

The Road to Decode

2021

WE PROVIDE

Suggested Book List

Includes decodable books, literacy resources and list of dyslexia-themed books. The list is just a suggestion. Some libraries right grants to cover the costs of ordering decodable books. If you do not have the means to order and would like samples, contact us and we will reach out to the publishers or try to work with you to help with access.

Infographic With Information About Decodable Books

Download our infographics to educate and decorate your collection of decodable books. Share the infographics on social media.

Social Media Kits

Our social media kit is a padlet with lots of websites and information for you to share. It was initially created to support Dyslexia Awareness Month. We will update it over time.

Program Materials & Toolkits

There are handouts, videos and information for you to access for your own information and to share with patrons.

Incentives

Our many partners enable you to receive discounts, and benefits to pass on to your patrons.

Mini-Course

Learn about the process of how we learn to read and where the different resources fit.

Additional Programming:

Virtual Events & Workshops – to educate you and your patrons and to help with outreach.

The Roadmap To Reading – Support and guidance to initiate literacy programming.



About Us!

Teach My Kid to Read (TMKTR) is a new non-profit poised to create an impact! Our mission is to provide parents, caregivers, librarians or anyone interested in literacy education with the tools to help all children, including those with dyslexia, learn to read. Through advocacy and programming that builds awareness and educates, TMKTR will demonstrate how more community awareness about dyslexia and best practices in literacy influence educational change.

Learn more at www.teachmykidtoread.org

CALL FOR PARTNERS

THE ROAD TO DECODE: TEACH MY KID TO READ WORKS WITH LIBRARIES TO PROMOTE AWARENESS OF READING ISSUES LIKE DYSLEXIA

Why Spread Awareness of Reading Issues Like Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is one of the most common learning disabilities, affecting an estimated 20 percent of the population. With early identification, appropriate interventions and instruction, a child with dyslexia can successfully learn to read. Due to a lack of understanding about how we learn to read and dyslexia, too many children fall through the cracks, and never learn to read proficiently. By generating awareness of this common reading issue and learning more about effective reading strategies such as Decodable Books, more children in New York will learn to read, creating a pathway to future academic and professional success.

What Are Decodable Books

Decodable books enable a child to use and develop correct print to sound or phonics pathways resulting in excellent reading skills. Imagine the excitement of learning letter and sound patterns and choosing a book that applies those spelling patterns to words in a story!

The intent of decodable books is for the child to read independently. The child can use their knowledge of phonics to decode unfamiliar words. Why guess when you can read! Decodable books teach readers to develop effective reading strategies and to become more fluent readers. Decodable books help all kids learn to read, but are especially useful in helping kids with dyslexia learn to read.

Partner with Teach My Kid to Read

Teach My Kid to Read will provide partners with a suggested book list consisting of a selection of decodable books from several publishers, infographics, information about decodable readers, and other educational materials. Workshops or additional programming are available upon request. [Click here](#) to see the list of libraries and community partners helping to create awareness of dyslexia and best-practices in evidence-based solutions for all readers.

For more information, please contact us at info@teachmykidtoread.org

DECODABLE BOOKS

K–2

Bob Books <https://bobbooks.com/books/>

Dog on a Log Books <https://dogonalogbooks.com/>

Dr. Maggie’s Phonics Readers <https://www.creativeteaching.com/products/dr-maggies-phonics-readers-variety-pack>

EPS Phonics Plus Readers <http://eps.schoolspecialty.com/products/literacy/phonics-word-study/eps-phonics-plus/> about-the-program

Flyleaf Emergent Readers <https://flyleafpublishing.com/emergent-readers/>

Half Pint Readers <https://halfpintkids.com/>

Junior Learning Decodable Readers <https://juniorlearning.com/products/jl382-decodable-readers-phase-3-phonics-fiction>

Laughing Ogre Press www.laughingogrepublishing.com

Miss Rhonda’s Readers <http://www.missrhondasreaders.com/> (Montessori-inspired approach and books)

Phonic Books <https://www.phonicbooks.com/>

Phonics Storybook Sets <http://eps.schoolspecialty.com/products/literacy/phonics-word-study/primary-phonics/pricing/primary-phonics-storybooks-1-6-complete-starter-se>

