

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Dinosaurs Before Dark*. 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: $76 \text{ (wrpm)} - 5 \text{ (errors)} = 71$ divided by $76 = .934$ x 100 = 93% accuracy.

Students reading at least 50 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 *Dinosaurs before Dark*. Later, each of you will read part of the first chapter of this novel aloud to me to help me decide if you are ready to read this book.**

(Show students the illustration on the page facing page 1.) **In this novel a boy named Jack and his sister Annie discover a magic tree house. When they climb the ladder into the tree house they suddenly find themselves involved in many adventures and missions. (Point to the boy.) This boy is Jack. What is this boy's name? Jack. Jack likes learning about real things like Pennsylvania and ancient dinosaurs. (Point to the girl.) This girl is Annie. What is this girl's name? Annie. Annie likes pretend things.**

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 pages 2 and 3.)
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 name Jack.) **This name is Jack. What name? Jack.**

(Touch under the divided word late-afternoon.) **This word is divided into two parts because there is not enough room on the line. This word is late-afternoon. What word? *Late-afternoon*. Late-afternoon is the time just before evening when it is still daylight. What do you call the time just before evening when it is still daylight? *Late-afternoon*.**

(Touch under the name Annie.) **This name is Annie. What name? *Annie*.**

(Touch under the word built.) **This word is built. What word? *Built*. Built means made. What word means made? *Built*.**

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 *Dinosaurs Before Dark*

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

<u>Jack</u> left the road and headed into the	8
woods. The trees were lit with a golden <u>late-</u>	17
<u>afternoon</u> light.	19
“Come here!” called <u>Annie</u> .	23
There she was. Standing under a tall oak	31
tree. “Look,” she said. She was pointing at a	40
rope ladder.	42
The longest rope ladder Jack had ever	49
seen.	50
“Wow,” he whispered.	53
The ladder went all the way up to the top	63
of the tree.	66
There—at the top—was a tree house. It	75
was tucked between two branches.	80
“That must be the highest tree house in the	89
world,” said Annie.	92
“Who <u>built</u> it?” asked Jack. “I’ve never	99
seen it before. “	102
“I don’t know. But I’m going up,” said	110
Annie.	111

Excerpt from: Osborne, Mary Pope. *Dinosaurs Before Dark*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1992.