



CHERRY BLOSSOM PRESS

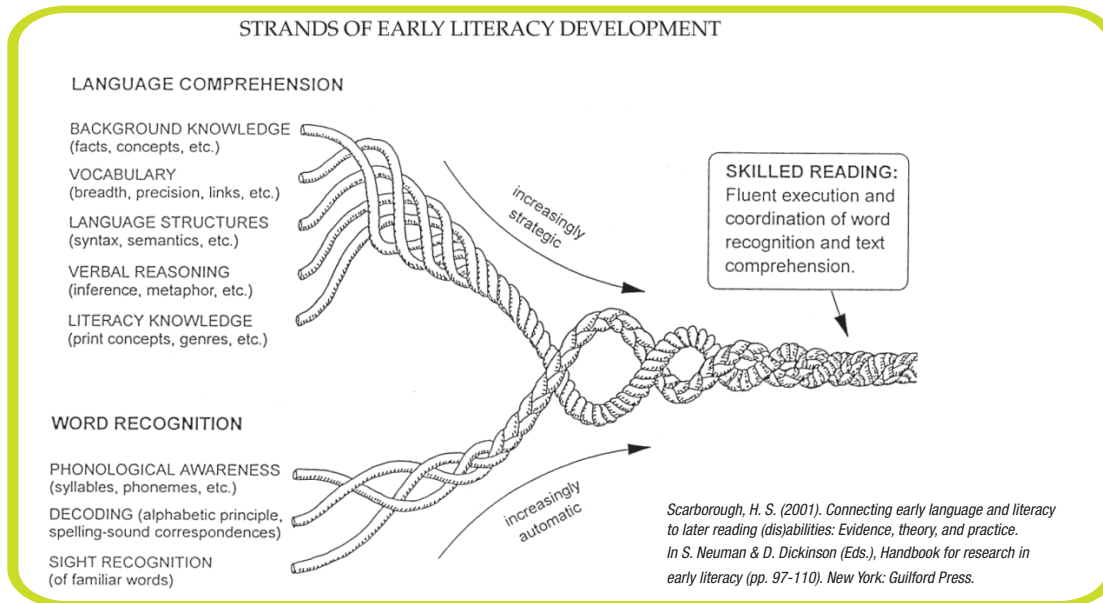
Reading is Science



*Explore How Cherry Blossom Decodable Books
Support the Science of Reading Classroom*

What is the Science of Reading?

The Science of Reading is not a program. It is not a single theory or study. It is also not a one-size-fits-all answer to all of the challenges teachers face. When researchers, publishers, and teachers talk about the Science of Reading, they are talking about best practices for applying what scientists have learned into actionable and accessible classroom instruction. One of the best ways to visualize the scientific findings and how they translate into teaching is through the Scarborough's Reading Rope.



Cherry Blossom Press and the Scarborough's Reading Rope

Cherry Blossom Press has been developing decodable readers since 2018. Each of our decodable readers comes ready-made to support classroom instruction.

Background Knowledge

- Fiction titles include familiar places, people, and experiences.
- Curriculum-based nonfiction titles build content knowledge.

Vocabulary

- High-use words help children identify known words in print.
- Content words enhance vocabulary acquisition.

Language Structure

- Texts use natural, not stilted, structures.

Verbal Reasoning

- Narrative arcs paired with rich visuals help children:
 - make predictions
 - make inferences
 - ask and answer questions

Literacy Knowledge

- Regular and predictable format introduces children to standard print concepts.

Phonological Awareness

- Teacher support materials guide explicit instruction.
- Titles provide lists of target words for explicit sound instruction to launch lessons or reteach.

Decoding

- Cherry Blossom Press titles align to a systematic decodable sequence that increases in difficulty.

Sight Recognition

- Sight word lists provided in each title.
- Included sight words focus on high-utility and high-frequency words.



