



The Reading Bandscales document 9 levels of reading development, from Initial exposure to Reading through to reading proficiency. They are designed specifically for teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak a language other than Standard Australian English in their home or community environment.

Junior Primary Reading Bandscales:

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Pre-level 1:

<p>New to reading and books: drawing on knowledge of the world in Home Language (HL) through the stimuli of play and family. Familiar with a range of spoken genres in HL.</p>

Are able to make meaning from visual cues in their environment, eg. finding items in the local shop or supermarket, reading tracks in the environment, recognizing the tides and seasons.

May demonstrate well-developed observational skills.

May be familiar with audiovisual texts, eg. CD covers, videos, television programs.

Will play as the initial form of making sense of the world.

May be new to books and their purposes.

May look at pictures in books.

May use HL in any attempts to communicate their ideas.

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- Are new to the use of school-based literacy, teacher talk and relating to and following the instruction of one adult.
- Are exposed to some Standard Australian English (SAE) through media, conversation with people such as hospital staff.
- Are aware of environmental print to varying degrees.
- Are developing confidence to respond and offer ideas about pictures in HL.
- May have difficulty concentrating on activities based around reading in SAE

Note: Family interactions with print are relative to the availability of printed material, adult literacy competencies and preferred literacy modes (Adults may prefer to use oral modes as a deliberate choice to preserve their oral culture and language).

Note: It is important to recognise the relationship between reading level and listening ability. Development of listening skills is important for all children who are learning English as a second language, but is essential for those children who have a hearing loss as well. Children with hearing loss require specific support with the development of listening skills. See Listening Bandscales and Listening – Major Teaching Emphases to identify areas of support required.

Level 1:

New to reading in SAE: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees) and is able to comprehend in the HL.

Can recognize and name some letters and words (within visual context) which they encounter frequently and for which meaning is given (e.g. commercial logos, signs and labels, brand names, Police, School).

Can recognize their name or part of it in print. (eg. That's in my name)

Will exhibit reading-like behaviour, eg., choosing a book, sitting and looking at a book, turning pages, studying and discussing pictures.

Will have a limited range of reading vocabulary/phrases until they have acquired the relevant spoken language.

Beginning to develop concepts of classroom literacy, and are gaining an understanding about the school context.

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- May have a conceptualization of literacy in HL based on experiences with the environmental and functional written texts to varying degrees such as signs, forms, bulletin boards etc. (This may be more prominent in the Torres Straits, where Torres Strait Creole is being displayed in written form on posters, etc.)
- Are beginning to display reading-like behaviour: holding book the right way up, turning pages appropriately.
- Are using pictures to construct ideas in HL, may be beginning to insert SAE words and phrases particular to story, eg. Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin.
- Will retell/relate the meaning of a story or text in HL drawing on their world view which may vary from the SAE world view understanding.
- Are keen to look at books and have favourite reading materials.
- Are beginning to recognise that words are different from pictures (point to print when "reading").
- Will rely heavily on visual contextual support in shared reading activities, eg. pictures, gestures, facial expressions, these however may present difficulties where cultural variations give gestures different meanings.

Note: May stay at this level longer than children with a home based literacy background.

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Pre-level 2:

Beginning to recognise familiar words and short word clusters memorized in known contexts: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE for some and HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Can recognise words and short word clusters in SAE if these have been recycled often in a variety of language activities (eg. Words on the job chart).

Can recognize words in context but may not be able to transfer this knowledge to a different context (eg. May know a word on a chart but may not be able to recognise it in a storybook/computer game).

Are showing signs of responding to a known text "read" independently, e.g. laughter, surprise and disappointment and verbal responses in HL.

Will make meanings and predictions in HL and begin to understand SAE in texts read to them.

Can "read" familiar SAE texts from memory.

