

Ziptales Reading Level Test

To find out where a child fits in terms of appropriate Ziptales texts for their level of reading ability, we offer a “Reading Level Test”.

It will recommend a variety of appropriate texts to suit the child’s reading ability. This is based on:

- (a) the child’s year level (to establish age appropriateness)
- (b) the child’s reading ability, as established by the test instrument.

The reading diagnosis ‘engine’ starts with a list of five story titles. The child reads a test story selected by the teacher and answers the questions that follow.

Here are the suggested passages for establishing the best reading level.

Approximate Level	Test item	Title of test story
Foundation/Year 1	1	Tom and the Mouse
Year 2	2	Bad Dog
Years 3 & 4	3	Three Wishes
Years 5 & 6	4	Over the Rainbow
Advanced readers	5	Education of Amelia

Once the child finishes the test, the engine makes recommendations for reading on the basis of his/her level of accomplishment. A list of titles is made available for the child to choose from.

The test is suitable to use with children in the early primary years who can independently read at a simple level, and goes all the way through to recommendations for older children reading at an advanced level.

Teachers may wish to select a text outside these recommendations that may be more desirable for a child who is reading at a *very different level to his/her age or grade level*. For example, a Year 1 child reading at an *above average* level for their age group could begin with Test 2 (Bad Dog). Or a Year 5 child reading at a *below average* level for their age group might begin with Test 3 (Three Wishes). The teacher is best placed to make these adjustments before allocating a test story.

Nothing about the tests that the student sees indicates level. Only the teacher knows the true levels.

How to use the test

Select a relevant reading test for the child based on their year level or reading ability (see table above).

Have the child go to the Student Dashboard and select “Reading Level Test” (just below the three library buttons). The child enters the test area and clicks “Continue”.

The child then selects the story allocated to them by the teacher.

The test passage will appear on screen. They read the passage carefully. Then they answer the questions on the screens following the passage. They can scroll up and down to find details to help them answer the questions.

(Note: There are no illustrations at all in the test passages. This is to make certain that the child must decode the words themselves without any visual cues.)

Below are the full scripts for each of the five test passages, along with the questions, and the way the test engine directs readers.

Test passage 1

Tom and the Mouse

Tom had a little toy car. It was red. He loved to play with it. He played with it every day.

One day, Tom saw something moving in his toy car. He looked inside. He got a big surprise.

There was a little mouse inside the car! The little mouse looked very sad.

“Hello,” said Tom. “What’s wrong?”

“I’m lost,” said the little mouse.

“Where do you live?” asked Tom.

“I live in the big tree,” said the little mouse. “But I don’t know where it is.”

“I can help you,” said Tom.

“Oh, thank you!” said the little mouse.

Tom picked up his little car very carefully. He took it outside.

“Don’t worry,” said Tom. “I will take you to the big tree.”

Tom went over to the big tree in his backyard.

“Here is the big tree,” he said to the little mouse.

Tom put the car on the ground. The little mouse jumped out. He looked up at Tom.

“Thank you so much!” he said.

“I will come back tomorrow,” said Tom. “I will give you a ride in my car.”

“That will be lots of fun!” said the little mouse.

Tom and the little mouse became friends. They played together every day.

(206 words, Flesch 0.4)

QUESTIONS

Question 1 What colour is Tom’s toy car? blue/red/yellow/brown

Question 2 What did Tom find in his toy car? a little mouse/a fairy/a green frog/a tree

Question 3 Why was the little mouse sad? he was sick/he was lost/he had no friends/he was covered with red spots

Question 4 Where did the little mouse live? in the garden/in the toy car/in the big tree/in the house with Tom

Question 5 How did Tom help the little mouse? he gave him a ride in his toy car/he took him home/he gave him some food/he gave him a nice gift

On the basis of your reading, we recommend you start reading at Zip Stage ?

(If 1-3/5) – go to Zip Stage 1

(If 4 or 5/5) – go to Zip Stage 2

Test passage 2

Bad dog

My dog is called Fido. He is a good dog. He loves me and I love him.

I take him for a walk each evening after school. I feed him. He sleeps on my bed every night.

Fido is a good dog. But last summer he was a very naughty dog. Let me tell you why.

My family and I were going away on holiday. We were going somewhere you cannot take dogs. Fido knew we were going away. He saw the bags. He saw the fishing rod. He saw the beach ball. And he knew we were not going to take him.

So what did Fido do? He ran away. He left home. He went off by himself.

We looked everywhere. We called him.

“Here, boy! Good dog! Come back!”

But he hid.

We missed the taxi. We missed the plane. We missed out on the first two days of our holiday.

