Decodable Plays

Fast Track Reading’s interactive plays give your students the opportunity to shine, while providing additional practice of the new skill. Have students read the play “Ignite!” aloud in small groups or pairs. If you have several students working at the same Word Work level, consider using the decodable play in a readers’ theater setting, or ask the students to perform it in front of the class. Working with the decodable plays in a group setting offers the additional benefit of reducing the isolation that delayed readers often feel.
In the Word Work Word Study Teacher Guide, ten master word study lessons provide instruction in spelling and vocabulary development:

1. Changing Word Meanings
   - Plurals
   - Verb Endings
   - Comparatives
   - Possessives
   - Suffixes
   - Prefixes
2. Words with Multiple Meanings
   - Homophones
   - Homographs
3. Words with Same or Different Meanings
   - Antonyms
   - Synonyms
4. Shortened Words
   - Contractions
   - Abbreviations
5. Capitalization
6. Dictionary Skills
7. Context Clues
8. Origins and Derivations of Words
9. Content-Area Words
10. Figurative Language

**Background Information**

A plural noun names more than one person, place, or thing. Students need to understand that:

- most regular plural nouns are formed by adding -s to the singular noun
- plurals of nouns ending in s, x, z, ch, or sh (sibilants) are formed by adding -es
- there are some nouns whose plurals are formed in irregular ways (women/ women, tooth/teeth)
- some nouns are the same in the singular and the plural forms (sheep/sheep, deer/deer)

The lesson that follows covers the variety of plural forms. You may wish to concentrate on one type at a time to avoid confusion. A logical teaching sequence would be words that add -s or -es, followed by plural forms that require spelling changes (story/stories), and then irregular plurals.

**Objectives**

The student will learn to:

- recognize, read, and form plural nouns ending in -s and -es
- recognize, read, and form plurals of words ending in -y
- recognize, read, and form plurals of words in which f is changed to v
- recognize, read, and form irregular plurals
- spell selected plural nouns

**Pre-Check**

Write the following words on the board:

dog, box, shelf, bush, woman, lunch, baby, deer. Ask students to copy the words in a column on a piece of paper. Then have them write the plural form of each word next to each word in the column. The words represent the different ways plurals are formed and will give you an idea of students' familiarity with forming plurals.

**ELL Support**

1. English speakers pronounce -es as /z/ or /iz/. These endings add an extra syllable: box/box-es; watch/watch-es; bus/bus-es.
2. -ees is often pronounced as /i/ez, /i/ez, or /i/ez. Times = tense, fees, mice, mice, mice, mice.
3. -ees creates a tricky consonant cluster (wives = /waivz/). Learners usually compensate by dropping /v, /v, or /v/ or by inserting a vowel sound (foaves = /foivz/).
4. The pronunciations of irregular plurals must be memorized (goose, deer, teeth).
Three-part lessons enable differentiated instruction to meet each student's needs.

**DEMONSTRATE**

The Demonstrate section of the lesson is divided into three parts. For some students, regular plurals will be a review. If this is the case, you will move on to Part 2 and Part 3 as appropriate. Other students may need more practice with forming regular plurals. For these students, move on to the Coach section of the lesson and come back to Part 2 and Part 3 on another day when you feel students are ready.

**PART 1**

Write the following words in two columns on the board — column 1: cat, apple, door, button, doll; column 2: bus, dress, box, church, bus. Model how to add -s or -es to make plurals.

Say: These nouns are singular, which means that there is only one of each of these things. I want to make them plural so that these are more than one of each of these things. I need to add -s to the words in the first column to make them plural. (Add -s to the words on the board. Read each word.) The words in the second column are different. I need to add -es to them to make them plural. This is because they end in the letters s, x, ch, or sh, and I know that words that end in these letters need to have -es added in order to make them plural. (Add -es to the words on the board. Read each word.)

**PART 2**

Write the following sentence on the board:

I have to change the y to i and then add -es. When ends in y, if I want to make a word ending in y plural, I have to change the y to i and then add -es. (Highlight these letters in the words on the board as you talk about them.)

Write deer and sheep on the board.

