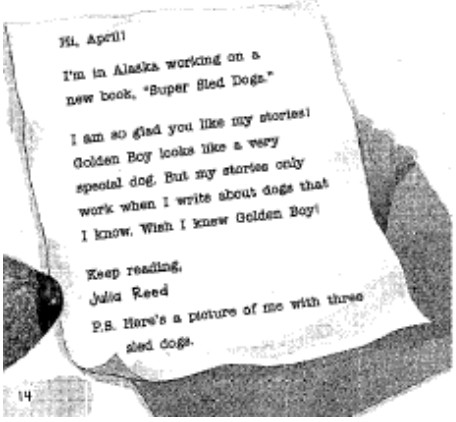



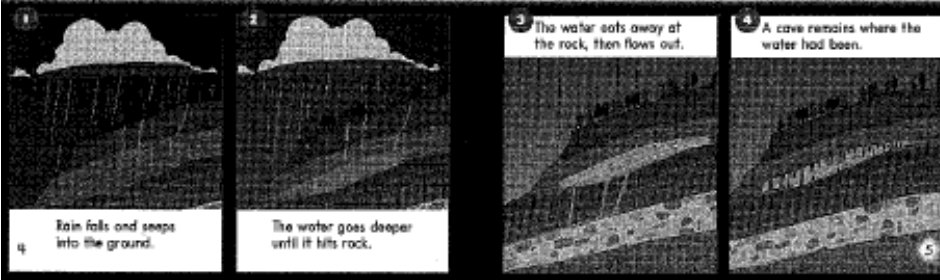



A Guide to Third Grade Text Levels

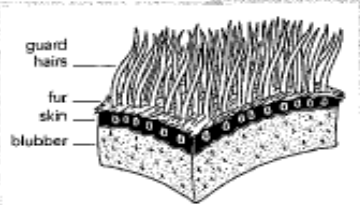
Target reading levels by month	Sept. – M/N	Oct. – M/N	Nov. – N	Dec. – N	Jan. – N/O	Feb. – O	Mar. – O	Apr. – O/P	May – P
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Level	Text looks like this:	A student reading independently at this level can typically:
L	<p>And the very next day, there was an envelope addressed to April in the mailbox. She tore it open.</p>   <p>April was disappointed that Golden Boy would not be in a book after all. She watched as her dog sniffed and sniffed at Julia Reed's letter.</p> <p>Then April had another Big Idea.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read silently during independent reading. • read smoothly and fluently when reading orally. • read easy chapter books, including some series books with more complicated plots and fewer illustrations. • understand that chapters have a series of events that relate to the overall plot. • see multiple perspectives by considering various characters' thoughts and actions. • read differently for different purposes. For example, readers can preview a text by skimming or they can read slowly and carefully to remember details. • begin using reading in order to learn new information. This is commonly referred to as making the switch from "learning to read" to "reading to learn."
M	<p>Soon the caterpillar's old skin splits open! But the caterpillar has been growing a new, larger skin underneath the old skin. When the old skin breaks, the caterpillar crawls right out of it. This happens again and again. Because it grows so fast, the caterpillar will change its skin five times before it is fully grown. ■</p>   <p>When it is two weeks old, the caterpillar is fully grown. It is about two inches long. Now the caterpillar looks for a safe place to stay. It finds a good leaf or twig to hold on to. Then it hangs upside down, holding on with its legs. It hangs there for about a day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read silently during independent reading. • read smoothly and fluently when reading orally. • begin to read longer chapter books with characters that grow and change from the beginning of the book to the end. • notice themes in books, such as friendship or bravery. • identify the structure of informational texts. Text structure types include: description, compare/contrast, sequence, problem/solution, and cause/effect. • understand lengthy complex sentences. • decode words with several syllables. • understand a variety of graphics (for example: diagrams, maps, graphs) and text features (for example: headings, captions, sidebars) in informational books.

Level	Text looks like this:	A student reading independently at this level can typically:
N	<p>How Are Caves Formed?</p> <p>Scientists have different ideas about how caves are formed. Most think caves are created by water.</p> <p>When rain falls, it mixes with an invisible gas in the air. When the water reaches the ground, it seeps into the earth.</p> <p>The water continues going deeper into the earth until it touches rock. Very slowly, the water eats away at the rock and causes tiny cracks to develop. The cracks in the rock grow wider with time. Then the water flows out and leaves behind a cave.</p> <p>How Caves Are Formed</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read silently during independent reading. • read smoothly and fluently when reading orally. • read texts that vary widely in length. • process a full range of genres, including various types of fiction, such as mysteries and series books, and various types of informational books, such as biographies. • read books with more sophisticated plots and characters. • notice themes in books, such as friendship or bravery. • identify the structure of informational texts. Text structure types include: description, compare/contrast, sequence, problem/solution, and cause/effect. • decode words automatically enough to keep the focus on comprehension. • understand a variety of graphics (for example: diagrams, maps, graphs) and text features (for example: headings, captions, sidebars) in informational books.

