

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Secret of the Andes*. 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 them 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 their 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 *Secret of the Andes*. Later each of you will read part of pages 1 and 2 of this novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

In this novel, a young Indian boy named Cusi lives with an old Indian named Chuto high in the Andes mountains of Peru. In the part you will read, Cusi is telling Chuto about something he has discovered.

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 1.)
4. **Some of the hard words are underlined on these pages. We will practice these hard words before you read these pages aloud to me.**

(Touch under the word overhanging.) **This word is overhanging. What word? *Overhanging*. If something is overhanging, it is sticking out over something. If something is sticking out over something, it is... *overhanging*.**

(Touch under the word gazing.) **This word is gazing. What word? *Gazing*. If you are gazing at something, you are looking at it. Another word for looking is... *gazing*.**

(Touch under the word stillness.) **This word is stillness. What word?**
Stillness. **The word stillness means quiet. What word means quiet?**
Stillness.

(Touch under leaped.) **This word is leaped. What word?** *Leaped.* **Leaped is an action verb that means jumped. What is an action verb that means jumped?** *Leaped.*

(Touch under questioning.) **This word is questioning. What word?** *Questioning.* **Questioning means asking. What word means asking?** *Questioning.*

(Touch under Ah.) **This word is Ah. What word?** *Ah.* **In this story, Ah is an exclamation that means "I see." What exclamation in this story means "I see"?** *Ah.*

(Touch under cleared.) **This word is cleared. What word?** *Cleared.* **If someone cleared some land, they cut down the trees and prepared the land for farming. What word do we use to describe what someone did if they cut down the trees on some land and prepared it for farming?** *Cleared.*

5. **You will read part of these pages 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 *Secret of the Andes*

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

"What are you doing, Cusi?" An old Indian stood	9
looking down at a boy who lay on an overhanging	19
rock, gazing into the valley below. The old Indian's	28
slow, deep voice broke the stillness of the mountain	37
world.	38
At the sound the young boy leaped to his feet. His	49
dark face was shining with happiness. His black eyes	58
danced with excitement. "Oh, Chuto," he answered,	65
"Chuto, I see them again." At Chuto's questioning	73
look he said, "Sometime every day I come here to	83
watch them. Look, Old One, if you lie flat on this rock	95
and lean far forward you can see them too.	104
The old Indian bent low over the rock and looked	114
down to the deep, deep valley so far below. "Ah," he	125
said and repeated it again. "Ah!"	131
In the valley a family of Indians had cleared the land	142
for a small field and a smaller hut. There were five of	154
them, a man, a woman, and three children.	162

Excerpt from: Clark, Ann Nolan. Secret of the Andes. New York, New York: Puffin Books, 1952.