Fountas & Pinnell Text Level Descriptions

Level	Description
A	• One line of text *(focus on print, directionality)*; Large spaces between words • Sentence structure is similar to students' language; Repeated pattern • Includes basic sight words • Punctuation includes periods, question marks, and exclamation marks • Pictures are highly supportive • Topics are familiar to children • Focus on a single idea
B	• Two lines of text *(return sweep)*; Large spaces between words • Sentences increase in length; Sentence structure is similar to students' language • Repeated words or pattern • Includes more basic sight words • Includes some word endings (e.g., s, ed, ing) • Punctuation includes periods, question marks, exclamation marks, & some commas • Simple dialogue • Pictures are highly supportive • Topics are familiar to children • Focus on a single idea • Setting is present, but seldom a plot
C	• Increased number of words and lines of text; Large spaces between words • Sentences increase in length and may include some embedded clauses • Sentence structure is similar to students' language • Some books have repeated words or pattern • Most books are about eight pages • Pictures are highly supportive • Includes more basic sight words and some compound words • Includes word endings (e.g., s, ed, ing) • Opportunities for decoding simple words • Punctuation includes periods, question marks, exclamation marks, and commas • Dialogue is frequently included • Topics are familiar to children, esp. experiential books [events of everyday life] • Characters and story plots are straightforward
D	• Longer, more complex stories • Some compound sentences conjoined by "and" • Simple plot but may include several elaborate episodes • Topics are familiar, but may include abstract or unfamiliar ideas • Text layout is easy to follow, but font size may vary • Texts range from ten to twenty pages • Pictures begin to extend meaning of text • New punctuation may be included (i.e., dashes, ellipses) • Larger number of high frequency words/greater variety • Includes more word endings, compound words, and multi-syllable words • More opportunities for decoding words with familiar patterns
E	• Sentences include more embedded phrases and clauses • More variety in language including some literary language • Topics range beyond the familiar

Sources:
Fountas and Pinnell. (2001). *Leveled Books for Readers Grades 3-6.*
Fountas and Pinnell. (1999). *Matching Books to Readers: Using Leveled Books in Guided Reading.*
Novi Community School District web site. http://www.novi.k12.mi.us/schools

Fountas & Pinnell Text Level Descriptions

Level	Description
	• Genres include realistic fiction, fantasy, and nonfiction (simple informational books) • Font size may vary; Increased number of words and lines of print • Texts range from ten to twenty pages • Text structure is more complex, often with several simple episodes • More characters, but not very developed • Moderate picture support • Greater variety of high frequency words • Frequent dialogue and full range of punctuation • More multi-syllable words and less common spelling patterns
F	• Language reflects patterns that are more characteristic of written language than spoken language • Concepts are more distant from local knowledge or the everyday world • Some texts have abstract ideas which require discussion • Themes emerge • Genres include realistic fiction, human and animal fantasy, simple folktales, and nonfiction (informational texts) • Text range from ten to thirty pages • Full range of punctuation to enhance meaning • Longer texts may have longer sentences and/or more lines of text per page and shorter texts may have unusual language patterns or technical words • Greater variety in vocabulary
G	• Sentences are longer with many embedded clauses • Several high frequency words which increase in difficulty • Large number of decodable words with regular and irregular patterns • Several episodes with a variety of characters • Ideas and vocabulary are more challenging with some specialized vocabulary • Story line is carried by the text • Pictures support and extend meaning • Readers expected to remember information and action over a longer reading time **Text Examples:** *Teddy Bear for Sale, Rabbit's Party, Say It, Sign It*
H	• Language is not repetitive • Full range of high frequency words • Size and placement of print varies widely • Some repeated episodes • Content moves away from familiar experiences • Genres include realistic fiction, fantasy, folktales, and nonfiction (informational texts) • Characters tend to learn and change • Picture support is used to enhance and extend meaning as well as arouse interest • Story events require interpretation **Text Examples:** *Follow the Leader*
I	• Multiple episodes are highly elaborated • Most text lengths are about the same as G and H (10 - 30 pages) but have smaller print size; Some longer texts thirty to forty pages; Some chapter-like books • Texts use a great deal of dialogue • Pictures enhance meaning but provide little support for precise word solving • Complex word solving is required with multi-syllable words

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Fountas & Pinnell Text Level Descriptions

