

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Hatchet*. 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 *Hatchet*. 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.**

Hatchet is a story of adventure and survival. It is the story of a teen-aged boy who survives a plane crash in the Canadian wilderness, but finds himself with nothing but the clothes he is wearing and a hatchet his mother had given him as a present.

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 3.)
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 name Brian.) **This name is Brian. What name? *Brian*. Brian is the name of the main character in the novel. Who is the main character in the novel? *Brian*.**

(Touch under the word burning.) **This word is burning. What word?** *Burning.* **One meaning of burning is the feeling that something is extremely hot. What word is sometimes used to describe the feeling that something is extremely hot?** *Burning.*

(Touch under the word machine.) **This word is machine. What word?** *Machine.* **A machine is a mechanical device with moving parts, used to perform a task. What do you call a mechanical device with moving parts used to perform a task?** *A machine.*

(Touch under the words rudder pedals.) **These words are rudder pedals. What words?** *Rudder pedals.* **Rudder pedals are pedals you push with your feet that allow you to steer an airplane. What do you call the pedals you push with your feet that allow you to steer an airplane?** *Rudder pedals.*

(Touch under the word extension.) **This word is extension. What word?** *Extension.* **An extension is a part that is added to something to enlarge it or to make it longer. What do you call the part that is added to something to enlarge it or to make it longer?** *An extension.*

(Touch under the word indicating.) **This word is indicating. What word?** *Indicating.* **Indicating means pointing out or showing. What word means pointing out or showing?** *Indicating.*

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 *Hatchet*

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

<u>Brian</u> felt his eyes beginning to burn and knew	9
there would be tears. He had cried for a time, but	20
that was gone now. He didn't cry now. Instead his	30
eyes burned and tears came, the seeping tears that	39
burned, but he didn't cry. He wiped his eyes with	49
a finger and looked at the pilot out of the corner	60
of his eye to make sure he hadn't noticed the <u>burning</u>	71
and tears.	73
The pilot sat large, his hands lightly on the wheel,	83
feet on the <u>rudder pedals</u> . He seemed more a machine	93
than a man, an <u>extension</u> of the plane. On the	103
dashboard in the front of him Brian saw dials, switches,	113
meters, knobs, levers, cranks, lights, handles that	120
were wiggling and flickering, all <u>indicating</u> nothing	127
that he understood and the pilot seemed the same	136
way. Part of the plane, not human.	143

Excerpt from: Paulsen, Gary. Hatchet. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing, 1987.