BookTrust

INSPIRING KIDS’ PASSION FOR READING

Lesson Plan
Lesson Objectives:

Students will know what reading level their ‘Just Right’ books might fall under. Students will know why choosing a ‘Just Right’ book is important.

Materials/Reference:

• Book Trust Reading Inventories Worksheet
• Your data about your student’s reading levels

Lesson Background for Teachers:

Giving students choice in their book selection is what differentiates the Book Trust Program from other literacy programs and organizations that provide books to children. Research shows when children choose what to read, they develop:

• More positive attitudes toward reading
• Increased reading skills
• Increased motivation to learn
• Improved academic performance

However, reading self-selected texts with accuracy is essential for reading growth. To make the most out of reading choices, teachers must guide choice by helping students find “just right” books.

What is a “Just Right” Book?

A book is “just right” when it aligns a student’s purpose for reading (to learn more about alligators, for example) with the students’ reading level. In addition to knowledge of your students reading levels, use the following tips to help gauge if a book is “just right” for your students, and to teach them methods for evaluating on their own how “just right” a book may be.
**Teacher Actions:**

1. Use [Book Trust’s Reading Inventories](#) to help students think about their purpose for reading. Do they want to learn more about a famous person? Escape reality by getting lost in a fictional world? Laugh out loud? Read a story about animals? Encourage students to identify their purpose for reading before selecting their books.

2. Practice a few techniques for helping students self-assess a book’s reading level and its match to students’ current reading level.¹
   - Goldilocks technique:
     i. Is this book too easy? (Have you read this book before? Do you understand the story well? Can you read it smoothly?)
     ii. Is this book too hard? (When you read, does it sound choppy? Are you confused by most of what is happening in the book? Are there many words you don’t know?)
     iii. Is this book just right? (Is the book new to you? Do you understand most of the book? When you read, are some places smooth and some places choppy?)
   - Five-finger technique: For each word you come across that you don’t know, hold up a finger. If you get to five fingers before you are finished with the book (for younger grades), or five fingers after five pages (for older grades), the book may be too hard.

3. If a student wants to read a book beyond his or her reading ability, ask follow-up questions about who may read the book with the student. A parent? Older sibling? A reading partner in the class? Encourage the student to read the book with a family member and boost family engagement in reading.

4. Teach students how to identify their current reading level according to your classroom assessment systems. Then, identify where students can find reading levels next to texts in the Scholastic Student Flyer.

5. Follow-up with students. Ask how they liked the books they selected after reading them and if the books did indeed fit their original purpose. Get students in the habit of reflecting on their past book choices as a tool to making future choices.

**Student Actions:**

1. Students complete their own reading inventory to identify their interests and purpose for reading.

2. Think-Pair-Share the goldilocks technique with a class book. Have students open a book and try the 5 finger technique individually and in pairs.

3. Students discuss reading strategies for difficult texts.

4. Students identify and write down their current reading level, their challenge reading level, and their goals for reading.

¹ Techniques adapted from Read Write Think “Is this book right for me?” Resource.