Superkids <https://www.superkidsreading.com/>

Voyager Sopris Power Readers <http://store.voyagersopris.com/power-readers/>

The I See Sam Readers <http://freereaders.weebly.com/i-see-sam-readers.html> (K-4)

Whole Phonics www.whole-phonics.com

YouKan Publishing <http://youkanpublishing.com/>

Grades 3–8

Phonic Books www.phonicbooks.co.uk (or go to www.highnoonbooks.com)

Simple Words Decodable Chapter Books <https://www.simplewordsbooks.com/>

Voyager Sopris Supercharged Readers <https://www.voyagersopris.com/literacy/supercharged-readers/> overview

Teens & Adults

Saddleback TERL Phonics Book Sets <https://www.sdlback.com/terl-phonics-decode-1-boxed-set-3-each-of-24-titles-tg/>

Teen & Adult Phonics (TAP) Library <http://www.focusontap.com/>

DECODABLE BOOKS

All Ages

All About Reading <https://www.allaboutlearningpress.com/all-about-reading/>

Flyleaf Decodable Literature Library <https://flyleafpublishing.com/Decodable-Literature>

Go Phonics Readers <https://www.gophonics.com/phonics-readers>

The Logic of English

S.P.I.R.E. Readers <http://eps.schoolspecialty.com/products/literacy/readers/spire-decodable-readers/about-the-program>

95% Group Decodable Passages <https://store.95percentgroup.com/StudentReaders.aspx>

Literacy Resources

The Hornet Literacy Primer –A manual for teaching literacy skills based on a structured literacy approach. <https://www.wordwasp.com/the-books/hornet-literacy-primer/>

Itchy'Alphabet Uses mnemonics and sounds to build letter recognition and letter formation.
<https://itchysalphabet.com/>

Nessy Programs that help children that learn differently learn to read. <https://www.nessy.com/us/>

STORYBOOKS

Books for Children with Dyslexia Characters

Dr. Dyslexia Dude! (new, awesome graphic novels) <https://drdyslexiadude.com/index.html>

Hurford, *I Have Dyslexia* <https://www.jettpublishing.net/books> (books that explain dyslexia to kids) Hunt, Fish in a Tree <https://www.lyndamullalyhunt.com/books/fish-in-a-tree/>

Burton Robb, *The Alphabet War: A Story About Dyslexia* <https://www.amazon.com/Alphabet-War-Story-about-Dyslexia/dp/0807503029>

Tacky the Penguin Book Series https://www.amazon.com/gp/bookseries/BooCKCWQ3A/ref=dp_st_0618988122

Bauer, *Close to Famous* <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0142420174?tag=randohouseinc7904-20>

Giff, *Eleven* <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0440238021?tag=randohouseinc7904-20>

Winkler/Oliver, *The Soggy, Foggy Campout (Here's Hank #8)*
<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/044848661X?tag=randohouseinc7904-20>

Moore-Mallinos, *It's Called Dyslexia* https://www.amazon.com/s?k=9780764137945&tag=randohouseinc7904-20&ref=nb_sb_noss

Betancourt, *My Name Is Brain Brian* https://www.amazon.com/s?k=9780590449229&tag=randohouseinc7904-20&ref=nb_sb_noss

Palacco, *The Junkyard Wonders* https://www.amazon.com/Junkyard-Wonders-Patricia-Palacco/dp/0399250786/ref=sr_1_fkmr1_2?keywords=Palacco%2C+The+Junkyard+Wonders&qid=1558444952&s=book_s&sr=1-2-fkmr1

Percy Jackson Series <https://www.amazon.com/Jackson-Olympians-Paperback-covers-poster/dp/1484707230/>

Other Stories about Fitting In

Hall, *Red: A Crayon's Story* https://www.amazon.com/Red-Crayons-Story-Michael-Hall/dp/0062252070/ref=sr_1_1keywords=Hall%2C+Red%3A+A+Crayon%E2%80%99s+Story&qid=1558445040&s=books&sr=1-1-catcorr

Shannon, *A Bad Case of the Stripes* https://www.amazon.com/Bad-Case-Stripes-Scholastic-Bookshelf/dp/0439598389/ref=sr_1_1keywords=Shannon%2C+A+Bad+Case+of+the+Stripes&qid=1558445087&s=books&sr=1-1

