

## Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Ben and Me*. 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 *Ben and Me*. 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.**

**This novel tells the story of Benjamin Franklin's life, as seen through the eyes of his pet mouse, Amos. The part of the story you will read to me tells about Amos having to leave his family because there was not enough food for everyone.**

### 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 desperate.) **This word is desperate. What word? *Desperate*. Desperate means hopeless. What word means hopeless? *Desperate*.**

(Touch under the word severity.) **This word is severity. What word?** *Severity. Severity means the amount of harshness or difficulty. What does severity mean? The amount of harshness or difficulty. What word means the amount of harshness or difficulty? Severity. If you are describing how severe something is, you are describing its severity.*

(Touch under the word practically.) **This word is practically. What word?** *Practically. One meaning of practically is almost or nearly. What word means almost or nearly? Practically.*

(Touch under the words Minister's sermons.) **These words are Minister's sermons. What words?** *Minister's sermons. Minister's sermons are the speeches a Minister gives during a church service. What do you call the speeches a Minister gives during the church service? Minister's sermons.*

(Touch under the names Bathsheba and Zenas.) **These names are Bathsheba and Zenas. What names?** *Bathsheba and Zenas.*

**Bathsheba was one of Amos's sisters. What was the name of one of Amos's sisters?** *Bathsheba.*

**Zenas was one of Amos's brothers. What was the name of one of Amos's brothers?** *Zenas.*

(Touch under the divided words remembered and sermons.) **Each of these words is divided into two parts because there is not enough room on the line.**

**The first divided word is remembered. What word?** *Remembered.*

**The second divided word is sermons. What word?** *Sermons.*

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 *Ben and Me*

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

But it was not until the Hard Winter of 1745 that things	12
really became <u>desperate</u> . That was a winter long to be <u>remem-</u>	23
<u>bered</u> for its <u>severity</u> , and night after night my poor father	33
would come in tired and wet with his little sack <u>practically</u>	44
empty.	45
We were driven to eating prayer-books, and when those	55
gave out we took to the <u>Minister's sermons</u> . That was, for me,	67
the final straw. The prayer-books were tough, but those <u>ser-</u>	78
<u>mons!</u>	78
Being the oldest, it seemed fitting that I should go out into	90
the world and make my own way. Perhaps I could in some	102
way help the others. At least, it left one less to be provided for.	116
So, saying farewell to all of them—my mother and father	127
and all the children from <u>Bathsheba</u> to <u>Zenas</u> —I set forth	138
on the coldest, windiest night of a cold and windy winter.	149

Excerpt from: Lawson, Robert. Ben and Me. New York: Little Brown and Company Limited, 1939.