



# DAY CLINIC

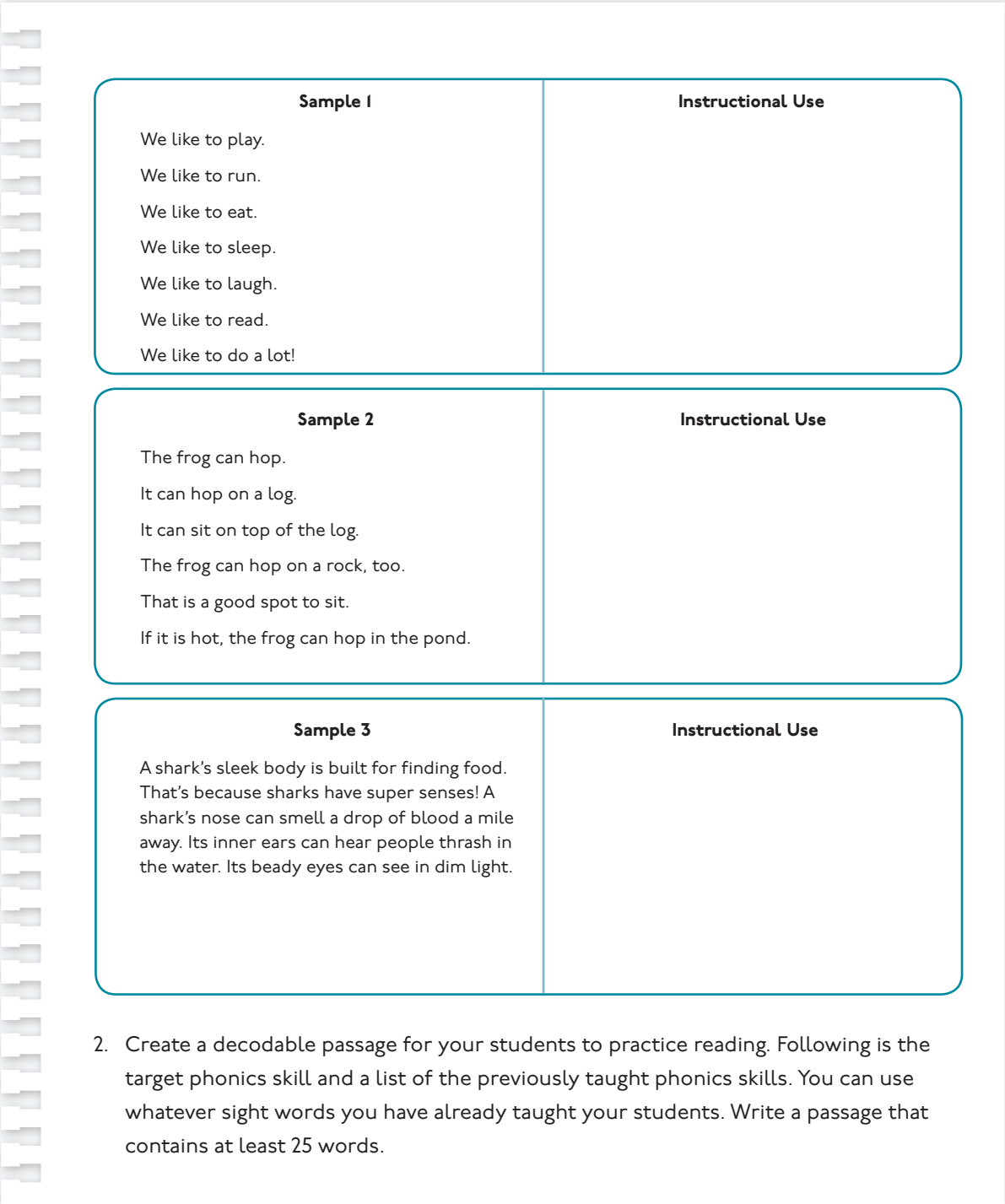
## Examine Your Practices

Now it's your turn. Ask yourself the following questions to examine your instructional practices and materials as they relate to reading connected text.

1. Do I have a sufficient amount of decodable text to use with my phonics lessons (at least two different texts per skill)?
2. How strong are the decodable texts I have? What are their weaknesses? Can these be easily fixed? How might I be able to obtain more decodable texts?
3. What instructional routine do I use when reading these texts? Am I providing modeling and self-correction based on student attempts?
4. Are students reading the decodable texts multiple times to build fluency (each book should be read at least twice)?
5. Am I extending the decodable texts through associated writing activities?
6. Am I monitoring comprehension during and after reading the decodable texts?
7. What is the content and quality of the discussion I am having around these decodable texts? Have I tried ways to enhance these conversations to build vocabulary and conceptual knowledge (using read-alouds to frontload vocabulary, using graphic organizers to record and examine story structure, etc.)?

