



St John's School 2011



Take Home Reading Program

Books sent home for individual Home Reading have been levelled and placed on a continuum according to a wide range of characteristics:

Subject matter/Concepts	Sentence Structure
Story line— plot	Text complexity
Print length and font	Punctuation
Letter patterns, sounds, meaning	Vocabulary
High Frequency and Sight words	Use of illustrations
Layout etc...	

Levelled texts are designed to support children as they learn how to read. Each level exposes children to these differing characteristics. Children progress along this continuum to learn about the differing concepts of print. As the level increases, so does the complexity of the reading process required to read it well. Your child is regularly monitored to determine whether the texts selected are at an appropriate level.

For independent/home reading to be effective we commonly use books that children can read with about 97-100% accuracy, ie. 3 or less errors per 100 words. An **easy text** allows children to focus on the meaning of the story, recognize when errors are made and assist in developing self-correction skills, fluency and expression.

It is essential that children take home books they **CAN** read independently. We want them to have lots of practice reading with ease and allow them to celebrate their success with their families. Children also need to be able to make sense of what they read, as this is the primary purpose of reading.

Children are exposed to 'harder' texts within class sessions with the support of the teacher. A challenging or **instructional text** is one that is read with about 90-95% accuracy. This level provides an opportunity for experimenting and learning about reading while being supported by a teacher or parent.

A very **difficult text** is one that is read with less than 90% accuracy. The child reading this text spends so much time decoding the words

that meaning and fluency is reduced. The reader may seem lost, frustrated, and usually lacks enthusiasm for the task. Parents are encouraged to read these texts to/with children at home to model good reading behaviours.

There is an unfortunate belief that teachers must give children 'hard' books if they are going to improve reading performance. Research suggests otherwise.

We, at **St John's School**, want to create a community of children who enjoy reading and do not find it a difficult or a labour intensive task.

If you require any further information about our reading program or the use of leveled texts, please do not hesitate to ask.

Maureen Barrett
Principal



5 FINGER TEST

- Test your book—read a page.
- Put a finger up for each word you don't know.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

- Set aside a few minutes each evening and/or the morning to work with your child.
- Give your child encouragement and support
- Before reading the book, do a “picture walk.” Have your child look through the book (front to back) and comment on the pictures and predict/discuss what the book might be about.
- Encourage children to use other clues (pictures) for figuring out unknown words.
- Your own role model is very important. Read and discuss books in front of your children.
- Share reading, take it in turns reading a page.
- Ask questions.
- Make use of book clubs. There are lots of reasonably priced, quality books.
- Visit your local library or bookshop together - get the whole family to borrow and read at once.
- Reading books do not have to be restricted to English.
- Remind your child to take good care of books.

THE PURPOSE OF HOME READING IS TO PRACTISE, REINFORCE AND GAIN CONFIDENCE IN WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS ABOUT READING.