Say: When I talk about one deer, I use the word deer. But when I want to talk about more than one deer, I use the word deer. There are some words that are the same for singular and for plural. I have to learn which words these are because there is no rule. I know that sheep is another example of a word that is the same in singular and in plural.

**PART 3**

Write the words woman and tooth in one column on the board and the words women and teeth in another column.

Say: There are some words that I can’t make plural by adding -s or -es. There is no rule I can apply and I just have to learn their plural spellings. I know that woman and tooth are two examples of these kinds of irregular nouns.

Write deer and sheep on the board.

Say: When I talk about one deer, I use the word deer. But when I want to talk about more than one deer, I use the word deer. There are some words that are the same for singular and for plural. I have to learn which words these are because there is no rule. I know that sheep is another example of a word that is the same in singular and in plural.

**COACH**

Using MatchWord, create a worksheet that lists singular forms of words whose plurals are formed by adding -s or -es. Be sure you include words that end in s, x, ch, or sh. If you feel your students are ready, and you have taken them through Part 2 of the Demonstrate section of the lesson, you will also want to include some examples of words that end in y and l. Read each word with students, have them say the plural form, and then ask them to write the plural form next to its singular form. Have students explain how they know whether to add -s or -es and whether they need to change final letter y or l before adding the plural ending.

Say: Let's look at the first word on the list. What is the word? (For example, boy.) What is the plural form of this word? The word box ends in s. What do we add to a word that ends in s to make it plural? I will write it on the board while you write it on your paper. Look at the plural word you wrote and then look at the word I have written on the board. Check to see if you have spelled the word on your paper correctly. Let's look at the next word.

Continue working through the list, helping students to identify the final letters and to decide how to form the plurals.

When you have taken students through Part 3 of the Demonstrate section of the lesson, prepare a list of words that have irregular plurals, using MatchWord. Include words that are the same in their singular and plural forms. Help students to read, say, and write these irregular plural forms.

Say: These words have irregular plural forms. Some words have the same spelling for plural and for singular. You will have to learn how to spell them. Let's look at each one, read it, and then decide what the plural form is. I'll help you with the spelling. When we have created our list of plurals, we will keep the list and spend some time every day practicing their spelling until we know them really well.

**APPLY**

Use MatchWord to create games and activities that require students to read and write plural forms of words such as word cards for matching, word puzzles, and cloze paragraphs. The Activities Bank that follows provides ideas for helping students practice using plural forms.

**ASSESS**

- Observe students as they work with word cards and games.
- Use the completed MatchWord blackline masters to evaluate students' ability to read and write plurals.
- Use the assessment blackline master provided at the end of the unit on plurals to evaluate students' understanding.

**RETREAT**

- Work with students to model how to create plurals.
- Allow extra time for students to practice the words on their list of irregular plurals.
- Use MatchWord to create more practice sheets for students.
- Call attention to plurals in books that students are reading. Discuss how the plurals were formed.
- HaveELL and English Only students work in groups or pairs to complete the above activities.
The Activities Bank helps students apply and reinforce target concepts.

Blackline masters can be used to record student progress.

**ACTIVITIES BANK**

**Plural Baseball**
Divide students into two teams for a game of plural baseball. "Pitch" a word to a player on one team by writing a singular noun on the board. The player "at bat" comes to the board and writes the plural form of the word. If that player responds correctly, the team earns a run. Then "pitch" a word to the other team. You might vary the play by "pitching" plural nouns and asking players to supply the singular form. Be sure to include nouns that end in s, x, ss, ch, sh, f, and y, as well as nouns whose plural forms are irregular. Play to ten points and then rearrange teams and play again.

**Plural Concentration**
Using MatchWord, prepare word cards for singular nouns on one set and their corresponding plural forms on another set. Have students work with a partner to play Concentration in which they match singular and plural nouns.

**Plurals Chart**
Prepare a chart with the headings "words with s," "words with es," "words ending in y," "words ending in f," and "irregular plurals." Encourage students to look for plurals in their reading. Have them write the words they find under the appropriate heading on the wall chart.