Decoding

The art of reading begins with understanding sound-spelling correspondences. These correspondences connect the written, alphabetic English language with the spoken language that children have been absorbing and producing since infancy. The alphabetic system is not natural. It can even be arbitrary at times. Decoding written language, sometimes talked about as breaking the code, requires explicit and systematic instruction.

READING WITH FLYING COLORS

Cherry Blossom Press provides the following sequence, organizing each of our titles into skills categories that build in complexity over time.

Short Vowels

Consonant Blends

Consonant Digraphs

Silent E

Vowel Teams

R-Controlled Vowels

Diphthongs

Syllables

Word Knowledge

Sight Recognition

Within each category, new readers engage with sight words regularly to gain mastery of some of the most common functional words in English. Cherry Blossom Press sight words include:

- * Irregular words such as *the*, *a*, and *from*.
- * High frequency words that are not decodable until later in the sequence such as *like*, *we*, *me*, and *they*.
- * High-use content and domain-specific vocabulary such as math and science words *one*, *eight*, *push*, and *pull*.

Student Choice

Cherry Blossom Press's extensive decodable library allows children to master skills with titles that they choose themselves. Teachers can provide a large selection of options within a given category and allow space for children's own agency to develop alongside their reading skills.

Formative Assessment Opportunities

Each Cherry Blossom Press title includes the full text of the book on the last page. Removed from the context of the illustrations or photographs, this text offers a perfect opportunity for formative assessment. Teachers can observe as children read through the text, making note of any words or sound/spellings that children may struggle with for later reteaching. Children can be presented with new text from elsewhere in the decodable library, or with a text they have already read to practice reading with fluency.



Cherry Blossom Press Teacher's Guidelines

Cherry Blossom Press books are specifically written for beginning and emergent readers. The simple text and repeating language patterns provide strong support for early readers. Concepts in each book were selected to reflect vocabulary familiar to the reader. There is also support from easily identified illustrations. A word list at the end of the book helps with word study and fluency. Here are some suggestions to help guide the developing reader.

Picture Walk

Begin by taking a walk through the book with the reader. Point to the cover and ask the reader if there are clues to the content of the book. Go through the book, stopping every few pages to ask the reader to identify the illustrations. End by asking the reader to predict what he or she will learn from the book.

Preview

At the end of the book, there is a list of every word in the book. You may want to take a moment to review the sight words. This will help to support the reader through the first reading.

Some teachers may want to

review all the words. Others may choose to have the reader sound out the short vowel words.

Read

You may decide to ask students to read each page on their own. You may also decide to conduct a buddy reading where readers take turns reading the pages. Readers at this level may use a finger to follow the text and help to focus on the words. Give the reader time to sound out an unfamiliar word. Point out words that are used multiple times. Many of the pages follow patterns that, once mastered, will help give the reader more fluency. Encourage the reader to sound out the word before using the illustration as a clue. Illustrations can be used to confirm their reading.



Words chosen for the earliest books in the sequence are primarily short vowel/single syllable words. Sight words were selected from Fry's K-1 sight word lists. Content words are also in sight words. Short Vowel books have lots of repetition to give the reader practice in learning new sounds.





Books later in the sequence build on consonant and vowel patterns learned earlier. More complex books include the addition of blends, digraphs, long vowel patterns, and added endings. Words in the back of book are listed by feature to give the teacher a quick reference when selecting what the focus will be for the lesson.

Comprehension

At the end of the book, ask the reader if his or her prediction was similar to the story. Do not make this a right or wrong answer. A prediction is simply a guess to help with comprehension. Try to avoid direct questions such as “What color was the flower?” Rather, ask questions that promote comprehension. “What do you think it would be like to be in a car going through a carwash?”

Word Study

The short vowel words are listed according to the short vowel sound. Not every short vowel will be in each book, but an effort was made to ensure that there are at least two short vowels with enough words to provide word study activities.

