

# Independent (“Just Right”) Reading Descriptions

## Level Y

### Characteristics of Level Y Books

- Wide range of complex genre & forms; some sentences of 30 or more words; *many texts with the complex structure of adult-level reading*
- In information texts, texts with multiple topics/categories; prior knowledge often required
- Fiction texts have elaborate plots and subplots; complex themes revealing insight into the human condition & human problems (war, racism, social class barriers), present mature/adolescent social issues (growing up, sexuality, abuse, poverty)
- 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 un signaled
- Some with larger-than-life characters who represent struggle between good/evil; fantasy texts may incorporate classical motifs, such as “the quest;” 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 Y

- Can remember information in summary form over chapters, to understand larger themes
- 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 & reflect on purpose of author's use of irony, satire, parody and allegory and the resulting changes to surface meaning; can determine point of view or bias
- Make connections among characters in different texts (setting, problem, person)
- Can explain how author supports points in a text; collects evidence for arguments
- 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 Y

All-Star Examples: *The Schwa Was Here*, *The Giver*, *My Brother Sam is Dead*

Books titles at my level include:

TITLE	AUTHOR
The Amulet of Samarkand	Stroud, Jonathan
The Man Who Was Poe	Avi
Artemis Fowl	Colfer, Eon
Athletic Shorts: Six Short Stories	Crutcher, Chris
Dangerous Days of Daniel X	Patterson, James
House of the Scorpion	Farmer, Nancy
Milkweed	Spinelli, Jerry
The Evolution Of Calpurnia Tate	Kelly, Jacqueline
The Underneath	Appelt, Kathi
Touching Spirit Bear	Mikaelsen, Ben
The Arctic Incident	Colfer, Eoin
Seeing Stone, The	Crossley-Holland, Kevin
Here There Be Dragons	Yolen, Jane
The Thief Of Always	Barker, Clive
The Timekeeper	Kidd, Rob
Arthur Spiderwick's Field Guide To The Fantastical World Around You	Black, Holly & Tony DiTerlizzi
Just Ella	Haddix, Margaret P.
The Saint Of Dragons	Hightman, Jason
Victory	Cooper, Susan
Ashes Of Roses	Auch, Mary J.
Rodzina	Cushman, Karen
A House Of Tailors	Giff, Patricia Reilly
Numbering All The Bones	Rinaldi, Ann
With Every Drop Of Blood	Collier, James Lincoln
Bull Run	Fleischman, Paul
Dawn Of Fear	Cooper, Susan
The Boy Who Dared	Bartoletti, Susan Campbell
Aleutian Sparrow	Hesse, Karen
Gloria Estefan	Benson, Michael
Do You Know The Monkey Man?	Butler, Dori Hillestad
Hana's Suitcase	Levine, Karen
Black Potatoes: The Story Of The Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850	Bartoletti, Susan C.
Blizzard! The Storm That Changed America	Murphy, Jim
Chew On This (Young Readers Edition)	Schlosser, Eric
Freedom Riders: John Lewis And Jim Zwerg On The Front Lines...	Bausum, Ann
Hitler Youth: Growing Up In Hitler's Shadow	Bartoletti, Susan C.
Secrets Of A Civil War Submarine: Solving The Mysteries Of the...	Walker, Sally M.
Shipwreck At The Bottom Of The World: Extraordinary True Story Of Shackleton...	Armstrong, Jennifer
Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed "Apollo 11" On The Moon	Thimmes, Catherine
The Story Of Salt	Kurlansky, Mark
<b>Saga of Darren Shan Series</b> (Allies of the Night, Hunters of the Dusk...)	Darren Shan

\*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](http://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.