

Information about Book Banding



Why Book Band?

Book Banding is a system which is designed to provide children with the enjoyment of choosing books, as in a library, whilst being accessible to their individual reading ability. When a child is learning to read, it is important that they have access to lots of different kinds of books (poetry, fiction and non-fiction) and a wide vocabulary. Many reading schemes have their own core vocabulary and introduce different phonemes (sounds within words) and as a result, teachers have found that children sometimes struggle when they are asked to read something different. Book Banding is a national scheme which grades children's reading books according to the difficulty of the text. The system is designed to help schools grade their reading books across schemes and 'real books'. Children have access to the variety they need whilst still being supported at the right reading level for them.

When will my child move to the next colour band?

For a child to be an effective reader, they need to not only read the words on the page, but also to understand what they have read. For this to happen, they need to read with 98% accuracy (that is only 2 errors in every 100 words), and must be able to demonstrate secure use of the reading skills that have been taught at each colour band. We will carefully monitor your child's reading and move them on when they have acquired accuracy and the appropriate skills at each Book Band (see below for notes on each band).

How are the books levelled?

All publishers grade their scheme to their specifications but the Book Band system is far broader in its levelling. It is based on careful research in to the kind of words used in each book, the length of the sentences, punctuation, story style or non-fiction format and text size. It also supports a progression of reading strategies.

How can I help my child at home?

- Read, read and read. Discuss, discuss and discuss! Just 5-10 minutes of reading each day makes such a difference in a child's fluency, word recognition, pace and understanding.
- Reading just before bedtime is often not effective, try reading after your child has had a play and a snack so they begin to understand when work and play/down time are different.

Tips for reading with your child

- If your child has a new book, discuss the title and flick through the pages, discussing the illustrations where necessary. If they have already read the book, ask them to tell you what they remember about the story.
- When your child comes to an unfamiliar word:
 - Sound out the word and then blend it together
 - Chunk the sounds (ch ur ch)
 - Look for words within words, e.g. seaside - sea side
 - Try reading the full sentence to them, missing the unfamiliar word for them to think about what might make sense
 - Use the illustrations for clues

- During reading, give specific praise, e.g. I liked the way you read ...
- Try to ask questions that unpick their understanding, e.g. what happened when ...? How did the farmer feel when ... (and why)?
- Predict what might happen next, modelling your own ideas will develop their own understanding too. Feel free to act out a new ending, use puppets or cuddly toys to retell the story in their own words.
- It is good to read a book more than once in order to consolidate the child's new learning and to develop their pace.

Progression of Book banding levels

Lilac	Pink	Red	Yellow	Blue	Green	Orange	Turquoise	Purple	Gold	White	Lime
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Book band descriptors - what a child should be able to do

Lilac Band

These are wordless picture books and help children to develop speaking and listening skills through creating and telling stories.

Pink Band

- ✓ Locate title, open front cover, turn pages appropriately
- ✓ Understand that left page comes before right
- ✓ Understand that we read print from left to right
- ✓ Match spoken word to printed word
- ✓ Locate familiar word and use to check own reading
- ✓ Use the meaning of the text
- ✓ Use language patterns (print syntax)
- ✓ Predict the story line and some vocabulary
- ✓ Read a few simple CVC words

Red Band

- ✓ Locate and recall title
- ✓ Consolidate secure control of one-to-one matching on a wide range of texts
- ✓ Use known words to check and confirm reading
- ✓ Solve simple CVC words by blending phonemes from left to right and check for meaning and correct syntax, ie, does it make sense and sound right?
- ✓ Start to read more rhythmically or use phrasing while maintaining track of text
- ✓ Repeat words, phrases or sentences to check, confirm or modify own reading

Yellow Band

- ✓ Follow print with eyes, finger pointing only at points of difficulty
- ✓ Take more note of punctuation to support the use of grammar and oral language rhythms
- ✓ Cross-check all sources of information more quickly while reading
- ✓ Note familiar words and phonemes and use these to help with reading of unknown words
- ✓ Search for information in print to predict, confirm or attempt new words while reading
- ✓ Notice relationships between one text and another
- ✓ Predict in more detail