By the time we found Fido, we were very angry.

We know that he was naughty because he did not want to be left behind. So next holiday, we are going to take him with us. Then he will be good all the time.

(197 words, Flesch 0.8)

QUESTIONS

Question 1 The dog in this story is called... Fido/Naughty/Good dog/Bad dog

*Question 2 Fido is usually ... A bad dog/A sad dog/A **good dog**/A stupid dog*

Question 3 Every night Fido's owner... Takes him on holiday/Takes him for a walk and feeds him/Takes him to school/Reads him a story

Question 4 Last summer Fido was naughty when he... Cried/Slept on the bed/Got angry/Ran away

Question 5 The reason Fido was naughty was that... He had not been fed/He knew the family were going to leave him behind/He did not like school/He was told not to sleep on the bed

Question 6 What did Fido do when he knew he was being left behind? He took himself off and hid/He hid the fishing rod/He bit his owner on the hand/He barked at the taxi

Question 7 The family tried to find Fido. They called out... "Come and get your food!"/"Come for a walk after school!"/"Come with us on holiday!"/"Come back!"

Question 8 As a result of not being able to find Fido... They got very cross and smacked Fido/They missed out on their holiday/They missed part of their holiday/They called the police to report a missing dog

Question 9 Next holiday, the family will... Send Fido away/Take Fido with them/Lock Fido up at home/Smack Fido so he will be good

Question 10 Then Fido will be... Very sad and lonely/Unable to run away/Somewhere safe/Good all the time.

(If 1-3/10) – go to Zip Stage 2

(If 4-7/10) – go to Zip Stage 3

(If 8-10/10) – go to Zip Stage 4

Test passage 3

Three Wishes

One day, in an antique shop, Johnny came upon a very old lamp. It was his Mum's birthday the following day. The lamp was cheap, so he bought it.

When he got it home, he thought he had better clean it up. So he took a cloth, and rubbed hard.

"POOF!"

A huge genie rose from the lamp. He bowed low.

"Greetings, Master," said the genie. "What are your wishes?"

"Can you grant me whatever I wish for?"

"Just ask."

"I wish for... lots of lovely food!"

In an instant, Johnny's bedroom was full of marvellous things to eat. There were pies, roast beef, chicken legs and sausages.

There were ice creams, chocolate pudding, cakes and soft drink.

“Wow! Can I have anything I want?”

“Anything. But I forgot to tell you, Master - when you wish again, whatever you wished for disappears. Think carefully.

”While Johnny thought about his second wish, he started eating. He ate two pies, a beef sandwich, several sausages and a chicken leg. He had an ice cream and a plate of pudding. Yummy.

“I know,” said Johnny. “I wish to be a millionaire!”

Immediately, the food was all gone. In its place was money, jewellery, gold plates and diamonds.

“Wow!”

Johnny threw the money in the air. He put the jewels around his neck. He laughed till his stomach hurt.

“Oh no!” Suddenly he felt sick. Very sick. It was all that food.

“What is it, Master?”

“Oh no, I’m going to throw up. I wish I had something to settle my stomach.”

Instantly, the wealth was gone. On the middle of Johnny’s bed was a bottle. He read “SICK PILLS...Take one with water.”

The genie held out a glass of water.

“The water is free, Master. Good bye.”

(294 words, Flesch 2.3)

QUESTIONS

Question 1 Johnny bought the lamp... At a lamp shop/At the genie’s shop/At Mum’s shop/**At an antique shop**

Question 2 When the lamp was rubbed ... **A genie appeared**/Food and money appeared/Mum appeared/Nothing at all happened

Question 3 Johnny’s first wish was for... Ice cream, pudding and cakes/**Lots of food**/Lots of money/A new bedroom

Question 4 The second wish was for... **Wealth**/Food/Sick pills/Food and money

Question 5 The problem with the wishes was that... Nothing happened/**Each new wish caused the previous one to disappear**/They were too dangerous/The genie was lying

Question 6 Johnny got sick because... Money made him sick/The genie made him sick/The millionaire made him sick/**He ate too much too fast**

Question 7 Johnny's last wish was for... **Something to stop feeling sick**/More food/More money/Another three wishes

Question 8 The genie held out... A new lamp/A bottle of pills/**A glass of water**/A towel to wipe up the mess

Question 9 At the end of the story... Johnny had all the food and money he wanted/The wishes started all over again/Johnny threw up/**The genie vanished**

Question 10 The moral of this story might be... Don't trust genies/Don't buy old lamps/**Don't be greedy**/Don't believe in magic

(If 1-3/10) – go to Zip Stage 4

(If 4-7/10) – go to Zip Stage 5

(If 8-10/10) – go to Zip Stage 6

Test passage 4 Over the Rainbow

Sally wanted so badly to be Dorothy. She had just found out that her school was auditioning for 'The Wizard of Oz'. It was her favourite film of all time. She just loved the idea of finding a magical land on the other side of a cyclone. She adored the costume - that cute little dress and apron - the lovely red shoes. And of course there was Toto. She longed to be able to pick Toto up and walk along the yellow brick road, singing "Over the Rainbow".

