
How to Teach Phonics So it Sticks

Denver Public Schools



“Scientists have figured out that learning to read is not natural—it’s not like learning to talk or walk, in which all you need is immersion or interaction with your environment. Without structured, evidence-based reading instruction with phonics at its core, many students will struggle with reading and spelling....A “survival of the fittest” approach to reading creates a profound equity issue...Every child needs and deserves access to evidence-based reading instruction.”

Phonics and Equity



- Gaps in letter knowledge and phonics lead to gaps in decoding, which lead to gaps in comprehension.
 - Our students of color are overrepresented in SBGL category. The most pressing gaps for students in SBGL, in Spanish and English, are in domains related to phonics.
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Outcomes

We will...

- identify elements of effective phonics instruction
- understand how to scaffold while maintaining the rigor
- examine tools and resources to support with effective phonics instruction



Agenda

- **Part 1: Grounding**
- **Part 2: Out of Context Practice**
- **Part 3: In Context Practice**
- **Part 4: Closing & Next Steps**



Access for ALL Students



BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

EVIDENCE-BASED DISCUSSION & WRITING

HIGH-QUALITY TEXTS

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Key Ideas from Previous Sessions



- Explicit & systematic phonics instruction is the most effective way to ensure that ALL students master the foundational skills necessary to engage with complex texts.
 - A phonics scope and sequence (curriculum) is essential in order to teach phonics systematically.
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Teaching phonics so that it sticks starts with ensuring sufficient practice both **out of context** and **in context**.

Out of Context

lessons and activities that introduce and practice patterns in isolation (at first) so children can focus on the sound-symbol connection

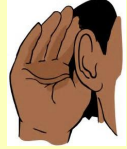
opportunities to apply newly learned sound-symbol patterns in a connected text, and understand that the text conveys meaning

In Context

Out of Context Practice through Whole Group Instruction

Component	Time
Shared Reading & Read Aloud	10-15 min
Explicit, Whole Group Phonics Mini-Lesson	20 min
Differentiated Small Group Phonics	20 min
Integrated Reading Mini-Lesson	25 min
Integrated Writing & Language Mini-Lesson	25 min
Small Group/Independent Work Time	40 min

Hear It



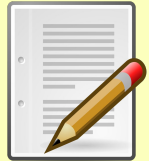
Say It



Read It



Spell It



What makes this an effective phonics lesson?

What routines or strategies were used to help the sound-spelling pattern “stick” with students?



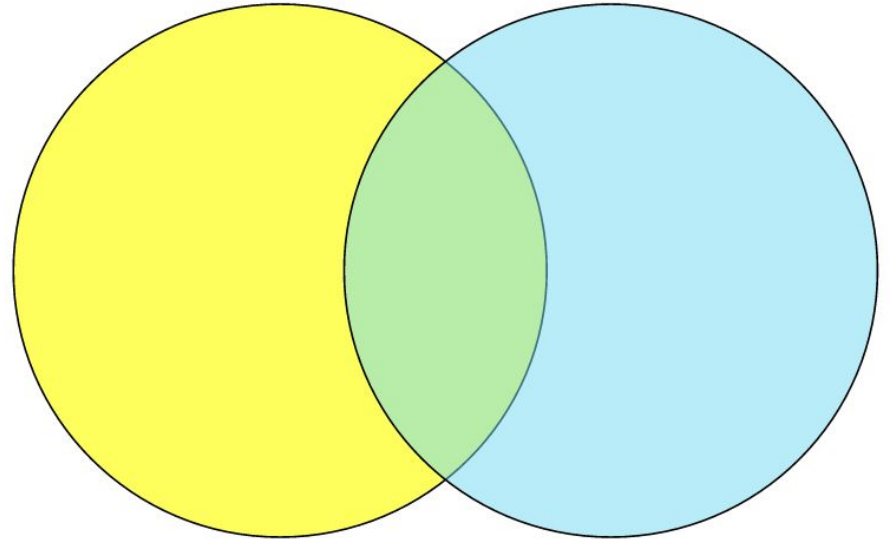


- Objective tied to a grade level scope and sequence: i_e spelling for long i
- Clear and specific teacher instruction and modeling
- Frequent CFUs
- ALL students accountable for learning
- Quick pacing
- Engaging chants, routines and movement

