

Word-level Readers – a platform for teaching decoding

The Wood-level readers are real books – with a plot, characters, a setting and a theme. They can be used to teach:

- comprehension strategies -listening and reading comprehension strategies
 - vocabulary knowledge
 - phonemic awareness skills – rhyming, syllabification and sound recognition skills
 - reading fluency
- PLUS**
- knowledge of how the ‘code’ of English works - from simple to more complex aspects of the code (phonic knowledge)

Teacher notes and independent student activities for all these aspects of reading instruction are available for every book. Go to <http://www.giltedgepublishing.co.nz/Word-Detective-Resources/decodable-levelled-readers-word-level-readers> and click on the image of the book you want. Go to ‘Teacher notes’ and click ‘download’ (see attached page with screenshots for this process).

Using the Word-level Readers to support the teaching of decoding

Decoding involves learning to recognise and pronounce **whole words** that have been seen before (sight-word vocabulary) and **‘working out’** words that are not stored in print memory.

‘Working out’ words involves learning to recognise the ‘code’ of English. This involves **recognition of graphemes** (images of phonemes), which can be simple one letter-one sound relationships (/b/ - b), two letter – one sound relationships (/b/ - bb, /k/ - ck, /sh/ - sh, long /a/ - ay etc.), triple letter-one sound relationships (long /u/ - ieu (view), long /i/ - igh etc.) and quadruple letter-one sound relationships (long /o/ - ough (though), long /a/ -neigh (sleigh) etc.).

We need to **scaffold children’s knowledge** of how the code works from these simple to complex patterns.

ALL READERS NEED TO LEARN HOW THE CODE WORKS – even those who learn to read quickly and easily.

This scaffolded decoding approach makes the process of ‘working out’ words obvious and much easier for *all* children. Move from one step to the other when you think children are ready – some may move fast between steps and others may need to practise the decoding strategy/skill for longer before moving to the next step.

EMERGENT READERS

Step 1

Teaching the concept of how words work

Lesson 1

Read *Tim’s Sound Hunt* to teach the concept that words are made up of sounds, the same sound can be in many words, we can put sounds together to make words.

Lesson 2

Read *Meg’s Sound Hunt* to teach the concept that words are made up of sounds, the same sound can be in many words, we can put sounds together to make words.

Other lessons

Read any Emergent books teaching children to match one-to-one, recognise high-frequency words, use pictures to build context, retell the story, learn new vocabulary, find punctuation etc. Chose some two and three-sound words from these texts – ask children to guess the word you are saying on that page/from that book using the blending strategy taught on Monday and Tuesday.

“ I wonder if you can work out the word I am saying – we read this word in our book today. The word is /a/ /n/ /t/ - what word is that? Well done. You worked that word out by putting the sounds together. That’s how we make words”

Read Pages 3 and 4 of the Teachers’ Guide to Using Word-level Readers

Step 2

Teaching that one letter can represent one sound

Lesson 1

Read *Pet Day*. Use the synopsis on the back of the book and the title and picture to talk about what *Pet Day* might be about. For the first reading, read the words “I’ll bring my...” aloud and then show

children how each letter in the content words represents a sound. "In this word the c sounds like /k/, the a sounds like /a/ the t sounds like /t/ - /c/, /a/, /t/ - what would that word say? Cat – is it a cat? Let's look under the flap and find out."

Do this for each content word.

Read Pages 5-8 of the Teachers' Guide to Using Word-level Readers

Lesson 2

Reread the book the following day, practising decoding the content words but also focussing on discussing the story and linking it back to the children's own experience, perhaps anticipating what sort of pets they would bring to a pet Day at school.

Use the idea for a story starter during writing.

Lessons 3 & 4

Read *A Bug in a Jug* in the same way you read *Pet Day*, focusing on decoding the one letter-one sound words. There are several pairs of rhyming words in this book that could be used to generate rhyme as a way of building phonemic awareness skills.

Other lessons

Read any Emergent books. Choose one or two words from the books children are reading (or more, if children find this easy) that are one letter-one sound words and ask children to decode them using the strategy taught with *Pet Day* and *A Bug in a Jug*. Tell them these are their 'working out' words in this book.

If children read these words fluently go back to the sentence that has one of these words and ask them how they knew this word said....

"Which word says ant? How do we know that? Let's *work it out*. The a sounds like /a/, the n sounds like /n/, the t sounds like /t/ - /a/ /n/ /t/ - Yes it does say ant!

