

## Decodable Texts and their use in the Science of Reading

### What is a decodable text?

Decodable texts are designed with the specific purpose of helping children learn to read. They're tailored to children's reading stages, containing high numbers of the grapheme-phoneme correlations that children have already learnt. As children are only encountering words they already know, they don't ever have to guess the meaning of a word or stop reading to ask about it. This means they can read the text from start to finish, concentrating on the meaning of the whole text rather than worrying about individual words. It's a great way to build reading confidence and fluency.

As children's reading skills progress, they move up to the next level of decodable texts, which contain more challenging words that they've been learning.

### Science of Reading

Current research supporting the Science of Reading shows that decodable texts are needed to establish effective reading skills to reinforce the phonic skills that are being taught.

However, before the readers are introduced the students need to have learnt their letters and the sound that they make and what the letters look like.

There are lots of materials available online that SVPACT volunteers can use for free. The challenge for us is that each school can choose which type of readers they use. So we need to have access to a variety of materials that we can use to support the students.

The following five worksheets have been downloaded from [literacylearn.com](https://www.literacylearn.com)

You can download free decodable readers to an ipad or tablet from [www.readingdoctor.com.au](https://www.readingdoctor.com.au)

The goal of these readers is to teach children to work out words for themselves when they are reading. Learners should use their knowledge of letter – sound relationships to say the sounds in the words from left to right to decode the words.

**The text in these decodable books is presented to your child before they turn the page to see the picture. This is so that kids can check to see if they read the word correctly rather than relying on the picture to guess the word. The pictures are very engaging. They are intentionally ridiculous to stimulate conversation.**

### Not just Decodable Texts

Leveled books combine specific phonetic patterns, sentence fluency, and vocabulary in a particular text. Once children can read they will be able to enjoy many other different books and they should!

### Decodable Books

- Contain words with phonetic patterns students have already learned
- Sequenced with simple phonetic patterns (with a few high frequency words) and progress to more complex patterns
- Pictures support the story, but not the specific words
- Word reading accuracy is stressed
- Used with beginning readers

### Leveled Readers

Contain repeated and predictable text  
Includes many high frequency words  
Read using meaning cues, picture cues, and, as a last resort, looking at the first sound  
Word reading accuracy is not important  
The goal is comprehension

### Authentic Books

- Written to entertain, inform, explain, or evoke a response
- Used in read-alouds to build vocabulary knowledge and background knowledge
- Contains complex sentences and text structures

All ACT schools have lots of different leveled readers. This year (2024) , teachers in the ACT are being encouraged to explicitly teach students the letters and the sounds that they make. Practicing reading, writing and spelling and sounding out words helps students to develop confidence. This can then be put to good use reading Decodable Readers.

Once students are confident with letters, sounds of letters, and blending sounds together to make words they can move on to reading levelled readers.