Considerations for Spanish Phonics

Similarities

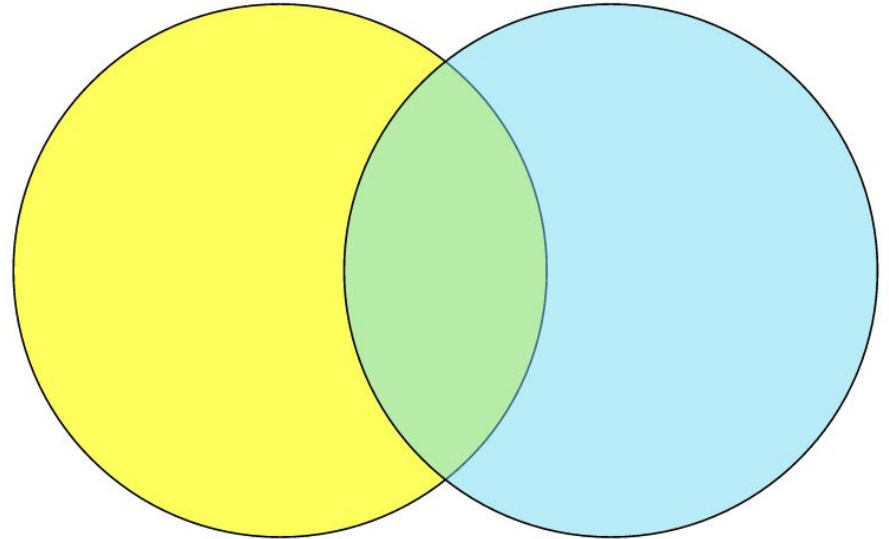
- Both languages use the Roman alphabet
- Learning to read and write uses the same basic process: PA, decoding, fluency, comprehension, writing mechanics
- Sentences have the same basic structure (except for a couple word order exceptions)
- 30-40% of all English words have a related Spanish word



Considerations for Spanish Phonics

Differences

- Spanish has 5 vowel sounds while English has 14+
- Some Spanish consonant sounds are distinctly different than English (v, ll, h, j, r, rr, z, ñ, x)
- Certain combinations of letters are pronounced differently in the two languages (que, güe)
- Certain letter/sound combinations in English do not exist in Spanish (th, ou, sh, kn)



Using the Benchmark Contrastive Analysis

Sound-Spelling: Consonant Digraphs

English						Spanish		Vietnamese		Hmong	
Sound (phoneme)	Most Common Spelling Patterns (graphemes)	Notes	Word Examples			Sound (phoneme) transfer?	Spelling pattern (grapheme) transfer?	Sound (phoneme) transfer?	Spelling pattern (grapheme) transfer?	Sound (phoneme) transfer?	Spelling pattern (grapheme) transfer?
			initial	medial	final						
/ch/	ch		chile	satchel	inch		yes		no		
	_tch	Used after short vowel in root.		hatchet	crutch		no		no		
	tu	Latin origin. Unstressed long u impacts the /t/ sound.		culture, situate, fortunate, mutual		yes	no	yes	no	no	
	ci, ce	Small number of foreign words commonly used in English	cello	concerto, agent, financial			no		no		

- Point out English/native language phoneme distinctions
- Start with oral language development (e.g., phoneme articulation & identification, etc.)
- Adjust the rate at which unfamiliar sounds are introduced
- Provide additional skills practice

Developing Biliteracy through Foundational Skills Instruction

Intentional support of our English Learners with phonics will help them build the skills they need to be biliterate



Considerations for Benchmark

- Adapt lessons as necessary to **ensure students hear it, say it, read it and write it daily** (most lessons include all components already) and get **more practice**
- **HFW instruction** should be incorporated into daily phonics lessons (included in Benchmark already)
- Use students writing to **informally monitor progress** on a daily basis and speed up scope and sequence to be responsive to student needs
- Do **formal CFUs on a weekly basis** with Weekly Foundational Skills Checks
- Sound-spelling patterns & HFW can be **reinforced in shared reading lessons**



Sample Benchmark Lesson

Did the lesson need to be adapted to incorporate “Hear it, say it, read it, write it?”

