

Placement Test

Where to Start

In order to be successful in mastering and applying the concepts taught in Essentials for reading and spelling, it is vital that students first have strong underlying skills in several important areas. These skills include:

- Well-developed **phonemic awareness** skills
- Knowing a majority of the **sounds for a-z**
- **Writing** lowercase a-z consistently and **legibly**

The Placement Test, starting on page 45, will aid teachers in determining if students need to strengthen these skills with the **Pre-Lessons**, beginning on page 49, before starting Unit 1. Use the phonemic awareness, sounds of a-z, handwriting, and writing a-z sections of the Placement Test to decide whether you will start with the Pre-Lessons or with Unit 1. If you are teaching multiple students, make a copy of the placement test for each student.

The Placement Test will also help teachers determine which level to follow in the Teacher's Guide: Level A, B, or C. Use the reading and spelling sections of the Placement Test to help you determine the best level for your student. Students who have completed *Essentials* once can use Level B or Level C in a second year to achieve greater mastery.

Levels A, B, and C

Much of the instruction in each Essentials unit is used for all students. The Spelling Analysis, Grammar, and Vocabulary exercises are separated into three levels in order to provide appropriate application for students of different ages, vocabulary levels, and reading and spelling abilities.

Handwriting

If handwriting instruction is needed, incorporate lessons from either the cursive or manuscript *Rhythm of Handwriting* Student Book. Begin with the lowercase letters from *Rhythm of Handwriting*, following the schedule provided in the Pre-Lessons, then continue with the uppercase letters as they are scheduled in handwriting call-out boxes in *Essentials* Units 2-15.

Teacher Tip

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are comprised of sounds. Students with strong phonemic awareness skills will be able to blend sounds that a teacher has segmented into a word and segment words into their individual sounds.

Student Name _____

Make a copy for each student. Available at https://assets.logicofenglish.com/downloads/Essentials_PlacementTest_sample.pdf

Phonemic Awareness Segment a word aloud as written. Ask the student to blend (glue) the sounds together to make a word.

	Easily blended	Struggled but successful	Could not blend
1. /p-ĭ-g/ <i>pig</i>			
2. /h-or-s/ <i>horse</i>			
3. /p-l-ā/ <i>play</i>			
4. /s-ĕ-n-d/ <i>send</i>			
5. /g-ar-d-ĕ-n/ <i>garden</i>			
6. /p-ŭ-m-p-k-ĭ-n/ <i>pumpkin</i>			
7. /k-ŏ-m-p-ŭ-t-er/ <i>computer</i>			
8. /b-ŭ-k-sh-ĕ-l-f/ <i>bookshelf</i>			

If students struggled to blend words 1-6, complete the Phonemic Awareness Activities in Pre-Lessons A-J before beginning Unit 1.

Phonemic Awareness Say a word aloud. Ask the student to segment the words into its individual sounds.

	Easily segmented	Struggled but successful	Could not segment
1. dog /d-ŏ-g/			
2. step /s-t-ĕ-p/			
3. trip /t-r-ĭ-p/			
4. stand /s-t-ā-n-d/			
5. basket /b-ā-s-k-ĕ-t/			
6. picnic /p-ĭ-k-n-ĭ-k/			
7. energy /ĕ-n-er-j-ĕ/			
8. watermelon /w-ā-t-er-m-ĕ-l-ŏ-n/			

If students struggled to segment words 1-6, complete the Phonemic Awareness Activities in Pre-Lessons A-J before beginning Unit 1.

Read the Sounds of A-Z Using the Basic Phonogram Flash Cards, ask the student to read the sounds of a-z. The sounds are provided on the back of the card. Note if the student knows all, some, or none of the sounds.

	All	Some	None		All	Some	None		All	Some	None		All	Some	None
a				h				o				v			
b				i				p				w			
c				j				qu				x			
d				k				r				y			
e				l				s				z			
f				m				t							
g				n				u							

If the student knew fewer than 20 of the a-z phonograms, reteach and practice the sounds with the “Phonograms and Handwriting” and “Phonogram Practice” sections of Pre-Lessons A-J.