<p>If your child is reading at level L, M, or N, it is important to...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read aloud to your child daily. Choose fiction books above your child's reading level so that your child hears new vocabulary and develops a better understanding of story structure and characters. Include informational books and magazines in your read aloud in order to increase background knowledge and vocabulary and to prepare your child for academic reading. Talk about what your child already knows about the topic and what information the book might provide. Be sure to point out text features such as graphs, headings, or captions because these help improve a reader's comprehension. • encourage silent reading time daily so that your child develops the attention and stamina needed to read longer books with fewer illustrations. Talk to your child about what is being read silently. Have your child tell you what the book is about, what might happen next, who the favorite character is, what the best part is, or even what the author should have done differently. Keep your discussion enjoyable and low-key. • introduce your child to a variety of series and genres. Many readers at this level love series books like Magic Tree House or A-Z Mysteries and will want to read one book right after another. The books look like grown-up chapter books, but the plots usually follow a simple formula from one book in the series to the next. This supports the reader's growing understanding of story elements. Other readers might prefer informational books about a topic of interest and will choose to read as many books as possible about that favorite topic. The public library is a great resource.
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Level	Text looks like this:	A student reading independently at this level can typically:
O	 <p data-bbox="268 305 569 350">Plenty of Pets</p> <p data-bbox="310 358 506 380">by Stephanie Herbek</p> <p data-bbox="241 420 590 542">Mr. Lee's commanding voice brought the classroom to attention. "Listen up! I need someone to care for Scooter this weekend. Any volunteers?"</p> <p data-bbox="241 553 583 773">All around the classroom, students who hoped to be picked to bring home the adorable, fuzzy hamster shot their hands up high. Instead, Nate put his chin in his hand and sighed. Although Nate loved animals, he was allergic to everything furry, fluffy, or feathery.</p>	<ul data-bbox="1157 118 1969 708" style="list-style-type: none"> • read silently with ease. • read aloud fluently with appropriate phrasing and expression across a variety of text types. • decode words with little or no effort in silent and oral reading. • read texts that vary widely in length. • process a full range of genres, including hybrid texts which contain more than one genre, such as an informational narrative which tells a story while providing information about a topic. • identify the structure of informational texts. Text structure types include: description, compare/contrast, sequence, problem/solution, and cause/effect. • understand a variety of graphics (for example: diagrams, maps, graphs) and text features (for example: headings, captions, sidebars) in informational books.
P	<p data-bbox="268 808 575 846">Animal Instincts</p> <p data-bbox="352 857 491 878">by D. M. Longo</p> <p data-bbox="226 911 359 932">Introduction</p> <p data-bbox="226 943 621 1349">When you were a baby, you learned how to walk. Later, you learned to read and do many other things. But some things you didn't need to learn. When you were an infant, for example, no one had to teach you how to cry when you were hungry. You were born knowing how to do that. A baby's cry is one example of an instinct—a behavior that is built-in, not learned. Different animals are born with different instincts.</p> <p data-bbox="226 1390 386 1411">Dogs and Cats</p> <p data-bbox="226 1422 621 1487">Dogs and cats have many instinctual behaviors. Some of their actions might</p>	<ul data-bbox="1157 794 1969 1536" style="list-style-type: none"> • read silently with ease. • read aloud fluently with appropriate phrasing and expression across a variety of text types. • decode words with little or no effort in silent and oral reading. • read texts that vary widely in length. • process a full range of genres, including hybrid texts which contain more than one genre, such as an informational narrative which tells a story while providing information about a topic. • understand abstract and more mature themes and consider diverse perspectives. • begin to read and understand nonfiction texts that are well beyond his/her own experiences. • identify the structure of informational texts. Text structure types include: description, compare/contrast, sequence, problem/solution, and cause/effect. • understand a variety of graphics (for example: diagrams, maps, graphs) and text features (for example: headings, captions, sidebars) in informational books.

Level	Text looks like this:	A student reading independently at this level can typically:
Q	<p>Surviving the Cold</p> <p>How do polar bears survive all that cold? Polar bears are very well adapted to life in the frozen Arctic. A polar bear's entire body, even the bottoms of its feet, is covered in fur. The fur protects it from the cold. The top layer of fur is called guard hair. Guard hair sticks together when it's wet. The wet hair is a barrier that protects polar bears from the cold water. ■</p> <p>Below the guard hairs is a downy undercoat of fur that gives polar bears another layer of warmth. Underneath their fur, polar bears have black skin. The black</p>  <p>Amazing fact: Beneath its fur, a polar bear has black skin. The dark color absorbs the heat of the sun.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spend more time reading silently than orally although both skills are well established. • process a full range of genres, including hybrid texts which contain more than one genre, such as an informational narrative which tells a story while providing information about a topic. • understand abstract and more mature themes and consider diverse perspectives. • begin to read and understand nonfiction texts that are well beyond his/her own experiences. • encounter longer descriptive words and content-specific or technical words that require the use of context clues, background knowledge, or glossaries to determine meaning. • read and understand a variety of layouts, fonts, and print characteristics. • search for information in complex illustrations and graphics.

<p>If your child is reading at level O, P, or Q, it is important to...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read aloud to your child daily. Even though your child is now an independent reader, reading aloud still has the power to improve your child's vocabulary, attention, comprehension, and background knowledge. • encourage silent reading time daily, and be a reading role model so that your child sees reading as enjoyable and worthwhile. • help your child learn to self-monitor comprehension, particularly when reading a textbook or informational text. Have your child stop regularly to paraphrase what was just read. If comprehension is lacking, prompt your child to use fix up strategies, such as rereading, skimming, or reading headings in order to get back on track. • help your child know how to tackle an academic text. For example, before reading a new chapter, skim the pages, read titles and headings, read introduction sentences and boldface type, consider illustrations and graphic information, and read the summary. Ask your child, "What do you think you will learn from reading this chapter?" • encourage your child to slow down and read closely in order to find evidence in the text that supports his/her thinking. Being able to justify thinking with proof from the text becomes increasingly important and stories become more complicated and informational text becomes less straightforward.
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*Information in this packet is based on [The Continuum of Literacy Learning Grades PreK-2](#) and [The Continuum of Literacy Learning Grades 3-8](#) by Gay Su Pinnell and Irene C. Fountas, Heinemann Publishing, 2011.