

Appleseeds Lesson Preparation Protocol

TEACHER: _____

GRADE: _____

UNIT AND LESSON NUMBER: _____

Introduction: This Preparation Protocol is designed to help teachers think deeply about the design and intent of their Appleseeds materials so that they are able meet the key tenets of evidence-based foundational skills instruction:

- **Systematic:** Foundational skills must be taught systematically, as students must master more common sounds and more basic skills before less common and less basic ones (e.g. “C” spelled “cat” before “C” spelled “race,” CVC words before CVCe words).
- **Explicit:** The English language is a code that we have to explicitly teach students how to “crack”. By explicitly teaching students the rules, sounds, and patterns, we teach them how to decode and make sense of text rather than using pictures and context to guess at words. Focus on sounds first.
- **Student Practice:** Students need significant practice—both in and out of context of text—to make newly acquired skills automatic and fluent. The goal is to develop fluent decoders such that students can ultimately devote more brain space to reading comprehension than to sounding out words and letters.
- **Assessment and Differentiation:** Because students must master more basic skills/sounds before more complex ones, it is critical that we identify students’ earliest points of weakness as they arise. This requires frequent, ongoing assessment—both formal and informal—so that we can identify and provide support in those earliest areas of weakness.

STEP 1: Identify the priority skills for the lesson.

Lesson Priority Skills	
What is the primary purpose of the lesson? Which sounds/foundational skills are explicitly taught and practiced in this lesson?	
How should any sound/s of the lesson be pronounced? Consult this video to ensure accurate pronunciation and avoid student misconceptions (e.g. /p/ not /puh/ as in “pig” not “puh-ig”).	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I need to learn more about before starting this lesson/work? 	

STEP 2: Prepare for teacher-directed instruction.

Guided Teacher Model	
<p>List all the routines used to explicitly teach and model the skills of the lesson. e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the sound • Blending • Chaining • Tricky words • Spelling trees 	
<p>Review the purpose of each routine you identified in the lesson using the resource at the end of this document (Appleseeds Routines: Purpose and Design). Reflect, then be sure you can answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose of each routine? • Which competencies are being targeted (phonological awareness, decoding, encoding)? What are the implications for instruction? • How do the instruction and modeling routines make the skills of this lesson clear and explicit to students? <p>Notes: Add any notes below on how you will structure the routines to achieve their intentions and make the skills of the lesson explicit:</p>	
<p>[Review the instruction and modeling routines in the lesson.] How will you ensure all students are engaged in these routines and have opportunities to demonstrate their emerging understanding?</p>	

STEP 3: Prepare to support and monitor student practice.

Student Practice		
<p>List all the activities that will be used in the lesson for students to practice their new skills and demonstrate mastery.</p> <p>For example:</p>	<p>Out-of-Context Practice (without text)</p>	<p>In-Context Practice (with text)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decodable Partner Read • Workbook spelling activity 		
<p>Review the purpose of each practice activity you identified in the lesson using the resource listed at the end of this document (Appleseeds Routines: Purpose and Design). Reflect, then be sure you can answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose of each practice activity? • Which competencies are being targeted by the practice activities (phonological awareness, decoding, encoding, language/grammar)? • How does each practice activity allow students to develop mastery in the target skills and competencies in the lesson? • How do the practice activities allow teachers to assess individual student understanding of the target skills of the lesson? <p>Notes: Add any notes below on how you will structure practice activities to ensure students develop and demonstrate mastery?</p>		
<p>[Review the student-facing practice activities.] What specifically will you look for during student practice as evidence of understanding? How will you monitor and check for individual student mastery?*</p> <p>*Due to the systematic nature of skills instruction in which basic skills must be mastered before complex ones, ongoing assessment of understanding is critical. Use Appleseeds tools like Observation Records, Anecdotal Reading Records, and Checks for Understanding to monitor student mastery. And structure practice activities so students have opportunities to demonstrate individual understanding.</p>		
<p>Which students do you want to monitor and support more closely during student practice? Why—what specific skills gaps do they have that may make the practice challenging?</p>		
<p>What specific challenges do you anticipate these students or others will have with the practice of this lesson?</p>		

<p><i>What appropriate supports will you provide without reducing rigor or taking away from the intention of the practice?*</i></p> <p><i>*Consider supporting a targeted small group during independent/partner practice activities.</i></p>	
<p><i>What opportunities for differentiation do you see?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can you center + support your MLL students?</i> • <i>How can you center + support students with thinking and learning differences?</i> • <i>Are there opportunities for extension work?</i> 	
<p><i>How am I ensuring that students are consistently receiving supportive feedback that affirms their abilities and potential as readers and writers?</i></p>	

STEP 4: Prepare lesson materials.