Handwriting Evaluate a sample of the student’s handwriting.

	yes	no
Are the letters formed consistently each time?		
Are the letters sized appropriately?		
Are all the letters sitting correctly on the lines?		
Are all the letters legible?		

If you answered “no” to any of the questions above, teach how to write lowercase a-z using *Rhythm of Handwriting* Cursive or Manuscript before beginning Unit 1. (Pre-Lessons A-J contain a 10-day plan for teaching these.)

Write A-Z When Hearing the Sounds

Read the sounds of a-z. Do not use the letter names. Ask the student to write the correct lowercase phonogram without a visual prompt. Did the student write the correct phonogram? Was it written neatly?

	Yes	Neat		Yes	Neat		Yes	Neat		Yes	Neat
l /l/			e /ĕ-ĕ/			o /ō-ō-ō/			qu /kw/		
m /m/			i /ī-ī-ē-y/			p /p/			c /k-s/		
w /w/			z /z/			b /b/			r /r/		
d /d/			j /j/			x /ks-z/			u /ŭ-ū-ō-ü/		
h /h/			a /ă-ā-ā/			k /k/			f /f/		
s /s-z/			v /v/			t /t/					
g /g-j/			n /n/			y /y-ī-ē/					

If the student wrote fewer than 20 of the a-z phonograms correctly, reteach writing lowercase a-z with the “Phonograms and Handwriting” section and practice the sounds with the “Phonogram Practice” section of Pre-Lessons A-J.

Reading

Choose a grade level text from another subject area. Ask the student to read aloud for three minutes. Make a mark for each word read incorrectly. Count words the student self-corrects as right. Count the total number of words read, subtract the words read incorrectly, and divide by 3. This is the number of words read per minute. If the student struggles to read the text, provide a simpler text.

	yes	no
Was the student confident during reading?		
Ask the student to summarize what was read. Could the student summarize the text easily?		
Words per minute _____		

If the student cannot read the simpler text, begin with Pre-Lesson A. If the student is reading less than 75 words per minute, is not confident, and/or struggles to summarize the content of his reading, consider limiting the student’s required reading to the *Essentials Reader* until either the student begins to pick up uncontrolled books voluntarily or the student has completed *Essentials* Unit 20.

Reading Words

Ask the student to read the words on the following page without assistance. If the student misses two in a row, or more than three, stop and count the number of words read correctly.

	yes	no		yes	no
1. dog			11. afternoon		
2. dig			12. thunderstorm		
3. blob			13. character		
4. blend			14. mauve		
5. quilt			15. century		
6. strong			16. disadvantage		
7. string			17. illustration		
8. braids			18. elementary		
9. bread			19. delicious		
10. paper			20. contagious		

If the student reads fewer than five words correctly, skip the spelling portion of the placement test and follow Level A. Otherwise, complete the spelling portion to determine whether to start Unit 1 at Level A, B, or C.

Spelling

Read a word. Ask the student to spell it. If the student misses more than two words, stop.

A	yes	no	A	yes	no	B	yes	no	C	yes	no
1. dip			6. move			11. paper			16. massive		
2. trap			7. they			12. walk			17. subterranean		
3. quit			8. each			13. banquet			18. audience		
4. the			9. example			14. poison			19. manuscript		
5. have			10. large			15. costume			20. spacious		

If the student misses more than two words, begin in the level (A, B, or C) indicated above the words where you stopped. If the student spells 16 or more words correctly, begin in Level C.

Student Placement Test

Reading Words

1. dog
2. dig
3. blob
4. blend
5. quilt
6. strong
7. string
8. braids
9. bread
10. paper
11. afternoon
12. thunderstorm
13. character
14. mauve
15. century
16. disadvantage
17. illustration
18. elementary
19. delicious
20. contagious