

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Soldier's Heart*. 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 90 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 *Soldier's Heart*. Later, each of you will read part of page 2 of this novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

***Soldier's Heart* is based on a true story about a fifteen-year-old boy from Minnesota named Charley Goddard who lied about his age so he could join the First Volunteers of Minnesota to fight in the Civil War.**

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 2.)
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 rebels.) **This word is rebels. What word? *Rebels*. Rebels are people who revolt against the ruling power or government. Who are rebels? *People who revolt against the ruling power or government. What do we call people who revolt against the ruling power or government? *Rebels*.***

(Touch under the word violated.) **This word is violated. What word?** *Violated. One meaning of violated is broke or disregarded, as in violated the law. What word means broke or disregarded? Violated.*

(Touch under the name Fort Sumter.) **This name is Fort Sumter. What name?** *Fort Sumter. The battle at Fort Sumter near Charleston, South Carolina started the American Civil War. Where was the battle that started the American Civil War fought? At Fort Sumter.*

(Touch under the word respect.) **This word is respect. What word?** *Respect. Respect is a feeling of deep admiration for something. What word means a feeling of deep admiration for something? Respect.*

(Touch under the name Union.) **This name is Union. What name?** *Union. During the American Civil War, the Union referred to the federal government of the United States. What name referred to the federal government of the United States during the American Civil War? The Union.*

(Touch under the name Charley.) **This name is Charley. What name?** *Charley. Charley fought for the Union in the American Civil War. Who fought for the Union in the American Civil War? Charley.*

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 *Soldier's Heart*

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

There would be a shooting war. There were	8
<u>rebels</u> who had <u>violated</u> the law and fired on	17
<u>Fort Sumter</u> and the only thing they'd <u>respect</u>	25
was steel, it was said, and he knew they were	35
right, and the <u>Union</u> was right, and one other	44
thing they said as well—if a man didn't hurry	54
he'd miss it. The only shooting war to come in	64
a man's life and if a man didn't step right along	75
he'd miss the whole thing.	80
<u>Charley</u> didn't figure to miss it. The only	88
problem was that Charley wasn't rightly a man	96
yet, at least not to the army. He was fifteen and	107
while he worked as a man worked, in the fields	117
all of the day and into night, and looked like a	128
man standing tall and just a bit thin with hands	138
so big they covered a stove lid, he didn't make	148
a beard yet and his voice had only just dropped	158
enough so he could talk with men.	165

Excerpt from: Paulsen, Gary. *Soldier's Heart*. New York: Dell Laurel-Leaf Random House, Inc., 1998.