

# GRADE 3 READING PLACEMENT TEST

As a rule, students who have performed well in a second-grade reading program should be able to succeed in *Reading Mastery Transformations* Grade 3 Reading. However, this rule may not apply to all students, particularly those who can decode words silently but cannot read aloud with sufficient accuracy (no more than 2 errors per 100 words). Also, students who are extremely weak in answering written comprehension questions should not go into *Reading Mastery Transformations* Grade 3 Reading.

The reproducible placement test on the last page (page 3) of this PDF determines the rate, accuracy, and comprehension performance of students. Administer the test to all the students before placing them in *Reading Mastery Transformations* Grade 3 Reading. The test results will provide you with:

- “baseline” information about students’ reading rate and accuracy.
- a basis for evaluating student improvement after completing Grade 3 Reading.
- a means of identifying students who may be placed in the program “on trial,” and those who should not be placed in Grade 3 Reading.

## Administering the Placement Test

- Make one teacher copy and one student copy of the PDF placement test (page 3) for each student that you are to test. (Teacher will mark the teacher’s copy of part 1 for timed reading rate and accuracy. The student will work on the student’s copy by reading unmarked part 1 and answering items in part 2.)
- Part 1 of the test is to be administered individually to the students. They should not observe others taking the test. Part 1 requires about 2 minutes per student. You will need a stopwatch or timer. *If students make more than 6 errors on part 1, do not administer part 2 to those students.*
- Part 2 of the test may be presented to more than one student at the same time. Part 2 requires the students to write answers to comprehension questions about the part 1 passage.

## Instructions for Part 1 and 2

### Part 1—Vocabulary Word Reading (Not Scored)

- (Call a student to a corner of the room, where the test will be given.)
- (Give a copy of the test to the student. Have a teacher’s copy of the test in front of you to mark errors and time.)
- (Point to the column of words at the top of the test. Tell the student:)
- Touch word 1. (Wait.) That word is **California**.
  - Touch word 2. (Wait.) That word is **Pacific**.
  - Touch word 3. (Wait.) That word is **lifeboat**.
  - Touch word 4. (Wait.) That word is **Japan**.
  - Touch word 5. (Wait.) That word is **loudspeaker**.

### Part 1—Passage Reading (Scored)

- (Point to the passage in part 1. Tell the student:)  
*You’re going to read this passage out loud. I want you to read it as well as you can. Don’t try to read it so fast that you make mistakes. But don’t read it so slowly that it doesn’t make any sense. You have 2 minutes to read the passage. Go.*
- (Time the student. If the student takes more than 3 seconds on a word, say the word, count it as an error, and permit the student to continue reading. Make 1 tally mark for each error.)

(Count any of the following behaviors as errors:)

- If the student misreads a word, count 1 error.
- If the student omits a word part (listen carefully for *s* and *ed*), count 1 error.
- If the student sounds out a word but does not say the word at a normal speaking rate, count 1 error.
- If the student skips a word, count 1 error.
- If the student skips a line, immediately show the student the correct line; count 1 error.
- If the student does not identify a word within 3 seconds, tell the word; count 1 error.
- If the student reads a word incorrectly and then reads it correctly, count 1 error.

- Also count each word not read by the end of the 2-minute time limit as an error. (For example, if the student is 8 words away from finishing the passage by the end of the time limit, count 8 errors.)
- c. (Mark the number of errors and the total time to read 195 words on the teacher's copy. Collect the student's copy of the test.)

## Part 2—Comprehension Questions (Scored)

- a. (After you've administered part 1 to all the students, present part 2 to those students who made no more than 6 errors on part 1. *Part 2 is a group test for qualifying students.*)
- (Assemble the qualifying students.)
  - (Give each student a copy of the placement test and make sure the students have pencils.)
- b. (Give the group these instructions:)
- Here is the passage you read earlier. Read the passage again silently, then answer the questions in part 2 at the bottom of your paper. You have 7 minutes. Go.*
- c. (Collect the test papers after 7 minutes.)

### Answer Key for Part 2

- Why was everybody trying to leave the ship?  
Idea: because the ship was on fire
- Name the two sisters who were on the ship.  
Linda; Kathy (Either order)
- People were trying to get into the  
lifeboats
- Which sister was older? Linda
- How old was that girl? 13
- How old was her sister? 10
- Linda told Kathy, "Hold on to my hand."
- When the big man picked up Linda, where did he put her? Idea: in a lifeboat
- What country were the girls going to?  
Japan

10. Why were the girls going there?

Idea: to see their father

11. How long had they been on the ship?

3 days

## Placement Criteria

Use the table below to determine placement for each student.

Errors	Placement
If a student makes 7 errors or more on part 1 <b>OR</b> 3 errors or more on part 2	Administer a placement test for a more elementary reading program, such as <i>Reading Mastery Transformations Grade 2</i> .
If a student makes no more than 6 errors on part 1 <b>AND</b> no more than 2 errors on part 2	Place the student in <i>Reading Mastery Transformations Grade 3</i> .
If a student makes 0–1 errors in less than 1:20 on part 1 <b>AND</b> no errors on part 2	Administer placement test for <i>Reading Mastery Transformations Grade 4 Reading</i> .

