

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *The Call of the Wild*. 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 *The Call of the Wild*. Later, each of you will read part of page 3 of this novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

This novel takes place during the Yukon Gold rush that took place in the late 1800s. There was a great demand for dogs that could pull sleds loaded with supplies. Many large dogs were stolen and shipped to the Far North. In the passage that you will read Buck, a large strong dog, has been stolen from his kind and pleasant 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 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 menacingly.) **This word is menacingly. What word? Menacingly. Menacingly means done in a way that is threatening. What does menacingly mean? Done in a way that is threatening.**

(Touch under intimated and intimate.) **The first word is intimated** (pronounced intimāted) **and the second word is intimate** (pronounced intimāte). **In the context of this story intimated is the past tense of the verb intimate which means to make known indirectly, to hint or suggest at something. What word means to make known indirectly, to hint or suggest at something? *Intimate*.**

(Touch under the word futilely.) **This word is futilely. What word? *Futilely*. Futilely means done in a way without hope. What word means done in a way without hope? *Futilely*.**

(Touch under the word vilely.) **This word is vilely. What word? *Vilely*. Vilely means in a cruel and evil way. What word means in a cruel and evil way? *Vilely*.**

5. **You will read from the top 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 *The Call of the Wild*

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

Buck had accepted the rope with quiet dignity. To be	10
Sure, it was an unwonted performance: but he had learned	20
to trust in men he knew, and to give them credit for a	33
wisdom that outreached his own. But when the ends of	43
the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, he growled	53
menacingly. He had merely intimated his displeasure, in	61
his pride believing that to intimate was to command. But	71
to his surprise the rope tightened around his neck.	80
shutting off his breath. In quick rage he sprang at the	91
man, who met him halfway, grappled him close by the	101
throat, and with a deft twist threw him over on his back.	113
Then the rope tightened mercilessly, while Buck struggled	121
In a fury, his tongue lolling out of his mouth and his	133
great chest panting futilely. Never in all his life had he	144
been so vilely treated, and never in all his life had he been	157
so angry. But his strength ebbed, his eyes glazed, and he	168
knew nothing when the train was flagged and the two.	178
men threw him into the baggage car.	185

Excerpt from: London, Jack. *The Call of the Wild*. New York, New York: Puffin Classics, 2015.