

Placement Test

Preparation: You will need a copy of the novel *Holes*. 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 80 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 *Holes*. 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.**

The first page of Chapter 1 introduces the setting for the book *Holes*. The setting of a story tells where and when the story happens.

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 word wasteland.) **This word is wasteland. What word? *Wasteland*. A wasteland is a large place with few plants and animals. What do you call a large place with few plants and animals? *A wasteland*.**

(Touch under the word shriveled.) **This word is shriveled. What word? *Shriveled*. If something shriveled, it means it dried up and became smaller. What word means dried up and became smaller? *Shriveled*. What does shriveled mean? *Dried up and became smaller*.**

(Touch under the words temperature hovers.) **These words are temperature hovers. What words?** *Temperature hovers.* **Temperature tells how hot or cold something is. What word tells how hot or cold something is?** *Temperature.*

If the temperature hovers around ninety-five degrees, it means it stays around that temperature.

(Touch under the word hammock.) **This word is hammock. What word?** *Hammock.* **A hammock is a hanging bed. What do we call a hanging bed?** *A hammock.*

(Touch under the divided word belongs.) **This word is divided into two parts because there is not enough room on the line. This word is belongs. What word?** *Belongs.* **Belongs means a certain person owns it. What does belongs mean?** *A certain person owns it.* **If I say the car belongs to Bill. It means Bill owns the car.**

(Touch under the word Warden.) **This word is Warden. What word?** *Warden.* **Warden is the title given to the person in charge of a prison. What do you call the person in charge of a prison?** *Warden.*

(Touch under the words rattlesnakes and scorpions.) **These words are rattlesnakes and scorpions. What words?** *Rattlesnakes and scorpions.* **Rattlesnakes and scorpions are two kinds of dangerous creatures found in wastelands. Name two kinds of dangerous creatures found in wastelands.** *Rattlesnakes and scorpions.*

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 *Holes*

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

There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. There once was a very	13
large lake here, the largest lake in Texas. That was over a	25
hundred years ago. Today it is just a dry, flat <u>wasteland</u> .	36
There used to be a town of Green Lake as well. The town	49
<u>shriveled</u> and dried up along with the lake, and the people	60
who lived there.	63
During the summer the daytime <u>temperature</u> <u>hovers</u>	70
around ninety-five degrees in the shade—if you can find any	81
shade. There's not much shade in a big dry lake.	91
The only trees are two old oaks on the eastern edge of the	104
“lake.” A <u>hammock</u> is stretched between the two trees, and	114
a log cabin stands behind that.	120
The campers are forbidden to lie in the hammock. It <u>be-</u>	131
<u>longs</u> to the <u>Warden</u> . The Warden owns the shade.	139
Out on the lake, <u>rattlesnakes</u> and <u>scorpions</u> find shade	148
under rocks and in the holes dug by the campers.	158

Excerpt from: Sachar, Louis. Holes. New York, New York: Dell Yearling, 1998.