Things to consider when purchasing decodable texts:
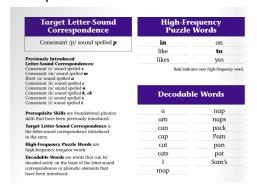
1. Do the texts support the science of reading?
   - Do the texts allow students to practice the decoding skills that have been taught?
     The purpose of decodable text is to give students practice with the decoding skills they have learned in phonics.
   - Do students have to guess a large percentage of the words?
     Guessing is not aligned to the science of reading. Many leveled texts include words that cannot be decoded based on what students have learned in phonics, so for students to "read" them, they have to guess.
   - Do students have to rely on picture cues to read the words?
     Cues such as look at the picture or look at the first letter of the word do not align to the cognitive science of how students read.
   - Do students have to use context to figure out unknown words?
     Cues such as what would make sense here do not align to the cognitive science in how students read.
   - Do the texts tell teachers specific skills readers need to be able to read the text?
     Decodable texts should have a chart in the front or back of the text that shows the skills students should have learned before using this text.
     Example:

   - Are a large percentage of the words high frequency words that are not decodable?
     Leveled texts are written with a large percentage of high frequency words and words that can only be decoded by guessing based on the pictures or context. Decodable texts should use a limited number of high frequency words.

2. How decodable are the texts?
   - Have students been taught at least 90 percent of the phonics patterns and high frequency words needed to read the text?
     If books have a low percentage of words that can be read by the student using their decoding skills, they do not get enough practice with their skills to be helpful.

3. How does the scope and sequence of your phonics program align with the scope and sequence of skills taught in the books?
   For decodable texts to really be helpful, they need to follow the scope and sequence of your phonics program pretty closely. For example, If you have only taught closed syllables, does the text have other syllable types? If so, this is not a good match.

4. Do the books match the interests and age range of your students?
   This question is most important when you are dealing with older students who have holes in their phonics knowledge and still need practice with age appropriate texts. Texts that are good for a K-1 student may not work as well for a fourth grade student. Several companies sell texts that are high interest for older readers but are at a first or second grade decodable level.

5. Does the company offer free samples for teachers to try?
    Examples: https://portal.flyleafpublishing.com/;
   https://rolls.bublup.com/abctutor/free-decodable-books

Decodable Text Resources:

Decodable Text Sources From The Reading League

Decodable Text Resources