There was only one problem. Sally wore glasses. And she had braces. But she could sing better than anyone at school. She knew, though, deep in her heart of hearts, that she didn't look like everyone's idea of Dorothy. And that she wasn't going to get the part.

"But you will audition, won't you?" said her mother, anxiously.

"Why bother?"

"Because you have a wonderful voice. And you're great on stage."

"Mum, they're not going to give it to me. Never. I don't look like Dorothy."

Sally refused to try out for the lead role. Nothing would persuade her.

But the chorus - that was different. She loved acting, and singing. The end of year show was the high point of the year. And so she tried out. She wanted to sing, so a winged monkey was out of the question. She decided to be a Munchkin. At least this way she could sing as part of the chorus. And of course she got the role.

Rehearsals began in earnest. They went on for months. Costumes were designed and sewn together. The sets were built. The cast practised their lines and their songs. Posters were put up.

Before anyone knew it, the week of the show had arrived. There was only one problem. The girl playing Dorothy was sick. She had caught pneumonia only the week before. And there was no understudy.

“Sally,” said the director, Mr Phillips, “I have a huge favour to ask...”

The next day, everyone congratulated Sally on her performance.

“You were the best Dorothy ever,” they said. “And to think, you took over at the last minute. Just brilliant!”

Her mother was proudest of all.

“Who cares about how you look?” she said, embracing Sally. “You have a wonderful voice. And you’re great on stage. That’s all that counts.”

As for Sally - how did she feel?

Over the rainbow.

(396 words, Flesch 2.9)

QUESTIONS

Question 1 Sally wanted to be Dorothy... Because her Mum loved ‘The Wizard of Oz’/**Because she loved the film version of ‘The Wizard of Oz’**/To prove that she was as good as the other kids/Because Mr Phillips wanted her for the role

Question 2 Sally longed to... **Sing ‘Over the Rainbow’**/Run away from school/Have a dog called Toto/Throw her glasses away

Question 3 Sally’s mother... Didn’t want her to perform/**Wanted her to audition for the part of Dorothy**/Suggested she become a Munchkin/Didn’t think her voice was good enough

Question 4 What stopped her auditioning for the part of Dorothy was... A fear of dogs/Her mother/Mr Phillips/**Fear of people rejecting her because of how she looked**

Question 5 Sally decided to be part of the show as... A winged monkey/A Munchkin/Dorothy/The Wicked Witch

Question 6 Sally's choice of part was based on the fact that... Her friends were all Munchkins/She wanted to make her Mum feel bad/She wanted to sing as part of the chorus/She wanted to be the witch

Question 7 In the final week of the show, there was a problem... The dog playing Toto got sick/The girl playing Dorothy got sick/Sally got sick/Mr Phillips got sick

Question 8 At the last minute, Sally... Helped Mr Phillips teach a new girl to be Dorothy/Missed the show because she was sick/Took on the role of Dorothy to save the show/Told Mr Phillips he had chosen the wrong person to be Dorothy

Question 9 After the show, everyone... Said how bad Sally had been/Refused to speak to Sally at all/Decided to be Sally's friend forever/Said how good Sally had been

Question 10 The last sentence of this story refers to... How happy Sally was/Sally's worry about her looks/How sad Sally was/Sally's favourite song

(If 1-3/10) – go to Zip Stage 5

(If 4-6/10) – go to Zip Stage 6

(If 7-8/10) – go to Zip Stage 7

(If 9-10/10) – go to Zip Stage 8

Test passage 5

THE EDUCATION OF AMELIA

In a far off kingdom, called Elsinore, a long time ago, lived a lovely princess by the name of Amelia.

She was the favourite of all the court, and the apple of the King's eye.

Unfortunately, the King's new wife, the beautiful but deceitful Malavica, was consumed with jealousy of her.

The King, a weak man, was easily swayed by his wife, who one day said to him,

"My Lord, it is time for your daughter to learn the ancient arts of royalty. I propose that we send her the best finishing school in the land."

"But my dear," said he, "I want her near to me."

“Sire,” retorted Malavica, “it is for her own good and will be the making of her. Trust me.”