Try the following activities to deepen your exploration of decodable text and its use in phonics instruction.

1. Look at the three texts that follow. Examine the words used, compare your findings to your phonics scope and sequence, and determine the best instructional use for each one.



**Sample 1**

We like to play.  
We like to run.  
We like to eat.  
We like to sleep.  
We like to laugh.  
We like to read.  
We like to do a lot!

**Instructional Use**

**Sample 2**

The frog can hop.  
It can hop on a log.  
It can sit on top of the log.  
The frog can hop on a rock, too.  
That is a good spot to sit.  
If it is hot, the frog can hop in the pond.

**Instructional Use**

**Sample 3**

A shark's sleek body is built for finding food. That's because sharks have super senses! A shark's nose can smell a drop of blood a mile away. Its inner ears can hear people thrash in the water. Its beady eyes can see in dim light.

**Instructional Use**

2. Create a decodable passage for your students to practice reading. Following is the target phonics skill and a list of the previously taught phonics skills. You can use whatever sight words you have already taught your students. Write a passage that contains at least 25 words.

**Target Phonics Skill:** Short e

**Previously Taught Phonics Skills:** Short a, i, o; consonant blends (s blends, l blends, r blends)

Now let's see how decodable your text is.

- a. Count the number of words in your passage. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Put a box around all the short-e words in the story. How many have you included?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Circle all the words that can be sounded out using *only* those phonics skills you have previously taught, including any short-e words. If a word contains even one letter sound not taught, you can't count it. For example, if a word contains a digraph like *sh*, *ch*, *th*, or *wh*, you can't count it. You also cannot count any sight words (with irregular spellings like *the* or *was*) or any multisyllabic words.
  - d. Count the number of circled words. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Divide the number of circled words by the total number of words. Write the percentage here. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Is your text over 50% decodable? \_\_\_\_\_ Over 75%? \_\_\_\_\_ Over 80%? \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. How many *different* nondecodable words are in your text?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - h. How will students figure out these words? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Ever had a bad decodable text—one that didn't make sense or that read like a tongue twister? Following are sentences from actual decodable texts that need to be fixed. Fix each one and write the corrected text below. I've corrected one as a sample. Remember, it is often better to replace a vague or imprecise word (e.g., a pronoun) with the name or noun it refers to in order to clarify meaning. When we overload sentences with these referents, it increases the propositional density of a text, or the amount of meaning connections a reader must make in order to understand

the sentences. As a result, a very simple sentence like “He hit it” requires a lot of thought and meaning connections on the part of the reader—for example, who is “he”? What did he hit? Is that what the “it” refers to?

**Sample:** He did hit it.

**Correction:** Sam hit the ball.

a. Sam did pat the dog.

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Lin bit the hot rib. Let Lin dab a lip.

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

c. The pup is up on the hut in the sun.

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Jim and Jen had Kit. Ben had Mem. Pam and Tam had the pup. (picture of kids with different pets)

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

e. “Can I hit it?” said Ron. Ron did hit it. It went and went.

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

f. Look at this. I got it for me. (picture of a boy with a baseball bat)

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

g. The fat tan cat saw Kit. The tan cat ran at Kit. Kit, the tan cat, the pup, and Jen and Ben ran.

Correction: \_\_\_\_\_

### Which Decodable Text Is Best?

Examine the three decodable texts on the next page. Complete the chart for each one. Determine which text is best to practice the focus skill and record any corrections or modifications you would make to the text to improve its use and quality.

## Focus Skill: Long a spelled a\_e

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sample 1</b></p> <p>In the forest, there lived a snake and an ape. The snake's name was Jake. The ape's name was Kate.</p>	<p><b>Unique Words With Target Skill</b></p> <p><b>Other Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Evaluation/Possible Fixes</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sample 2</b></p> <p>Jane's frog got away! Where did Wade end up? He jumped in the fish tank. What a way to have fun!</p>	<p><b>Unique Words With Target Skill</b></p> <p><b>Other Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Evaluation/Possible Fixes</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sample 3</b></p> <p>In the forest, there lived a snake, an ape, and a bat. The snake's name was Mac. The ape's name was Pat. The bat's name was Dale. The animals came to a big lake to talk.</p>	<p><b>Unique Words With Target Skill</b></p> <p><b>Other Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Evaluation/Possible Fixes</b></p>

*Source:* Text samples from Beck, I., & Beck, M. E. (2013). *Making sense of phonics: The hows and whys* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

For example answers to these and other activities, go to <http://resources.corwin.com/blevinsphonics> for completed charts.

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