The 5-finger rule

To find a good reading level, choose a book. Open to any page. Read it. On your hand, count the number of new words.

0-1 new words = too easy.

2-3 = This level is perfect!

4 = This is a “challenge” level. It is a little difficult. But you can try it if the book seems really interesting.

5+ = Too difficult.
If a book is too difficult, you probably won’t enjoy it.

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Based on an idea from Hiebert & Reutzel, 
Revisiting Silent Reading, 
International Reading Association. 2010