

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Each night for homework, your child is assigned 20 minutes of reading. To help them find “just right” books at the library, please see list below:

How to Choose “Just Right Books”

Too Easy

- You read the story too fast.
- There are no “tricky” words.
- You find it difficult to pay attention.

Too Hard

- You read the story very, very slowly.
- The words are too difficult.
- Some of the book does not make sense.
- You have to constantly reread.

Just Right Books

- You read a little slowly and don’t rush.
- You pay attention to the words.
- You’re able to figure out “tricky” words.
- You think about the story while reading.
- You enjoyed it even though it required some work.

Here are ways to help your child before, during and after reading:

Before Reading Take a picture walk through the book with your child and invite them to tell what they think the book will be about, make connections to their own experiences, and identify familiar and unfamiliar words. Discuss strategies children can use to decode unfamiliar words, such as finding beginning or ending sounds, breaking the word into parts, and using picture clues. Provide background for any concepts in the book that might be unfamiliar to your child.

During Reading Let your child read the book aloud as you listen in. Help your child use problem-solving strategies when they encounter unfamiliar words. You can offer support and encouragement without interrupting the flow of their reading.

After Reading Encourage your child to respond to what they’ve read by asking them what they liked most and least about the story. To assess their reading comprehension, ask your child to do an oral retelling of the story.

Next, ask them to reflect on their experience reading the book. Where did they encounter problems and what did they do to solve them? Review parts of the text that your child found challenging. Remind them to apply their knowledge of sound-spelling relationships when they get stuck on unfamiliar words. Also encourage them to use context clues in the text and pictures to figure out meanings.

To help your child improve their expression when reading, demonstrate how punctuation affects your inflection by reading aloud part of the text using somewhat exaggerated expression. Repeat the demonstration and then ask your child to read aloud with you. If your child is having difficulty reading dialogue, demonstrate how to make the voices of each character distinct. After you have read a sentence with expression, invite your child to echo your reading.

Finally, you can help your child build reading confidence by having them read each book several times.

Sincerely,
First Grade Team