<p><i>What materials do I need to prepare?</i></p>	
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Appendix

Appleseeds Routines: Purpose and Design

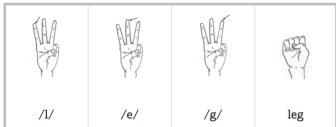
Overview: Errors in skills instruction commonly occur when teachers are unclear about the purpose and design of skills instructional routines. The tables below explain the core purpose and design of the most common routines and activities in Appleseeds: Evidence-Based Instruction for Massachusetts. While preparing for instruction, teachers should review the purpose and design of the routines they will use to teach foundational literacy skills.


Table of Contents: Descriptions of the purpose and design of each common Appleseeds routine or activity can be found in the charts below. Routines are listed alphabetically within the following categories:

Phonological Awareness Routines	Decoding Routines	Encoding Routines
These routines emphasize hearing and saying the individual sounds, or phonemes, that make up words. The emphasis is on sounds—not letters—and so should generally be instructed without visual aids. This is a core component of the “Sounds First” approach.	These routines and practice activities prepare students for fluent reading. They provide students the instruction and practice they need to decode symbols (letters) and translate them into sounds and words. The ultimate goal is to build decoding automaticity such that students are able to read fluently and concentrate on comprehension.	These routines are intended to teach students to spell and write words. The support students to turn sounds into symbols (letters) by explicitly teaching practicing the sound-spelling patterns that make up English, starting with the most common sound-spelling patterns.
Blending Introduce the Sound Segmenting	Chaining (for Reading) Decodable Reading Decodable Reading Comprehension Questions Tricky Words Wiggle Cards Word Baseball Workbook Activities (Decoding)	Chaining (for Spelling) Code Flip Book / Individual Code Charts Introduce the Spelling Spelling Trees Workbook Activities (Encoding)
Language/Grammar Routines		
For purposes of this document, we don’t include the Language or Grammar routines and practice activities that occur in many Appleseeds lessons. The purpose and design of these activities is generally quite clear with an explicit focus on teaching the targeted Language/Grammar skill of the lesson followed by opportunities for students to practice those new skills. Teachers should follow the directions in the Appleseeds materials to maintain curricular coherency and achieve the outcome targeted by the lesson and activities.		

Routines: Purpose, Design, and Common Mistakes: Use the chart below to better understand the core routines and activities used to teach Appleseeds.

Phonological Awareness Routines		
Routine	Purpose and Design	Common Mistakes
Blending	Blending allows students to hear the individual sounds/phonemes that make up words and learn how to blend those sounds together to create words, a prerequisite for decoding text (reading). /m/ /a/ /p/ □ “map”	Teacher adds print (visual words or letters) which takes away from the intended focus on phonological awareness

	<p>Using the kinesthetic motions to accompany each sound/phoneme in a word makes each sound clear and supports students to understand how to blend the sounds into a word.</p>  <p>Key design principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral activity (words and sounds should be heard, not seen). • Each sound/phoneme is pronounced individually; students blend sounds to make the word. • Kinesthetic motions make each sound distinct and the blending process clear. 	<p>Sounds are mispronounced (e.g. should be /p/ not /puh/; 'pig' not 'puh-ig')</p> <p>Teacher omits hand motions.</p> <p>Not all students participate in practice.</p>
Introduce the Sound	<p>These routines introduce the individual sounds—not letters—of the English code, and allow students to develop their phonemic awareness skills.</p> <p>Key design principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The markings in the text, /sh/ or /a/, for example, denote this is a sounds only activity. Visual letters and words should generally not accompany this activity. • Teacher must properly demonstrate the sound (paying close attention to correct pronunciation). • Students hear (or say) the sound in different words and guess, with pictures or hints, words that contain the new sound. 	<p>Teacher adds print (visual words or letters) which takes away from the intended focus on phonological awareness</p> <p>Sounds are mispronounced (e.g. should be /p/ not /puh/; 'pig' not 'puh-ig')</p>

