



# Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001  
www.isbe.net

Jesse H. Ruiz  
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

May 14, 2010

Dear Public Library Director/Librarians:

Summer vacation is nearly upon us and we know that you are well aware of the importance of summer reading. We commend all your efforts through the 30-year-old iREAD program, the summer reading program offered through the Illinois Library Association (ILA).

We are writing to ask your help in promoting summer reading through the Find-a-Book website, [www.lexile.com/findabook](http://www.lexile.com/findabook). The website provides quick and easy access to a list of books that will match a student's reading level and interests as well as the nearest libraries carrying each title.

We believe this website can help make reading and libraries part of students' summertime fun. As you may know, one review of the impact of summer reading found that children can lose up to 60 percent of their skills over a two-month vacation. Children who read during the summer months, however, can sustain their reading gains and are better prepared when school resumes in the fall.

The Find-a-Book website uses a student's reading score in Lexiles, a measure of reading ability and text difficulty derived from state standardized tests, including the ISAT. Attached is a flier about the Find-a-Book site that will explain how to use a Lexile measure to find just the right books for students. The website also features a search option to access appropriate book choices based on grade level and comfort with typical reading materials at that grade level. Information is also available at our summer reading website: [http://www.isbe.net/htmls/summer\\_reading\\_2010.htm](http://www.isbe.net/htmls/summer_reading_2010.htm)

Please consider keeping a copy of this information at your circulation desk so you can use it to assist parents or students who have questions about Lexiles or the Find-a-Book site. You may also want to consider how you can include Lexile measures into your existing book lists and/or summer reading programs.

We are also encouraging parents and children to enjoy their local public library together, and we know that the public library's staff can assist in finding books that may pique a child's interest in reading. We know many public libraries will participate in the iREAD Summer Reading Program offered through the Illinois Library Association. We are telling parents to look forward to the 2010 iREAD theme, "**Scare Up a Good Book!**"

Thank you for all your efforts to promote lifelong learners and readers and for your support of the Find-a-Book site. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jesse White in black ink.

Jesse White  
Secretary of State and State Librarian

Handwritten signature of Christopher A. Koch in black ink.

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

Attachment



# FIND BOOK for every the right reader!

Do you want to help improve a child's reading ability this summer? With the free "Find a Book" search tool, you can use the child's Lexile measure to build custom booklists at the right level of difficulty that he or she will like. When a child reads books at his or her Lexile level, he or she can strengthen important literacy skills and develop a love of reading.

## What is a Lexile measure and how does a child get one?

A Lexile measure indicates the reading level of a child or a book, and is represented as a number followed by an "L" (for example, 850L). By comparing the child's Lexile reader measure with the Lexile text measure of a book, you can decide whether its text demand will be too difficult, too easy or just right for the child's reading ability. A child's Lexile measure typically is included on his or her end-of-grade score report which is sent home.

## How can you use Lexile measures to help a child "Find a Book?"

You can help a child search for books by Lexile measure and interests by using "Find a Book" at [www.Lexile.com](http://www.Lexile.com). This search tool allows you to compare the child's Lexile reader measure with all of the books that have a Lexile text measure—more than 115,000 fiction and nonfiction titles on various subjects and at all developmental levels.

"Find a Book" is the quickest and easiest way to search for books at a child's Lexile level. Whether the child is reading for school or for pleasure, the book search utility will help that child build custom reading lists on the subjects that interest him or her the most.

- ① GO TO [www.lexile.com/findabook](http://www.lexile.com/findabook)
- ② ENTER the child's Lexile measure
- ③ PICK the child's interest categories
- ④ VIEW/REFINE the search results
- ⑤ PRINT the child's custom reading list



For more information on Lexile measures and to search for books using "Find a Book," visit [www.Lexile.com](http://www.Lexile.com).

## How do you determine what books are best for a child?

A child's "Lexile range" spans from 100L below to 50L above his or her Lexile measure. When the child reads a book within his or her Lexile range, he or she should be able to comprehend enough of the book to make sense of it, while still being sufficiently challenged to maintain interest and learning.

## Should a child try to read books outside of their Lexile range?

A child certainly can read books that are above or below his or her Lexile range. However, books that are below the child's Lexile range may offer little challenge in terms of new vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. Similarly, books that are above the child's Lexile range may be too challenging and discourage him or her from reading.

*Higher Lexile measures allow advanced and enthusiastic readers to:*

- be challenged with high-interest books above his or her Lexile level
- seek help with a hard but interesting book
- find other books on the same subject but at a higher Lexile level

*Lower Lexile measures allow struggling and reluctant readers to:*

- build skills with less challenging books on topics of choice
- select high-low books based on Lexile and developmental levels
- find other books on the same subject but at a lower Lexile level

## Is a Lexile measure the only criteria to consider when picking a book?

A book's Lexile text measure is one piece of valuable information that can help inform a child's reading selections. With "Find a Book," you can combine the child's Lexile reader measure with other factors, such as the developmental level of the subject matter, the publisher's recommended audience, and Lexile codes that capture additional book characteristics, to select books that best match the child's reading level and goals. You should preview all books the child is reading.

## Does a child need a Lexile measure to use "Find a Book?"

No. You can use a simple utility within "Find a Book" to estimate a child's Lexile range. This utility uses the child's grade level and overall comfort with the typical reading materials at that grade level to determine his or her starting Lexile range. Then, based on the results of the child's book search, you can help the child refine that Lexile range to find books that will promote successful reading.

## Where can you find out more about Lexile measures?

For more information on Lexile measures—and to access free Lexile resources—visit [www.Lexile.com](http://www.Lexile.com).

The Lexile Framework® for Reading provides a common, developmental scale and measure to match readers with resources and activities that are targeted to their ability level. Lexile® measures help educators, librarians and families select books, articles and other materials that provide the right level of challenge for the reader's skills and goals, and to monitor growth in reading ability. Tens of thousands of books and hundreds of millions of articles have Lexile measures, and the number of resources that have been measured continues to grow. Recognized as the most widely adopted reading metric, Lexile measures are used at the school level in all 50 states. Each year, over 30 million Lexile measures are reported from reading assessments and programs, representing more than half of U.S. students.

For more information  
on Lexile measures  
and to search for books  
using "Find a Book,"  
visit [www.Lexile.com](http://www.Lexile.com).



1000 Park Forty Plaza Drive, Suite 120  
Durham, North Carolina 27713  
919-547-3400/1-888-LEXILES  
[www.Lexile.com](http://www.Lexile.com)

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