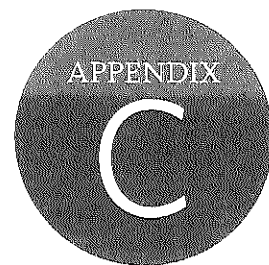


# SIPPS ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT: K-3



The **SIPPS** program provides an informal assessment for placing students initially within the different levels of the program. There are two forms: one for K-3 students (pages 510-518) and one for those in grade 4 through high school and including adults (provided in the **SIPPS** Plus and **SIPPS** Challenge Level *Teacher's Manuals*). Carefully placed students will receive instruction at the appropriate level, neither too low nor too advanced. Keep in mind that day-to-day performance in an instructional setting is the best indicator of appropriate placement. After two or three weeks of instruction (perhaps after the first mastery test), reconsider the placement of each student.

The assessment measures (a) students' use of phonics to read decodable words and (b) their knowledge of sight words. The earlier sections of the assessment cover beginning reading skills and include two components of using phonics: students' knowledge of spelling-sound relationships and their ability to blend sounds (a critical phonological skill).

## Administering the *SIPPS* Assessment

Place the evaluator's form on a clipboard and hold it at an angle so the student does not see you record answers. Present the student cards, one at a time. Place a blank index card under the row the student is reading to help her follow each row. Have the student read the sounds and words in each section aloud as you record her answers on the evaluator's form.

Avoid calling this activity a test, and be supportive of the student's effort. Refrain from indicating whether an answer is right or wrong, and do not give the student the pronunciation for any letter or word during the assessment. For sight words, allow 2 seconds before moving the student on to the next word. Note that variations in pronunciation that reflect nonstandard dialects are not counted as decoding errors.

After administering each section, record the number correct and circle "Pass" or "Not Pass" for each part; then check the instructions at the end of the section to determine whether to continue the assessment. Note that the students' placement is determined by the phonics portions of the placement

test: if a student doesn't pass the phonics portions of a section, you will stop the assessment at that point and place the student as indicated. After completing the assessment, you may record the results of the assessment and indicate the student's placement on the first page of the evaluator's form.

## Interpreting the Assessment Results

Each section of the assessment corresponds to the **SIPPS** lessons as shown below. See Appendix F, "Scope and Sequence," for each level for the phonics and sight words taught in each lesson.

SECTION	CONTENT ASSESSED
Screening for Letter Names	Prerequisite knowledge of letter names
<b>ASSESSMENT FOR PHONICS AND SIGHT WORDS</b>	
Section A	Beginning Level Lessons 1A-10
Section B	Beginning Level Lessons 11-20
Section C	Beginning Level Lessons 21-30
Section D	Beginning Level Lessons 31-40
Section E	Beginning Level Lessons 41-55/ Extension Level Review Lessons 1-15
Section F	Extension Level Lessons 1-15
Section G	Extension Level Lessons 16-40
Section H	Challenge Level Lessons 1-75

A student does not have to show complete mastery to advance to the next section of the assessment. We suggest that students who respond correctly to approximately 80 percent of the items in a section move on. However, in Section B, the criterion for passing the blending portion is lower. Note that any criterion of this sort is somewhat arbitrary. If you believe that a higher or lower criterion is more compatible with your instructional program, apply that criterion to the assessment.

**Students' placement is determined by the section at which they do not pass the phonics portion of the placement test.** While sight-word knowledge is assessed, this information is *not* used to determine when to stop assessing higher levels. Keep assessing students across the sections until they fail to pass the phonics portion. However, you should note when students are at a lower level in sight-word knowledge than in phonics and use this information to provide more intensive instruction in sight words. See the discussion of assessment and intervention for sight words (page 519).

Our placement recommendations are based on the assumption that teachers have access to the following **SIPPS** instructional materials:

Kindergarten	Beginning Level
First Grade	Beginning and Extension Levels
Second and Third Grades	Beginning, Extension, and Challenge Levels

## Placement Considerations

If you have experience with the program and sufficient resources, you may wish to fine-tune placements. For example: The placement advice in the evaluator's form specifies a limited number of entry points in the three levels of the **SIPPS** program. Some students may be most appropriately placed between two entry points. Consider making a closer analysis of the assessment, particularly for students in the early part of Beginning Level. For example, the optimal placement for some students may be in Beginning Level Lesson 6.