Weeks, *Two Eggs, Please* https://www.amazon.com/Two-eggs-please-Sarah-Weeks/dp/141692714X/ref=sr_1_1keywords=Weeks%2C+Two+Eggs%2C+Please&qid=1558445123&s=books&sr=1-1

BOOKS ABOUT DYSLEXIA FOR ADULT READERS

Shaywitz, *Overcoming Dyslexia: A New and Complete Science-Based Program for Reading Problems at Any Level* <https://www.amazon.com/Overcoming-Dyslexia-Complete-Science-Based-Problems/dp/0679781595>

McGuiness, *Why Our Children Can't Read and What We Can Do About It: A Scientific Revolution in Reading* https://www.amazon.com/Children-Cant-Read-What-About/dp/0684853566ref=sr_1_fkmr1_2keywords=Diane+McGuiness+Why+Our+Children+Can%27t+Read&qid=1558444246&s=books&sr=1-2-fkmr1

Borkowsky, *Failing Students or Failing Schools?: A Parent's Guide to Reading Instruction and Intervention* https://www.amazon.com/Failing-Students-Schools-Instruction-Intervention/dp/1937615456/ref=sr_1_1keywords=Borkowsky+Failing+Schools&qid=1558445254&s=books&sr=1-1-catcorr

Borkowsky, *If only I would have known...What I Wish the Librarian would have told me about Language, Literacy, and Dyslexia* <https://www.amazon.com/Only-Would-Have-Known-Librarian/dp/1734068825>

Wolf, *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* https://www.amazon.com/Proust-Squid-Story-Science-Reading/dp/0060933844/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_o?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=SX59WKSMQBZZMMF7Q7SF

Kilpatrick, *Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties* <https://www.amazon.com/Essentials-Preventing-Overcoming-Difficulties-Psychological/dp/1118845242/>

Seidenberg, *Language at the Speed of sight: How We Read, Why So Many Can't, and What Can Be Done About It* https://www.amazon.com/Language-Speed-Sight-Read-About/dp/1541617150/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_2?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=SX59WKSMQBZZMMF7Q7SF

Inspirational

Ameer Baraka, *The Life I Chose* <https://www.amazon.com/Life-Chose-Streets-Lied-Me/dp/0578155710>

WHY DECODABLE BOOKS ARE IMPORTANT?

Why are we highlighting decodable books?

Many teachers and parents do not know the value of decodable books for emergent and struggling readers, and these books are frequently misunderstood and misrepresented. We hope to spread the word about decodable books—what they are, what they are not, and how to use them effectively.

What are decodable books?

Decodable books follow a phonics-based structure for teaching letter patterns in a sequence to slowly introduce children to decoding. The sequence used is cumulative, starting with simple patterns and building to more complex patterns. Rather than looking to context or pictures to figure out words, students are encouraged to read left to right and all through the word parts. Decodable books match up to what the students have already been taught so that they can practice their skills efficiently. When a student learns to use the skills they were taught, they are less likely to develop poor reading habits such as guessing or using pictures.

Once children develop good habits and have an understanding of the grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) connection, all children can develop the confidence to pick up any book they choose.

What books are commonly used to teach reading?

What emergent readers are currently given to read in most schools are “leveled” books, organized by a gradient scale from A-Z, with A being the easiest and Z being the hardest. The levels match up approximately to grade-level expectations. Unlike decodable books, which provide children the opportunity to practice the phonics and decoding skills they are simultaneously being taught, leveled books contain words with random spelling patterns and no structure or connection to the phonic elements the children may or may not have been taught. The children are instead expected to learn to “read” on their own by being guided to memorize high-frequency words, looking at picture cues, or guessing based on context. While some children can and do advance using this “Guided Reading” approach, others struggle and never figure out how to decode words once the pictures and other cues are removed.

WHY DECODABLE BOOKS ARE IMPORTANT?

How do you use decodable books?

