

Reading Milestones

There's no better time than chilly winter to make sure the kids are up to par with their reading skills. We get teachers to set some milestones for your kids to reach and the books they should be reading for their age group



1 to 3 years old

Teia Nidey, English Pre-K Lead Teacher
House of Knowledge

Kindergarten children one to three years old should be working to increase their knowledge of reading through word games, play, and art. Most children of this age do not read themselves, and will need to be read to.

Milestones for this age group include:

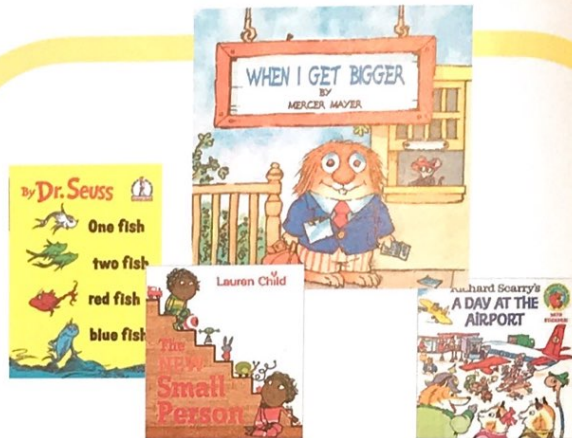
- Using illustrations to tell stories
- Repeating and retelling familiar stories
- Identifying their own name and some words that are special to them like 'mom' or 'dad'
- Taking care of books
- Following simple texts when being read to

Suggested books:

Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr and Eric Carle. *Brown Bear* is a repetitive rhythm book that builds anticipation and facilitates responses from young readers. The repetition makes it easy for children to follow along and begin connecting sounds.

Where's Spot by Eric Hill. Spot is a popular series due to its easy to follow story line. The book helps build knowledge of story structures such as characters, setting, and events.

Things That Go by Author Amy Pixton and Stephan Lomp. This book is about transportation which is a popular topic among this age group and brings the outside world into a story book.



4 to 5 years old

Royce Haughton, English Classroom Teacher
3e International School

Children in this age group should be speaking clearly in complete sentences averaging over five words. They should be using future tense and vocabulary for frequently viewed items. They should be able to describe the items such as its size, color, shape and quantity. Goals for this age group include developing and expanding a functional vocabulary, the ability to pronounce phonetic sounds in English and comprehension of vocabulary over situational imagery.

As children grow, their skills, successes, and abilities, need to be nurtured so that they develop into capable and confident learners. With children in this age group, it should be expected that they reach these milestones in their native language while still building towards them in their second or third language.

Suggested books:

A Day at the Airport by Richard Scarry. This book is about airplanes – an astonishing creation to many children. It shows and describes an airport in a simple and easy to understand way through detailed pictures.

The New Small Person by Lauren Child. This book is written for children with new siblings and shows that even as things change, they are still important.

One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish by Dr. Seuss. This book uses rhyming words while pointing out descriptors to made-up animals and beings.

When I Get Bigger by Mercer Mayer. Although this book surpasses the goals for children in this age group, it allows them to see possibilities of when they can achieve when they are older and what they should work towards.



6 to 7 years old

**Jim Sweeney, Head of Primary
YCIS Beijing**

Reading lies at the heart of all our teaching at YCIS Beijing. The phrase, 'the more you read, the more you know', rings true in every part of our community. Reading with your child at home and cultivating a love of reading will have a significant impact on them and their studies. It is essential when reading with a child to understand their reading level, so that you can appropriately support and challenge them.

Milestones to hit at this age include:

- The ability to successfully decode or sound out words that are unfamiliar to them. Give them an opportunity to break down the word and read it on their own.
- Children should also be 'self-correcting' mistakes they have made when they are reading aloud. As educators, we look for children of this age to be reading aloud with proper emphasis and expression.
- Children at this age group should be able to comprehend what they have read and demonstrate this through conversations regarding the text, notes or drawings.

However, it is important to appreciate that all children develop differently and the nature of support and level of difficulty that they need will vary. It is not a 'one size fits all' situation.

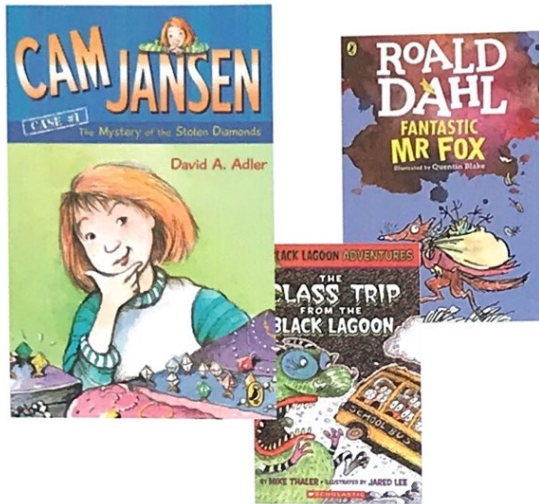
Suggested books:

Stig of the Dump by Clive King. This is a complete classic that should be compulsory reading for all children!

The BFG by Roald Dahl. Dahl's use of language is fabulous, creative and fun.

Who Would Win? series by Jerry Pallotta. As a child I wasn't an avid reader and I didn't enjoy fiction or fairytales. These books are filled with interesting facts that would have hooked me in as a young reader.





7 to 8 years old

Megan Williams, Fourth Grade Teacher
International School of Beijing

Even though readers at this stage still rely heavily on phonics to decode words, children are beginning to recognise more words automatically. At this stage, children are starting to transition from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'. Children at this stage are becoming faster, more fluent readers. Their reading should become more expressive; less stilted and more like regular speech. They are also reading longer and about more complex stories in which the plot carries over several chapters. This requires an increased reading stamina. Even though children are becoming independent readers at this age, they still need to hear their parents and teachers read to and with them. This models what good reading sounds like as well as inspires them to become lifelong readers.

Suggested books:

Fantastic Mr Fox by Roald Dahl - This is one of my favorites by Roald Dahl. Children love Dahl's creative use of language and his mischievous main character, Mr Fox.

Black Lagoon Adventures series by Jared D Lee & Mike Thaler. The Black Lagoon Adventure books put a fun twist on the familiar school setting. These are short chapter books, which helps students feel a sense of accomplishment as they build up their reading volume and stamina.

Cam Jansen series by David A. Adler. Mysteries like the Cam Jansen series are great for readers at this stage. Students are naturally engaged and read the books closely to solve the mystery before the main character.



9 to 11 years old



Clare Cannon, Deputy Head of Primary
British School of Beijing

Milestones for this age group include:

- Ability to draw inferences and make predictions from text
- Ask a range of questions to develop their understanding of the text, with supporting evidence from the text
- Express views which show their understanding of what they have read
- Routinely develop comments on the writer's choice of language, form or structural features and how they guide the reader
- Make evaluative comparisons within and across different texts, by expressing opinions about how the writers' choices affect the reader

Suggested books:

Wonder by R J Palacio. This is a wonderful book to engage students in learning about how we are all unique. The book explores the themes of acceptance and empathy.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C S Lewis. This classic novel transports the reader to a magical land. Children embark on a journey of adventure and fantasy, discovering the power of courage and transformation.

Holes by Louis Sachar. A great read for ages 10+, exploring a mystery that is woven throughout time. The novel portrays interesting and well-developed characters that children can relate to. ■

