



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Chief Academic Officer

# List of Reading Behaviors: A Tool for Guided Reading

## Guidance for Using this Document

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This document was designed to provide information about each reading level so that teachers can make informed decisions about what to teach their students and what to observe for and assess. As this document represents a continuum of reading behaviors, not discrete steps, you will see that many reading behaviors can be found in multiple levels. Students should practice those reading behaviors repeatedly, but with increasingly complex texts. You will also find suggested readinga-z.com texts that can be used to progress monitor students throughout the school year to determine if they are ready to move to the next level. Please keep in mind that some readinga-z.com levels do not exactly correlate to TRC/Fountas and Pinnell levels. We have listed books that align to the TRC/Fountas and Pinnell levels for consistency and have included a correlation chart for your reference.

### Two suggestions for using this document

- **Lesson Planning Tool:** Primarily, this document serves as a planning guide, as it lists the reading behaviors students should exhibit at each reading level. For example, students reading on a Level F should “use multiple sources of information while reading to self-correct.” Teachers can use this list to craft objectives for each leveled group. During the lesson, teachers should model the reading behavior they want students to try, students should have an opportunity during guided reading to apply the behavior, and students should receive “just in time” feedback regarding their application.
- **Observation and Assessment Tool:** Teachers can use the checklists during guided reading lessons as a tool on which to record the behaviors each child is demonstrating. This enables teachers to monitor student progress and provide more targeted instruction. During the lesson, the teacher should listen to as many students read as possible. While listening in, some teachers will choose to take informal running records while others may find it helpful to record their observations on these checklists.

The checklists that follow have been adapted from the following sources:

- Fountas, I.C. & Pinnell, G.S. (2011). *The continuum of literacy learning: Grades preK-8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Fountas, I.C. & Pinnell, G.S. (2011). *Scholastic guided reading program: Teacher’s guide*. NY, NY: Scholastic.

## Level A

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Reads words from left to right					
Remembers and uses language patterns					
Locates both known and new words					
Begins to match word by word, pointing with one finger under words					
Differentiates print from pictures					
Holds the book and turns pages correctly					
Relies on illustrations to tell a story and begins to focus on print					
Understands familiar concepts in stories and illustrations					
Relates the book to his/her experience					
Notices and interprets details in pictures					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

I Go	Vegetables
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## Level B

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Remembers and uses language patterns in text					
Uses visual information, such as the first letter of the word, to read known and new words					
Notices features of letters and words					
Demonstrates control of left to right movement and return sweep					
Begins to control word-by-word matching across two lines of text, pointing with one finger					
Begins to self-monitor, noticing mismatches in meaning or language					
Uses word-by-word matching to check on reading					
Rereads to confirm or figure out new words					
Pays close attention to print					
Uses knowledge of high-frequency words to check on reading					
Notices and interprets detail in pictures					
Talks about ideas in text					
Notices mismatches in meaning or language					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

The Sandwich	This Turtle
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## Level C

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses picture details to help figure out words					
Remembers and uses language patterns in text					
Solves some new words independently					
Demonstrates awareness of punctuation by pausing and using some phrasing					
Demonstrates control of left-to-right directionality and word-by-word matching across several lines of print					
Begins to track print with eyes					
Rereads to solve problems, such as confirming or figuring out new words					
Controls directionality and word-by-word matching with eyes, using finger at points of difficulty					
Recognizes known words quickly and uses them to figure out the meaning of new words					
Uses visual information to predict, check, and confirm reading					
Searches for understanding while reading					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

How Things Move	I Can Help
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## Level D

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Pays close attention to words and their structural features (for example, endings)					
Solves new words using knowledge of sound/letter relationships and word parts					
Reads fluently, with phrasing					
Self-corrects, using visual information					
Controls directionality and word-by-word matching with eyes, using finger at points of difficulty					
Rereads to confirm or figure out new words					
Remembers language patterns and repeating events over longer stretches of text					
Searches for understanding while reading					
Remembers details from text and pictures					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

The Wheel	Who Runs Fast?
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## Level E

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Figures out some longer words by taking them apart					
Reads for meaning but checks with the visual aspects of print (letters, sounds, words)					
Uses language syntax and meaning to read fluently, with phrasing					
Demonstrates awareness of punctuation by using, phrasing, and reading with inflection					
Recognizes many words quickly and automatically					
Tracks print with eyes, except at points of difficulty					
Rereads to self-monitor or self-correct phrasing and expression					
Rereads to search for meaning and accuracy					
Relates texts to others previously read					
Remembers details and uses them to clarify meaning					
Demonstrates understanding by talking about text after reading					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Bath Time	In the Sea
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## Level F

