

READING BOOK BANDS FOR EYFS AND KS1

In recent years, there has been a shift in thinking regarding individual reading books and the best way to support pupils' reading development. As a result, we have adapted our reading book system to reflect this. Part of this has been a large order of new reading books that closely follow the Letters and Sounds Phonics Phases. Pupils' reading bands will reflect which phase they are working within. Pupils will progress through coloured book bands as they develop both the skills of reading individual words and the skills of comprehension (understanding what they have read). As part of the process of learning to read books, children need to be able to practice reading the words in books, increasingly recognising more words and understanding what the books are about.

The purpose of banded reading books is for pupils to develop the ability to read fluently. Reading fluency goes deeper than being able to read each individual word. It is the ability to read with expression, where pupils use inferences and comprehension skills to make decisions about how to read certain words or phrases. Our aim is for pupils to develop their reading fluency and engage with books on a deeper level than just decoding words.

Pupils will be matched to a reading colour band that reflects the phonics phase they are confident with. Pupils should be able to read the book with limited help, using and applying the decoding, segmenting and blending skills they have learnt in school.

To develop and enjoy reading, it is really important that pupils have the opportunity to re-read their colour banded reading book several times.

1. The **first time** your child reads a colour banded book, they will initially be decoding each word. To help them work out how to read individual words, children apply their knowledge of individual sounds (phonics) and build up words using these sounds. They should be able to recognise some of the words in the book, but other words they will need to build from their knowledge of each sound. The books they are given only include sounds that they have been taught, but they may need reminding of which sounds match the letters in a word.
2. The **second time** they read the same book they will be able to recognise most of the words and the book will carry much more meaning for them. They will be able to talk with you about what is happening in the story. Discussions can now be based around comprehension- how are the characters feeling? What are they doing? How might they say that word differently now you know they are happy?
3. The **third time** they read the same book they will now have sufficient word knowledge and comprehension for that individual book that they can read it at a reasonable speed and include expression so that you can listen to them and enjoy the story or information together.

Some reading books will have comprehension questions in the back that parents can use. However, further question starters that are based on the assessment Content Domains can be used. These can be found on our school website (Useful Reading Questions). Parents and carers can use these to start deeper discussions about the texts and to help pupils develop important comprehension skills. Some skills are more difficult than others. For example, retrieval questions will be easier to answer than inference questions, which require pupils to 'read between the lines'.

Additionally, continuing to read a range of high-quality texts to your child will expose them to rich language and develop their comprehension skills. There are staggering statistics which show that when children are regularly read to by an adult, their knowledge of language increases dramatically.