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- Will join in with key words and repetitive phrases in familiar texts (e.g. picture stories, written chants and rhymes) in shared/modelled reading sessions with teacher.
- Can recognize words in context but may not be able to transfer this knowledge to a different context (eg. May know a word on a chart but may not be able to read it in a book.)
- Will cue into (particularly) nouns and verbs associated with the accompanying picture or words pointed to by the teacher, but are unaware of the meaning carried by structural words such as the, and, in, of, what and other language not pointed out or supported by illustrations. Prepositions may be of particular difficulty due to HL differences.
- May not see self as reader, reluctant to risk-take with unfamiliar texts.
- Will rely on familiar texts in order to feel success.
- Will exhibit reading-like behaviours.
- Will rely on illustrations and memory of text to "read".

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Level: 2

Beginning to recognise words and short word clusters in SAE: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are beginning to see themselves as readers, developing risk-taking, and displaying one to one correspondence confidently.

Are attempting to read on own.

Are beginning to use contextual and visual cues to gain meaning from text (eg., whole word shape, using a letter shape in a word to recognize the word, using cues from pictures).

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- Will continue to cue into (particularly) nouns and verbs associated with the accompanying picture or words pointed to by the teacher and are becoming aware of the meaning carried by structural words such as prepositions.
- Are unable to fully comprehend and to predict meaning in texts, even if they are able to decode. Can predict meaning based on HL knowledge and culture that may not reflect the original meaning of the text.
- Will only be able to predict grammatical structures in SAE that they are familiar with.

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Level: 3

Beginning to comprehend short familiar texts in SAE with contextual support: drawing on the knowledge of the world in HL and SAE and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are able to read with contextual support short familiar texts (words and phrases in passages, short passages, rhymes within a story, etc.) which use language that has been recycled in a variety of ways; however are limited in their reading by their developing spoken proficiency in SAE.

Are able to read own written stories to peers and teachers (using both memory and word recognition).

Are beginning to expect what is read in SAE to make sense.

Are able to retell stories in HL with guided questioning and prompting from the teacher. (e.g., What happened then? Oh they...,did they! What did they do then ?)

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- Will read along as the teacher reads short, simple, repetitive and illustrated narratives, joining in with sections they know.
- Are able to show comprehension through appropriate contextual activities eg., story maps, sequencing pictures, however level of oral proficiency in SAE will determine the ability to discuss the text and the reading strategies they have used.
- Will have difficulty comprehending written words, phrases and sentences that they do not know orally.
- Will encounter unfamiliar language dependent on overall SAE proficiency. As a consequence, will be unable to predict from the language context alone.
- Are attempting to decode known and unknown words, using initial sounds and other early decoding skills. Will have difficulty predicting meaning as they decode until their oral proficiency in SAE develops.
- May pause and appeal to teacher for assistance through non-verbal cues when reading comprehension has broken down or children may not be aware that comprehension has broken down.

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Level: 4

Applying developing reading skills in familiar contexts and topics: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Can gain meaning from texts around which language activities have been based and for which contextual cues are provided eg. short repetitive narratives, simple procedures (eg. Recipes, simple invitations, letters, faxes, emails).

Can get the gist of texts (which may be in language arts, mathematics, science, etc.) based on class experience and jointly constructed by the teacher and students; however comprehension may be sporadic.

Are becoming independent readers within the range of these types of texts, and within the range of their overall proficiency in SAE. Are drawing on a growing but still limited overall proficiency in SAE; comprehension in unfamiliar topics will be restricted.

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- May rely less on teacher support when reading individually than when reading aloud in front of the class or group. Be aware that children may prefer to read to individuals rather than in front of a whole class.
- Are applying their developing reading skills with greater facility (eg. predicting, confirming, decoding, growing sight vocabulary; ability to ask others for help with meaning and pronunciation of words; referring to the illustrations in text; rereading in order to establish meaning when comprehension of text breaks down).
- Reading aloud may contain transfer of knowledge influenced by HL spoken features (e.g., intonation, stress, pronunciation) and by HL sound-symbol relationships (for those who have some HL reading ability).
- Are able to talk about aspects of reading (e.g., are developing meta-language around texts and books e.g., word, letter, on page 10, title).

