

## K Levels:

### What is a Yellow Reader?

Successful Yellow readers do not really read the words on the page. They don't have a sight word bank and they can't yet "sound out" words. They use the repeated sentence pattern, the initial consonant sound, the pictures, and the spaces between words to "read" the book. Yellow readers are integrating all three cuing systems (syntax, phonics, meaning) while exhibiting fluency, confidence, and comprehension. While they are working in the Yellow level, they will need help accumulating sight words for their independent work in One-Green. A Yellow reader's success is dependent on his or her basic background knowledge, phonemic awareness, speaking vocabulary, common sense, and ability to reason.

#### Key Common Core State Standards

##### Stage 1Y

Use the repeated sentence stem and pictures to read a yellow book.

##### Stage 2Y/CCSS F.K.3a

Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or most frequent sound for each consonant.

##### Stage 3Y/CCSS F.K.3c

Read common (25) very high-frequency words by sight (e.g., *the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do*).

#### Major Characteristics of a Yellow Book

One basic sentence pattern is repeated on each page. Only one word changes per page, and that word is clear from the picture.

### What is a 1G Reader?

1G readers will know and use 25–75 very high-frequency sight words as a reliable and familiar support framework when reading. They will be able to read these words in books they have never seen before and out of context (lists, flash cards, etc.) at Flash Speed. Power Words provide "islands of certainty" from which emergent readers can navigate the unknown. Although there are other skills involved with success at 1G, the acquisition of a bank of sight words is fundamental. They will use these words at the Blue levels as a foundation for learning the basic vowel patterns.

#### Key Common Core State Standards

##### Foundational Skills CCSF 3c

Read common high-frequency words by sight (*the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does*).

##### Power Words

The 60 Power Words on the back of the 1G Skills Card are the highest-frequency sight words. These words make up more than one-third of the words used in English text. (The combined sight words in 1G and 2G make up 50% of all adult and student writing.)

#### Major Characteristics of a 1G Book

Simple sentences with picture and pattern support. Uses first 50 sight words.

To learn more about any level go to,

<http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	Gl

1st **Grade Levels:**

## What is a 2G Reader?

**Power Words:** 2G readers will know and use 125 very high-frequency Power Words as a reliable and familiar support framework when reading. They will be able to read these words in books they have never seen before and out of context (lists, flash cards, etc.) at Flash Speed. Power Words provide “islands of certainty” from which emergent readers can navigate the unknown. The combined Power Words in G and GG make up 50% of all adult and student writing.

**Initial Blends & Digraphs:** When students come to a word they don’t know, they will successfully use initial blends and digraphs as clues.

### Key Common Core State Standards

#### Foundational Skills

- 3g.** Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words (were, could, would, does, some).
- 3a.** Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs (*sh-*, *ch-*, *th-*, *wh-*).

### Major Characteristics of a 2G Book

Simple sentences with picture and pattern support and first 170 sight words. Initial blends and digraphs may be required.

## What is a 1B Reader?

1B readers take a huge jump forward in reading. Not only do they have a sight word bank of 200–300 high frequency words, they are now able to use these known words, and knowledge of regular vowel patterns, to figure out unknown words (e.g., ride/pride). 1B readers have their fingers out, covering parts of unfamiliar words to find something they know inside them. Once they find a chunk that looks familiar, they have to recall what known word it is part of, take off the first letter of the known word in their mind, vocalize the isolated chunk, add the beginning sound of the new word to the chunk, and see if it works out to be a sensible word. If it doesn’t work out they have to start all over again. The phonological awareness skills required for this level are tremendous.

### Key Common Core State Standards

#### Foundational Skills

- 3b.** Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words
- 3c.** Know final -e and common vowel team conventions for representing long vowel sounds.
- 3g.** Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

### Major Characteristics of a 1B Book

Very difficult to find in bookstores and libraries. Most of these books are written to teach reading. Simple sentences, first 250 sight words, and basic one-syllable word family words (bat, Matt, flat; bike, Mike).