Segmenting	<p>Segmenting is similar to blending, but rather than start with the individual phonemes/sounds that make up the word, we start with the word and have students segment the word into its component sounds. “map” □ /m/ /a/ /p/</p> <p>Breaking words into their component sounds is a prerequisite for encoding (spelling and writing). The kinesthetic motions that accompany each sound segment helps to make the sounds of the word and the segmenting process clear to students.</p>  <p>Key design principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral activity (words and sounds should be heard, not seen). • Words are pronounced and students segment the word into its component sounds/phonemes. • Kinesthetic motions make each sound distinct and the segmenting process clear. 	<p>Teacher adds print (visual word or letter) which takes away from the intended focus on phonological awareness</p> <p>Sounds are mispronounced (e.g. should be /p/ not /puh/; ‘pig’ not ‘puh-ig’)</p> <p>Teacher omits hand motions.</p> <p>Not all students participate in practice.</p>
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Decoding Routines		
Routine	Purpose and Design	Common mistakes
Chaining for Reading	<p>A chain is a series of words that can be built by changing just one sound/spelling at a time (e.g., cub□rub□run□fun). This allows students to think about the sounds that each letter (or drawing of the sound) makes and visually see how replacing just a single phoneme changes the entire word.</p> <p>Because this activity is preparation for reading, instruction moves from symbols (letters) to sounds. Teachers make a new word by adding/deleting/replacing a letter/sound on the pocket chart (e.g., Sip□Sap) and students read the new word that has been created. Students explain what changed to make the new word (“we changed the /i/ sound to an /a/ sound to change Sip to Sap”).</p> <p>Repeat: Sip□Sap□Sop□Mop.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the sound, not the letter. • Only one sound/spelling changes at a time. Changes can be made by adding, deleting, or substituting a sound. 	<p>Teachers choose their own words to chain and don’t use the words in the materials selected to target only the letter sounds taught.</p> <p>Teachers don’t physically replace phonemes (e.g., they use PowerPoints that have a new word on each slide), meaning students don’t visually see the phonemes change.</p> <p>Teachers change more than one sound at a</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chaining can be done with a pocket chart and letter cards or by writing words on the overhead/board. Pocket chart and letter cards are recommended. Unlike Chaining for Spelling, in Chaining for Reading the teacher is responsible for making the new words and the student is responsible for reading the words. 	<p>time (rub↯run, not rub↯fun)</p> <p>Students write the words, rather than focusing on the sounds and reading.</p> <p>Teachers mix real words and nonsense words, causing confusion about which words are real/made up.</p>
Decodable Reading	<p>The primary goal of skills instruction is to teach students to fluently decode text so that they can read with automaticity and focus on comprehension.</p> <p>Decodable reading allows students to practice their new skills to decode text, build fluency, and read for comprehension.</p> <p>The Appleseeds readers are 100% decodable, meaning they use only sound-spelling patterns and words that have been explicitly taught and practiced. Newly taught sounds and spellings are bolded in the text, and tricky words are underlined to help students focus on their newly acquired skills and read for comprehension.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decodable readers emphasize newly taught skills (e.g., after learning the /k/ sound spelled 'ck,' the reader will emphasize that sound-spelling pattern). Demonstration stories (teacher read-alouds) allow you to model fluent reading and reinforce key skills. Hearing the stories fluently read aloud supports students to read more fluently during their independent-and partner reads. Partner and independent reading allow students to practice independent decoding and fluency and provide teachers the opportunity to monitor student fluency. Small groups can be pulled during independent/partner reading to support students who may need additional decoding support. 	<p>Teachers change the way the decodable was intended to be read (e.g. skipping demonstration stories, doing partner or independent reads as whole group read-alouds, etc.) meaning students don't have the opportunities to practice with the sounds and words. Teachers don't monitor for fluency and decoding challenges during partner/independent reads. Partner reading routines are not established. Teachers don't emphasize the new skills and sound-spelling patterns that students will see and practice in their readers.</p>
Decodable Reading Comprehension Questions	<p>Comprehension is the goal of learning to decode and read fluently. After every decodable story, there are oral and/or written comprehension questions that allow students to demonstrate whether they understood what they read. The goal is generally basic comprehension of characters, setting, and plot, not to reach the depth of grade-level reading comprehension standards (which should occur during knowledge—not skills—instruction).</p>	<p>Teachers don't check for comprehension. Teachers attempt to align questions to grade-level reading standards.</p>

