

Picking Just Right Books

Research shows when children are reading independently, they should be reading books they understand and can read. Reading books that are too difficult can lead to frustration, inability to understand the story, and then reading is no longer enjoyable. We want children to enjoy reading, which means it is important they are reading books they are interested in and on their just right level! Research also shows that children are motivated to read when they can choose their own books.

Every year many parents ask, "How can I help my child choose books that he or she can read?" There is a very simple way to help your child choose good fit books. It is called IPICK.

1. I choose a book. Have your child choose a book. This is the first I in IPICK which means "I choose books to read"
2. Purpose--Why do I want to read it? Ask your child, "What is your purpose for choosing this book?" You may also want to ask, "is it for fun or to learn something?". This is the P in IPICK which means purpose.
3. Interest--Does it interest me? Ask your child, "Is this a book you are interested in?" This is the second I, which means interest.
4. Comprehend--Am I understanding? Have your child read a page of the book. After your child reads the page, ask your child, "Who did you read about and what did they do?". This is the C in IPICK which stands for Comprehend. If it is a good fit book your child should be able to answer your question.
5. Know--I know most of the words. Have your child read another page (or use the same page) and ask, "Did you know the words?". This is the K in IPICK which stands for know the words. Your child should know all or almost all of the words in order for it to be a good fit book.

Going through the steps of choosing a good fit book should only take a couple minutes. It has been my experience that many children can easily choose good fit books once they have mastered the process of IPICK. Other children may need more guidance from mom or dad as they choose good fit books. This is an ongoing process that we will continue to learn and practice at school.