

# CHAPEL HILL STATE SCHOOL



## Reading at Home in the Early Years

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As part of Chapel Hill State School's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) on the Effective Teaching of Reading, our teachers have reviewed our home reading program this term to ensure that home reading aligns with our classroom explicit teaching instruction for reading. Reading instruction at CHSS is evidence-based and aligns with the Department of Education's (DoE) [Reading Position Statement](#).

Reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from texts as shown in the theoretical framework, The Simple View of Reading shared below:

### The Simple View of Reading



Gough and Tunmer, 1986; Tunmer and Gough, 1990; Hoover and Tunmer, 2020

The **Simple View of Reading** identifies components necessary for reading success. It shows that reading is the product of word reading and language comprehension. The Simple View of Reading is a settled framework to understand the components of skilled reading.

We know that our students need to have both Word Reading and Language Comprehension to attain Reading Comprehension success.

Parents and guardians are asked to support your child using **decodable readers (online) and a shared reading approach** where you are encouraged to read together at home on a daily basis. Daily reading of decodable texts and shared reading provides your child with an opportunity to develop a love of reading.

We are excited to introduce a new resource that will be used both in the classroom and at home: decodable readers from Decodable Readers Australia. We use decodable texts to support word reading.

### What Are Decodable Readers?

Decodable readers are specially designed books that use a controlled set of phonic sounds and words, allowing children to apply their developing decoding skills. These readers are essential for early readers as they help build confidence and improve reading proficiency by ensuring children can successfully read and understand the text using the phonics knowledge they have acquired in the classrooms

### Accessing Decodable Readers at Home

Parents and guardians will have access to the Decodable Readers Australia (DRA) website from Term 3, where your child can continue their reading practice outside of school hours. Your child will be allocated a set of texts which reflects their learning in the classroom. This personalised approach will assist and support each child to progress at their own pace and reinforce the skills they are learning in class.

### How to Get Started

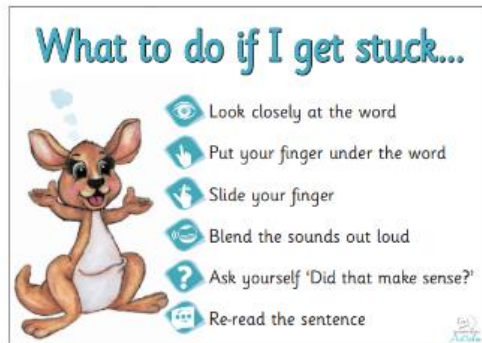
1. **Visit the Website:** Please go to [Decodable Readers Australia](#) to familiarize yourself with the platform.
2. **Login Information:** Your child's login details will be provided to you separately. Please keep this information secure.
3. **Reading Schedule:** We recommend setting aside regular times throughout the week for your child to read their allocated decodable readers. Students will be allocated **two books per week** (on a Monday) and are encouraged to read their decodable texts a minimum of three times a week for 10 minutes each time.

## Benefits of Decodable Readers

- **Improved Phonics Skills:** Decodable books align with our phonics curriculum (Systematic Synthetic Phonics) and help children apply what they learn in a practical, engaging way.
- **Boosted Confidence:** Children experience a sense of achievement as they successfully decode and understand the texts.
- **Individualised Learning:** Tailored levels ensure that each student is challenged appropriately and can progress at their own speed.

## How can I support my child's reading when they are reading decodable text?

It is important that a child does not randomly guess or use the pictures to work out unknown words. Focus should be on the letters and sounds, and the process of blending those together to read the word. To support this strategy, you can use the Decoding Poster 'What to do if I get stuck?' that has been provided by your teacher.



## Some key features when supporting the reading process using DRA

1. Use a tracking finger to hold the position of reading and have your child slide it along as they read.
2. If an error is made, ask your child to try decoding the word again. Then re-read the complete sentence will assist with
3. fluency and understanding.
4. If your child forgets the sounds when decoding, click on the word to hear the text being read aloud.
5. At the end of each page, click the 'read to me' button to check accuracy and hear the text being read aloud.
6. At the end of the book use the comprehension questions to check for understanding and to discuss the story.
7. Celebrate each book and the effort your child has just given!

