

## Reading 'Just Right' Books

Chances are you have heard your child talk about reading books that are 'just right'. These words seem to be buzz words at Allen as teachers continue to guide children in selecting books to read. Teachers continually reinforce the need for students to read books that are not too easy, not too challenging, but at a level that is 'just right' for them.

The most common method used to select 'just right' books is the five finger rule. As children are reading, when they come to a difficult word to say or understand, they are instructed to put up a finger. If they get to five fingers on one page, that book is likely too challenging for them. When readers cannot read smoothly and fluently without interruptions, they are not able to make meaning of the print they are attempting to read. As you are listening to your child read, you can use the five finger rule to help determine if the book they are reading is 'just right' or too challenging for them.

Reading is a complex act of decoding words and making meaning from those words. When selecting books to read independently, children are expected to read 'just right' books. If they do not choose 'just right' books *most* of the time, they will not be able to practice and strengthen their skills. When children have success choosing and understanding books at their own reading level, their reading skills improve.