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses syntax of written language to figure out new words and their meaning					
Uses sound/letter relationships, word parts, and other visual information to figure out new words					
Uses known words to figure out new words					
Figures out longer words while reading for meaning					
Demonstrates awareness of punctuation by using, phrasing, and reading with inflection					
Recognizes most words quickly and automatically					
Moves quickly through text					
Reads fluently, with phrasing					
Tracks print with eyes using finger at points of difficulty					
Uses multiple sources of information to search and self-correct					
Rereads to figure out words, self-correct, or improve phrasing and expression					
Rereads to search for meaning					
Talks about ideas in the text and relates them to his/her experiences and to other texts					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Many Roads	Monkey to the Top
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## Level G

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses sound/letter relationships, word parts, and other visual information to figure out new words					
Uses meaning, visual information, and language syntax to figure out words					
Reads fluently and rapidly, with appropriate phrasing					
Notices and uses punctuation to assist smooth reading					
Recognizes most words quickly and automatically					
Follows print with eyes, occasionally using finger at points of difficulty					
Rereads to figure out words, self-correct, or improve phrasing and expression					
Rereads to search for meaning					
Remembers details to support the accumulation of meaning throughout the text					
Uses pictures for information but does not rely on them to make predictions					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

A Dog for Sally	Big and Small Cats
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## Level H

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses sound/letter relationships, words parts, and other visual information to figure out new words					
Reads fluently and rapidly, with appropriate phrasing					
Notices and uses punctuation to assist smooth reading					
Recognizes most words rapidly					
Follows print with eyes, occasionally using finger at points of difficulty					
Rereads to figure out words, self-correct, or improve phrasing and expression					
Rereads to search for meaning					
Uses meaning, visual information, and language syntax to solve problems					
Remembers details to support the accumulations of meaning throughout the text					
Uses pictures for information but does not rely on them to make predictions					
Searches for meaning while reading, stopping to think or talk about ideas					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

How Long Does It Take?	Living Together
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# Level I

## Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Actively figures out new words, using a range of strategies					
Flexibly uses meaning, language syntax, and visual information to figure out new words and to monitor reading					
Begins to silently read some of the text					
Follows the print with eyes					
In oral reading, rereads some words or phrases to self-correct or improve expression					
Rereads to search for meaning					
Self-corrects errors that cause loss of meaning					
Rereads when necessary to self-correct, but not as a habit					
Demonstrates understanding of the story and characters					
Goes beyond text in discussions and interpretations					
Sustains problem solving and development of meaning through a longer text and over a two- or three-day period					

## Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Land and Water	On Vacation
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## Level J

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses multiple strategies to figure out new words while focusing on meaning					
Analyzes words from left to right, using knowledge of sound/letter relationships					
Uses known words and parts to figure out new words					
Reads fluently, slowing down to figure out new words and then resuming speed					
Silently reads sections of text					
Flexibly uses meaning, language syntax, and visual information to monitor reading					
Self-corrects errors that cause loss of meaning					
Rereads when necessary to self-correct, but not as a habit					
Rereads to search for meaning					
Uses multiple sources of information to process text smoothly					
Demonstrates understanding of the story and characters					
Goes beyond the text in discussions and interpretations					
Sustains problem-solving and development of meaning through a longer text read over several days					
Makes inferences, predicts and analyzes character and plot					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Animal Olympics	What Comes From Plants
Gorillas	The Mailman's Hat

# Level K

## Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Flexibly uses multiple word-solving strategies while focusing on meaning					
When reading orally, reads rapidly, with phrasing, slowing down to problem solve and then resuming speed					
Reads silently much of the time					
Integrates multiple sources of information while reading with fluency					
Demonstrates understanding of the text after silent reading					
Makes inferences, predicts and analyzes characters and plot					
Goes beyond the text in understanding of problems and characters					
Demonstrates ease with interpreting the text					
Sustains attention to meaning and interpretation of a longer text read over several days					

## Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

The Gray Wolf	Harold the Hungry Plant
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## Level L