**Build Words**
Have pairs of students use letter cards created from MatchWord to build singular and plural nouns. One student can think of a singular noun, form it using the letter cards, and then read it aloud. The other student then forms the plural form of the word.

**Spelling Dictation**
As students become more familiar with reading and writing plural forms of words, you may want to set up a weekly dictation time with them. Dictate the singular form of a word first. Have students repeat the word and then write it. Then dictate the plural form. Have students repeat the word and write it next to the singular form on their paper.

**Writing**
Have students write a description of their classroom. Encourage them to use as many plural nouns as they can in their descriptions.

Blackline masters can be used to record student progress.

Write the plural form of each word.

- story
- goose
- calf
- church
- dress
- fox
- sheep
- army
- woman
- woman
- berry

Write the singular form of each plural word.

- knives
- cakes
- bakeries
- teeth
- bikes
- brushes
- apples
- apples
- frogs
- flies
- loaves
Synopses
Josiah is a twelve-year-old drummer in the Union army during the Civil War. Josiah feels that the other soldiers treat him as a child. Recovering from illness, he sits down to rest one day while on a march. He falls asleep, and awakens to hear Rebel soldiers nearby. Thinking quickly, he beats a long drum roll, fooling the Rebels into thinking the Yankees are attacking. The Rebels retreat and Josiah gains the respect of the Yankee soldiers.

Previewing the Text
Show students the illustration on the opposite page. Have them predict what they think the story might be about. Write their predictions on the board or an overhead transparency. Through questioning, find out what they know about the American Civil War (prior knowledge).

What do you know about the American Civil War? When did it happen? What caused it? Who fought who and why?

What are the people in the illustration doing? When do you think this story takes place? Where? What does the title, "Drummer," tell you about the story?

How old do you think the soldiers are? How old is the drummer? How would you feel if you were the boy with the drum?

What do you think might happen in this story?
Reading the Text

Page 46

Josiell

He spoke right into my ear, but I tried not to hear. I was holding tight to a dream of home. Mama was cutting into an apple pie. Where the knife went in, steam was coming out. My mouth watered.

"Josiell, you lazy slug. Wake up!" Fred shook me.

I opened one eye, "I've told you a thousand times to call me Joe!" I sat up.

"Or Josiah. Anyway, I was already awake."

"You were not," said Fred. "I called you and tickled you and I was about ready to dump you in the creek."

"Well, I'm awake now so you can go about your business." Fred Wooley was like a burr in your sock, irritating and hard to get rid of.

"No need to snap, my boy," said Fred. "I'm just looking out for you. You'll get extra duty if you hold things up."

"My boy!" He called me that as if he were a grown man. In fact, he was fifteen, just three years older than I. I figure he lied about his age so they'd take him in the army. They took me because I knew how to play the drum. I was pretty good when I first joined up, but after a few weeks I went from good to expert.

They had me playing morning, noon, and night. I drummed to tell the men when to line up for roll call and when to eat and when to water the horses and when to do drills.

I practiced drumming out signals for battle. My favorite was the long roll that told the men to form a battle line. I hadn't seen a speck of fighting yet, but as I watched the men line up, I imagined how it would be on a real battlefield. I'd beat out the long roll and hundreds of men would form a line, ready to attack.

Reading the Text

Page 47

Finally Fred left, but before I was finished chewing the last of my breakfast he was beside me again. "Here," he said, handing me my cup. "Don't let your coffee get cold."

I took a big drink. Fred watched as I swallowed, and then he started to giggle.

"What's so funny?" I demanded.

"You drank a fly," Fred said, grinning. "It was floating in the coffee."

"I did not," I retorted. "I would have felt it in my mouth."

"Did so."

My belly did a somersault.

"Josiiah Jones!" Corporal Hays shouted. "Get moving."

I hurried over to check my pack. My spoon was already gone, and I didn't want to lose anything else. Knife, fork, salted meat, coffee, hardtack, dried vegetables, letters from home, lice comb, extra socks, dominoes—everything was there. I hoisted the pack onto my back and picked up my drum.

