

In collaboration with our PTA we thought it might be helpful to answer some Frequently Asked Questions about reading at home, and provide clarity regarding our stance with unleveled books, and resources to help find levels. In order to understand how to address unleveled books it's helpful to understand why we level books, the difference between a Break Book and Just Right Book, and which apps we find most helpful in identifying book levels! We hope you find the information below to be helpful!



Why do we ask your child to read Just Right Books at home?

Your child's Just Right Level is reading the level that your child can read with the appropriate amount of rigor during independent reading time as determined by a one on one running record administered by their teacher. Reading, reading, reading, and more reading in a Just Right Level will yield the greatest gains in growth for your child! Every night we ask your child to read so they can have extra practice applying the reading strategies they learned from their reading workshop lessons and teacher conferences. The more students read the more they grow in all subject areas and so this homework is prioritized for us as a district.

What is a Break Book?

Just Right Books are the most supportive way to help your child grow, and we strongly suggest that they read **at least** 30 minutes a night (and on the weekends if possible!) in their Just Right Books. Sometimes students are passionate about comic books, favorite books that are below their level, or books that are above their level like Harry Potter. **We never tell a student they can not read a book. We value their interests and encourage them to use reading as a way to expand their knowledge and learn more.** We simply recommend that a child reads books that are not on their level, or are unleveled **as a break book**. A break book is a book on any level that they can read **after their 30 minutes of Just Right Reading**.



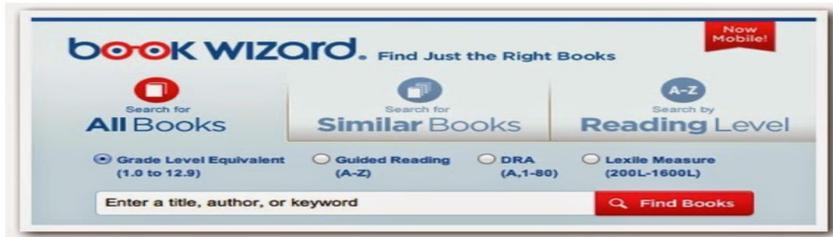
How to Level Books?

When a book is not leveled what can you do? We think it is helpful to share that only 60% of books are leveled. There are two resources that we use in leveling books. The most accurate is the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled literacy website. A second resource that is helpful is the Scholastic Book Wizard app. If there is a book that is not leveled that your child wants to read we just suggest that it becomes a break book!

Scholastic Book Wizard

1. Website

This is a free [website](#) that allows educators and parents to search by title, author, or keyword. Select the Guided Reading Level button to find the level.



2. App



Fountas and Pinnell

The Fountas and Pinnell [website](#) is considered the most accurate resource for leveling books. It is available as a subscription service with a base price of \$25 for an annual membership.

Why do we ask your child to write about reading?

Unlike math or writing the thinking work behind reading is invisible. Through our running record assessments we can identify the skill that needs to be developed in order for your child to advance to the next level. In order to “train your child’s brain” to start thinking about this skill the teacher will work with him/her in a conference and name the skill as a goal. This goal is often a post it that can be found on their goal sheet. This jot becomes no more than a 5 minute pause in their nightly reading where they practice the skill. These jots not only hone in on a specific skill but they also help students learn to write about reading which is also an essential skill.

We thank you for entrusting us with your child’s education and for your ongoing partnership. If you have any questions feel free to contact your child’s teacher or our district ELA Supervisor, Christy O’Connor.

