

ESL Grade 1 – 3 Reading Profiles

Step A1 (TDSB)

At the end of Step A1, students use visuals to make meaning from texts. They recognize a few letters of the English alphabet and their name. They may or may not have had the opportunities to develop literacy in their first language. Students benefit from having texts read and reread to them. These texts are carefully selected in consideration of their visual and contextual support and their limited vocabulary range. Students require many opportunities to explore very simple English texts as they begin to understand that print carries meaning and build their awareness of directionality of print. They can match some basic English words with pictures.

Step 1

At the end of Step 1, students can understand and respond in English and or first language (L1) to highly visual or dual language text as appropriate to the grade. They follow simple instructions with visual support. They may be able to read simple, patterned texts. They are becoming familiar with concepts about English print, such as directionality and letters of the alphabet. They read and understand some high-frequency and personally relevant words as well as simple, pre-taught vocabulary. Students may bring age-appropriate understanding of language concepts in their first language (L1) to reading in English. They require extensive teacher modelling, opportunities to participate in small group conversations and guided practice.

Step 2

At the end of Step 2, students can read and understand simple, patterned texts with strong visual support and pre-taught vocabulary. They may also read dual language or L1 texts, as appropriate (for personal reading, to maintain L1 and to connect with their community). They can read and follow short, simply worded instructions and use visual and context clues to decode unfamiliar vocabulary. They recognize an increasing number of high-frequency words. Connecting students' background knowledge to new cultural concepts and situations supports comprehension and understanding.

Step 3

At the end of Step 3, students can read and understand simple and adapted texts with visual support and pre-taught vocabulary. They follow instructions consisting of a few steps. They use cueing systems to decode and determine the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. They read and understand pre-taught academic words. Guided practice and descriptive feedback support the learner.

Step 4

At the end of Step 4, students can read and understand authentic texts that are approaching grade level. They comprehend a range of high frequency words and key academic vocabulary. They can follow multi-step instructions for authentic tasks. Students can determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in context. Explicit instruction and guided practice regarding the use of cueing systems, punctuation, and expression when reading aloud, support the learner.

Step 5

At the end of Step 5, students can read and understand authentic texts at early grade level, from a variety of genres. They comprehend low frequency and academic vocabulary. Students use cueing systems such as context, and sentence structure to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words. They follow multi-step instructions for various tasks. Students require support to understand culturally specific references. They still require additional time to read and respond to increasingly complex texts, as well as ongoing opportunities to actively engage in group discussions.

Step 6

At the end of Step 6, students can read and understand a wide variety of grade level texts with limited vocabulary support. They consistently use a variety of strategies to solve unfamiliar words. They are reading the same volume of material and at a similar rate as their peers.