

The Goldilocks Method

We want students to be able to choose "just right" books when they are independently reading. When students read at their instructional level, they are able to apply the comprehension strategies that all good readers use. Our teachers often model what a reader looks like while reading a book that is too easy, a book that is too hard, and a book that is "just right". You can demonstrate this at home as well; ask your student(s) to tell you what they noticed about how you read each of the three types of books. We often tell them to think about Goldilocks and the three bears. She wanted things that were "just right". It helps to teach them the "Five Finger Rule."

The Five Finger Rule

Tell your student(s) that if they are not sure if the book is "just right" or not, they may be able to use the "Five Finger Rule" to help them decide.

1. Open to a page of the book.
2. Begin reading.
3. Each time you come to a word you don't know, hold up 1 finger.
4. After you finish reading the page, check to see how many fingers you are holding up.

Too Easy: 0 - 1 fingers

Just Right: 2 - 3 fingers

Too Hard: 4 - 5 fingers