

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *The Boxcar Children*. 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 Boxcar Children*. Later, each of you will read part of the first chapter of this 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 four children run away rather than going to live with their grandfather. Their parents have died, and they are afraid their grandfather will be mean to them.**

(Point to the bigger boy.) **This boy's name is Henry. What is this boy's name?** *Henry.*

(Point to the bigger girl.) **This girl's name is Jessie. What is this girl's name?** *Jessie.*

(Point to the smaller girl.) **This girl's name is Violet. What is this girl's name?** *Violet.*

(Point to the smaller boy.) **This boy's name is Benny. What is this boy's name?** *Benny.*

In the part of the story you will read to me, the children are hungry and have stopped at a bakery.

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 8.)

4. **Some of the hard words are underlined on this page. We will practice these hard words before you read part of page 8 aloud to me.**

(Touch under the word cross.) **This word is cross. What word?** *Cross.*
Cross means angry. What does cross mean? *Angry.*

(Touch under the name Jessie.) **This name is Jessie. What name?** *Jessie.*
Jessie is the older sister. Who is Jessie? *The oldest sister.*

(Touch under the name Benny.) **This name is Benny. What name?** *Benny.*
Bennie is the youngest brother. Who is Benny? *The youngest brother.*

(Touch under the name Henry.) **This name is Henry. What name?** *Henry.*
Henry is the biggest brother. Who is Henry? *The biggest brother.*

(Touch under the name Violet.) **This name is Violet. What name?** *Violet.*
Violet is the youngest sister. Who is Violet? *The youngest sister.*

5. **You will read part of page 8 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 Boxcar Children*

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

The baker's wife saw them first, as they	8
stood looking in the window of her store.	16
The little boy was looking at the cakes, the	25
big boy was looking at the loaves of bread,	34
and the two girls were looking at the cookies.	43
Now the baker's wife did not like children.	51
She did not like boys at all. So she came to	62
the front of the bakery and listened, looking	70
very <u>cross</u> .	72
"The cake is good, <u>Jessie</u> " the little boy	80
said. He was about five years old.	87
"Yes, <u>Benny</u> " said the big girl. "But bread	95
is better for you. Isn't it, <u>Henry</u> ?"	102
"Oh, yes," said Henry. "We must have	109
some bread, and cake is not good for Benny	118
and <u>Violet</u> ."	120
"I like bread best, anyway," said Violet.	127

Excerpt from: Warner, Gertrude Chandler. The Boxcar Children. Niles, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 1942.