

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Touching Spirit Bear*. 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: $97 \text{ (wrpm)} - 4 \text{ (errors)} = 93$ divided by $97 = .958$ x 100 = 96% accuracy.

Students reading at least 100 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 *Touching Spirit Bear*. Later, each of you will read part of page 5 of this novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

Cole, the main character in this novel, has been in trouble for much of his life. After severely beating up another student, he has been banished to a remote Alaskan island for one year. In the part of the story you will read to me, Cole is on his way to the island.

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 5.)
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 word Cole.) **This name is Cole. What name? *Cole*. Cole is the main character in this novel. Who is the main character in this novel? *Cole*.**

(Touch under the word smirk.) **This word is smirk. What word? *Smirk.*** When someone has a smirk on his face, he has an unpleasant smile on his face. The person thinks he has an advantage over another person. Cole has a smirk on his face because he thinks he is avoiding going to jail and that things won't be so hard for him on the island.

(Touch under the word chafed.) **This word is chafed. What word? *Chafed.*** Chafed means rubbed. What does chafed mean? *Rubbed.*

(Touch under the name Tlingit Indian pronounced klin-kit.) **This name is Tlingit Indian. What name? *Tlingit Indian.*** The Tlingit are native people who live on the coast and islands of southwestern Alaska and northwestern British Columbia.

(Touch under the divided name Minneapolis.) **This name is divided into two parts because there is not enough room on the line. This name is Minneapolis. What name? *Minneapolis.*** Minneapolis is a city in the Midwestern United States. It is in the state of Minnesota.

(Touch under the word Edwin.) **This name is Edwin. What name? *Edwin.*** Edwin is a Tlingit elder who helped arrange Cole's banishment to the island. Who is the Tlingit elder who helped arrange Cole's banishment? *Edwin.*

(Touch under the word elder.) **This word is elder. What word? *Elder.*** An elder is an older member of a tribal group, who is respected and looked up to by other members of the community. What do you call an older member of a tribal group, who is respected and looked up to by other members of the community? *An elder.*

(Touch under the word saliva.) **This word is saliva. What word? *Saliva.*** Another word for saliva is spit. What is another word for spit? *Saliva.*

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 *Touching Spirit Bear*

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

Bracing himself now against the heavy seas,	7
<u>Cole</u> held that same <u>smirk</u> . His blue jeans, heavy	16
wool shirt, and rain jacket <u>chafed</u> at his skin, but it	27
didn't matter. He would have worn a cowbell	35
around his neck if it had meant avoiding jail.	44
He wasn't a <u>Tlingit Indian</u> . He was an innocent-	53
looking, baby-faced fifteen-year-old from <u>Minne-</u>	61
<u>apolis</u> who had been in trouble with the law half	70
his life. Everyone thought he felt sorry for what	79
he had done, and going to this island was his way	90
of making things right.	94
Nothing could be further from the truth. To	102
Cole, this was just another big game. With salt air	112
biting at his face, he turned and glanced at	121
<u>Edwin</u> . The <u>elder</u> eyed him back with a dull stare.	131
Anger welled up inside Cole. He hated that	139
stupid stare. Pretending to aim toward the waves,	147
he spit so the wind would catch the thick <u>saliva</u>	157
and carry it back.	161

Excerpt from: Mikaelson, Ben. Touching Spirit Bear. New York, New York: Harper Trophy, 2001.