

Reading Guidance for Essential Letters and Sounds

ELS includes fully decodable reading material in every lesson. This is in the form of the Activity Books and, in review lessons, the decodable reading books matched to the ELS progression. The intention is for children to use this material to make the direct application of their phonic knowledge to reading. This could be supported during the teaching input, or independent application in their apply activities and independent reading of the decodable books.

Decodable texts must be matched to each child's current phonic knowledge. The intention is that each child keeps up rather than catches up and this is an integral part of the assigning of these texts. By ensuring that gaps are addressed within the lesson, using the in-lesson intervention, we can reduce the need for external intervention meaning that more children are accessing the texts that correspond to the week of teaching.

Review lessons provide the opportunity to read decodable texts as part of the lesson. On these days, you could opt to extend the reading part of the lesson and use this as your reading session for the day. We have allowed 10 minutes for reading within the lesson. You can extend this time, if you wish, to ensure that children are reading for a sustained period and complete one initial reading of the text.

By reading and re-reading texts both in school and at home we offer children the opportunity to develop a cohesive orthographic map of the words within our language. It is suggested that, in addition to reading the decodable texts within the review lessons, you also read the decodable books that match the ELS progression outside of the ELS lessons. This could be in a 1:1 setting, or paired or small group session. You should also provide additional practice to those children who are most vulnerable to fall behind and for those who are lowest attaining.

Fluency

The building of fluency is factored into the apply activities and the paired reading that happens during review lessons. Fluency is a complex skill that takes practice to achieve. It is not the simple act of decoding, but furthermore the ability to read 'as if speaking in your normal voice', with prosody (the expression and intonation) matched to the text you are reading. Taking increased enjoyment from the texts read, developing stamina for reading and engagement with preferred text-types as well as other skills. Fluency is a skill built up over time, adequate practice and rehearsal of decoding words is the first component in this range of skills, this provides the access to then develop a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of texts.