

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *The Absent Author*. Students being tested should read from the actual novel not from the Placement Test Scoring Sheet. Underline the difficult words from the Placement Test Scoring Sheet in the copy of the novel students will read from.

You will need 1 copy of the Placement Test Scoring Sheet for each student you will be testing.

You will need a timer.

Instructions for Recording Student Responses and Scoring:

As students read the passage use the following procedure to record errors.

Word read incorrectly: Write what the student said above the word. Count as 1 error.

Added word: Write a caret with the word above it where the word was inserted. Count as 1 error.

Unknown word: Give the student 3 seconds to say the word and then tell him or her the word. Write a T above the told word. Count as 1 error.

Deleted words: Draw a line through any words that are left out. Do not count deleted words when counting the total words read per minute.

Repeated words: Draw a wavy line under the word(s) that were repeated.

Self-correct: Put a check mark above the word.

Repeated words and self-corrected words do not count as errors. Students are already penalized for time with these types of errors.

Record words read per minute (wrpm) and errors on the top part of the Placement Test Scoring Sheet. To calculate the accuracy percentage, use the following formula: Subtract the number of errors from the wrpm. Divide this number by the wrpm. Multiply by 100. Example: $76 \text{ (wrpm)} - 5 \text{ (errors)} = 71$ divided by $76 = .934$ x 100 = 93% accuracy.

Students reading at least 50 wrpm with 90% accuracy can be placed in this novel study. Remember, this is the student's instructional level not his or her independent reading level.

Instructions for Administering the Placement Test

1. Fill in student information on the top portion of the Placement Test Scoring Sheet.

Setting the Scene

2. (*Note: This part of the test can be done individually, with a small group of students, or with a whole class. Hold up a copy of the novel for students to see.) **This book is called *The Absent Author*. Later, each of you will read part of page 10 from novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

(Show students the illustration on page 7.) **In this novel a boy named Dink writes to his favorite author, mystery writer Wallis Wallace, and invites him to visit Dink's town. Wallis Wallace accepts the invitation, but doesn't appear on the day he was supposed to. Dink, and his friends Josh and Ruth Rose decide they must solve this mystery, and find Wallis Wallace.** (Point to the boy carrying the backpack.) **This boy is Dink. What is this boy's name? *Dink*.** (Point to the boy carrying the sketchbook and the pencil.) **This boy is Josh. What is this boy's name? *Josh*.** (Point to the girl.) **This girl is Ruth Rose. What is this girl's name? *Ruth Rose*.**

Hard Word Review

3. (Note: This part of the placement test needs to be administered individually. Give the student a copy of the novel open to page 10.)
4. **Some of the hard words are underlined on this page. We will practice these hard words before you read part of this page aloud to me.**

(Touch under the name Dink.) **This name is Dink. What name? *Dink***

(Touch under the word urged.) **This word is urged. What word?** *Urged*. If a friend encouraged you to go to the store, he or she urged you to go to the store. What did a friend do if he or she encouraged you to go to the store? *He or she urged me to go to the store.*

(Touch under the name Book Nook.) **This name is Book Nook. What name?** *Book Nook*. The Book Nook is the name of a bookstore. What is the name of the bookstore? *The Book Nook*.

(Touch under the name Mr. Paskey.) **This name is Mr. Paskey. What name?** *Mr. Paskey*. Mr. Paskey is the owner of the Book Nook. Who is the owner of the Book Nook? *Mr. Paskey*.

(Touch under the word noticed.) **This word is noticed. What word?** *Noticed*. Noticed means observed or saw. What word means observed or saw? *Noticed*.

(Touch under the words WELCOME, WALLIS WALLACE!) **These words are written all in capital letters because they were written on a sign. This sign says Welcome, Wallis Wallace. What does the sign say?** *Welcome, Wallis Wallace*. What did you notice about how the names on the sign are pronounced? *Idea: They are both pronounced the same, even though they are spelled differently.*

5. You will read part of this page aloud to me. I would like you to track under the words with your finger as you read aloud. You will read aloud for 1 minute. I will tell you when to stop reading. Be careful to read exactly what is on the page. (Start the timer and record student errors as indicated above.)

Placement Test Scoring Sheet for *The Absent Author*

Name of Student: _____ Date: _____
Teacher: _____ Tester: _____
Words Read Per Minute (wrpm) _____ Errors: _____ Accuracy % _____
Placement: _____
Comments: _____

“Come on!” <u>Dink urged</u> as he	6
dragged his friends down the street to	13
the <u>Book Nook</u> .	16
They looked through the window,	21
out of breath. The bookstore was	27
crowded with kids. The Book Nook’s.	33
owner, <u>Mr. Paskey</u> , had set up folding	40
chairs. Dink <u>noticed</u> that most of them	47
were already taken.	50
Dink saw Mr. Paskey sitting behind	56
a table. A big white sign on the table	65
said <u>WELCOME, WALLIS WALLACE!</u>	69
But the chair behind the sign was	75
empty. Dink gulped and stared at the	82
empty seat.	84
Where was Wallis Wallace?	88

Excerpt from: Roy, Ron. The Absent Author. New York: Random House, 1997.