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

In oral reading, uses multiple word-solving strategies with longer words					
When reading orally, reads rapidly, with phrasing					
Reads orally, with accuracy, not stopping to self-correct in the interest of fluency and phrasing					
Reads silently most of the time					
Integrates multiple sources of information while reading with fluency					
Demonstrates understanding and ease with interpreting the text after silent reading					
After reading longer sections of a text predicts events, outcomes, problem resolutions, and character changes					
Makes connections between the text read and other books					
Sustains attention to meaning and interpretation of a longer text read over several days					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Go Away, Sun!	Spiders
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## Level M

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses multiple sources of information to figure out words rapidly while focusing on meaning					
Flexibly applies word-solving strategies to more complex, multisyllabic words					
Reads orally with high accuracy in most instances, not stopping to self-correct errors in the interest of fluency and phrasing					
Reads silently, except during assessment or to demonstrate text interpretation					
Demonstrates facility in interpreting text while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing					
After reading longer sections of a text predicts events, outcomes, problem resolutions, and character changes					
Remembers details and sustains attention to meaning through a longer text					
Demonstrates understanding and ease with interpreting the text after silent reading					
Makes connections between the text read and other books					
Goes beyond the text to make more sophisticated interpretations					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Dinosaurs	Sally Takayama's Worst Day Ever
Hattie in the Attic	Mysterious Mars

## Level N

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Uses multiple strategies to figure out new words quickly					
Reads silently, except during assessment or when demonstrating text interpretation					
Demonstrates ease with text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing					
Remembers details from one section of text to the next					
Sustains attention to a longer text, remembering details and revising interpretations					
Notices how illustrations convey the author's meaning					
Demonstrates sophisticated interpretation of characters and plot					
Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings					
Makes connections among a wide variety of texts					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Life Cycles	The Nor'easter
The Hunting Trip	Nature Reuses and Recycles



## Level O

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Solves words quickly and automatically while focusing on meaning					
Searches to understand the subtle shades of meaning that words can convey					
In oral reading, figures out new words rapidly while reading smoothly and expressively					
Demonstrates ease in text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing					
Sustains attention to a text read over several days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered					
After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in text interpretation					
Makes connections among texts to enhance interpretation					
Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings					
Shows the ability to summarize the text in writing					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Polar Regions of the Earth	The Wall
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## Level P

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Actively acquires new vocabulary through reading					
In oral reading, figures out new words rapidly while reading smoothly and expressively					
While reading silently, reads rapidly and with attention to meaning					
Demonstrates interest in reading an extended text over a longer time period					
Demonstrates ease with text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing					
Sustains attention to a text read over several days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered					
After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in interpreting meaning					
Compares the text with other books in an analytic way					
Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings					
Shows the ability to summarize and extend the text in writing					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

The Ant in the Photograph	Robots
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## Level Q - T

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Actively/rapidly acquires new vocabulary through reading					
In oral reading, figures out new words rapidly while reading smoothly and expressively					
Reads rapidly (both orally and silently), with attention to meaning, when reading silently					
Demonstrates ease with text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing					
Demonstrates flexibility in reading texts of different styles and genres					
Sustains attention to a text read over many days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered					
Demonstrates interest in reading an extended text over a longer time period					
Uses illustrations to help analyze text meaning					
After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in interpreting meaning					
Compares the text to other books in an analytic way					
Goes beyond the text to interpret characters' thoughts and feelings to speculate on alternative meanings					
Shows the ability to analyze, interpret and extend the text in writing					
Extends and demonstrates understanding of the text through writing in a variety of genres					
Uses comparison with other texts to assist interpretation					
After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and ability to analyze characters and plot					
Reflects knowledge of literary genre in conversation and writing					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Magnificent Meatball Maker (F&P Level Q)	Chick-a-Dude (F&P Level R)
Many Happy Returns (F & P Level S) (F&P Level S)	Early Birds: Fossils and Feathers (F&P Level T)

## Level U

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Learns technical words from reading					
Notices graphic illustrations and gets information from them					
Synthesizes information from graphic information with the body of the text					
Uses the table of contents to help in the understanding of the organization of the text					
Grasps "layers" of meaning in a story; for example, specific understandings plus the "bigger picture"					
Reads, understands, and appreciates literary language					
Interprets illustrations and their connections to the text					
Keeps up with several different themes and many characters					
Interprets characters' motives and the influences on their development					
Recognizes and appreciates a wide range of genres, both fiction and non-fiction					
Notices and uses a full range of punctuation, including more rarely used forms such as dashes					
Uses reading to learn about self and others					

### Progress Monitoring Texts from Readinga-z.com

Tessa's Family Day	Violent Weather
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## Level V

## Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Learns technical language and concepts through reading					
Understands and talks about complex themes, analyzing them and applying them to current life situations					
Understands many different perspectives that are encountered in fiction and nonfiction texts					
Evaluates both fiction and nonfiction texts for their authenticity and accuracy					
Deals with mature topics such as death, war, prejudice and courage					
Thinks critically about and discusses the content of a literary work or the quality of writing					
Notices aspects of the writer's craft and looks at the text from a writer's point of view					
Sustains attention and thinking over the reading of text that are long and have small fonts					
Tries new genres, topics, and authors, and is able to compare them with known genres, topics and authors					
Makes connections across texts to notice an author's style or technique					
Understands symbolism in both realistic fiction and fantasy; discusses what symbols mean in terms of today's society					
Brings prior knowledge to aid in understanding of literary references					
Learns about self and others through reading, especially about societies that are different from one's own					

## Level W

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Flexibly and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references, index, credentials for authors, legends, charts, and diagrams					
Sustains reading over longer and more complex texts; is not intimidated by varying layouts and styles of print					
Builds understanding of a wide variety of human problems					
Uses reading to expand awareness of people who are different from oneself					
Understands and learns from characters' experiences					
Learns about self and others through reading; actively seeks understanding of people different from oneself by culture, period of history, etc.					
Deals with mature themes such as prejudice, war, death survival, and poverty, and is able to discuss them in relation to one's own experiences					
Understands the complexities of human characters as they develop and change; discusses one's own point of view and relationship to characters					
Integrates understandings derived from graphic illustrations and the text					
Expands world knowledge through reading					

## Level X

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Understands and is able to use the sophisticated, scholarly, technical language that is found in informational texts					
Flexibly and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references, index, credentials for authors, legends, charts, and diagrams					
Sustains attention over longer texts with more abstract, mature, and complex themes					
Notices, understands and discusses a wide range of literary devices, such as flashbacks and stories within stories					
Deals with mature themes, such as family relationships, death, social injustice, and the supernatural					
Uses descriptive text as a way to understand settings and their importance to the plot of character development					
Discusses the setting as an element of the text, deciding whether it is important or unimportant					
Notices aspects of author's craft, including the ways characters are described and presented as "real"					
Talks about the text in an analytic way, including finding specific evidence of the author's style					
Appreciates, understands and discusses irony and satire					

## Level Y

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Understands and discusses the fact that words can have multiple meanings in relation to the context in which they are used					
Flexibly and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references, index, credentials for authors, legends, charts, and diagrams					
Understands and discusses subtle and complex plots and themes					
Understands, discusses, and deals in a mature way with a wide range of social problems, including social injustice and tragedy					
Understands and discusses in a mature way texts that present explicit details of social problems					
Understands literary irony and satire as they are used to communicate big ideas					
Understands complex fantasy, entering into whole new worlds, and understands concepts in relation to the imagined setting					
Interprets events in light of the setting—time, place and culture					
Engages in critical thinking about fiction and nonfiction texts					
Critically evaluates nonfiction texts for accuracy and presentation of information					



## Level Z

### Reading Behaviors to Teach and/or Observe

Switches easily from one genre to another, accessing knowledge of the structure and nature of the text while beginning to read					
Flexibly and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references, index, credentials for authors, legends, charts and diagrams					
Sustains reading and understand over much longer texts					
Deals with a great range of texts- from diaries to narratives to plays					
Understands and discusses how a text “works” in terms of the writer’s organization					
Deals with controversial social and political issues, seeing multiple perspectives					
Uses reading to gain technical knowledge in a wide variety of areas					
Understands the symbolism in heroic quests; applies concepts encountered in fantasy to today’s life					
Deals with and discusses in a mature way graphic details such as accounts of brutality, hardship or violence					
Notices, understands, appreciates complex language, archaic language, and cultural motifs					
Learns about epilogues, bibliographies and forewords					
Builds information across text, even when very unusual formats are used (for example, brief interviews with many characters)					
Fully understands the subtle differences between fiction and nonfiction					

## Correlation Chart

Reading A-Z Level	Fountas & Pinnell Level
aa	A
A	A
B	B
C	C
D	D
E	E
F	F
G	G
H	H
I	I
J	J
K	J
L	K
M	L
N	M
O	M
P	M
Q	N
R	N
S	O
T	P
U	Q
V	Q
W	R
X	S
Y	T
Z	U-W