Level	Description
	• Paragraphs and sentences are longer • Readers transition to texts that my call for sustaining interest and meaning over several reading periods • Most books are narrative fiction and folktales with a plot and solution • Informational books are shorter with more difficult content • Characters and story events require interpretation **Text Examples:** *The Bunny Hop, The Dinosaur Who Lived in My Backyard*
J	• Stories have similar characteristics to level I but generally longer (over 50 pages) • First chapter books • Characters in series books will expand reading interest in reading, increasing the amount of time reading • Large amount of dialogue • Full range of punctuation within longer, more complex sentences with many adjectives and adverbs • Texts have one main plot with several episodes over a period of time – chapter books may only cover a period of one day • Requires more interpretation on the part of the reader • Requires quick solving of new words, including three or four syllables. **Text Examples:** *Mouse Tales, Henry and Mudge in Puddle Trouble, Seeds*
K	• Includes longer, slightly more complex chapter books with more characters • Books have one plot, but many episodes are carried over a period of time • Shorter books have more difficult vocabulary (not often used in speech by children), • challenging content, or more complex themes • Genres include realistic fiction, fantasy, and nonfiction (informational texts) • Some fables or legends and historical fiction may be include (not requiring extensive • background knowledge to understand) • Large amount of dialogue used to determine what is going on in the plot • Characters show various perspectives • Illustrations are placed throughout the text and are used to enhance enjoyment and helps students visualize • Readers explore the various connotations of words **Text Examples:** *Nate the Great and the Tardy Tortoise, Frog and Toad are Friends, What Happens When You Recycle?*
L	• Includes chapter books with fewer illustrations and complex picture books • Texts contain many multi-syllable and technical words • Words are used for a range of connotative meanings • Print size is varied but often much smaller • Most sentences end in the middle of lines and continue from one line to the next • Includes a full range of genres from realistic fiction to biography • More characters are speaking with dialogue not always assigned • Plots and characters are more sophisticated • Characters develop and change in response to events in the story • Events in chapters build on each other requiring the reader to recall and keep track of information **Text Examples:** *Pinky and Rex and the Spelling Bee, Horrible Harry in Room 2B, Looking at Insects*
M	• Chapter books are longer texts (60 - 100 pages) with short chapters and few pictures • Informational books are shorter with new information and text features • Includes a full range of genres with more biographies included • Text has subtle meanings that require interpretation and background knowledge

Fountas & Pinnell Text Level Descriptions

Level	Description
	• More complex and expanded plots • More complex themes (i.e., respect for difference, loneliness, independence) • Vocabulary may be introduced to create feeling or mood • Writer's style may be clearly marked by use of words, sentence structure, descriptions of characters, or humor **Text Examples:** *Freckle Juice*
N	• Chapter books are usually one hundred or more pages with short chapters and memorable characters • Nonfiction titles are generally shorter and may present social issues • Topics of informational books and settings for narratives go well beyond readers' personal experiences • Complex picture books illustrate themes and build experience in character interpretation • More demand on the reader to use a variety of strategies to understand plot, theme, and new vocabulary • Writers use devices such as irony and whimsy to create interest and communicate the nature of characters **Text Examples:** *Gooney Bird Greene, The Enormous Crocodile, The Magic Finger, Julian: Dream Doctor*
O	• Multiple characters are developed through what they say, think, and do or what others say about them • Characters deal with everyday experiences and more serious problems such as war or death • Genres expand to include historical and science fiction • Chapter books have between fifty and two hundred pages • Text have few illustrations - usually black and white drawings or photographs • Highly complex sentences employ a wide range of punctuation necessary for understanding the text **Text Examples:** *Beezus and Ramona, Night Crossing, Pippi Longstocking, The Secret Soldier: The Story of Deborah Sampson*
P	• Wide variety of fiction and nonfiction • Fiction texts include novels with longer chapters • Characters are often concerned with issues related to growing up and family relationships • Settings are very detailed • Informational texts and biographies present complex ideas • Topics may be unfamiliar • Longer texts require readers to sustain interest and attention over several days • Structural complexity, theme sophistication, and necessary background experience increases **Text Examples:** *Encyclopedia Brown, Fantastic Mr. Fox, George's Marvelous Medicine, Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World, Stone Fox, Thank You, Jackie Robinson, Wayside School*
Q	• Wide variety of fiction and nonfiction • Fiction texts include novels with longer chapters • Characters are often concerned with issues related to growing up and family relationships • Settings are very detailed • Informational texts and biographies present complex ideas • Topics may be unfamiliar • Longer texts require readers to sustain interest and attention over several days • More mature themes, focusing on problems of society as they affect children • Texts contain difficult words to solve, often including words from other languages **Text Examples:** *James and the Giant Peach, Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*
R	• Fiction and nonfiction texts represent a range of times in history • Wider variety of texts

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Fountas & Pinnell Text Level Descriptions

