

Interpreting Your Students' End of Year Results

As a Reading Buddy you have worked hard this year to help your students grow as readers. Their growth has likely taken many forms from increased reading ability to showing greater motivation to read and learn.

The assessment we use to track the growth of students in the program is the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System that teachers conduct with each of their students at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. The assessment gives teachers information about the students' reading level based on the errors they make (accuracy), their understanding of the text (comprehension), and rate/expression of their reading (fluency). The chart below shows the expected progression of reading levels for a typically developing student as it corresponds with their grade level.

In past years, the reading level of students participating in the Reading Buddy program increased, on average, four letter levels from their beginning of 2nd grade to end of year levels. However, as you can see by looking at the level gradient the levels are not equally distributed across the grade levels. In earlier grades when most children are beginning to unlock the fundamentals of decoding written text, they progress through a wider range of text complexity in a year. Once children are primarily focusing on strategies for comprehending what they read, they tend to require more time at a given level of text complexity before they are ready to move on.

While we want all our children to be reading on grade level (Level M/N) when they leave us at the end of second grade, there are many factors that may account for why they are still reading on a lower level:

- **Entered second grade far below grade level:** all students identified for our program are reading below grade level at the beginning of second grade, however, a student entering second grade at a level D has to make more progress to be reading on grade level than one starting at level J.
- **Developmental differences:** if you have had children of your own or spent time with children you are aware that each child develops at their own pace. While there are ages when most children will learn to walk, talk, know their letter sounds, etc., some children take longer to reach certain milestones. This is true of children's reading development as well.
- **Reading Difficulties/Disabilities:** in some cases, children may have cognitive difficulties or disabilities, like dyslexia, that interfere with how and when they learn to read. Because reading is such a complex process, diagnosing the existence and nature of such disabilities needs to be done by a highly-qualified expert.



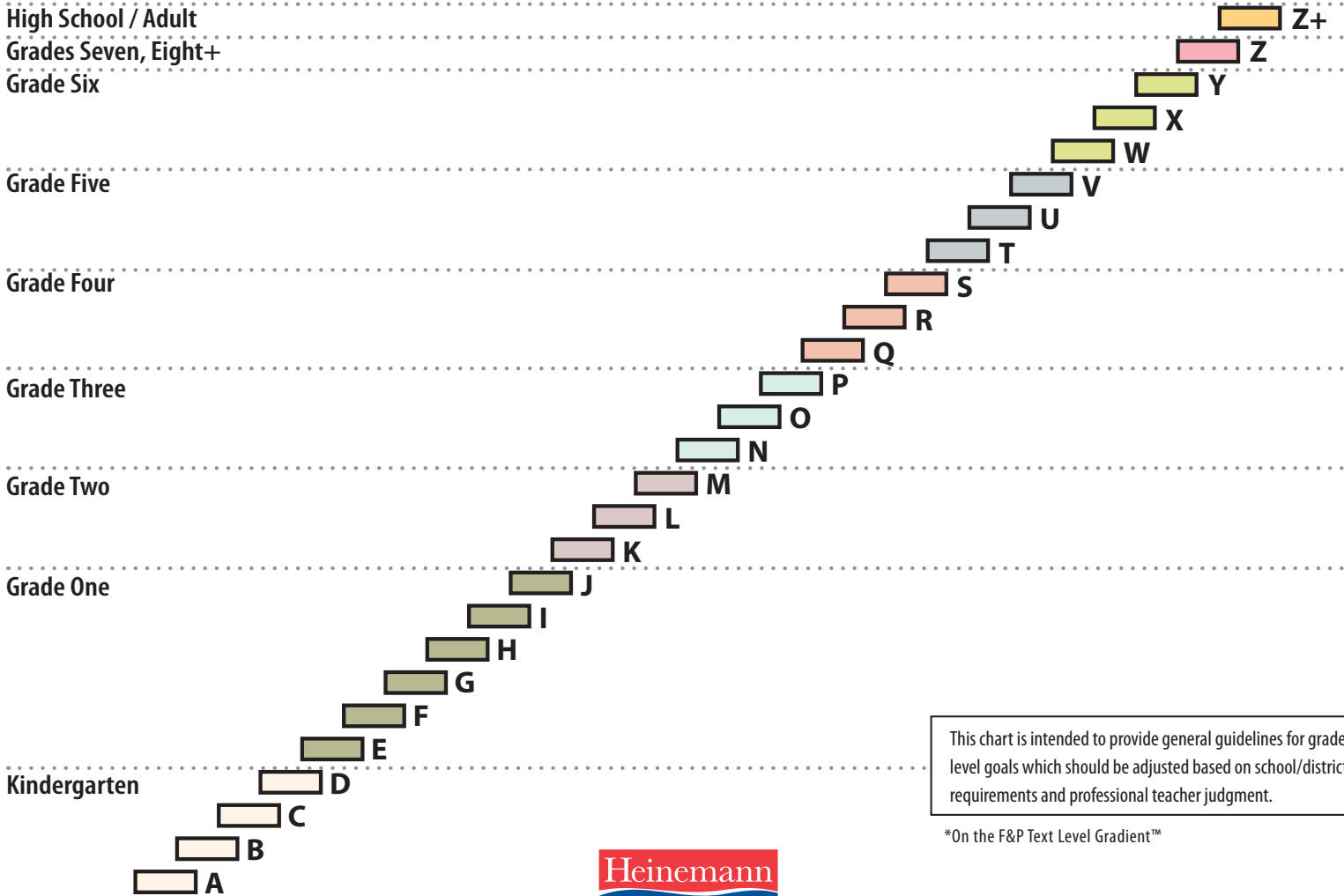
When considering your impact as a Reading Buddy this year it is important to look at the experience holistically. Many of the ways your students have benefited from working with you are difficult to quantify and measure, and yet are so valuable.

Fountas & Pinnell

TEXT LEVEL LADDER OF PROGRESS

GRADE LEVEL GOALS

FOUNTAS & PINNELL LEVELS*



This chart is intended to provide general guidelines for grade level goals which should be adjusted based on school/district requirements and professional teacher judgment.

*On the F&P Text Level Gradient™



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