Step 3

Teaching that two of the same letters can represent one sound

Lesson 1

Read *Fun in the Mud*. **Read Pages 9-11 of the Teachers' Guide to Using Word-level Readers** which explains how to introduce double letter digraphs as children meet them in this story.

Lesson 2

Reread *Fun in the Mud* choosing some words to focus on for decoding as you read, or 'working out' words to go back to after reading. These words could be one letter-one sound words (three and four sound words such as dig, mud, jump, slip, slap etc.) and words containing doubled consonants (all, roll).

Lesson 3

Read *Oh What a Mess!* which re-introduces the doubled l plus other doubled letter digraphs (grass,

glass, dress, egg). Use this book to focus on these doubled letter graphemes.

Other lessons

Re-read *Oh What a Mess!*

Choose other readers and look for examples of doubled letter graphemes. Ask children to scan the pages for these patterns and help them to 'work out' these words. You may have to help them decode unknown graphemes if they occur in the same words. The word *butter* for example has an er that may not be known. Just say "We can work this word out. What could the b sound like? The u? the two ts? The er on the end sounds like /u/. The word is /b/ /u/ /t/ /u/ - butter!

Step 4

Teaching that two different letters can represent one sound

Lesson 1

Read *Camping with Dad*. Introduce the story using the synopsis on the back, the title and picture on the front cover. Read the story aloud to children and they follow with their eyes in their own books. This lesson is to discuss the story, the concept of camping, the vocabulary associated with camping, the idea of holidays etc.

Lesson 2

Reread *Camping with Dad*. Before reading, tell children that they are going to be word detectives and they are going to work out some words that have the /k/ sound in them. Tell them that every time they see blue letters, those blue letters will sound like /k/. Turn to page one and ask children to point out the /k/ words. Decode the /k/ words on each page by sounding them out using one letter-one sound reading strategies (except for the word *whack* - explain that the wh sounds like /w/). This word says /k/ /a/ /m/ /p/ - camp. This word says /r/ /o/ /k/ /s/ - rocks! Then, children re-read the sentence or phrase on each page.

After reading the book ask children to see how many different spelling patterns they found for the /k/ sound in this book – write them on the board.

Other lessons

Choose other readers and ask children to be listening word detectives to listen for words that have the /k/ sound. Ask them to see if they can 'work out' what the /k/ sound looks like in these words. If you find other spelling patterns for /k/ add them to your list. You can also ask them to be 'looking' word detectives to find words that have a c, k or ck pattern. If they find a word that has a c which sounds like /s/ (cents, cycle etc.), help them work out the word by saying, " In this word the c sounds like /s/ - /s/ /e/ /n/ /t/ /s/ - cents! You found out that the letter c has another sound – it can also sound like /s/!

Step 5

Teaching word endings *y, le, er, ed, ing,*

Read Pages 12-14 of the Teachers' Guide to Using Word-level Readers

Lesson 1

Read *Papa Henry*. Introduce the story using the synopsis on the back, the title and picture on the front cover. Read the story aloud to children and they follow with their eyes in their own books. This lesson is to discuss the story, grandparents, families and the vocabulary from the book – what the words scruffy, lazy, messy mean etc.

Lesson 2

Papa Henry. Tell children that there are blue patterns in this book and all these blue patterns sound like a long /e/. Ask children to flick through the book to see what letters are blue. They will find words that end with a blue y and words that end with a blue e. Remind them that when they read these words, these letters will sound like /e/. Children read the story, 'working out' content words they don't know using their decoding strategies.

Extension

When the book is finished, write all the words that end with a blue spelling pattern for the long /e/ on the board (in two lists – y and e words) or onto cards. Children can sort the cards into words that end with e or y. Clap the syllables in each list and ask children how the long e is written when it is in a one-clap word and how it is written when the word has two claps.

Other lessons

Choose other readers and ask children to be *listening* word detectives to listen for words that end with the long /e/ sound. Ask them to see if they can 'work out' what the long /e/ sound looks like in these words. They may find other spelling patterns. Add new words and spelling patterns to your list or make new cards for these words.

Note: Many words end with e but the e will not sound like a long /e/, and words that end with y do not always end in a long /e/ either, so it is better not to ask children to be 'looking' word detectives for words that end in e or y - there is too much variety about how to pronounce e and y patterns. If children find words that end in e or y that is not a long /e/ sound, just say that the letters e and y can have other sounds too.