It is recommended that students repeat reading the variety of texts allocated in their assigned level until they build a confident level of fluency before moving on to the next level.

## What if my child is reading every word slowly and sounding out every word?

Some children take a little bit longer to develop automaticity in reading and that's ok. The process of sounding out words may seem laborious, but this is part of the process. Learning to read takes time and hard work! Repeated practice is the key!

Click on the link to view an example of reading (word decoding) [using a decodable text](#).

If you would like to read more, please click on our [school website](#) where you will have access to Decodable Readers Australia eBook for parents/carers.

## What happens when my child has completed Level 8 in DRA?

If your child has moved past Level 8 decodable texts in DRA, they no longer need to use the DRA platform. Decodable texts are designed to assist students with their word decoding. Once this skill has been mastered, your child is considered an independent reader and is encouraged to continue to read for learning and enjoyment with texts of interest.

## What else can I do to support my child's reading?

Your child is working on the very important phase of 'word decoding' which makes up one of two crucial elements of a skilled reader (as illustrated in the Simple View of Reading Framework). The other component is Language Comprehension.

To foster the development of Language Comprehension it is important to read to your child using story books and factual texts that have language rich vocabulary. Engage your child in deep discussions about the texts, the content, the meaning, and foster a love of reading for excitement.

### **Using Fiction and Non-Fiction Texts in a Shared Reading Approach**

Shared reading describes the interaction that occurs between an adult and a child when reading or looking at a book. Although one of the most obvious and engaging features of storybooks and non-fiction texts is their illustrations, they also provide children with access to a world of sights, sounds and words that may be quite different from what they experience in their homes, communities and school.

Reading aloud with your child builds language development so that by the time children have mastered letter-sound correspondences and can read increasingly complex texts themselves, they will have the language skills to understand what they read. Having strong oral language skills sets the foundations for children to build strong literacy skills. Reading authentic texts aloud to your child allows them to continue to hear stories, information and written language they may not yet be able to read themselves.

### **What does shared reading look like?**

An important aspect of shared reading is the conversation that occurs between the adult and child during the reading. Pausing while reading and taking the time to discuss details in the story can support your child's oral language development. The conversation might focus on the storyline, such as characters or where the story takes place; it may focus on similar experiences the child has had to those that happened in the book; it may focus on specific words; aspects of print; or concepts that are new to the child. When you read aloud to your child, they hear and learn lots of new and sophisticated words and sentences they may not hear or use in everyday conversation.

Click on the following link to view a Department of Education modelled example of [shared reading](#), including the types of conversation most beneficial for children's literacy development in the early years.

### **What books should be used for shared reading?**

In the early years of reading instruction, children engage with different books for different purposes. Virtually all children's books are appropriate for shared reading, but the best books will have rich, detailed pictures and are interesting to the child. We strongly suggest that these rich texts are reread to your child multiple times throughout the week to develop their comprehension skills, vocabulary knowledge and confidence building to develop into a lifelong love of reading. The purpose of a shared reading approach being to stimulate rich talk between the adult and child, not for the child to be able to read the text themselves.

To assist with access to some great authentic texts, we have increased the number of books that our students can borrow at the school library visit.

### **Support and Questions**

We are here to help. If you need further assistance with accessing or using the decodable readers within DRA or have questions about the shared reading approach, please do not hesitate to contact your classroom teacher. They are here to support both you and your child in making the most of this valuable resource.

### **Recording of DoE's Semester 1 Twilight Reading Session for Parents and Carers – Supporting Beginning Readers**

Earlier this year, parents and carers were invited to participate in an online Twilight Information Session on Reading run by the DoE. This session was done in collaboration with P&C's Queensland and was designed to provide information to parents and carers to assist with supporting reading at home. The recording of the [Twilight session](#) is now available and may be of interest for parents/carers wanting to know more about the changes to reading in Queensland schools linked to the recent release of V9.0 Australian Curriculum.

We thank you for your continued partnership in your child's education. Together, we can help them develop a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Kind regards,

**HoD-C Prep to Year 2, Leia Brameld, and Prep to Year 2 Teachers**