

PLACEMENT

Grade 4 Language Arts is appropriate for students who have mastered the basics of narrative writing. They can write a coherent passage. Generally students who can place in the Grade 4 Reading Mastery Signature Edition program will have sufficient writing skills. So, using the placement test for the Grade 4 Language Arts program may not be necessary.

The placement test to evaluate student's readiness for Grade 4 Language Arts appears below. Each student will need a copy of the placement test Blackline Master (found on page 19–20), lined paper and a pencil.

Ray, Mario and Lisa stood on the deck of the boat.				
anchor coins	face mask diving equipment	air tank dove	pressure exclaimed	jewels sharks

Directions for Placement Test:

- Look at the pictures. You're going to write a story that tells what happened. You'll begin your story with the sentence in the first box. That sentence says, **Ray, Mario and Lisa stood on the deck of the boat.**
- The first picture shows what happened at the beginning of the story. The second picture shows how the story ended. Lots of things must have happened between the first picture and second picture.
- I'll read the words in the vocabulary box below the pictures: anchor, face mask, air tank, , pressure, jewels, coins, diving equipment, dove, exclaimed, sharks. Be sure to spell those words correctly if you use them in your passage.

- I'll make up a beginning to the story.

Ray, Mario and Lisa stood on the deck of the boat. They looked at a map. They were getting ready to search for a sunken treasure. Maria said, "I hope we find the treasure."

Lisa said, "People say the treasure is worth a fortune." The divers put on their diving equipment and stood by the side of the boat.

- Start with the sentence in the box that tells what Ray, Lisa and Mario did and write an interesting story. Tell what the characters did and what they said. Be sure to tell all the important things that must have happened between the pictures. You have 20 minutes.
- (After 20 minutes, collect the students' papers.)

Write an interesting story. Use lined paper.

- Start with the sentence in the first box.
- Tell what the characters did and what they said.

<p>Ray, Mario and Lisa stood on the deck of the boat.</p>	 <p>Ray: I hope we find the treasure.</p> <p>Lisa: People say the treasure is worth a fortune.</p>	 <p>Mario Lisa Ray</p>
<p>anchor coins</p>	<p>face mask diving equipment</p>	<p>air tank dove</p> <p>pressure exclaimed</p> <p>jewels sharks</p>

MARKING THE TEST

It is very hard to establish fair criteria for “scoring” a writing test, but quite easy to gain a sense of the range of students who should be placed in the program. If you want to, you can circle various problems. When you find that your circles start to overlap, the student is probably too low to be in the program.

Placement Guidelines

The examples below provide a sense of the range of students who should be placed in *Grade 4 Language Arts* and those who are too low for the program. The passages are taken from the students’ writing and are not made up for illustration purposes. Read the passages and notice the writing tendencies of the better students and those who are too low for the program.

Students who are prepared for the *Grade 4 Language Arts*:

The examples below show the writing of students who are prepared for *Grade 4 Language Arts*. The writing of these students is coherent and clear. Students use a variety of sentence types, correct punctuation and not only on regular sentences, but more complex sentences that begin with part of the predicate and those that have quotes.

Example 1

... They dove into the water and sunk into the deep until they disappeared. They had forgotten to put the anchor down in the water. Under the water everything looked pitch black so it was a good thing they remembered to bring flashlights. Also the pressure underneath the water was tougher and heavier. They separated themselves but not too much so they wouldn't get lost. Mario felt something on the floor and called Ray and Lisa to come help. They had found the treasure.

Example 2

... At last Ray, Mario and Lisa had there diving equipment ready. They prepared themselves for the freezing cold water.

The first one to go in was Lisa. Lisa swam around for a minute or two to get used to the water. Finally she was ready. Second was Mario. He put on his face mask and

jumped in. Ray did the same as Lisa so he could get used to it as well. Last was Mario. Mario jumped in, but as soon as he dove in he had a really bad feeling.

Ray set his navigator to the point where the treasure was known to be. They swam to the spot. Mario suggested, “Maybe we should back to the boat for safety.”...

Example 3

... When they dove into the water they came across many different sharks. One of them almost got Mario. They also saw many beautiful fish. Finally they found what they went after. The treasure. It was very hard to open because of the pressure. When they opened it they found amazing and beautiful things. They exclaimed, “Wow.” There were vases full of jewels, necklaces with pearls, and rubies. They also found coins from the old times. When they finally climbed up on the boat they continued admiring the jewels. This treasure made them very rich and famous. It was hard to get it but it was worth it.

The examples below show the writing of students who have an understanding of how to construct a narrative passage, but who have gaps in their knowledge of punctuation and clarity. These students may be placed in *Grade 4 Language Arts*, but are likely to need support.

Example 1

... Just then, Lisa shouted I found something. Mario, and Ray looked and looked to see what she found. Oh, look it's a crown Ray said. So they dug for more treasure. They found jewels, diamonds and coins. They kept digging until the next morning. So around 7:45AM the next morning they found more things than they really needed. They gathered there dividing equipment and steered the boat all the way back to where they needed to go...

Example 2

... They saw the ship and went to it. Before they could get to the boat a octopus appeared from no were Lisa was so scared. Ray told Lisa to move. All of a sudden Lisa took off swimming to the other side of the ship. “Watch out Ray said.” The octopus chased her. Then Ray chased after the octopus. The octopus couldn't find Lisa and Ray couldn't find the octopus. So Ray just went in. Then he saw Lisa swim into the back hole. They saw all different kind of fish down in the ship.

Example 3

The crew put on there diving equipment there air tanks and face masks. Then they dove under the water. They saw sharks and other kinds of fish. Then they found the treasure. They took it back up to the boat. They looked inside the treasure chest. They saw lots of valuabl things. Lisa found a crown She said This is beautiful.

Students who are too low to be placed in *Grade 4 Language Arts*

The examples below show the writing of students who do not have the basic writing skills needed for *Grade 4 Language Arts*. These passages give evidence that the writer does not know English well or does not have basic punctuation and sentence-construction knowledge. The passages have run-on sentences and sentence fragments. The passages lack verb agreement and tense consistency. Writers leave out details and express things in awkward ways. These students need systematic and explicit instruction in basic writing. They would be more appropriately placed in *Grade 3 Language Arts*.

Example 1

... When Ray was swiming with Mario. Ray hit his back on the treasure. So Lisa wint to Mario and Ray everybody carry the treasre up and then Lisa use a anchor to open the treasure. Then it dove open coins and diamonds, rubies pop open when they took out the jewels they seen necklaces and perls stook on the bottoms of the treasure ...

Example 2

... Ray Mario an Lisa stood on the deck of the boat took out the diving equipment and dove in the water an they seen a big anchor hook on a treasure box soon as they put the treasure box here come sharks they pull the big anchor up to the water the sharks brock the lock and they didn't now the lock was brocke when they was about to thowr it back in the water...

Example 3

... They were so happy they swim up the water. Until they seen a sharks they flow up the water got in to the boat the sharks was still swimming around the boat But Lisa and ray wasn't paying no mine's at the shark but they was looking at the treasure. Mario was looking at the sharks until Lisa said come on Ray we have treasure...