



Placement Test Directions

Preparation

Make a master copy of the *S.P.I.R.E.*® Placement Test, plus one copy of the *S.P.I.R.E.*® Placement Test Recording Form for each student being tested.

Administration

Select a place to administer the test one-to-one. Choose an area where students will not be distracted or observed as they are being tested.

Complete the Student Information section of the Recording Form prior to beginning the assessment and keep it on hand. Provide the student with a clean copy of the *S.P.I.R.E.* Placement Test.

When administering the test, sit across from the student and position the Recording Form so that the student cannot see what you are writing.

Note: It is important to be discreet when recording observations. Be sure to show no evidence that the student is making errors, either in the manner of recording, or by gestures or facial expressions.

Part A: Phonograms

Tell the student that the first part of the test involves naming letters and saying the sounds the letters make.

Tell the student to state the name of each letter and the sound that it makes.

Whenever the student incorrectly identifies a letter or does not produce the correct sound, circle the letter on the Recording Form.

- Do not prompt the student unless the student produces only one correct sound for a letter that has multiple sounds. For example, if the student correctly identifies the letter *c* and pronounces it with a soft *c*, /s/, rather than a hard *c*, /k/, prompt for the hard *c* sound by asking, "Is there another sound for that letter?"
- A correct response includes both the correct letter name *and* its sound; if either is incorrect, circle the item.
- If the student does not correctly identify all of the items in Part A (the phonograms that represent consonant sounds), discontinue testing and place the student in **Sounds Sensible** for remediation on consonant sounds. If a student misses between 1–3 consonant sounds, the teacher may choose to teach only the corresponding lessons for those sounds in **Sounds Sensible**, Step 4.
- Students who correctly identify all of the letters and sounds in Part A will continue testing with Part B.

Part B: Word Lists

Part B is a series of word lists organized by level and concept. It includes words for every concept taught in *S.P.I.R.E.*, Levels 1–6.

Nonsense words are included in Part B. These are provided to assess decoding skill and set it apart from sight recognition. They do not appear elsewhere in *S.P.I.R.E.* Explain to the student that some of the words he or she will read are nonsense words and have no meaning, but should be read as if they were real words.

To administer Part B of the test, tell the student to start reading the word lists, beginning with the Level 1 Word List. Explain that he or she will read each word aloud, slowly and clearly, as you listen carefully.

As the student reads this list of words, follow along and complete a running record of student errors on the Recording Form by circling each word the student decodes incorrectly. As you mark errors, keep in mind that the discontinue point for each word list is 8 errors. The errors do not have to be consecutive.

- To accurately assess the student’s ability to decode, do not prompt the student.
- If a student completes a word list with fewer than 8 errors, move on to the next word list or level.
- The student is placed at the level at which the discontinue point is reached. For example, if the student makes 8 errors while reading Level 3 Word List B, the student is placed in Level 3 of *S.P.I.R.E.*
- If the student reads each sound individually before blending the word, count it correct, but mark the word “s/o” for “sounded out.”
- If the student does not read with fluency or automaticity, but decodes correctly, do not mark the word incorrect. The student may require additional fluency and automaticity instruction and practice, but should not be held back in placement.

When testing is complete, indicate the student’s placement in *S.P.I.R.E.*® on the Recording Form.

Note: the *S.P.I.R.E. Initial Placement Assessment (IPA)*, which offers a more extensive diagnostic assessment for placement in *S.P.I.R.E.*, is available for purchase.

Placement Test Schedule

	Errors	Placement or Next Steps
Part A: Phonograms	*1 or more	Place in Sounds Sensible .
	0	Continue with Part B.
Part B: Word Lists Level 1	0 to 7	Continue with Level 2 Word List.
	8	Place in Level 1 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
Level 2	0 to 7	Continue with Level 3 Lists A and B.
	8	Place in Level 2 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
Level 3 List A	0 to 7	Continue with Level 3 List B.
	8	Place in Level 3 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
Level 3 List B	0 to 7	Continue with Level 4 Word List.
	8	Place in Level 3 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
Level 4	0 to 7	Continue with Level 5 Word List.
	8	Place in Level 4 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
Level 5	0 to 7	Continue with Level 6 Word List.
	8	Place in Level 5 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
Level 6	0 to 7	Doesn't need <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>
	8	Place in Level 6 of <i>S.P.I.R.E.</i>

*If a student misses 1–3 consonant sounds, the teacher may choose to teach only the corresponding lessons for those sounds from **Sound Sensible**, Step 4, before continuing with placement in *S.P.I.R.E.* Level 1.