As we marched off, I beat a rat, tat, rat-a-tat-tat, and the corporal sang out. "Yankee Doodle went to town." Everyone joined in.

It felt good, swinging along in the cool of the morning, but as time passed the day got hotter. Under my blue jacket I had a dozen itches. Salty sweat stung my eyes. My feet got heavier with every step.

I tried to think of other things like the new game I'd learned. It was called baseball,
and I planned to teach it to everyone when I got back home. That made me think of my family and how we used to sit around the table and talk about the war. Pa would say, "All that arguing with the South was sure to end in a fight."

“We should have kept on arguing,” Ma would say. “It’s a bad thing when Americans fight Americans.”

“Maybe so,” Pa would say. “But we have to stop slavery from spreading. Doing nothing would be just plain wrong.”

I was beginning to feel lightheaded, but I marched on. Strange how the trees are swaying, I thought. Then I realized it was me that was swaying. I moved to the side of the road and sat down.

“Are you all right?” Corporal Hays asked.

“Fine,” I answered. “Just give me a minute. I’ll catch up.”

He hesitated and then nodded.

“Slowpoke,” said Fred as he passed.

I put my head between my knees. When I looked up, they had disappeared around a bend. I slipped off my pack and lay back in the grass. I remember thinking the sky was as blue as a robin’s egg, and then I must have dozed off.

I woke suddenly. I was sure I’d heard a noise, but when I got up and looked around I saw nothing. I was starting to relax when I heard voices.

Moving from tree to tree, I made my way back along the road, toward the sounds.

Suddenly my hair stood on end. Marching up the road was a long line of Rebel soldiers. What were the Rebs doing here? We thought they were all up ahead, beyond the Union forces. To make things even worse, I remembered I’d left my drum and my pack sitting in plain sight where I’d been sleeping. I scrambled back and snatched them up and then hurried back into the trees.

The voices got louder.

This is a high point in the story. Ask students what they think Josh might do now that the Rebel soldiers are so close.

I knew I should run ahead and tell the others. They wouldn’t have a chance if the Rebs took them by surprise. But was it too late? The Rebs would see me if I ran along the road, and it would take too long if I kept to the woods.

I was frozen with fear. Maybe they should stay very still and let them pass. I thought. Surely the corporal will hear them coming.

They were getting so close I could make out some of their words.

“I’ve got two eggs left,” one said.

I heard that as clear as anything. I felt so afraid and so alone. If my father were beside me, I knew what he’d say.

“It’s just plain wrong to do nothing, son.”

Multiple opportunities for review reinforce key points in the text.
That’s what he’d say.

My mind raced. I was squeezing the drumsticks so hard my nails cut into my palms, making little half-moons of blood.

All at once I knew what I had to do. I slipped away from the Rebs quietly, but as fast as I could, keeping to the trees. Then I stopped, took a deep breath, and began to beat out the long roll.

Over the noise of the drum, one of the Rebs yelled, “It’s the Yankees! We’ve run into the Yankee army!”

“They must be forming a battle line,” shouted another.

There was more shouting, but finally I heard the word I was waiting for.

“Retreat!”

My legs buckled under me as the Rebels slipped away. Finally, when all was quiet, I got myself up and headed for the road.

“Where are you?” someone shouted.

My heart stopped. Had they seen me after all? Had the Rebs circled back? I ducked behind a rock.

“Josie? Where are you? Was that you drumming?”

I never thought I’d be so glad to see Fred Woolley. I stepped forward. “Joe. You should call me Joe.”

“I was worried,” said Fred. “After all, I promised your ma I’d look out for you.”

“You won’t believe what just happened,” I said. “Come on, I’ll tell you on the way.”

I told Fred the whole story. At first I thought he didn’t believe me, but as I talked, he walked faster and faster until, finally, we were running. When we caught up to the others he shouted, “Corporal! Halt! Stop!”

The corporal turned to face us. “Well?”

“Corporal,” said Fred. “Listen, I think you better hear what Josie—I mean Joe—has to say.”

