



A steady diet of “Just right” books, with a healthy dose of “Light reading” is necessary for building strong reading skills.

Conversely, a diet of “too hard” reading promotes poor comprehension and limits vocabulary development.

“**Light reading**” consists of vocabulary and content that allows the reader to **relax, wonder a bit, and still enjoy a story; most words can be read automatically.**



Students enjoy **re-reading** of favorite characters and themes from earlier reading experiences. Entertainment magazines and romance novels come to mind for adults.

“**Just right**” books can be read **independently at a comfortable, relaxed rate**, discovering new vocabulary along the way; these gradually extend a reader’s ability to comprehend, analyze and synthesize reading material. These books **stretch the reader, at a comfortable and independent level.**



For an adult, this reading would include novels that get you thinking, professional/personal development material and maybe “how-to” books.

“**Too hard**” books are **too hard for students to read & comprehend independently.** Readers become used to not understanding and not engaging with what they read.

This is *not* good practice.



Books with a host of **unfamiliar reading vocabulary or with themes too mature** for the reader are signs of “too hard” books. Professional journals *outside* one’s own profession would be an example of “too hard” for adults.

Ideas for Parents

Robin Kreines, PS Learning Specialist May 2011

Choose books at your child's reading level. Have your child read aloud to you for the first few pages of a new book. If she makes more than five mistakes per page, it's too hard for her to read on her own. If you're unsure which books are appropriate, ask her teacher or librarian for suggestions.

Try the magazine rack. An entire book may be daunting after a whole day at school. A children's magazine may be a less intimidating alternative. If your child likes stories, try Spider (ages 6-9) or Cricket (ages 9-14); if she likes science, pick up Ranger Rick (ages 7 and up) or Kids Discover (ages 6 and up). [For more information, visit CricketMag.com, NWF.org, and KidsDiscover.com.]

Pick the best time and place. Many families schedule reading time when kids are getting ready for bed. Be sure focus and concentration are accessible at the time you choose.

Read together. Take turns reading pages, or paragraphs, depending on his skill level and ability to focus. A bookmark can also keep your child on track and prevent him from losing his place.

Review every day. After your child reads a chapter, have her explain to you what happened. You can jot down her words and review them with her the next day, before moving on to the next chapter.

Use a audio recordings. Reinforce his reading with a book on audio (at local libraries, faculty webpages and most bookstores). By hearing the book's words, interest and attention can be peaked. For more info: http://web.prairieschool.net/~rkreines/Kreines_Webpage/Podcasts_Audio_Books.html

Stay loyal to an author whose characters and writing are familiar and engaging.

Visit websites:

Check out Prairie teacher webpages at: <http://web.prairieschool.net/Home.html>

Peruse

<http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante> for a list of books for all developmental levels based on the research of a team of highly respected reading consultants, *Gay Sue Pinnell and Irene Fountas.*

Stay **focused on description, child's interest and reading vocabulary** rather than grade level to find great books!

