

The Goldilocks Method

Do you remember Goldilocks' quest to find the porridge, the chair, and the bed that were "just right" for her? Just as Goldilocks found that some porridge was too hot or too cold and one was just right, beginning readers often have difficulty finding books that are "just right" and not too hard or too easy for them. When you are reading a book you can try asking yourself these questions to help you find a book that is "just right" for you.

Too Easy Books: As you read, ask yourself these questions. If you answer "yes" to most of the questions then the book is probably too easy for you. You can still have fun reading it, but next time choose a book that is a little more challenging.

1. *Have you read this book many times before?*
2. *Do you understand the story very well without much effort?*
3. *Do you know and understand almost every word?*
4. *Can you read it smoothly and fluently without much practice or effort?*

Just Right Books: As you read, ask yourself these questions. If you answer "yes" to most of them then the book you are reading is probably "just right" for you. These are the books that will help you make the most progress in your reading. Read, enjoy, and learn from the experience!

1. *Is this book new to you?*
2. *Do you understand most of the book?*
3. *Are there a few words per page that you don't recognize or know the meaning to instantly?*
4. *Can someone help you with the book if you hit a rough spot?*

Too Hard Books: As you read, ask yourself these questions. If you find that you answer "yes" to most of these questions, then the book is probably too hard for you. Don't forget about the book. Try it again later. As you gain experience in choosing "just right" books, you may find when you pick the book up again that it is "just right."

1. *Are there more than a few words on a page that you don't recognize or know the meaning?*
2. *Are you confused about what is happening in most of the book?*
3. *When you read, are you struggling and does it sound choppy?*
4. *Is everyone busy and unable to help you if you hit a tough spot?*