- Make sure children have the code knowledge before using the decodable book. The intent of the book is for the child to practice what was taught.
- If the decodable books are not aligned to a phonics program, just preview the books to make sure that the children know the letter patterns. Some people use the sequence in the decodables to inform which letter patterns will be taught prior to reading the books.
- You can mix and match decodable book series as long as the phonics elements have been taught. If you are new to decodables, you might want to stick with one series before jumping around.
- Do not use the books in the same way as leveled books! Pictures should not be used to cue a word. Pictures should confirm understanding of what was read and can be used after the child reads the page. For some children, you might want to cover the picture with a sticky note until after the page was read to reduce the desire to guess.
- Encourage children to read through the word. They might be in the habit of guessing from the first letter and using the picture or context. Decodable books are designed to give children the confidence that they know enough to read through the whole word.
- Encourage children to read in syllables, not sound-by-sound. The decodables are meant for fluency as well as accuracy. Show children how to blend one sound into the next. Many struggling readers want to stick with just sounds rather than trying to blend sounds because it is safe, and some cannot remember all the sounds to read the word. Model how to blend sounds and use the books for practice.
- We want children to have multiple exposures to the alphabetic rules so that the letter patterns can be retained for reading and spelling. Most of the time, children do not get nearly enough practice, and the letter patterns never reach long term memory.
- Make sure that the books are appropriate for the age of the students. There are some books designed for the older, struggling reader that will be a better fit than books that are meant for beginning, younger readers.
- Irregular words that do appear in decodables are meant to be read by analyzing the regular letter-sound correspondences and recognizing the letters that do not have an obvious corresponding sound.

WHY DECODABLE BOOKS ARE IMPORTANT?

It's hard to believe that anyone would oppose tools that help all kids learn to read. Just in case, the following points address criticism of decodable readers.

- 1) **Decodable books are contrived.** This argument completely shows a misunderstanding of the purpose of decodables. Yes, the stories are built around a limited number of letter patterns taught, so they cannot have the rich language of a book with uncontrolled text. But decodable books are meant to be used for a short time. They are the “training wheels” before placing children in books with code variation. It can be compared to a child first learning to play the recorder. The song “Hot Cross Buns” is used because it only has three notes. Once children can play these three notes, more notes are added on. Nobody would expect a child learning how to play an instrument to be given random notes that have never been taught. Learning to read is no different.
- 2) **There is no storyline.** Not true. Many decodable books actually have very good stories while adhering to the phonic principles taught and reviewed. The better decodable books weave in enjoyable characters and engaging content.
- 3) **They don't teach the “joy” of reading.** Not true. Success breeds joy... and confidence. For many children, it is the first time they actually feel successful. There is nothing pleasurable about reading books that benefit only the children who CAN break the alphabetic code. The children who did not figure out how to read spend much of their time pretending to read.
- 4) **Meaning and vocabulary are not the focus.** True. That's what authentic children's literature is for. Adults can read aloud to children and have rich discussions. The primary goal of decodable books is learning to read by learning to decode accurately and fluently.
- 5) **Sounds alone are not sufficient to support a struggling reader.** True. I don't think anyone who advocates for phonics would think that reading is just sounds and letters. We would all agree that meaning is the main goal of reading. But one cannot derive meaning unless one can read. Again, decodable books are misrepresented.
- 6) **Use “authentic” books to teach decoding skills.** This comment shows a true lack of understanding, and it has been used by other supporters of this approach such as Lucy Calkins, who believes that all the phonics that need to be taught can be pulled out of authentic books. There is no way a struggling reader will be able to make sense of books with mixed letter patterns without resorting to guessing, and there is no way that they would remember it through one exposure.
- 7) **Decodable readers are not “efficient.”** Is multi-tasking efficient? If we throw everything at children, will they become readers in a shorter amount of time? If we look at how reading has been taught for the last thirty years or more, leveled books have not proved to be more efficient for struggling readers.

Inaccurate, slow, labored reading is a result of never getting the basic skills right. Without a strong foundation, children will not be motivated to read. The one point that makes sense is that the “strategies children are taught to use when first learning to read greatly influence what strategies they use in later years.” This actually supports rather than refutes the use of decodable books.*

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES/NOTES

The list of decodable books is based on a list originally compiled by The Reading League (<https://www.thereadingleague.org/>) and used with their consent.

*The arguments against the use of decodable books are set forth in an article appearing in the October 31, 2018 publication of *The Conversation* entitled, “What are ‘Decodable Readers’ and Do They Work?” Academics Misty Adoniou, Brian Cambourne, and Robyn Ewing presented their reasons for abandoning decodable books. In their words, “Surely all books are decodable. If they weren’t decodable they would be unreadable.” Our author’s work is based on a response to the points brought up in the original article.