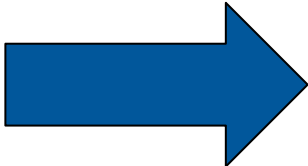


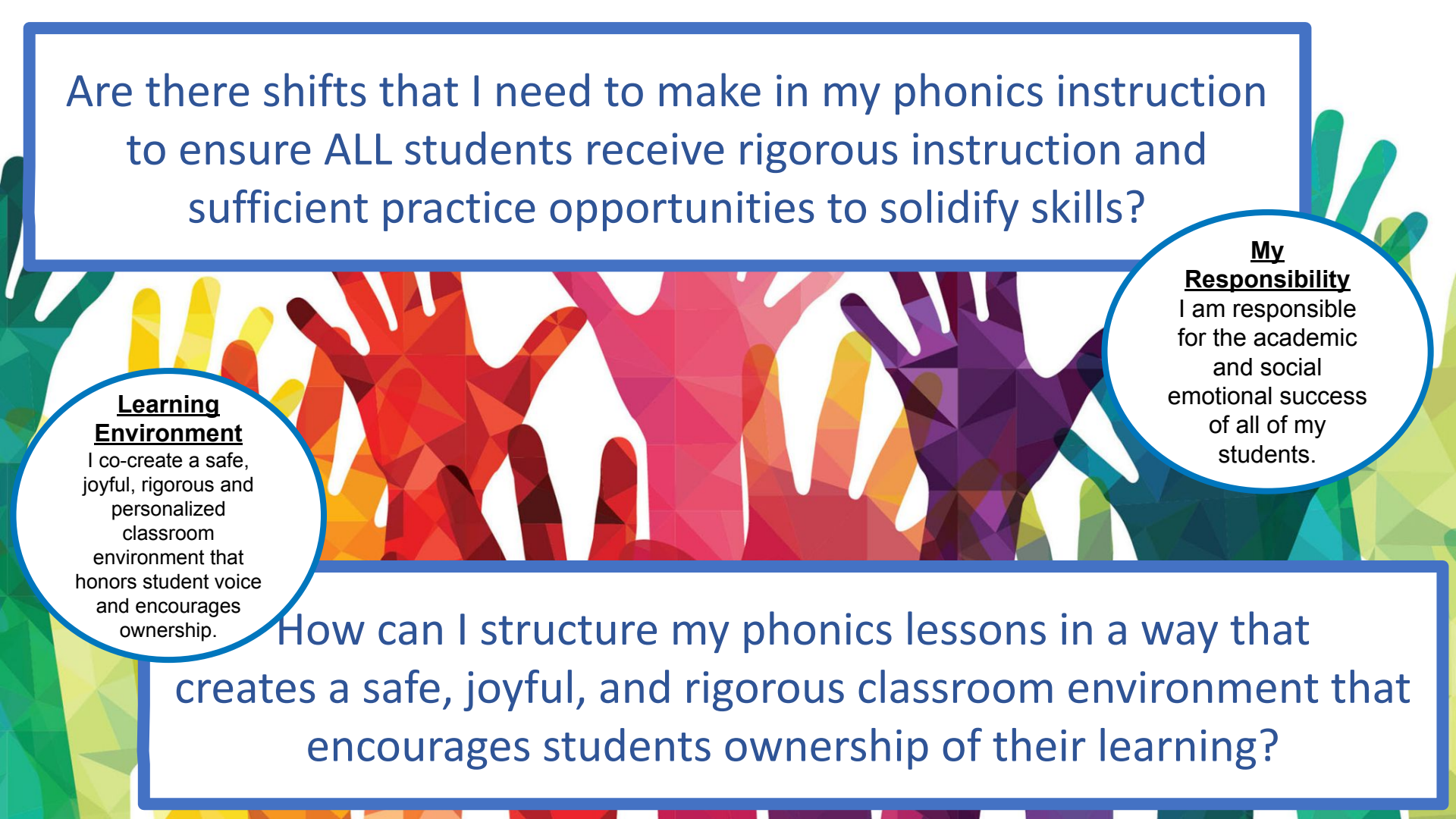
What additional adaptations were made and why?



When and how did the teacher check for understanding?

Considerations for Spanish-Speaking ELs

- /sh/ does not have transferrable phoneme or grapheme in Spanish
 - /th/ does not have a transferable grapheme but does have a transferable phoneme in some dialects
 - /ng/ is transferable as both a phoneme and grapheme
- 
- don't introduce all three on the same day; spread it out throughout the week
 - use a sound-spelling transfer chart to identify Spanish words with the /ng/ sound
 - students may need additional practice opportunities with these words in small group and independent work time
-



Are there shifts that I need to make in my phonics instruction to ensure ALL students receive rigorous instruction and sufficient practice opportunities to solidify skills?