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Level: 5

Becoming active and confident readers in SAE but their overall proficiency in SAE places limits on their progress in reading: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and SAE language literacy (to varying degrees).

Are able to read most texts (within level ranges expected at their phase of schooling) on familiar topics using less complex language and contextual cues.

Will lack "depth" of comprehension and predicting ability in more complex narratives, and in informational texts on unfamiliar topics and procedures where the language of the text is removed from oral language and where there is an overload of new language and concepts.

May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media (also known as middle ear disease). See note below.

- Will lack the "depth" in reading, eg., may lose the thread of longer, more complex texts because of difficulties in understanding of cohesive devices (eg. because; before this happened; pronoun references to earlier nouns/objects/people etc.) and in remembering prior text which contains new language and is far removed from the connector (eg. The girl who wore one white sneaker said that she had lost the other one at the pool).
- Will be likely to be able to comprehend texts at a literal level.
- Will need teacher and contextual support (e.g. talking around the topic, with visual support to ensure understanding; additional time to process and to revisit new language and concepts; making links with what they know in their HL) to fully comprehend new language and concepts in informational texts on new topics.
- Are becoming aware that the same word may be used in different ways (e.g., He *cried* when he fell down; "It's mine!" she *cried*.)
- Are becoming aware that a phrase may be used in different ways to give different meanings, eg. "*I've got it!*" she yelled as she caught the ball; "*I've got it!*" He finally understood the teacher.)
- Will have difficulty with texts containing unfamiliar cultural reference and content.

Note: It is important to recognise the relationship between reading level and listening ability. Development of listening skills is important for all children who are learning English as a second language, but is essential for those children who have a hearing loss as well. Children with hearing loss require specific support with the development of listening skills. See Listening Bandscales and Listening – Major Teaching Emphases to identify areas of support required.

Level: 6

Becoming Competent readers in SAE (within the range expected at the later stages of junior primary: drawing on their knowledge of the world in HL and SAE and, and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are becoming competent readers in SAE (within the range of ability expected at the later stages of junior primary), though still need more time than their mainstream peers to process information to gain meaning from texts and to internalize the content.

Are able to comprehend most texts at a literal and inferential level (within the range of ability expected at their phase of schooling), ie. narratives, procedures, instructions, informational texts, with the support normally provided to learners at their phase of schooling (eg. introduction of new vocabulary and concepts, talking around the topic, etc.).

- Can rely on an expanding experience and overall proficiency in SAE to comprehend written texts in SAE and to discuss and express opinions on texts they have read.
- Are able to comprehend, and may choose to read, more concept-dense texts (eg. factual texts about countries, animals) during free reading time.
- Understand written SAE and knowledge of the world gained from a widening range of reading in SAE is transferring over into the students' written work and conversation (eg. in choice of topics and vocabulary and in sentence structure).
- Will continue to draw on their knowledge of the world in HL.
- Will encounter difficulties with cultural references in some culture-bound texts outside their experience (eg. in certain culture-specific narratives) and will continue to have difficulty with the unfamiliar language and patterns of poetry and rhymes in SAE.

Additional Background Information:

Will continue to benefit from using their HL with HL peers and adults.

Level: 7

Competent readers in SAE (within the range expected at the later stages of junior primary): drawing on their knowledge of the world in HL and SAE and, and on HL and SAE language and literacies (to varying degrees).

Are able to comprehend (within the range of ability expected at their phase of schooling) all texts relevant to their age level and phase of schooling.

Can comprehend most texts at this level within the same time expected of mainstream students.

Will need the same support as mainstream peers in accessing new learning texts.

- Will continue to have some difficulty with culture-specific language in SAE texts (eg. Idioms, metaphors and subtle humour and with the unfamiliarity of some language in poetry and rhymes).
- Will continue to draw on both HL and SAE knowledge of the world and for some, HL literacy and literacy in SAE to enhance their reading.

Additional Background Information:

Will continue to benefit from using their HL with HL peers and adults.