Barefoot Books
Step inside a Story

What is book leveling?

About twice a year we send our new titles to be leveled. Once the results are in, we post them to Printable Materials for our Ambassador community to see. Many of you are probably familiar with the book leveling process, but for those of you who aren't, here's a bit of background information.

Leveling is an educational tool that matches readers of all ages with books that are best suited to their abilities. Leveled books expose students to content and vocabulary that they can understand while helping them move onto higher level texts. Factors that contribute to a book's level might include the word count per page, rhyme, sentence structure, vocabulary, etc.

We send our books to be leveled under three systems: Advanced Reader (AR), Lexile, and Fountas & Pinnell (F&P). The three methods share many traits, but because some statewide school and library systems prefer one method over another, it's important for us to get our books leveled under all three.

AR uses software analysis to assess the language difficulty of a book and assigns a number based on that score. AR then tests students on their reading ability, finds an average within each grade level, and matches the book number to the appropriate student reading level. Lexile leveling is similar to AR, but this method provides more detailed scores. It is based on an algorithm that simultaneously measures vocabulary and sentence length. Lexile levels are important to understand because nearly 50% of all school systems use them to determine what texts are appropriate for Common Core Standards. Lexile and AR only take language and structure into account, not content. F&P leveling is the only system that accounts for content and genre. It's rooted in the work of Marie Clay, who in the 1970s developed the Reading Recovery system for students who achieve the lowest literacy scores after their first year of school. The goal is to help children build an effective system for processing a variety of increasingly challenging texts over time. The F&P results we post also include the Reading Recovery equivalent.

How can you utilize this information in your Barefoot Books business?

Teachers, librarians and parents use leveling to find books that will retain interest for their children without being either too easy or too difficult. Teachers will use leveling to determine what books complement the section they're teaching. It is important for them to have the correct level text for their students—one that allows them to concentrate on comprehension instead of struggling to decode unknown words. Librarians use leveling to flesh out a section that they see as having growing interest or to guide children to a book that will suit their needs and skills.

You can use leveling in the same way. For example, if you can ascertain from a parent what level their student is reading, you can then recommend the right book to that parent. If someone's child loves a particular Barefoot book, find out what level it is and recommend another title at that level or a slightly higher level. A satisfied customer is a return customer!

Grade Level	AR Reading Levels (grade.month)	F&P Guided Reading Program Levels	Scholastic Guided Reading Program Levels	Lexile Comprehension Levels (25th-75th percentiles)	Scholastic Guided Reading Lexile® Ranges	CCSS Lexile® Recommendations	DRA Level
Kindergarten	0.0 - 0.9	A-D	A / B / C / D	n/a	n/a	n/a	A–1 / 2 / 3–4 / 6
Grade 1	1.0 - 1.9	E-J	A / B / C / D / E / F / G / H / I	Up to 300	n/a	n/a	A–1 / 2 / 3–4 / 6 / 8 / 10 / 12 / 14 / 16
Grade 2	2.0 - 2.9	K-M	E / F / G / H / I / J–K / L–M / N	140-500	100-1120	420-620	8 / 10 / 12 / 14 / 16 / 16–18 / 20–24 / 28–30
Grade 3	3.0 - 3.9	N-P	J–K / L–M / N / O–P / Q	330-700	100-1120	620-820	16–18 / 20–24 / 28–30 / 34–38 / 40
Grade 4	4.0 - 4.9	Q-S	M / N / O–P / Q–R / S–T	445-810	180-1280	740-875	20–24 / 28–30 / 34–38 / 40 / 40–50
Grade 5	5.0 - 5.9	T-V	Q–R / S–V / W	565-910	330-1280	875-1010	40 / 40–50 / 60
Grade 6	6.0 - 6.9	W-Y	T–V / W–Y / Z	665-1000	300-1340	925-1010	50 / 60 / 70