My Responsibility
I am responsible for the academic and social emotional success of all of my students.

Learning Environment
I co-create a safe, joyful, rigorous and personalized classroom environment that honors student voice and encourages ownership.

How can I structure my phonics lessons in a way that creates a safe, joyful, and rigorous classroom environment that encourages students ownership of their learning?

Out of Context

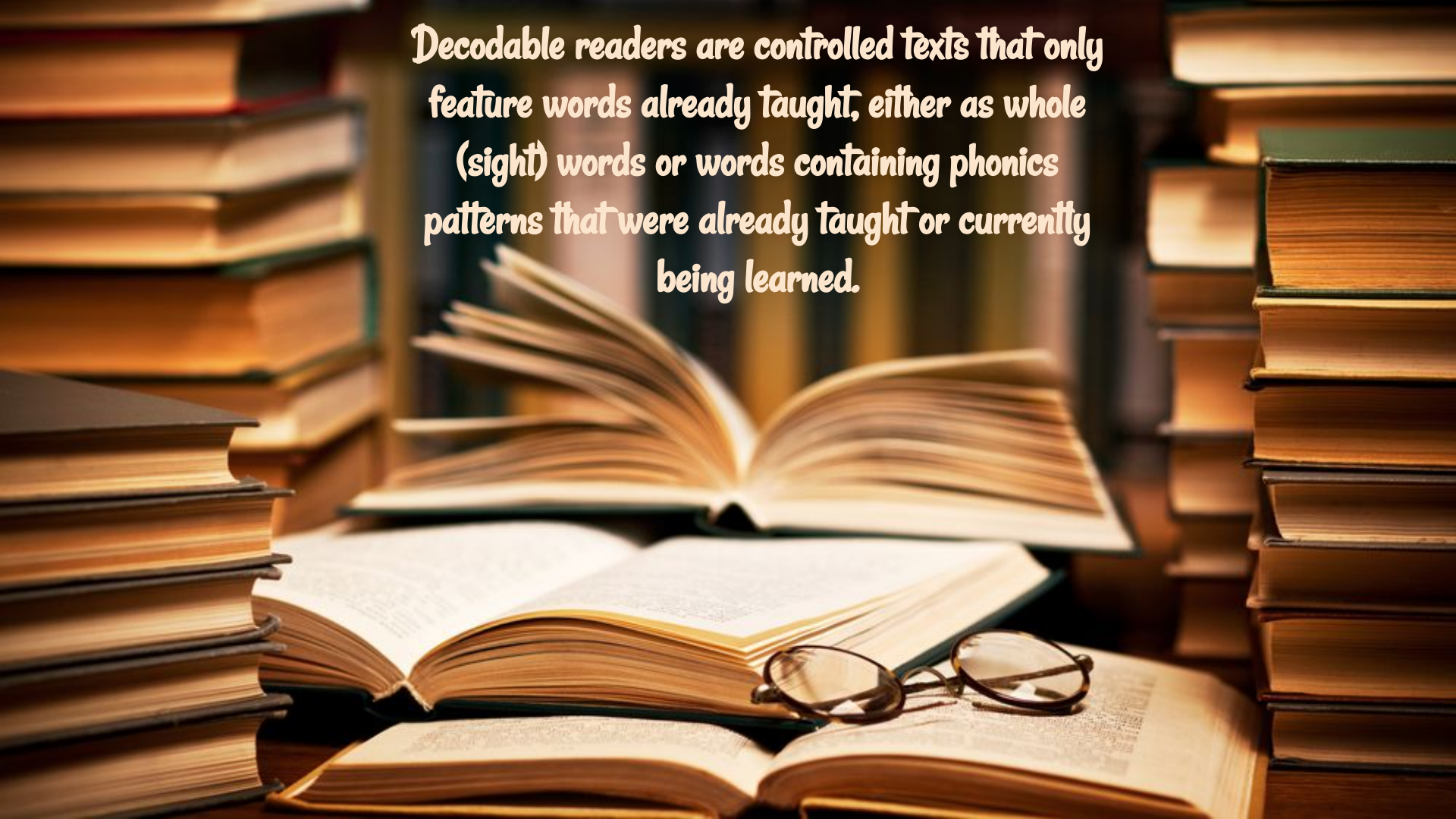
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In Context

“We adults tend to forget that, for children learning to read, recognizing words in print is very much its own reward. It’s super exciting to see those little shapes on a page resolve into known patterns and words and to be able to read those words and sentences for yourself.”