Lesson 1

Read *The Little Kitten*. Introduce the story using the synopsis on the back, the title and picture on the front cover. Read the story aloud to children and they follow with their eyes in their own books. This lesson is to discuss the story, the idea of owning pets and vocabulary associated with the story.

Lesson 2

The Little Kitten. Before reading, tell children that they are going to be word detectives and 'work

out' a lot of the words in this book. First they look at each page and find all the words that have the **le** pattern on the end of the word. As children find the words ask them to 'work out' how to pronounce each one using their decoding strategies (they will all contain one letter-one sound graphemes or doubled letter-one sound graphemes). Write the **le** words on the board or onto cards. Ask children to clap the syllables in these words and to listen to how the last syllable sounds (little, puddle, cuddle, nibble – the /il/ words, and Nicole is an /ole/ word - in Nicole the e belongs to the long /o/ pattern so the last syllable sounds different.

Children read *The Little Kitten*, 'working out' decodable words, including those that end with **le**. You may need to tell children the high-frequency words they don't know.

Other lessons

Choose other readers and ask children to be *looking* word detectives to find words that end with **le**. Add these words to your list or write them on cards for children to reread independently.

Repeat this format of introducing the book then focussing on the decoding feature for teaching the er on the end of words (A Breakfast Surprise) and the ed and ing endings (A Bee for Breakfast, My Haircut, Beachball Games). Apply this strategy to other readers – searching for words with these endings.

[Read Pages 12-14 of the Teachers' Guide to Using Word-level Readers](#)

EARLY READERS

Step 6

*Teaching sounds and their common spelling patterns – sometimes one spelling pattern for one sound and other times more than one spelling pattern for one sound – **Level 6-8 Word-level Readers***

[Read Pages 15-20 of the Teachers' Guide to Using Word-level Readers](#)

Teach the sounds in the suggested sequence to scaffold the decodability of text from one book to another. Use the books in the order suggested in the inside front cover to ensure only one new part of the code is introduced at a time.

Lesson 1

Introduce the book. Read aloud if necessary and discuss the story, vocabulary and context.

Lesson 2

Introduce the sound and tell children what the blue spelling patterns in this book will sound like. Support children to decode the content words in the stories using what they already know about the code.

For example: Here's a word that ends in a y – how did we pronounce the y on the end of a word when we read *Papa Henry*?

Break multisyllabic words into syllables and decode one syllable at a time.

For example: complained. The first syllable in this word looks like this (show the com) the c is a /k/, the o is an /o/, the m is a /m/ - /c/ /o/ /m/ - com. The second syllable looks like this (show plained) - /p/, /l/ - and here is our blue long /a/ sound - /p/, /l/ /a/ /n/ and our ed sounds like /d/ - plained. com/plained – that word sounds like complained.

Other lessons

Choose other readers and ask children to be *listening* word detectives to listen for words that have the focus sound in them. Look for the spelling patterns for that sound.

Note: If you read the Word-level readers in sequence the sounds and patterns already taught will be introduced in following books to provide repeated practice using the decoding strategies already taught.

EARLY AND FLUENT READERS

Level 9 – 16 books

Teaching sounds and all their common spelling patterns.

Read Pages 21-25 of the Teachers' Guide to Using Word-level Readers

The sequence for reading these books is not critical. The foundations of the code will have been taught in the first 33 books (levels 1-8). Books after this simply increase in length and the sentence structure becomes progressively more sophisticated. The sound that is the focus of each book will be written in more diverse ways as the length and complexity of the story increases so that children are learning more options for pronouncing sounds as their reading progresses. You can choose a sound to be the focus of your decoding lesson and select the most suitable book for children's reading skills – many sounds are the focus of more than one book with variations in the complexity of the reading skills required. **Please see following overview of books by sound.**

GILT EDGE WORD-LEVEL READERS: SCOPE AND SEQUENCE BY SOUND TEACHING FOCUS

BOOKS Levels 1-8

These books teach simple one-sound, one-letter relationships, introduce common digraphs and a limited range of spelling patterns for each sound.

BOOKS Levels 9 - 16

These books teach an expanding range of spelling patterns for sounds that are written diversely. If there is more than one book at these levels, it means there is a greater range of spelling patterns for the focus sound, introduced with higher level books.

