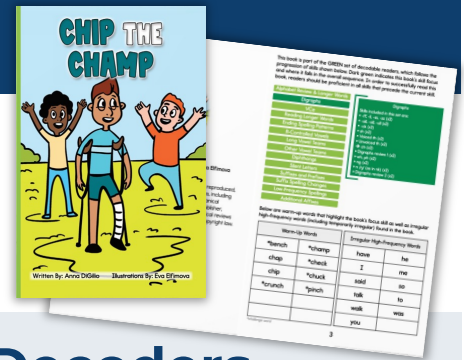




The Research Behind Developing Decoders

Evidence-Driven Tools for Reading Success

Developing Decoders by Laprea Education are structured, research-aligned decodable text collections designed to support foundational reading development. Rooted in the Science of Reading, these series support decoding, comprehension, and confidence by providing texts that align with systematic phonics instruction. Below are four key reasons administrators can trust Developing Decoders as part of their early literacy approach.

1 Built on the Science of How the Brain Learns to Read

Learning to read is not automatic. The brain must be trained to connect sounds to letters. Decodable texts are essential in supporting *orthographic mapping*, the mental process that stores words for instant retrieval (Ehri, 2005). When students read words that align with explicitly taught phonics patterns, they strengthen decoding skills and build the neural pathways needed for fluent reading.

Neuroscience confirms this process. The Four-Part Processing Model (Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989) explains how the brain links the phonological, orthographic, semantic, and contextual systems during reading. Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) studies show that skilled reading engages a network across the brain's left hemisphere, including the visual word form area, where print is processed and connected to sound and meaning (Dehaene, 2009; Gentry & Ouellette, 2019). These connections do not exist at birth and must be developed through instruction and practice.

Decodable texts offer this practice by guiding students to connect graphemes and phonemes in meaningful context. As Share's (1995) self-teaching hypothesis emphasizes, decoding is the mechanism that drives word learning and reading fluency.

2 Aligned to Multiple Research-Based Phonics Sequences

Unlike many decodable series tied to a single program, Developing Decoders offer multiple collections intentionally aligned to widely used, research-based phonics sequences. These include UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute) Foundations, Foundations, and more general progressions that start with simpler syllable types and move to more complex syllable types. This flexibility ensures that students are practicing phonics patterns that directly match their classroom instruction, increasing transfer and automaticity (Mesmer, 2005).

3 Support Language and Knowledge Development

While decoding is critical, Developing Decoders also incorporate rich vocabulary and age-appropriate nonfiction content. Research shows that students build stronger comprehension when they develop background knowledge and oral language alongside decoding skills (Cabell & Hwang, 2020; Cervetti et al., 2016). By weaving in science and social studies topics, these decodables support language comprehension and align with Scarborough's Reading Rope.

4 Promote Equity and Early Success

Decodable texts ensure that all students, especially those with reading difficulties or those learning English, can participate in successful, meaningful reading experiences. This supports equity goals and strengthens Tier 1 and intervention instruction within MTSS frameworks (Foorman et al., 2016). Research also shows that evidence-based reading interventions using decodable texts can reorganize brain activity in struggling readers, shifting activation patterns in the brain's left hemisphere to resemble those of typical readers (Shaywitz et al., 2004; Simos et al., 2007).



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