

Independent (“Just Right”) Reading Descriptions

Level W

Characteristics of Level W Books

- Wide range of complex genre & forms, incl. satire, *photo essays, high fantasy*
- In information texts, texts with multiple topics and categories within them; prior knowledge often required
- Fiction texts *have complex themes revealing insight into the human condition and focusing on human problems (war, racism, social class barriers), present mature social issues (family, growing up, sexuality); content appealing to adolescents*
- Interpretation of characters essential to understanding theme
- Many texts requiring knowledge of history, other heavy content load, *or current events*; critical thinking required to judge authenticity of texts
- Some switching through dialogue from setting to setting, often unsignaled
- *Some with larger-than-life characters who represent struggle between good/evil; multiple themes that may be understood in many layers; wide range of challenging themes building social awareness and revealing insights into the human condition*
- Many stories have moral lessons & many have parallel or circular plots
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors
- Long strings of unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred; long stretches of descriptive language important to understanding setting, characters
- Extensive use of figurative language important to understand plot
- Words that are seldom used in oral language and are difficult to decode; long multisyllable words requiring attention to roots to read and understand
- Vocabulary words used figuratively or with unusual or hard-to-understand connotations; archaic words or non-English words not following conventional pronunciation patterns

Characteristics of Readers at Level W

- Can remember information in summary form, to understand larger themes; can follow complex plots, including texts with literary devices (flashbacks...)
- Search for/use information from texts with many new/unfamiliar concepts; can organize important ideas in summary form & later use them as background knowledge
- Can adjust stance to better understand genre, like fantasy, or stance, like satire
- Notice and reflect on purpose of author's use of idiom, irony, and satire
- Can explain how author supports points in a text; collects evidence for arguments
- Can express changes in ideas or perspective after and while reading
- *Monitors understanding closely, searching within and outside the text, as needed*
- Can process texts with dense print, complex layouts, & *almost no illustrations*
- Can solve complex multisyllable words (vowels, phonograms, affixes, word origins...)
- Can understand words with multiple meanings, difficult proper nouns, words from dialects/languages other than English; *can understand meaning when satire is used*
- Can infer about characters' traits, motivations, and changes; can manage multidimensional characters; *use situations focusing on the problems of adolescents to develop new perspectives on own lives*
- Integrates content knowledge while reading to consciously create new understandings
- Crafts and revises many predictions using knowledge of genre and evidence from the text

Sample Texts - Level W

All-Star Examples: *The Skin I'm In, Maniac Magee, Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry, A Stone in My Hand, Year of Impossible Goodbyes, The House on Mango Street*

Books titles at my level include:

| TITLE | AUTHOR |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Out From Boneville | Smith, Jeff |
| I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have To Kill You | Carter, Ally |
| The Lightning Thief (series) | Riordan, Rick |
| Tuck Everlasting | Babbitt, Natalie |
| A Wrinkle in Time | L'Engle, Madeleine |
| Book of a Thousand Days | Hale, Shannon |
| Ember Series | DuPrau, Jeanne |
| Coraline | Gaiman, Neil |
| Daniel X: Alien Hunter | Patterson, James |
| Dead Girls Don't Write Letters | Giles, Gail |
| Drive-By | Ewing, Lynne |
| Elijah of Buxton | Curtis, Christopher Paul |
| Freak the Mighty | Philbrick, Rodman |
| Inkheart | Funke, Cornelia |
| Max the Mighty | Philbrick, Rodman |
| The Green Glass Sea | Klages, Ellen |
| The Invention of Hugo Cabret | Selznick, Brian |
| Tunnels | Gordon, Roderick & Williams, Brian |
| Walk Two Moons/Heartbeat | Creech, Sharon |
| Broken China | Williams, Lori Aurelia |
| Dairy Queen | Murdock, Catherine G. |
| Hoot | Hiaasen, Carl |
| The Ghost's Grave | Kehret, Peg |
| Silver On The Tree | Cooper, Susan |
| Everworld Series | Applegate, K.A. |
| Eldest | Paolini, Christopher |
| Curse Of The Bane/Revenge of the Witch | Delaney, Joseph |
| Leven Thumps (series) | Skye, Obert |
| Septimus Heap (series) - Flyte, Magyk | Sage, Angie |
| Among The Enemy | Haddix, Margaret P. |
| Enna Burning | Hale, Shannon |
| The Phantom Tollbooth | Juster, Norton |
| The Artemis Fowl Files | Colfer, Eoin |
| The Goose Girl | Hale, Shannon |
| Sweetgrass Basket | Carvell, Marlene |
| The Game Of Silence | Erdrich, Louise |
| The Rough-Face Girl | Martin, Rafe |
| The Pot That Juan Built | Andrews-Goebel, Nancy |
| The Mouse Rap | Myers, Walter Dean |
| The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales | Hamilton, Virginia |
| Black Diamond: The Story Of The Negro Baseball Leagues | McKissack, Patricia and Fredrick |
| The Great Fire | Murphy, Jim |

*Bold titles are Series books.

REMEMBER: You can sometimes find titles at your level or check the level of a book you already have on Scholastic's Book Wizard site. Look for the initials GRL (meaning Guided Reading Level) - this is the level we use at school. www.scholastic.com/bookwizard

Nancy Giansante is a librarian who keeps a leveled book list at her website: <http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante>
This site is searchable by grade level suggestions, titles, and author names.