

Leveling QRI-5 Text: Comparing Fountas and Pinnell Levels, Harris-Jacobson Readability Levels, and Lexiles for Grades 2–4

	Level	HJ	Lexile (without Graphics)
Second: J–M			
Narrative: "What Can I Get For My Toy?"	J	2.0	410
Narrative: "The Lucky Cricket" (P)	L	2.1	510
Narrative: "Father's New Game" (P)	M	2.7	480
Narrative: "The Family's First Trip"	M	2.3	560
Expository: "Whales and Fish"	L	2.9	590
Expository: "Seasons"	M	2.4	480
Third: N–P			
Narrative: "The Trip to the Zoo"	N	3.4	670
Narrative: "A Special Birthday for Rosa"	O	3.2	750
Narrative: "The Friend"	P	3.9	710
Narrative: "A New Friend from Europe"	Q	3.8	770
Expository: "Cats: Lions and Tigers in Your House"	N	2.7	750
Expository: "Where Do People Live?"	O	2.6	500
Expository: "Wool: From Sheep to You"	P	4.6	700
Fourth			
Narrative: "Johnny Appleseed"	P	4.3	650
Narrative: "Amelia Earhart"	R	3.3	500
Narrative: "Tomie dePaola"	T	4.4	910
Expository: "Early Railroads"	Q	3.8	810
Expository: "The Busy Beaver"	R	3.2	670
Expository: "Plant Structures for Survival" (G)	T	4.6	930

Note: (P) indicates a pictured passage and (G) indicates a passage with a graphic.

The Lexile system removes all graphics, headings, bolded words, and so on when estimating a level. Therefore, to the extent that the graphics enhance comprehension the lexile may overestimate the difficulty of a selection. In addition, readability formulae and lexiles do not consider the effects of prior knowledge on comprehension. So, for example, although "Johnny Appleseed" has a readability level of 4.3 and a lexile of 650L compared to the 3.3 and 500 for "Amelia Earhart," our data indicate that "Johnny" is easier than "Amelia." (Mean comprehension scores for students at a fourth grade reading level of .79 on "Johnny Appleseed" and .64 on "Amelia Earhart.")

SEM of lexiles is estimated to be 64 divided by the square root of the number of slices of 125 words (Stenner, Burdick, Sanford, & Burdick, 2006). Therefore, passages around 250 words would be comprised of two slices of 125 words each, and the square root of 2 = 1.41, so $64/1.41 = 45.39$. Most of the second through fourth grade passages are around 250 words. Passages of 350 words would have a SEM of 38.32.