

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. 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 *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. Later, each of you will read part of pages 2 and 3 of this novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

In this part of chapter 1, Karana, the main character who tells this story, and her brother, Ramo are watching a ship come into Coral Cove, a little harbor near their home.

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 pages 2 and 3.)
4. **Some of the hard words are underlined on this page. We will practice these hard words before you read part of these pages aloud to me.**

(Touch under the name Ramo pronounced Ram-ō.) **This name is Ramo. What name? *Ramo*. Ramo is the brother of the main character in this novel. Who is the brother of the main character in this novel? *Ramo*.**

(Touch under the word gaze.) **This word is gaze. What word? Gaze. When you gaze at something you look at it steadily, intently, and with fixed attention. When you look at something steadily, intently, and with fixed attention, what are you doing? Gazing at it.**

(Touch under the word mist.) **This word is mist. What word? Mist. A mist is a light fog. What is a mist? A light fog.**

(Touch under the divided word acting.) **This word is divided into two parts because there is not enough room on the line. This word is acting. What word? Acting.**

(Touch under the word canoe.) **This word is canoe. What word? Canoe. A canoe is a narrow open boat, moved by one or more paddles. What do you call a narrow open boat, moved by one or more paddles? A canoe.**

5. **You will read part of pages 2 and 3 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 *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

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

<u>Ramo</u> was standing one foot and then the	8
other, watching the ship coming, which he did not	17
know was a ship because he had never seen one. I	28
had never seen one either, but I knew how they.	38
looked because I had been told.	44
“While you <u>gaze</u> at the sea,” I said, “I dig roots.	55
And it is I who will eat them and you who will not.”	68
Ramo began to punch at the earth with his stick,	78
but as the ship came closer, its sails showing red	88
through the morning <u>mist</u> , he kept watching it, <u>act-</u>	97
<u>ing</u> all the time as if he were not.	105
“Have you ever seen a red whale?” he asked.	114
“Yes,” I said, though I never had.	121
“Those I have seen are gray.”	126
“You are very young and have not seen everything	135
that swims in the world.”	140
Ramo picked up a root and was about to drop it	152
into the basket. Suddenly his mouth opened wide	160
and then closed again.	164
“A <u>canoe!</u> ” he cried. “A great one, bigger than all	174
of our canoes together. And red!”	180

Excerpt from: O'Dell, Scott. Island of the Blue Dolphins. New York, New York: Random House, Inc., 1960.