Student Achievement Partners Foundational Skills Mini-Course Tennessee Facilitator Guide *Learn how phonological awareness and phonics connect to early reading*
Module
[Module 5 - Early Reading](#)
Session Recommendations
For an optimal professional learning experience, an in-person approach, led by a facilitator, is best. If in person is not an option, then a synchronous virtual learning experience, led by a facilitator, is recommended. Ideally, teachers, coaches, administrators, and supervisors should engage in the sessions together. The run time of the video is 53:14; however, extra time should be planned for exploration and discussion of the content.
Module goals
• Identify how decodable readers support phonics skills acquisition. • Identify instructional recommendations for use, including the protocol for use of decodable readers.
Materials Needed
• [Foundational Skills Guidance Document](#) • [Module 5 Handout](#) • [Module 5 Presentation](#) • [Module 5 Practice Task](#)
Discussion or Task Points

• Pause Point at 1:24:
    ○ Facilitator look fors
        ▪ Listen to educators as they answer the three questions on the screen to get a sense of what strategies they may have used to make sense of the text and what was challenging.
    ○ Additional supporting questions
        ▪ What made this task challenging for you?
        ▪ What strategies did you use to make sense of this text?
        ▪ How might this relate to a student experience?

• Optional/Additional Discussion at 20:51
    ○ Facilitator look fors:
        ▪ Are educators able to articulate the "Myth of Memorized Words"? Do they have conflicting beliefs?
        ▪ Do educators understand the role teaching high-frequency words as whole words plays in the larger context of teaching students to become proficient readers? Knowing high frequency words provides access to texts. Knowing a predetermined number of words in isolation should never be a requirement prior to allowing students the opportunity to read.
        ▪ Do educators understand how the orthographic and phonological processor work together to support reading?
    ○ Additional supporting questions and tasks
        ▪ What is the "myth of memorized words"?

- What is actually happening when students are reading with automaticity?
- When do we teach words as whole words?
- What is the purpose of teaching high frequency words within a comprehensive reading plan? Why is it important to consider when and why to teach them?
- How do the orthographic and phonological processors work together? How are they reciprocal? How does this support early exposure to print?

- Discussion at 21:29: Look at the examples of different types of readers (leveled/predictable and decodables) and discuss the difference between them in terms of what students are asked to do.
  - Facilitator look fors
    - The next section of learning will dive deeper into discussions around this topic. As the facilitator, this initial discussion may provide a baseline for where educators' current understanding and beliefs are around the difference and purpose for each type of text.
  - Additional supporting questions
    - What type of texts do you primarily use?

- Optional/Additional Discussion at 25:53
  - Facilitator look fors
    - Do educators understand context should not be the primary strategy for accessing unfamiliar words? It is appropriate for early readers to use context as a backup strategy when the word isn't decodable to them yet and the orthography is challenging.
    - Do educators recognize a student's overreliance of contextual cues might indicate a lack of student's understanding of sound and spelling patterns?
  - Additional supporting questions
    - What do we know from research about the difference between strong/proficient and weak/non-proficient readers when it comes to using context?
    - Why is it important for educators to be on the lookout for overreliance of contextual cues by students?
    - When is it appropriate for students to use context? What should they rely on first?

- Optional/Additional Discussion at 32:32
  - Facilitator look fors
    - Do educators understand how a text that supports a heavier reliance on picture clues over decodable words provides advantages for students with greater background knowledge, more experience with text, and more experience making inferences?
    - Do educators understand the impact over time?

- o Additional supporting questions
  - What is the impact for students when the texts they are asked to read are not decodable?
  - If the text is filled primarily with high-frequency words and picture clues, how does this affect what students are doing or not doing cognitively?
  - How does background knowledge impact reading a text requiring a heavy reliance on context?
  - How might this contribute to inequities among student learning experiences?
  - How might this contribute to achievement gaps initially and over time?
  - What tends to happen to the words students are able to access using their knowledge of high frequency words and picture clues as they progress on to 1st, 2nd, 3rd and beyond?
  - Why do we see students being successful in early grades that later struggle to read proficiently by 3rd grade and beyond?

- Discussion at 35:37: Which type of text is more likely to solidify students' foundational skills? Why?
  - o Facilitator look fors
    - Do educators disagree with any of the points on the screen?
  - o Additional supporting questions
    - What are your takeaways from this learning so far?

- Pause Point begins at 36:27: Decodable Reader Protocols
  - o Facilitator look fors
    - Do educators understand how to determine what level of support on the continuum is most appropriate for each individual circumstance?
  - o Additional supporting questions
    - How might we use this protocol?
    - What determines the entry point or level of support on the continuum?
    - Should each week or sequence always be the same? Why?

Student Achievement Partners Articles/Research

- [Kids Need to Read Within Instruction](#)
  - o Possible discussion questions
    - When Shanahan advocates for students reading more in class, to what type of reading experiences is he referring?
    - How does this align or misalign with what independent reading opportunities currently look like in our classrooms?

Connect to Practice Tasks

- Pull a leveled reader in the grade band you teach, or at random if you span multiple grades. Analyze 1-3 pages: What varied sound and spelling patterns are included in the words in the reader? If you do not have a text, you could pull a text from [Reading A-Z](#).