	<p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehension questions—written or oral—allow you to assess whether students are able to decode and read for basic comprehension. Demonstrating comprehension, not correct spelling or grammar, is the goal. 	<p>Students don't answer in complete sentences. Pacing interferes with completion of questions.</p>
Tricky Words	<p>Tricky Words are words that are not yet decodable with the sound-spelling correspondences that students have learned. "From" is a Tricky Word because it is pronounced like "frum." The "o" in "from" is underlined (fr<u>o</u>m) to demonstrate that it is the tricky letter/sound that cannot be decoded as usual. The non-decodable parts of Tricky Words should be explicitly taught.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers explicitly instruct which sounds/letters of words are tricky and cannot be decoded by underlining them in the word. Tricky Words are also underlined in student decodable readers. Subsequent lessons will have review opportunities for tricky words. Tricky word wall captures the Tricky Words that students have learned. 	<p>Teacher introduces Tricky Words as Sight Words, which emphasizes that they must be memorized but fails to point out what makes them tricky.</p> <p>Teacher fails to explain what part of the word is tricky and/or does not explain what the underlined portion of the Tricky Word means.</p>
Wiggle Cards	<p>Wiggle Cards are used for basic decoding practice. The cards contain simple words or phrases using only those letter-sound patterns that students have been taught. Students must decode the word or phrase and then, if it describes an action, act out whatever the Wiggle Card says (e.g., "run and jog"). Reading and/or acting out the phrase serve as evidence of student decoding and comprehension and is a fun kinetic activity.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All words are decodable if used within sequence of program. Students decode and act out the word/phrase. 	<p>Teacher reads card aloud to students rather than allowing them to decode.</p> <p>Teacher creates their own Wiggle Card phrases that don't align to the sound-spelling patterns that have been or are being taught.</p>
Word Baseball	<p>Word baseball is a decoding competition between two teams to see which team can read and say the most printed words correctly. Students from each team take turns reading and pronouncing words featuring the sound-spelling patterns and/or tricky words that they have learned. Each correct reading is a hit. Four hits make a run. The team with the most runs wins.</p>	<p>Teacher uses their own words rather than the words in the materials targeting the sound-spelling patterns of the unit/lesson.</p> <p>Teacher turns a decoding activity into an encoding activity.</p> <p>Teacher has anyone on the team shout out rather than assigning students turns.</p>

Workbook Decoding Activities	<p>Workbook activities are generally designed to provide students with independent practice of newly acquired skills. It is critical that teachers pay close attention to the skills being targeted, and structure the activity to provide students with the appropriate practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decoding activities: Students should practice using their new skills to decode, read and make sense of words and text. Do not read aloud to students. • Encoding activities: Students should practice using their new skills to spell and write sounds, words, and sentences. • Language and Grammar activities: Students should practice with the target language and grammar skills of the lesson. <p>Teachers should also pay close attention to the specific directions of the activity (e.g., whole group vs small group vs independent) to ensure that students receive sufficient independent practice to demonstrate mastery, and that teachers can monitor and assess independent understanding and provide targeted small group support</p>	<p>Teachers read aloud text that students should decode.</p> <p>Teachers lead whole group work when activities should be done independently or in small groups.</p> <p>Teachers don't check and assess individual student understanding.</p> <p>Teachers don't provide targeted small group support to students who may need it.</p>
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Encoding Routines		
Routine	Purpose and Design	Common mistakes
Chaining for Spelling	<p>A chain is a series of words that is built by changing just one spelling at a time (e.g., cub→rub→run→fun). This allows students to think about each letter (or drawing of the sound) and visually see how replacing a single phoneme changes the entire word.</p> <p>Because this activity is preparation for spelling, instruction moves from sounds to symbols (letters). The teacher asks students how to change one sound in a word to create a new word: "If this is 'sip,' how do we make 'sap'?" A student replaces the picture of the /i/ sound in 'sip' with a picture of the /a/ sound. Repeat. Sip→Sap→Sop→Mop. The routines and selected word are strategically sequenced to focus on the spelling correspondence students are learning.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the sound, not the letter. • Only one sound/spelling changes at a time. Changes can be made by adding, deleting, or substituting a sound. • Chaining can be done with a pocket chart and letter cards or by writing words on the overhead/board. Pocket chart and letter cards are recommended. • Unlike Chaining for Reading, in Chaining for Spelling the student is responsible for making the new words and the teacher is responsible for reading them. 	<p>Teachers choose their own words to chain and don't use the words in the materials selected to focus only on the letter spellings taught.</p> <p>Teachers don't have students manipulate phonemes (e.g. they use PowerPoints that have a new word on each slide), meaning students don't have the opportunities to practice with these spellings.</p> <p>Teachers change more than one sound at a time (rub→run <i>not</i> rub→fun)</p> <p>Students read the words, rather than</p>