# PLACEMENT TEST

## Part 1

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. California | 4. Japan       |
| 2. Pacific    | 5. loudspeaker |
| 3. lifeboat   |                |

“Fire! Fire!” a voice said over the loudspeaker. “The forward deck is on fire,” the voice announced. “Everybody, leave the ship. Get into the lifeboats!”

Linda and her sister were on their way from the United States to Japan. Linda was thirteen years old, three years older than Kathy. Their father was in Japan, and they were on their way to visit him. Three days before, they had left California on a great ship called an ocean liner. They were now somewhere in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

“Fire! Fire!” the voice shouted. “Everybody get into the lifeboats!”

People were running this way and that way on the deck of the ship. They were yelling and crying.

“Hold on to my hand,” Linda said. The girls went to the lifeboats. People were all around them, shoving and yelling. Linda could not see much. She was afraid. Suddenly she was no longer holding Kathy’s hand. Suddenly a strong pair of arms grabbed Linda. “In you go,” a voice said. A big man picked Linda up and put her in the lifeboat.

“Where’s my sister?” Linda asked.

Linda looked but she couldn’t see her younger sister.

## Part 2

- Why was everybody trying to leave the ship?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Name the two sisters who were on the ship.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- People were trying to get into the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Which sister was older? \_\_\_\_\_
- How old was that girl? \_\_\_\_\_
- How old was her sister? \_\_\_\_\_
- Linda told Kathy, “Hold on to my \_\_\_\_\_.”
- When the big man picked up Linda, where did he put her? \_\_\_\_\_
- What country were the girls going to?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why were the girls going there?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How long had they been on the ship?  
\_\_\_\_\_

# GRADE 3 LANGUAGE ARTS PLACEMENT TEST

Students who place into *Reading Mastery Transformations* Grade 3 Reading are appropriately placed into Grade 3 Language Arts. The Grade 3 Language Arts program is also appropriate for students who meet grade-level expectations for beginning any grade 3 reading program. Students who do not place into a grade 3 reading program may still benefit from Grade 3 Language Arts, but may need some support. You might pair these students with stronger readers who can assist if their partner has trouble decoding a word in the workbook or textbook.

Students should also be able to copy words at no less than 10 words per minute. Students who do not meet this criterion may need additional support. In order to evaluate writing fluency, administer the placement test. Before beginning lesson 1, reproduce the page and distribute a copy to each student. The script for presenting the task appears below.

## Administering the Placement Test

- (Write the date on the board.)  
Write your name and the date at the top of your paper. Then put your pencil down. ✓
- Touch the little story that is in the box. ✓
- I'll read that story. Follow along: **Three men sat in a boat. Then one man jumped into the water. He went for a swim. They all had fun.**
- Everybody, touch the lines below the story. ✓  
You're going to copy that whole story. You'll copy the story just the way it is written. You'll spell all the words correctly. You'll put in the capital letters and the periods just the way they are shown in the story. You'll write quickly and carefully. If you finish before I say **stop**, sit quietly and read the story to yourself. Make sure you copied correctly.
- The first sentence of the story is: **Three men sat in a boat.** That's the first sentence you'll copy. Then you'll copy the rest of the story. Pencils ready. ✓
- You have **2 minutes**. Get ready. Go.  
(Time students. After 2 minutes, say:)  
Everybody, if you're not finished, stop now and put your pencil down.
- (Collect papers.)

## Scoring

Record the number of omitted words and misspelled words. The rate criterion is 10 words a minute (20 words in 2 minutes). A student may omit up to 2 words and meet the rate criterion. The accuracy criterion is 75%. A student may make up to 5 mistakes and meet the criterion.

- **Omitted words** (words not copied). Read each student's story. Mark any places where the student omitted words. Count the number of omitted words (those overlooked or those at the end of the story that were not written). Write the number. If the number is 2 or less, circle **Pass**. If the number is more than 2, circle **Fail**.
- **Misspelled words**. Mark each misspelled word. Write the number. If the number is 5 or less, **Pass**. If the number is more than 5, circle **Fail**.
- Total the number of omitted and misspelled words.

## Writing Fluency and Grouping

Students who do not pass the rate and accuracy criteria on the writing fluency task can begin the Grade 3 Language Arts program but should practice writing fluency. A good procedure is to devote 10 minutes a day to writing fluency. Set an initial goal of a rate of 9 words a minute with 75% accuracy, increasing the goal to 10 words a minute when most students are successful.

The results of the writing fluency task may also be used to group students. Grouping students who write at a similar rate will help lessons flow more smoothly, as there will be less variation in the time it takes students to finish the writing tasks. One method is to use the total number of omitted and misspelled words to order students from the highest total to the lowest total. If possible, place students with higher totals in smaller groups.

Sample practice passages and a presentation script can be accessed as a resource in your course.

