spl, sch, tw)
	Know a core (30-50) of high-frequency words that can be read fluently and can be used to self-monitor, or check on himself	
	Use meaning and structure to guide reading	
	Search through the difficult word from left to right and take word apart; blend sound by sound or with large units into a known word	
	Actively problem-solve unknown words using word study knowledge	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Remember details of the story and use them to clarify meaning	
	Understand story elements and uses them to talk about stories: who (characters), what (events), where (setting), problem, solution	
	Give a basic theme to go along with the story	
	Fluency reflects attention to punctuation	
	Uses language phrases, book talk and/or special vocabulary from the story	
	Describes story ending	

Traits	Level 14-16	Late Letter Name to Within Word Pattern Stage
	Students will...	Skills:
Self-Monitoring	Read fluently; problem solving on one or two things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know when a vowel is paired with “r” it says /r/, /or/, /er/ • Recognize and use contractions with <i>am, is, will, not,</i> • Explore common long vowel patterns and grouping words according to their pronunciation (ea, a-e, o-e, i-e, ee, ow, ai, oo, ou, ar, or, ay, ie, igh, -y, oa, ew, e-e, oi, oy, u-e) • Begin to understand simple compound words • Recognize and use 1 or 2 syllables in words • Recognize and use syllable patterns: CVC, CVCe, CVCC, CVVC • Explore word families consisting of three letters (ish, ang, uck, ump, ack, ash, ung, ong, ink, ank, unk, ock, eck, and, ill, ick)
	Reread some words or phrases to self-correct or improve expression	
	Acquire rapidly expanding vocabulary and concept knowledge through reading	
	Apply flexible word solving strategies with good control of visual patterns	
	Search for meaning while reading, stopping to think or talk about ideas	
	Search through the difficult word from left to right and blend using large units; solves new words using analogy (look, book)	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Be able to use the elements of story to guide their retelling: who (characters), what (events), where (setting), problem, solution, noting relationship between elements	
	Understand quotation marks create a conversation in the story	
	Begin to make inferences and discuss what is important in the text (give a more sophisticated theme)	
	Ask questions before, during, and after reading	
	Explore connections: text-to-self, and text-to-text	
	Understand the relationship between the story and characters	

Traits	Levels 18-20 Students will...	Within Word Pattern Stage Skills:
Self-Monitoring	Read complex sentences with meaning phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master common long vowel patterns and grouping words according to their pronunciation (ea, a-e, o-e, i-e, ee, ow, ai, oo, ou, ar, or, ay, ie, igh, -y, oa, ew, e-e, oi, u-e) • Recognize and use 1-3 syllables in words • Recognize and use compound words • Explore plural endings: -s, -es • Recognize and use word families consisting of three letters (ish, ang, uck, ump, ack, ash, ung, ong, ink, ank, unk, ock, eck, and, ill, ick) • Recognize and use the soft “g” and “c” (giraffe and celery)
	Anticipate for meaning and structure so self corrections become fewer and faster	
	Recognize common long vowel patterns and knows to try both vowel sounds	
	Use context clues to make inferences about word meanings	
	Search through the difficult word from left to right and blend words using syllables; solve new words using analogy (book, look); and large known units	
	Be able to integrate all reading cues (meaning, structure, visual)... make it make sense, sound right, and look right	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Sustain story while reading longer text over several days	
	Use the features of the text to construct meaning (title, heading, table of contents)	
	Provide evidence for their thinking based on text	
	Develop personal strategies for continued reading from day to day (visualize, reading log, sticky note, re-read...)	
	Understand that the pictures only enhance the text rather than assist decoding	

Traits	Levels 24-28	Within Word Pattern Stage
Self-Monitoring	Students will... Adjust fluency around the understanding of text	Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and use contractions with <i>are, have</i> • Recognize and use multi-syllabic words • Understands open syllables (when the syllable ends with a vowel, the vowel sound is usually long) • Understand closed syllables (when the syllable ends with a vowel and at least one consonant, the vowel sound is short) • Recognize and use plural endings: -s, -es • Explore inflectional endings: -ed, consonant doubling for CVC words, -e drop for CVCe words, no change, final -y to <i>i</i> and add -ed or -s • Use suffixes: -er, -est • Understand the same vowel sound can be spelled different ways: <i>haul, straw, thought</i> /ô/
	Use strategies to hold onto meaning over a period of time	
	Begin to use context clues in surrounding text to infer meanings of unknown words and confirm meaning, structure and visual cues	
	Quickly take words apart	
	Problem solve two/three syllable words	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Go beyond the literal meaning of the printed word (Amelia Bedilia)	
	Be able to hold onto characters and the relationships between the characters	
	Understand conversations between characters without the cues of dialogue markers	
	Go beyond the text to make more sophisticated interpretations	
	Use their understanding of genre when approaching a new book choice	
	Envision text with limited picture support	
	Effectively use text features (index, glossary, diagrams and captions)	
	Understand and use connections while reading (text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)	
	Take a critical stance to their reading	

Traits	Levels 30-38	Late Within Word Pattern to Early Syllables & Affixes
Self-Monitoring	Students will...	Skills:
	Fluently read complex sentences that include a variety of structures and punctuation (Prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, flexibly understands every form of punctuation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use open and closed syllables: VCCV doubled at juncture (button/happy), VCCV different consonants at juncture (window, sister), V/CV open with long vowel (bacon, lazy), VC/V closed with short vowel (river, camel), VCCCV blend or digraph at juncture (pilgrim,tangle) • Use prefixes and base words: <i>un-, re-, dis-, in-, il-, im-, ir-, non-, mis-, pre-, uni-, bi-, tri-</i> • Use suffixes: <i>-y, -ly, -ful, -less, -ness</i> • Explore spelling patterns for vowel: <i>ough, augh, oe, ir, ur, aw, er, ui, au, oy, ey, ue, ei, iew, uy, are, ear, ere, eir, our</i> • Explore inflectional endings: <i>-s, -es, change y to i before adding -es to words that end in consonant + y</i> • Explore homophones: <i>there, they're, their; to, too, two; which, witch</i> • Explore homographs – words that are spelled the same, but have different meaning <i>read, read</i> • Recognize and use 's to show ownership • Recognize consonants are silent in one word and sounded in another related word <i>sign, signature</i>
	Actively acquire new vocabulary through reading	
	Search to understand the subtle shades of meaning that words can convey	
	Search through the difficult word from left to right and takes words apart using syllables; solves new words using analogy	
	Understand that adding a prefix or suffix changes the meaning of the word	
	Solve words with three or more syllables	
Book Understanding (Comprehension)	Sustain story while reading longer text over several days remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered	
	Understand that italics, bold or capital letters indicates importance or level of information	
	Understand that some sentences continue on the next page	
	Understand that some books are written in first person and some in third person	
	Have ability to understand perspectives not familiar to reader	
	Understand topics that go well beyond the reader's personal experiences	
	Understand that characters are well developed over time by what they say, do and think as well as what other characters say, do and think about them	
	When reading non-fiction text – distinguishes between more important and less important ideas or facts	