**DISCUSSION**

1. Review students’ predictions and discuss how they compare to what actually happens in the story. Make sure students understand that it is common to make predictions that later need to be revisited. This is what good readers do all the time. *(make/review predictions)*

2. Review with students the problem or conflict in the story. Explain that every story has a conflict and that this is what keeps the story moving along. Reread the lost paragraph of the story and ask students how this provides a clue that the problem was resolved. Prompt them as needed so they understand that Fred’s attitude has changed toward Josiah. If necessary, point out that the text doesn’t say that his attitude has changed, but we know this from the fact that he now calls Josiah “Joe” instead of “Josie.” Explain that sometimes when we read, we have to “read between the lines” to work out what is happening. *(understand narrative structure)*

3. Explain to students that we can learn about characters from what they say in the story. Reread some of the things Josiah says and discuss what students can learn from this. *(See *) Explain that we can also learn about characters from what they do. Ask students what they can learn about Josiah from his actions when the Rebel soldiers are coming. Prompt and guide as necessary. *(analyze characters)*

4. Explain that another way we can learn about characters is from what others say about them. Reread some of the things that Fred says and ask what Fred’s words tell the students about Josiah. *(See *) *(analyze characters)*
Level 2
Comprehension Teacher Guide

Comprehension Teacher Guide: Level 2 provides a practical approach to teaching comprehension strategies. Pair the lesson featured here with the story “Jaws” from the Comprehension magazine anthology, Attack! (included in this package). Then use Fast Track Reading’s six instructional steps—Introduce, Demonstrate, Coach, Apply, Assess, and Reteach—to improve delayed readers’ understanding of the text. Accompanying blackline masters connect writing to reading comprehension as well as provide assessment opportunities.

ATTACK!

Introduce the magazine

Write the magazine title on the board.

Say: This is the title of the magazine you will be reading. What do you think of when you see the word attack? What different types of attacks can you think of? What do you predict the magazine will be about?

Hand out the magazine Attack! Have students read and study the cover.

Say: What do you predict the magazine will be about? What kind of feeling do you have about a magazine called Attack? How does the image on the cover change your predictions about the contents?

Have students open to the magazine’s table of contents on page 1.

Say: What additional information can you get from the table of contents that you were not able to get from the cover? Which article would you want to read about shark attacks? Which article would give you accounts of people who survived attacks? On what page would you find a poem written about an attack?

Direct students to the index on page 32.

Say: Give me page numbers for the following topics: bear attacks, migratory locusts, shark attacks.

Lesson Objectives

offer specific learning goals

Text Type: Information Report

Summary

Sharks are found throughout the world’s saltwater and freshwater. There are many species, ranging in size from very small to very large. While most sharks do not attack people, some do. There are three types of attacks. There are no guarantees against shark attacks, but there are things that can be done to lessen the risk of an attack.

Lesson Objectives

Comprehension

• Compare and contrast information
• Identify and use the structures and features of nonfiction text

Writing Strategies

• Write clear and coherent sentences that develop a topic
• Use reference materials appropriately

Writing Applications

• Write a description that compares and contrasts information

Writing Conventions

• Write using complete sentences

Listening and Speaking

• Report on a topic with supportive facts and details

INTRODUCE THE MAGAZINE
LESSON 1: JAWS

Page 9, Comprehension Teacher Guide: Level 2
BEFORE READING

COACH

Activate Prior Knowledge—Students will have some prior knowledge of sharks from movies or television.

Say: Has anyone seen movies about sharks?

Have students share what they remember about the shark attacks they have seen in movies or on television.

Say: What feature of sharks stands out in your mind? (The teeth and jaws) Have you ever been swimming in an area where there have been shark sightings? How did you feel about swimming there?

Preview Vocabulary—As students read "Jaws," they will encounter terms that may be unfamiliar to them, such as Arctic, Antarctic, prey, and species.

Make sure students know the pronunciation of each word. Pronounce them and have students repeat the words together.

Say: Look these words up in the dictionary and in the text. Then I want each of you to use one of the words in a sentence.

Introduce the Text—Have students turn to the article "Jaws" on page 2.

Say: You are going to read a nonfiction information report called "Jaws." What does "nonfiction" mean? What do you think an information report contains? What other things have you read that would be an information report?