SOUND/FOCUS for instruction	BOOKS Levels 1-8	BOOKS Levels 9 - 16
Short 'a'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words)	
Short 'e'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words) PLUS <i>The Cave Rescue</i> , Level 8	<i>Market Music</i> , level 15
Short 'i'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words)	
Short 'o'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words) PLUS <i>Walter and the Wasps</i> – teaches the short 'o' after a 'w' sound (<i>was</i> , <i>watch</i>), level 6	
Short 'u'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words) PLUS <i>The Bush Walk</i> – teaches three ways of writing the short 'u' sound (<i>up</i> , <i>about</i> , <i>come</i>), level 8	
Short 'oo'	<i>Look in a Book</i> , level 6	
'b', 'd', 'g', 'm', 'n', 'p', 't', 'y'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words PLUS doubled consonants – <i>better</i> , <i>funny</i> , <i>happy</i> , <i>egg</i>)	
'k'	<i>Camping with Dad</i> , level 4	<i>A Lucky Find</i> , level 13
'f'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words PLUS doubled consonants)	<i>Snap</i> , level 12
'h'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5	<i>The Real Miss Hooper</i> , level 11
'j'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5	<i>A Visit to Egypt</i> , level 11
'l' and 'il' endings	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words and doubled consonants), <i>The Little Kitten</i> (le endings), level 4	<i>Kindness</i> , level 12
'qu'	<i>Queen Mab's Secret</i> , level 7	
'r'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words PLUS doubled consonants)	<i>Raspberry Fizz</i> , level 11
's'	Any book, in particular books at levels 2-5 (one sound/one letter words PLUS doubled consonants)	<i>The Pony Express</i> , level 12
'v'	Any book	<i>A Special Event</i> , level 11

'w'	Any book	<i>A Holiday Swap</i> , level 12
'x'	<i>A Fox in a Box</i> , level 7	<i>The Barnyard Dance</i> , level 13
'z'	Any book	<i>The Bee that Sneezed</i> , level 13
'sh'	<i>Mrs Rush Around and Lily's Fish</i> , level 7	<i>Mum's Birthday Treat</i> , level 10 <i>Shona and Shay Save the Ocean</i> , level 15
'ch'	<i>Dad Makes the Scones</i> , level 7	
'th' sounds	<i>What Was That?</i> , level 7	
'ng'	<i>The Bunk Pirates</i> , level 7	
'zh'		<i>Tree Hut Tricks</i> , level 15
'or'	<i>Rory and The Storm</i> , level 8	<i>Cora and the Firestorm</i> , level 14
'ar'	<i>The Flying Carpet</i> , level 8	<i>The Go-Cart Race</i> , level 10
'er'	<i>My Cat Gertie</i> , level 8	<i>Worms, Worms, Worms</i> , level 14
'air'		<i>Plunk, Dunk</i> , level 10
'ear'		<i>Stormy</i> , level 10
'ow'	<i>Monty Mouse Goes Outside</i> , level 8	
'oy'	<i>Troy's First Day at School</i> , level 8	
Long and short vowel discrimination		<i>Five Busy Bees</i> , level 9
Long 'a'	<i>Amy the Snail and the Lucky Escape</i> , level 6	<i>Birthday Skates</i> , level 9 <i>Grace's Neighbours</i> , level 16
Long 'e'	<i>Papa Henry</i> , level 5 <i>Beans for Dad</i> , level 6	<i>The Greedy Beast Joins the Feast</i> , level 9 <i>Charlie the Sleepy Bee</i> , level 16
Long 'i'	<i>Good Night Baby Bear</i> , level 6	<i>Mike and the Ice Queen</i> , level 9 <i>Lime Green Ice Cream</i> , level 16
Long 'o'	<i>We Love Winter</i> , level 6	<i>Just Right</i> , level 9 <i>A Real Treasure</i> , level 16
Long 'u' and long 'oo'	<i>Ruby the Tooth Fairy</i> , level 6	<i>Marooned</i> , level 9 <i>Stuart's News</i> , level 16
Word endings – ed and ing	<i>My Hair Cut</i> , level 5, <i>A Bee for Breakfast</i> , level 5 <i>Beachball Games</i> , level 5	
Word endings - er	<i>A Breakfast Surprise</i> , level 4	
Word endings - le	<i>The Little Kitten</i> , level 4	
Word endings –	<i>Papa Henry</i> , level 4	

y as a long 'e'		
Doubled consonants	<i>Fun in the Mud</i> , level 3, <i>Oh What a Mess</i> , level 3 All level 4 books	