



When Choosing Books with your Child...

1. Begin by encouraging your child to choose books based on topics, themes, or authors of interest.
2. Ask librarian to steer you in the direction of grade appropriate books to start, but then take the time to be sure the books selected are "just right" for your child:
 - Share the inside jacket or back cover to evaluate whether or not it may have difficult thematic elements.
 - Encourage the child to read the first few pages to you to assess level of difficulty, based on the suggestions outlined below.
 - Select several books to bring home so that our child can "abandon" a book if it turns out to be too easy or difficult.
 - Use the "5 Finger Rule:" If there are more than 5 difficult words on the first page, bypass the book, or plan to read it together.

An "Easy" Book...

- Has words that are very easy to decode and understand.
- Includes larger font and fewer words.
- Often have many pictures.
- Takes very little effort to read and understand.
- Is a short, quick read.
- Usually gives little or no sense of satisfaction.
- Is appropriate to read once in a while, just for fun.

A "Difficult" Book...

- Has many words that are difficult to decode and/or understand.
- Usually includes few or no pictures.
- Has small font and many words per page.
- Includes situations and characters that make it difficult for children to "make connections."
- Frequently causes the reader to stop in order to sound out or try and understand new words.
- Often becomes frustrating to read.
- Can be appropriate to read occasionally, accompanied by an adult to guide understanding and address misunderstandings.

A "Just Right" Book...

- Will have **some** words that are challenging to decode or understand.
- Causes the reader the **occasional** need to reread a passage for better understanding.
- Has a reasonable font size.
- May have a few pictures.
- Includes characters and situations in which children can easily "connect".
- Provides an enjoyable, satisfying and interesting reading experience.
- Should be selected most frequently to support growth in reading.