Blue Band

- ✓ Move through text attending to meaning, print and sentence structure flexibly
- ✓ Self-correct more rapidly on the run
- ✓ Re-read to enhance phrasing and clarify precise meaning
- ✓ Solve new words using print information and understanding of the text to try alternative pronunciations
- ✓ Identify constituent parts of unfamiliar words to read correctly
- ✓ Manage a greater range of text genre
- ✓ Discuss content of the text in a manner which indicates precise meaning

Green Band

- ✓ Read fluently with attention to punctuation
- ✓ Solve new words using print detail while attending to meaning and syntax
- ✓ Track visually additional lines of print without difficulty
- ✓ Discuss and interpret character and plot more fully
- ✓ Use contents page and glossary in non-fiction books and locate information

Orange Band

- ✓ Get started on fiction after briefer introductions without relying on illustrations
- ✓ Examine non-fiction layout and use the contents page to select which sections of a book to read
- ✓ Read longer phrases and more complex sentences
- ✓ Attend to a range of punctuation
- ✓ Blend phonemes in unfamiliar words more fluently, cross checking with meaning and syntax
- ✓ Search for and use familiar syllables within words to read longer words
- ✓ Infer meaning from text, check information in text with illustrations, particularly non-fiction, and comment on content
- ✓ Begin to use appropriate terminology when discussing different types of text

Turquoise Band

- ✓ Extract meaning from the text while reading with less dependence on illustrations
- ✓ Approach different genres with increasing flexibility
- ✓ Use punctuation and layout to read with a greater range of expression and control
- ✓ Sustain reading through longer sentence structures and paragraphs
- ✓ Tackle a higher ratio of more complex words using known vocabulary, phonic knowledge and syllables
- ✓ Find a way around alphabetically ordered texts such as indexes, glossaries and dictionaries

Purple Band

- ✓ Look through a variety of texts with growing independence to predict content, layout and story development
- ✓ Read silently or quietly at a more rapid pace, taking note of punctuation and using it to keep track of longer sentences
- ✓ Solve most unfamiliar words on the run by blending long vowel phonemes, recognising and using them in longer and more complex words
- ✓ Adapt to fiction, non-fiction or poetic language with growing flexibility
- ✓ Take a more conscious account of literary effects used by fiction writers, and the formal language of different types of non-fiction
- ✓ Begin to make more conscious use of reading to extend speaking and writing vocabulary and syntax

Gold Band

- ✓ Look through a variety of books with growing independence to predict content and story development, and make full use of non-fiction layout
- ✓ Read silently or quietly at a more rapid pace, taking note of punctuation and using it to keep track of longer sentences
- ✓ Solve most unfamiliar words on the run by blending long vowel phonemes, recognising and using them in longer and more complex words
- ✓ Adapt to fiction, non-fiction and poetic language with growing flexibility
- ✓ Take a more conscious account of literary effects used by writers
- ✓ Make more conscious use of reading to extend speaking and writing vocabulary and syntax
- ✓ Locate and interpret information in non-fiction

White Band

- ✓ Read silently most of the time
- ✓ Sustain interest in longer texts, returning to it easily after a break
- ✓ Use text more fully as a reference and as a model
- ✓ Search for and find information in texts more flexibly
- ✓ Notice the spelling of unfamiliar words and relate to known words
- ✓ Show increased awareness of vocabulary and precise meaning
- ✓ Express reasoned opinions about what is read and compare texts
- ✓ Offer and discuss interpretations of text
- ✓ Comment on main characters and how they relate to each other
- ✓ Suggest alternatives or extensions to events and actions
- ✓ Discuss feelings created by stories
- ✓ Retelling of stories is balanced and clear

Lime Band

- ✓ Begin to read reflectively and to perceive meanings beyond the literal
- ✓ Refer to text to support own ideas
- ✓ Distinguish main points from examples; fact from opinion
- ✓ Devise key questions and words for searching and use several sources
- ✓ Begin to read in different ways for different purposes, e.g. skimming for relevance, scanning for specific details, reflective and recursive reading for fuller comprehension
- ✓ Compare/contrast work from more than one source
- ✓ Read aloud with expression and intonation taking account of punctuation
- ✓ Pupils can refer to text layout and organisation
- ✓ Pupils show some awareness of the point of view of the author
- ✓ Beginning to sustain narrative and investigative reading

We hope you find this information useful, if you have any questions, please ask your child's teacher.