Decodable readers are controlled texts that only feature words already taught, either as whole (sight) words or words containing phonics patterns that were already taught or currently being learned.



Decodable Reading Protocol

Read #	Format	Notes	Instructional Purpose <i>Italicized comments indicate moves that are especially supportive of English Language Learners (ELLs).</i>
Before Reading / As needed	Whole Class or Small Group Preview	Clarify possible unknown vocabulary or knowledge demands. <i>Guide students in discussing new ideas and concepts they may encounter.</i>	Support comprehension and vocabulary growth. <i>Attend to students' articulation of phonemes and highlight student language cognates when possible.</i> <i>Provide ELLs with additional contextualization to help with comprehension. This could include attending to and eliciting students' background knowledge to support new learning.</i>
1st Read	Echo or Choral	Lead echo/choral reading Note: Which students are struggling? Which words present hesitations? Follow with basic comprehension questions. <i>Invite students to discuss answers with others before sharing.</i>	Students can hear a fluent read. Teacher can note specific decoding needs (student or whole group). <i>Use an echo read or consider a teacher-led read (teacher reads, students follow along) for the highest level of support.</i> Reinforces that reading is for making meaning.

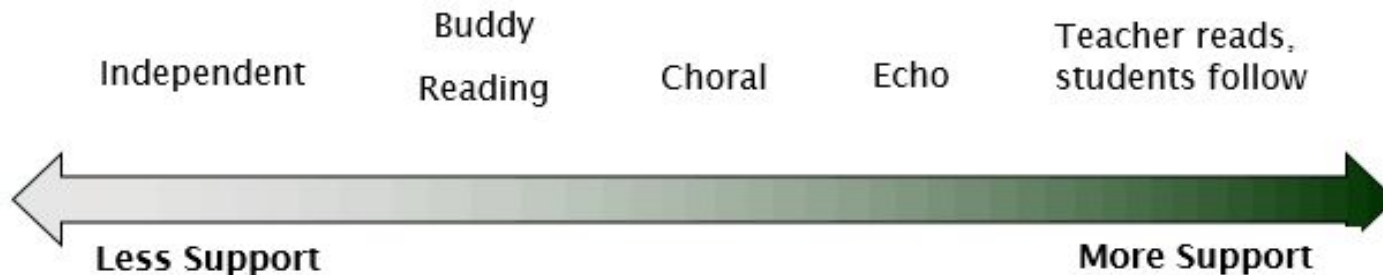
How does this protocol support students in solidifying sound-spelling patterns?

What could be some additional benefits of this process?



Use it flexibly and
adjust based on students' needs.

Using the Protocol Flexibly



Almost there

- Read the decodable 1 more time to ensure mastery
- Move to other texts

Getting there

- Skills reinforcement
- Reread decodables w/ combo choral, buddy, independent

Not there yet

- EXTRA isolated skills practice
 - EXTRA decodable work(old & current)
-

**How does Ms. Como
utilize elements of the
Decodable Reader
Protocol to support
students in completing
the task?**

**How does she
maintain the rigor
while supporting
all students
throughout the
lesson?**





- Builds background knowledge about swim meets to aid comprehension
- Previews vocabulary and reads several words with the i_e pattern
- Models fluent reading and does a couple brief checks of understanding
- Students apply decoding skills through buddy reading
- Students write a response to a text-dependent question

Using Decodables with ELs

- Starting with oral language development (e.g., phoneme articulation, vocabulary, etc.)
- Additional skills practice and repeated readings
- Building background knowledge
- Vocabulary, morphology and syntax Instruction
- Point out English/native language phoneme distinctions



Considerations for Benchmark

- Benchmark includes decodable texts for each week
 - Digitally to project
 - 1 big book
 - 6 handheld books
- Books pre-identify sight words and words with the sound-spelling pattern of focus
- Can be used in small group and during independent work
- Teacher will need to add comprehension check
- 2nd grade decodables are called “Word Study Read” in student consumable packets



Planning

Select a lesson for the upcoming week...

- Adapt it to include more practice and the hear it, say it, read it, write it process
- Script the lessons and routines you'd like to introduce
- Plan for how you'll use the Decodable Reader Protocol



Lessons for Planning: tinyurl.com/y274ftxc

New Resource: Video Library



- Videos of effective instruction of different parts of the literacy block
- Both DPS classrooms and non-DPS classrooms

tinyurl.com/K2LitVidLibrary

Next Steps

- Use Hear it, Say it, Read it, Spell it to support out of context practice
- Use the Decodable Readers Protocol to support students within context practice
- Dig into the video library



What is one thing
you want to
implement from
today's session in
your next week
of phonics
instruction?