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12 <sup>®</sup>				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	Gl

# What is a 2B Reader?

2B readers know to look for the known inside the unknown. They have their fingers on the text, covering up beginnings and endings of unfamiliar words, looking for chunks, vowel patterns, endings, little words inside bigger words, as they successfully figure out the 2-syllable words common to 2B text. 2B books begin to include narratives with some characterization and simple plots. Be careful, because 2B is the first level in which readers can decode without following the meaning of the text. Be sure to check comprehension carefully. Don't allow students who are working too hard on decoding to move into 1R. Make sure students learn to be fully engaged with the message of 2B books. Catch them laughing at the stories, not just figuring out what the words say, before moving them into 1R.

## Key Common Core State Standards

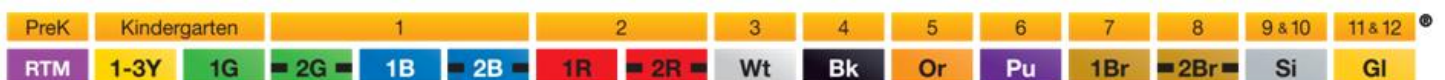
### Foundational Skills

- 3e. Decode 2-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables.
- 3f. Read words with inflectional endings (-ed, -er, -ing, -es, -y, -le, -est)
- 3g. Recognize and read 2B irregularly spelled words.

## Major Characteristics of a 2B Book

Beginning readers in bookstores and libraries. Basic sight vocabulary (500 sight words). Uses simple two-syllable words (compound words, endings, basic vowel patterns).

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Levels:

### What is a 1R Reader?

1R readers are able to sit for 30 minutes and enjoy one long picture book. Their focus is not on decoding, but on the content of the book. They are enjoying traditional tales, silly stories, poetry, and informational text. They should be given the opportunity to read picture books that come in series (e.g., Clifford, Arthur, Amelia Bedelia, Berenstain Bears). Picture books with the same characters and similar plot elements prepare 1R readers for the move into chapter books at 2R. As decoding 1R text becomes easier, silent reading will become the preferred mode. Allow students to spend enough time enjoying and engaging at the 1R level before moving them into the longer and more complicated books at the 2R level.

#### Key Common Core State Standards

##### Foundational Skills

- 3b. Know spelling-sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams (e.g., *ew*, *oy*, *oi*, *ought*).
- 3c. Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels (*ruby*, *even*).
- 3d. Decode words with common suffixes (*-y*, *-ly*, *-ier*, *-iest*).
- 3e. Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences.
- 3f. Recognize and read 1R irregularly spelled words.

#### Major Characteristics of a 1R Book

Picture books written with simple, regular three-syllable words, two-syllable words with vowel digraphs, and three-letter consonant blends.

### What is a 2R Reader?

#### Finish 1 Chapter Book Each Week

2R readers begin 2R as picture book readers and leave as chapter book readers. They develop the habit of silent reading, the ability to sustain interest across sittings, and finally, the chapter book reading habit, where they must engage and understand without the aid of illustrations. Students should not leave 2R until they are successfully reading (and finishing) at least one chapter book a week.

#### Decode All Multi-Syllabic and Irregularly Spelled Words Familiar from Everyday Speech

2R readers are able to try various vowel sounds for unfamiliar words until they recognize the word from everyday speech. 2R books are full of irregularly spelled words, multi-syllabic words, special vowel spellings, but all of the words in 2R books should be familiar to readers from their oral language (e.g., *gigantic*, *scientist*). Their use of decoding and context clues allows the 2R readers to get close enough to the pronunciation of any word so that as they try different possible pronunciations, they recognize one. Expect 2R readers to be able to approximate pronunciation of difficult names.

