

EXPECTATIONS OF A READER AT DIFFERING STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT

Expectations of an Emergent Reader (DRA Levels A-3)

- Attends to print and some known letters
- Points to words in a one-to-one match throughout one to three lines of patterned text
- Recognizes link between known letters and related sounds: articulates first letter of an unknown word
- Uses a special key word from ABC chart to help with solving unknown words.
- Fluently reads some (about 20) high-frequency words in easy text
- Self-monitors using high-frequency words and other known visual cues
- Rereads to cross-check first letter against meaning and structure
- Notices unknown words and guesses at the meaning from pictures or the way the words are used in text

Expectations of an Early Reader (DRA Levels 4-12)

- Self-monitors reading with greater ease: use known words and patterns to check on reading; notices words within a word; begins to acquire a reading vocabulary of about 150 words from easy, familiar texts
- Searches through words in a left-to-right sequence; blends letters into sounds; repeats words as if to confirm identity
- Focuses more on comprehension than decoding at the end of the early level
- Takes words apart at the larger unit of analysis (consonant diagraphs, inflectional endings, onset and rime, blends)
- Reads high-frequency words quickly, fluently, and automatically

Expectations of a Transitional Reader (DRA Levels 14-28)

- Expands reading vocabulary; shows interest in unfamiliar words that are read to them
- Solves multi-syllable words by noticing parts within the words
- Quickly takes words apart on the run while reading
- Reads longer texts with greater accuracy and fluency
- Uses word meanings to solve word problems (prefixes, suffixes, roots, compound parts)
- Preprocesses errors before making a mistake

Expectations of a Fluent Reader (DRA Levels 30-44)

- Has an extensive reading vocabulary; reads longer texts with specialized content and unusual words; learns new words daily
- Applies knowledge of word meanings to reading texts with more complex language structures
- Responds to reading in many different levels
- Applies knowledge about word meanings across different texts
- Makes predictions about word meanings and checks within texts
- Refines word knowledge