And so it came to pass that Amelia was taken off to a dark and gloomy castle in the mountains, and enrolled in the ‘Ladies’ Academy’ finishing course.

What the King did not know, and Amelia was soon to find out, was that the school was run by an old colleague of Malavica, a ferocious old woman called Draconia.

Amelia was forced to live in a cold cell, with only a candle for light. She was woken at 5 o’clock every morning and forced to wash the stone floor of the dining hall; breakfast was a thin soup, there was no lunch, and dinner was bread and cheese; and the lessons in ladylike deportment consisted in learning to sew and reading in Latin.

“How is my daughter doing?” asked the King.

“Wonderfully,” said Malavica, with a sly smile.

“When can I see her?”

“Shortly. Be patient.”

But when a year had come and gone, the King became deeply worried.

“I must see the princess,” he said. “Allow me at least to visit her.”

“My Lord, if you interfere now, it could ruin the effect of all that splendid teaching,” she replied.

A second year came and went, and by now the King was in the deepest distress. He took to his bed and fretted, for the pain of separation was making him poorly.

While Malavica gave the outward show of sympathy, inwardly she was jubilant.

A third year went by, and by now the King was gravely ill.

He summoned the court to him, and said,

“I fear I am dying. But there is one thing I will do before I go: I will see my beloved daughter once more. Arrange it.”

Malavica pleaded. She begged.

But the King was adamant.

And so, days later, a carriage bearing him wound its way into the mountains, and finally arrived at the forbidding gate of the ‘Ladies’ Academy’.

When the King saw his daughter at last, he was horrified, for she was pale and dirty, her beautiful eyes had a haunted look and she was dressed in rags.

“My darling,” said the King, “what has happened?”

When she told him, the King was furious.

He ordered the cavalcade back to the palace.

“Where is the Queen?” he bellowed.

“My Lord, she has gone,” stuttered a servant.

Sure enough, Malavica was nowhere to be found, and the crown jewels were also missing.

But the princess was back with her father, whose health improved immediately, and they both lived happily ever after.

(542 words, Flesch 5.4)

QUESTIONS

*Question 1 This story is about the sufferings of a princess called...
Elsinore/Malavica/**Amelia**/Draconia*

*Question 2 We know that the queen is not to be trusted because early in the
narrative we hear that she is... beautiful/a favourite of the King/**deceitful**/weak*

*Question 3 The queen's real, though unspoken, motive for having the princess sent
off to the “Ladies’ Academy” was ... wanting her to learn the ancient arts of
royalty/**wanting to remove her from the court**/wanting her to learn Latin/wanting
her to die young*

*Question 4 The ‘Ladies’ Academy’ was not a real school so much as ... **a prison**/a
lovely old castle/a hut in the mountains/a sewing course*

*Question 5 We know that Malavica knew in advance what Draconia would do
because she was ... a witch/**an accomplice of the queen**/a well respected teacher/a
very nice lady*

*Question 6 When the King asked after Amelia's ‘education’, he was ... told the
truth/told not to be silly/**told a lie**/shown pictures that made it seem all right*

*Question 7 When we read that the “pain of separation was making him poorly”, we
understand that the King ... was poor/**was getting ill**/was dying/was complaining a
lot*

Question 8 When we read that the King was adamant, we take that to mean... he knew he was dying/he missed Amelia but couldn't do anything about it/he insisted on getting his way/he was concerned about ants

Question 9 The King's reaction to seeing his daughter and hearing what had happened could be summed up as ... pleasure/indifference/happiness/outrage

Question 10 If this story were to be compared to another one, it might be said to be most similar to... The Little Mermaid/Snow White/Beauty and the Beast/Rapunzel

(If 1-4/10) – go to Zip Stage 8

(If 5-7/10) – go to Zip Stage 9

(If 8-10/10) – go to Zip Stage 10

NOTE: The indications given by the Reading Level Test are suggestions only. Teachers are free to make their own assessments based on knowledge of each child.

Test instruments such as the Ziptales diagnosis test cannot be taken as any sort of a scientific guarantee of the child's reading ability. Outside factors such as a child's mood or tiredness or health may influence his/her performance, as with any test.

Ziptales endorses the teacher's need to treat each child on a case by case basis, with the test results as a rough guide only.

Once a child begins reading at the recommended Zip Stage (reading band), his/her scores on the comprehension quizzes after each story will reveal if the recommendation was accurate.

If the Zip Stage level reading band suggested by this test proves to be either too easy, or too hard for a child, he/she can be placed in another reading band completely if needed. **The teacher knows best.**