		focusing on the spellings. Teachers mix real words and nonsense words, causing confusion about which words are real/made up.
Code Flip Book and Individual Code Charts	<p>The Code Flip Books show the spellings and other information for all sounds taught. The Individual Code Chart displays similar information for students and allows them to mark in their code books as the spellings for each sound are introduced. Students can reference the Flip Book and Code Charts to support their decoding and encoding.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One side of each card shows the sound. The other shows the spelling, a sample word with the spelling, and the power bar. • The power bar gives an indication of how common the spelling is for the sound it represents. A longer power bar means a more common spelling. • Students will use the Individual Code Chart to record the vowel sound/spelling correspondences and consonant sound/spelling correspondences that they learn. • When there are multiple spellings for a sound, the spellings are arranged in order from the most frequent to the least frequent spelling. 	<p>Teachers don't display the Code Flip Books and sound cards in the classroom for students to reference.</p> <p>Students don't mark in individual code books.</p>
Introduce the Spelling	<p>These routines support students to map sound to spelling. Students practice hearing and saying the sound (e.g. /er/), then practice "drawing the sound" both in isolation and in words (e.g. 'er,' 'her,' 'fern'). Students often progress from tracing the sounds with their fingers to tracing the sounds with their pencils, and then independently drawing the sounds in their activity books. This allows students to focus on directionality and placement of letters. Students should also say the sounds/words while writing them, to emphasize the sound-spelling connection.</p> <p>Key design principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most common spelling are taught first, and the power bar is introduced to show how common a spelling is. A longer power bar means a more common spelling. • Teachers should explicitly teach, model, and explain the specific drawing movements to write the sounds/letters correctly. • Students should say the words/sounds while writing them. • In Kindergarten this routine has students use a broken crayon to develop fine motor skills. Students also write in the air or on large chart paper before writing on traditional writing paper. 	<p>Teacher does not model how to draw the sound. Students do not practice saying the sound while tracing/drawing it. The teacher does not explain the power bar. Teacher emphasizes "writing the letter" rather than "drawing the sound," undermining the sounds first approach of Appleseeds. Sounds are mispronounced (e.g. should be /p/ not /puh/; 'pig' not 'puh-ig')</p>
Spelling Trees	<p>Spelling trees help students visualize and sort multiple spellings for a single sound (e.g. /k/ spelled 'k,' 'ck,' 'c,' and 'cc'), allowing students to visually see all the spellings for a single sound and identify how common each spelling is based on the length of each tree branch.</p>	<p>Students just apply the leaves without reading the words aloud.</p>

	<p>Spelling Trees support students to identify and understand sound-spelling patterns.</p> <p>Key Design Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students read the words aloud and then determine which branch to apply the leaf, to make the sound-spelling pattern concrete. • The length of the branches should correspond to the frequency of the spelling pattern (/k/ spelled 'ck' is more common than 'cc,' therefore the 'ck' branch is longer). • Displaying the trees in the room allows students to reference the sound-spelling patterns. 	<p>Teachers don't display spelling trees after creating them.</p> <p>Teachers omit spelling trees in favor of other activities.</p>
Workbook Encoding Activities	<p>Workbook activities are generally designed to provide students with independent practice of newly acquired skills. It is critical that teachers pay close attention to the skills being targeted, and structure the activity to provide students with the appropriate practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decoding activities: Students should practice using their new skills to decode, read and make sense of words and text. Do not read aloud to students. • Encoding activities: Students should practice using their new skills to spell and write sounds, words, and sentences. • Language and Grammar activities: Students should practice with the target language and grammar skills of the lesson. <p>Teachers should also pay close attention to the specific directions of the activity (e.g., whole group vs small group vs independent) to ensure that students receive sufficient independent practice to demonstrate mastery, and that teachers can monitor and assess independent understanding and provide targeted small group support.</p>	<p>Teachers read aloud text that students should decode.</p> <p>Teachers lead whole group work when activities should be done independently or in small groups.</p> <p>Teachers don't check and assess individual student understanding.</p> <p>Teachers don't provide targeted small group support to students who may need it.</p>