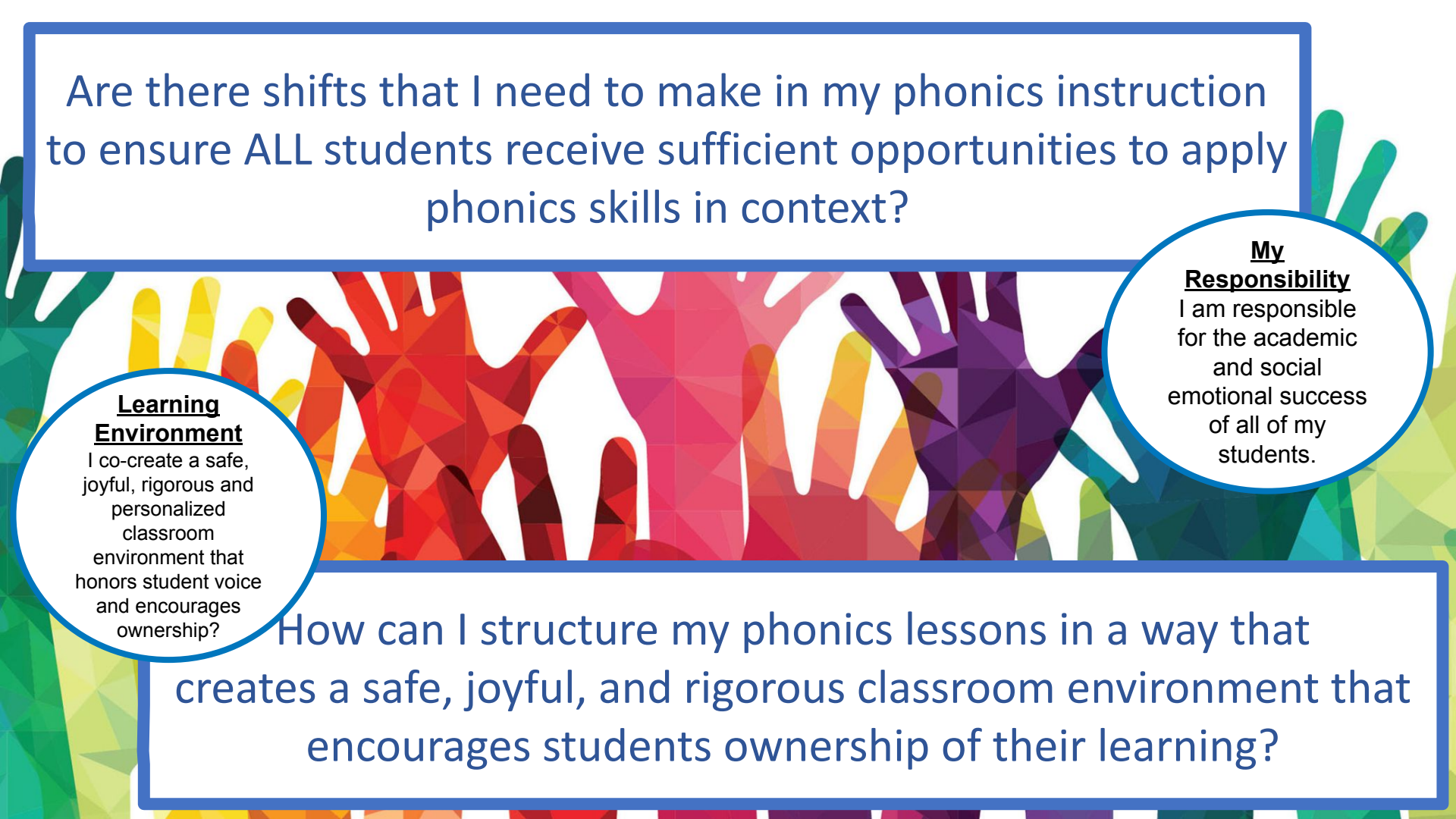


Feedback Please



**FYI: Fall Leadership
Week**

[tinyurl.com/OctoberTeal
Day2019](https://tinyurl.com/OctoberTealDay2019)



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