#### Key Common Core State Standards

##### Foundational Skills

- 3d. Decode words with common prefixes (*un-*, *re-*, *mis-*) and suffixes (*-able*, *-ful*, *-ier*, *-iest*, *-tion*).
- 3e. Identify and read words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences (*body*, *cloth*, *ton*).
- 3f. Recognize and read high-frequency words common to 2R books by sight, including grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.
  - Develop the stamina, experience, and fluency to complete at least one 2R chapter book per week.
  - Decode 3-syllable words.

#### Major Characteristics of a 2R Book

First chapter books (usually with pictures) and picture books where all the words are familiar from everyday speech. Multisyllabic words with irregular vowel patterns are common at this level.

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12 <sup>®</sup>				
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# 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

## What is a Wt Reader?

### Notice and Acquire Literary Vocabulary

Wt-level books include “literary” vocabulary, language not normally used in everyday speech (e.g., exclaimed, cautiously). For many students this is truly a foreign language. Students who arrive at the Wt level with a vast background of listening to higher-level books will already have much of this vocabulary. Students who have not been read to will not. Students acquire literary vocabulary through immersion in text, the same way they acquired their speaking vocabulary through immersion in oral language. Wt books have 1–2 literary words per chapter-book size page of text. Wt readers must spend enough time reading at the Wt level to acquire the 1,500 new “literary” vocabulary words expected of proficient 3rd-grade readers. This is entirely different and unrelated to decoding. At the Wt level, the major focus is on noticing these literary words and learning them through immersion in reading.

### Finish 1 Chapter Book Each Week

Wt readers continue to develop silent reading fluency, the ability to sustain interest across sittings, and the chapter book reading habit. Students should not leave Wt unless they are successfully reading (and finishing) at least one Wt chapter book a week.

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

### Key Common Core State Standards

#### Language 6:

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., *After dinner that night we went looking for them*).

#### Reading 4:

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a Wt topic or subject area.

### Major Characteristics of a Wt Book

First chapter books and complex picture books where one or two words on a full page of text are not familiar to the reader from speech. Assumes basic third grade knowledge of home, school, and community.

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	Gl

# 4th Grade

## What is a Bk Reader?

Bk-level readers really get hooked on reading. This is when silent reading takes off and readers will sit and read for long periods of time, reluctant to stop because they want to find out what happens next. Bk is the level where good readers binge on junky series books (e.g., *Goosebumps*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, Matt Christopher's sports fiction). This should be encouraged because it builds fluency, silent reading speed, endurance, and the habit of reading. Literary taste will come with experience. Require Bk-level readers to demonstrate their proficiency in both fiction and nonfiction, but otherwise let them indulge their passions. The levels that follow require students to broaden their reading into new genres. Take advantage of all the junky fiction and have students master the narrative form: characters, settings, dialogue, point of view, theme, etc., in both reading and writing.

In Bk text, the vocabulary demands are increasing, with 3–5 words on a typical chapter book page not familiar from everyday speech. Be sure readers can define those words either from past reading experience or through the use of context clues. Bk-level readers should finish a Bk chapter book, or its equivalent, each week.

### Key Common Core State Standards

#### Reading Literature 2:

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

#### Reading Informational Text 4:

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a Bk topic or subject area.

### Major Characteristics of a Bk Book

Picture books and short chapter books with 3–5 "literary" words on a full page of text. Simple and compound sentences. Assumes background knowledge of a proficient 4th grader (e.g., sense of historic time and universal space).

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	Gl



## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

### What is an Or Reader?

Or readers should demonstrate proficiency in at least five very different kinds of text. Encourage students to expand their reading experience through literacy circles, read-aloud, book clubs, sharing time, modeling, book talks and having enough of the right books in these genres. Proficient Or-level readers are comfortable in realistic/contemporary fiction, poetry, plays, informational writing, a variety of traditional tales, historical fiction, and biography.

In Or text, the vocabulary demands are increasing, with 6–10 words on a typical chapter book page not familiar from everyday speech. Or-level readers already know all but 1 or 2 of these literary words from their extensive reading at the earlier levels. Students who have not read widely will not know most of the words and will have comprehension difficulty because of the literary vocabulary load. These students must go back to the color level where they can define all (or almost all) of the words used and read from there, or they may develop the habit of “reading” without comprehension.