Level	Description
	• Sophisticated vocabulary requires an understanding of connotative shadings of meaning • Literary devices such as simile and metaphor require background knowledge • Technical aspects of texts requires background knowledge • Mature themes include family problems, war, and death • Readers must connect concepts and themes to political and historical events or environmental information **Text Examples:** *Because of Winn-Dixie, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Midnight Fox, Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, Sarah, Plain and Tall, The Trouble With Tuck, Hatchet, Hello, My Name is Scrambled Eggs, Shiloh, Strider*
S	• Complex ideas and information • Includes a wide variety of topics and cultures • Paragraphs and sentences are complex requiring rapid and fluent reading with attention to meaning • Requires automatic assimilation of punctuation • Chapter books include all genres with many works of historical fiction and biographies • Texts present settings from that are distant from students' own experiences • Literary selections offer opportunities for readers to make connections with previously read texts as well as historical events **Text Examples:** *Matilda, A Taste of Blackberries, From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankenweiler, The Great Gilly Hopkins, Journey To Jo'burg: A South African Story, Trouble River, In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson*
T	• Include a variety of genres and text structures • Chapter books are long, with few illustrations • Readers need to recognize symbolism • Texts contain many sophisticate, multi-syllable words that readers will need to analyze in terms of both literal and connotative meaning • Readers need more prior knowledge of political and historical events and about the problems of different culture and racial groups • Themes include growing up, demonstrating courage, and experiencing hardship and prejudice **Text Examples:** *Abel's Island, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Sign of the Beaver, Bridge To Terabithia, Tracker, Sing Down the Moon*
U	• Informational texts cover a wide range of topics and present specific technical information • Illustrations require interpretation and connection to the text • Narratives are complex with plots and subplots • Texts have several different themes and characters • Readers need to understand symbolism and themes which are more abstract • Creative text formats are used **Text Examples:** *Julie of the Wolves, The Secret Garden, Wringer, Baseball in April, Nothing But the Truth, Number the Stars, The Watsons Go to Birmingham -1963*
V	• Biographies go beyond simple narratives to provide significant amount of historical information and focus on harsh themes and difficult periods of history • Science fiction presents sophisticated ideas and concepts • Texts require readers to think critically • Full appreciation of the texts requires noticing aspects of the writer's craft • Texts have print in a small font • Novels may be two hundred to three hundred pages long **Text Examples:** *Chasing Redbird, Crash, Dragonsong, Rascal, Tom's Midnight Garden, Yolanda's Genius, The Cay, Esperanza Rising, Island of Blue Dolphins, Old Yeller, Pictures of Hollis Woods, Tuck Everlasting,*

Sources:
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Level	Description
	The Westing Game, Holes
W	• Themes explore the human condition • Fiction and nonfiction text present characters who suffer hardship and learn from it • Writing is sophisticated, with complex sentences, literary language, and symbolism • Text have print in a small font • Readers must have an awareness of social and political issues to comprehend texts • Fantasy and science fiction introduce heroic characters, moral questions, and contests between good and evil • Informational texts may present complex graphic information and require a whole range of content knowledge • Readers must understand all the basic nonfiction organizational structures • Narrative biographies include many details and prompt readers to make inferences about what motivated the subject's achievements **Text 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*
X	• Science fiction at this level incorporates technical knowledge as well as high fantasy depicting quests and the struggle between good and evil • Readers are required to go beyond the literal meaning of the text to construct implied meaning by a writer's use of symbolism • Continuing increase in the sophistication of vocabulary, language, and topic **Text Examples:** *Ties that Bind, Ties that Break, Where the Red Fern Grows, The Egypt Game, Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*
Y	• Texts have subtle themes and complex plots • Include a whole range of social problems as themes with more explicit details (e.g., details about death or prejudice) • Texts include irony and satire, literary devices requiring readers to think beyond the literal meaning Fantasies are complex, depicting hero figures and heroic journeys • Readers required to discern underlying lessons and analyze texts for traditional elements **Text Examples:** *The Schwa Was Here, The Giver, My Brother Sam is Dead*
Z	• Informational books deal with controversial social concepts and political issues and include detailed historical accounts of periods less well-known • Readers learn new ways of finding technical information • Informational texts include complex examples of the basic organizational structures • Fiction texts explore a wide range of mature themes relative to the human condition • Fantasy texts present heroic quests, symbolism, and complex characters • Some texts present graphic details of hardship and violence **Text Examples:** *Johnny Tremain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Breadwinner, The Outsiders, Witness, Animal Farm, Farewell to Manzanar, The Golden Compass, Monster, Night, The Pearl, Scorpions, 145th Street Short Stories, Fahrenheit 451*