Decodable texts

### What are they?

Decodable text is specifically written so beginning readers can independently practice their skills, knowledge and understanding of letter-sound correspondences in continuous text. Using decodable text can strengthen a student’s ability to decode unknown words. Guessing or predicting a word has limited benefit especially as texts become more challenging and research tells us poor readers over-rely on picture cues and guessing. We want our student to learn letter-sound relationships and the skill of blending sounds, to read words.

### Why use them?

Decodable text should offer the same letter-sound relationship practice, repeatedly, in a variety of positions within the word, and in a variety of words. Decodables allow students to practice what they have been learning, on continuous text. There is no discourse between phonics lesson content and guided reading. Decodable texts insist students focus on the print.

### How do I use them with my student?

After explicitly learning the letter-sound relationship, encourage students to independently read the text, to embed knowledge of the letter-sound relationship and to practice blending to read a word. It’s empowering for a student to take charge of their own reading, celebrate their progress.

### What can my student practice on a decodable text?

Concepts about print, such as orientation of a book, starting position, return sweep, awareness of punctuation and tracking left to right across a sentence can be learnt using decodable texts.

Decodable text should be comprehensible. The purpose of decodable texts is for students to practice their reading skills.

### What about high frequency sight words?

High frequency sight words are like glue between words. They allow sentences to make sense. We want our students reading continuous text as soon as possible, so a systematic acquiring of high frequency words is needed.

### How can I know what my student has learnt?

Students can demonstrate burgeoning skills, knowledge and understanding about phonics reading a decodable text. Look for:

* demonstrable application of taught letter-sound correspondences
* the skill of blending through words
* applying their understandings of print (e.g. responding to punctuation).

The systematic methodology encourages efficient tracking of student progress.