



Patterned Text

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For some young students, learning how to read can be a very challenging task. One area of difficulty can be letter knowledge. The struggle to identify letters becomes the focus during reading, so that deriving meaning from print becomes practically impossible. For others, as in the case of English Learners, whose knowledge of language structure and vocabulary are developing, predicting or self-correcting to make sense of the reading can be difficult. Decodable readers and patterned readers are two types of books written for emergent readers that address and support these concerns.

Decodable Readers

Decodable readers are written with controlled vocabulary, using only letters that have already been taught. The aim of these texts is for readers to practice decoding words made up of both known and new letters and to recognize high frequency words to get at the message of the text. Early levels of decodable readers are composed of simple sentence structures and short words, and the focus is on practicing specific letters. As levels increase, the length of sentences increases and words and sentence structures become more complex. Once readers are able decoders, they transition to grade-appropriate texts.

Patterned Readers

Whereas decodable readers are phonics driven, patterned readers are message driven. Early levels of patterned readers can have simple labels. Readers depend on pictures to access the print, using the initial letter to help “read” a label. In the next level, the text has a simple pattern, with sentences that have one or two word changes at the end. Readers get a “running start” on the text by repeating the pattern and then using the picture, language, and initial letter cues to get at the word(s). It is important to note that patterned readers do depend on phonics by using phonics cues, but readers are encouraged to use prediction to complete the word(s).

It must be remembered that using prediction means the reader is thinking of the message in the text, using learned knowledge of the content and vocabulary to be able to predict. Success in reading patterned text depends on the reader’s knowledge and familiarity with the content.

Prediction in content-driven text relies on the reader’s mastery of the content.



Panorama is a content-based program. As such, as content is taught and concepts developed, content vocabulary becomes an integral part of student learning and an important tool for speaking and writing. Each lesson includes a collection of Key Words that are introduced and practiced through a variety of speaking and writing routines. The patterned readers in *Panorama* give students an opportunity to read patterned text and access their knowledge of the content, practicing vocabulary in a meaningful way.

As an example, a lesson on the properties of rocks includes routines to practice Key Words, after which students will have the opportunity to read patterned text, such as the following:

- This rock has *layers*.
- This rock has a *rough texture*.
- This rock has a *smooth texture*.

The text is accompanied by rich photographs that clearly depict the different textures and qualities of each rock. Early readers might not have the phonics skills necessary to decode all the words, but in this case the readers’ attention is not solely on the letters. It is also on the photographs of the rocks and the words they have learned and internalized as the lesson progressed. The patterned reader lets students practice reading about known concepts and vocabulary while getting meaning from print.

Similarly, in a Spanish Kindergarten book in *Panorama*, students read about the growth cycle of a seed by accessing the following lines of text:

La semilla está dormida.
La semilla se despierta.
La semilla cambia.



Richly illustrated pages, supported by the pattern used in the text, help readers focus on the meaning and on the science-specific language needed to describe what they see.

As students continue learning, expanding their knowledge of the subject matter and practicing what they learned through the reading of patterned text, the complexity increases. Each patterned reader, along with focused phonics instruction, helps students become stronger readers. As picture cues become less helpful, readers focus more on letters and language cues to navigate through more complex texts. However, fluency and comprehension are achieved only through the mastery of science concepts and vocabulary.

Students might be able to decode a text about the properties of rocks, but they will lack comprehension without lessons that describe and explain these properties. The same might occur with the following Spanish text about the states of water.

Cuando el agua es sólida, le decimos hielo.
El hielo es frío.
Cuando el agua es un vapor, le decimos vapor.
El vapor es invisible.
Cuando el agua es un líquido, le decimos agua.
El agua fluye.

Each lesson in grades K–2 in *Panorama* includes patterned readers that support content learned through both fiction and nonfiction books. The goal is to deliver this content in a variety of ways to make it memorable and allow students to think, talk, and write about concepts critically.

References

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