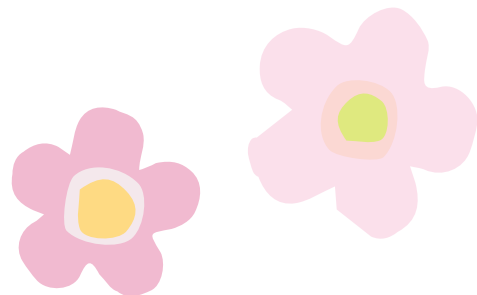
1. Write each short vowel word on a small card. Draw two columns on a sheet of paper. Ask the reader to write a vowel at the top of each column – for example, an /a/ and an /o/. Now instruct the student to read each word and place it in the correct column. More experienced readers will be able to do this with three or more columns.
2. Instruct the reader to take the stack of cards and go through the book, matching the short vowel word to the same word in the text.
3. Instruct the student to write (or dictate) a simple sentence using one or two of the short vowels words.

Fluency

The entire text is also in the back of the book. Once the reader has had an opportunity to read the book many times, it will be possible to do a timed reading test for fluency. The number of words is included to help the teacher determine the speed.

High Low Books

These books are designed for older readers struggling with basic skills. The words are primarily short vowel/single syllable. The books are divided into chapters to give the older reader a feeling they are passed the “baby” books. There is a carry over from the story across chapters to assist with comprehension.



INCORPORATING CHERRY BLOSSOM PRESS INTO THE CLASSROOM



Cherry Blossom Press decodable books can be used for whole group, small group, individual, or remedial instruction. Sample whole group use after explicit sound/spelling instruction:

Preteach Sight Words

1. Preview sight words at the back of the book.
 - Review familiar sight words.
 - Preteach new sight words, adding them to a classroom word wall.
 - Invite children to flip through the book and note where the sight words show up.

Review Sounds/Spellings

2. Review the target sound/spellings, such as consonant digraphs.
 - Display target spellings *sh, ch, th, wh, ck, wr*, and double final consonants such as *ll, ss, dd, gg*
 - Point to each spelling and have children say the sound it makes: /sh/, /ch/, /th/, /wh/, /k/, /r/, /l/, /s/, /d/, and /g/.

Read Together

3. Guide reading.
 - Conduct a **Whisper Read**. Have each child read the text to themselves under their breath, sounding out the words as they go. Remind them to look for sight words.
 - Guide children through a **Partner Read** to reread the text. Have each partner read one page of text while the other offers help when needed.
 - Finally, lead a **Chorus Read** of the text. Listen carefully for sound/spellings or sight words that continue to pose difficulty for children. Offer corrective feedback as necessary.

Independent Practice

4. Assign independent reading.
 - Allow children to choose a new book from the target skill category.
 - Have children bring you their selection and preview the sight words with them.
 - Provide classroom time for independent reading or send books home with children for additional practice.

Build Comprehension

5. Analyze text and images.
 - Ask questions about the plot and characters within the title.
 - Invite children to look at the illustrations or photographs to find details.
 - Discuss the topic of the story and allow children to make connections to their own lives.

Check Progress

6. Assess skill mastery.
 - Choose a book that a child has not read before. Display the full text at the back of the book. Have children read the book aloud to you. Make a note of words that children struggle with or misread.
 - Count up the errors.
 - Subtract this number from the number of total words.
 - Then divide the result by the total number of words to get each child's accuracy percentage.
 - Children with 90% or higher accuracy are likely ready to move on to the next skill.

Note that the number of sight words in a title and unfamiliar vocabulary may erroneously signal difficulty with sound spellings children have actually mastered. Pay close attention to the context of children's errors while assessing progress.





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"Cherry Blossom Books are written for the earliest readers. The colorful illustrations and engaging stories support beginning reading skills using short vowel, single syllable words. The word list and full text at the end of the book assist with word study and timed readings."

Cecilia Minden, Ph.D.

Literacy Consultant & former Director of the Language and Literacy program
at Harvard Graduate School of Education