Or-level readers should finish an Or chapter book, or its equivalent, each week.

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

#### Key Common Core State Standards

##### Reading Literature 9:

Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

##### Reading Informational Text 9:

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

#### Major Characteristics of an Or Book

Picture books and chapter books with 6–10 “literary” words on a full page of text.

Frequent use of compound and complex sentences. Assumes knowledge of American geography (e.g., Rocky Mountains, Atlantic Ocean).

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	Gl

# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

## What is a Pu Reader?

### Genre/Form Matters

Pu readers understand that authors use genre/form to organize and communicate ideas. Pu readers learn to identify the genre or form of a new text so they can use their understanding of the characteristics of a genre to anticipate what they will encounter and to scaffold their understanding as they read.

### Proficiency and Comfort with New Genres (e.g., Historical Fiction, Science Fiction, or Fantasy)

Pu readers should demonstrate proficiency in at least six very different kinds of text. Encourage students to expand their reading experience through literacy circles, read-aloud, book clubs, sharing time, modeling, book talks, and having enough of the right books in these genres. Proficient Pu-level readers are comfortable in realistic fiction, a variety of traditional tales, informational writing, poetry, biography, historical fiction, science fiction, and fantasy, usually developing in that order. In Pu text, the vocabulary demands are increasing, with 11–15 words on a typical chapter book page not familiar from everyday speech. Pu-level readers already know most of these literary words, and they have developed comfort with a wide variety of organizational frameworks through their wide reading in various genres. Students who have not read widely will have comprehension difficulty because of the literary vocabulary load and unfamiliar genre constructs. These students must go back to the color level where they can define all (or almost all) of the words used, follow the general text structure, and increase their proficiency levels from there. Do not allow students to develop the habit of reading without comprehension. Pu-level readers should finish a Pu chapter book, or its equivalent, each week.

### Key Common Core State Standards

#### Reading Literature 9:

Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories; memoir and biography) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

### Major Characteristics of a Pu Book

Picture books and chapter books with 11–15 "literary" words per full page of text. Complex sentence structure may have lots of embedded clauses. Assumes background knowledge of a proficient 6th grader (e.g., basic knowledge of American history and world geography).

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	GI



# 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

## What is a 1Br Reader?

1Br versus 2Br readers are not distinguished by the difficulty of the text they read, but by the sophistication with which they can analyze author's craft across a wide range of genres and forms. Of course, some Br books are harder than others, but which Br books will be difficult for which readers is more dependent on the background knowledge, genre knowledge, and vocabulary of individual readers than on the difficulty of the text. Students entering 1Br have read widely in Pu text and can handle a few of their most familiar genres in Br. In these genres they can identify choices the author has made as a writer, compare these choices to those of another author writing in the same genre or on the same subject, and critique the effectiveness of these choices. 1Br readers can determine an author's perspective in a text and are just beginning to speculate on how the different perspectives of authors shape the choices they make.

In order to handle Br text, comfort with the 16–20 literary words per typical chapter book page and common literary constructs, extensive experience as a reader, and sufficient academic background in history and science are required.

### Key Common Core State Standards

#### Reading Informational Text 9:

Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

#### Reading Literature 9:

Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

### Major Characteristics of a 1Br Book

Young adult. Vocabulary includes approximately 16–20 "literary" words on a full page of text. Assumes background knowledge of a proficient 7th or 8th grader, including world history, world geography, science, and social studies concepts. Which Br books will be difficult for which readers is more dependent on the background knowledge, genre knowledge, and vocabulary of individual readers than on the difficulty of the text.

To learn more about any level go to, <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> and click on the color level you wish to research.

PreK	Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 & 10	11 & 12				
RTM	1-3Y	1G	2G	1B	2B	1R	2R	Wt	Bk	Or	Pu	1Br	2Br	Si	Gl