

What Is A 'Just Right' Book? Reading Levels Explained

By Melissa Taylor

Kids need to read books that they can both decode (read the words) and comprehend (understand the meaning). Teachers call this a “just right” book, or a book that is at the child’s instructional level.

A just right book at a child’s instructional level is a book that stretches the child just a bit - not so much as to make him or her frustrated, but enough to continue growth as a reader. This child would make an error on about one word out of twenty.

How can you tell if a book your child wants to read is at his or her instructional level?

Use the Five Finger Test to figure out if the book is just right.

The Five Finger Test:

1. When your child finds a book (s)/he wants to read, have her/him flip to a page in the middle of the book.
2. Ask your child to read the page out loud.
3. Form a closed fist. Hold up a finger each time your child misses a word. She/he can do this on her/his own eventually.
4. No fingers mean that the book is an independent level- it’s easy for him or her to read and perfectly fine for part of the reading plan. **One to five fingers mean the book is at instructional level – BINGO!- just right for your child to grow as a reader.** Six or more fingers means the book is at a challenge or frustration level and not recommended because the child won’t be able to comprehend the text.

<https://www.readbrightly.com/just-right-book-reading-levels-explained/>