Have students discuss the title.

Say: What do you think "Jaws" is about?

Have students scan the section headings from page 2 to page 7.

Say: From reading these section headings, what do you think you will learn from reading the article? Has this changed what you initially thought when you had only read the title "Jaws"?

Hand out the BLM on page 115 for Jaws. Explain that students will organize the information from the article on the BLM. Tell them that you will show them how to find and record information on a topic.

DEMONSTRATE

Place transparency one for Attack! on the overhead and read it to the students.

Write the names of the storms mentioned in the passage (blizzard, hurricane, hailstorm, tornado) on the chalkboard. Model how to find specific details about each of the storms and highlight this on the transparency. Record the details on the board under the name of the storm. Then show students how to compare the different types of storms using the information you have recorded on the board.

Say: We read about four different types of storms. There are things that are similar about each of the storms, and there are things that are different. To help me make comparisons between them, I will organize details about the storms on a chart.

First I will write the names of the storms on the board. Then I will write down all of the details about each one. I find that blizzards are storms that happen in cold weather and bring heavy snow and strong winds. I will write that on the board under Blizzards.

I read that hurricanes also have high winds, but they cause rain, not snow, and big waves. They usually occur near the coast. I will write that on the board under Hurricane.

I read that hailstorms start with thunderstorms and bring freezing rain called hailstones, so I will write that on the board under Hailstorms.

I read that tornadoes involve a lot of wind that rotates quickly and forms a funnel, so I will write that on the board under Tornado.

I can now look at my chart and note the similarities between the storms. Both hailstorms and tornadoes involve thunder, tornadoes, blizzards, and hurricanes involve wind. I also know that all storms can cause a lot of damage.

Now I will note the differences between the storms. Tornadoes are the only storms that involve wind moving quickly in a circular, or funnel-like, movement. Hailstorms are the only storms that involve hail, while blizzards involve snow. Hurricanes are the only storms that occur mainly in coastal regions and that create large waves.

Making the chart on the board helped me to organize a lot of information about storms so that I could easily find the similarities and differences between them.

DURING READING

COACH

Explain that students will now read an article and record information about shark attacks just as you have done with the different types of storms. Read the introduction with students. Talk about the information that is presented there.

Say: Let's look at what we have found out so far. Where do different types of sharks live? Show me where it says that in the text. This is one difference about kinds of sharks—different kinds live in different places. Is there any other information about how sharks are different?

Let's look at the text to see what information is provided about shark attacks. When you read the next section, you will find information about the different kinds of shark attacks. I want you to try to pick out the most important information about each one and write it on the BLM. When you are finished, we will talk about the information you found.

APPLY

Have the students read the section on why sharks attack.

Say: In addition to information on different types of attacks, the author provides information on why sharks attack. Why might this information be useful to a reader? What do you think the relationship might be between the type of attack and why a shark attacks? (Examples: A hungry shark will circle before attacking, while an angry shark might attack straightaway. A hungry shark will do more than just bite its victim.)

Have the students read the section on how to stay safe from shark attacks.

Say: Can you think of things you would add to the author's list of things to do to avoid shark attacks?

APPLY

Discuss—Have students write a statement on how the attacks are similar and how they are different on the BLM. Then discuss the compare-and-contrast charts on shark attacks that the students have completed.

Say: What is the major difference between a hit-and-run attack and a circle-and-swivel attack? How is a shark attack different from the other attacks? Which type of attack is most common? Why do you think it is more common than the other types of attacks? (There is no right or wrong answer to this question. Encourage students to think divergently.)

Writing—Have students write a description of a particular species of shark by using the information from the chart on page 3. They may need to do further research. Review the use of headings in the article "Jaws" and encourage students to include similar headings in their descriptions. See writing BLM on page 190.

Say: On page 3, you will find a good model for using headings in information reports. The page shows three types of shark attacks. Can you tell me what the three types of shark attacks are? (Hit-and-run attack, circle-

Students apply the strategies they have learned to their own writing.

Teachers model each strategy using the script provided.