

Diagnostic Spelling Assessment (Canadian English Version)

Preparation, Administration, Correction, and Recording

The purpose of this assessment is to determine which of the previous grade-level spelling patterns students have and have not yet mastered. The multi-syllabic words prevent students from identifying the words by memorized “sight spellings” and require recognition of the sound-spelling patterns within the context of syllables.

Administer part or all of the Diagnostic Spelling Assessment test items, according to grade-level criteria.

- Grade 2: K-1 spelling patterns (#s 1–41)
- Grade 3: K-3 spelling patterns (#s 1–55)
- Grade 4: K-3 spelling patterns (#s 1–64)
- Grade 5: K-4 spelling patterns (#s 1–82)
- Grade 6: K-5 spelling patterns (#s 1–100)
- Grade 7: K-6 spelling patterns (#s 1–102)
- Grade 8: K-7 spelling patterns (#s 1–106)

The test items are grouped by spelling patterns e.g., the four long /i/ spellings, to simplify posttest correction and analysis.

Assessment Formats

Choose the Diagnostic Spelling Assessment format which best suits your needs:

1. Paper Only: Teacher dictates the number of test items assigned to the grade levels, following the written administrative protocol. Students take the test on binder paper. Display the numbering pattern on the following page to facilitate correction. Teacher corrects assessments according to directions and records spelling deficits on the **Spelling Patterns Assessment Mastery Matrix**.

2. Audio and Paper: Teacher plays the 21:12 “normal speed” Diagnostic Spelling Assessment [audio file](#) for grades 4, 5, and 6 students or the 18:53 “quick version” Diagnostic Spelling Assessment [audio file](#) for grades 7 and 8 students up to and including the last spelling pattern word assigned to the grade level. The audio file includes all administrative directions. Students take the test on binder paper. Teacher corrects assessments according to directions and records spelling deficits on the **Spelling Patterns Assessment Mastery Matrix**.

3. Google Forms: Teacher shares either the [Diagnostic Spelling Assessment Google Form](#) with the 21:12 “normal speed” audio file for grades 4, 5, and 6 students or the [Diagnostic Spelling Assessment Google Form](#) with the 18:53 “quick version” audio file for grades 7 and 8 students. The audio file includes all administrative directions except announcing which should be the final test item. Students may take the test individually with headphones, or you may choose to play the audio file out loud while students complete the Google forms test.

If using binder paper, model the numbering format, according to the grade-level criteria. Consistent numbering will facilitate correction and analysis.

FRONT SIDE

| | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 25. |
| 2. | 26. |
| 3. | 27. |
| 4. | 28. |
| 5. | 29. |
| 6. | 30. |
| 7. | 31. |
| 8. | 32. |
| 9. | 33. |
| 10. | 34. |
| 11. | 35. |
| 12. | 36. |
| 13. | 37. |
| 14. | 38. |
| 15. | 39. |
| 16. | 40. |
| 17. | 41. |
| 18. | |
| 19. | |
| 20. | |
| 21. | |
| 22. | |
| 23. | |
| 24. | |

BACK SIDE

| | | |
|-------|-----|-------|
| 42. | 65. | 83. |
| 43. | 66. | 84. |
| 44. | 67. | 85. |
| 45. | 68. | 86. |
| 46. | 69. | 87. |
| 47. | 70. | 88. |
| 48. | 71. | 89. |
| 49. | 72. | 90. |
| 50. | 73. | 91. |
| 51. | 74. | 92. |
| 52. | 75. | 93. |
| 53. | 76. | 94. |
| 54. | 77. | 95. |
| 55. | 78. | 96. |
| ----- | 79. | 97. |
| 56. | 80. | 98. |
| 57. | 81. | 99. |
| 58. | 82. | 100. |
| 59. | | ----- |
| 60. | | 101. |
| 61. | | 102. |
| 62. | | ----- |
| 63. | | 103. |
| 64. | | 104. |
| | | 105. |
| | | 106. |

Cheating: Note that incorrect spellings will be accompanied by the Google red squiggly line indicating a spelling error. Students may be tempted to right click the word and select the correct spelling; however, if the teacher tells the students the purpose of the test and directs them not to self-correct, students will generally follow instructions. Telling students that they will receive the same amount of credit whether the spelling is accurate or not, and using the “fast speed” audio also helps students avoid the temptation of cheating. Teacher uploads the students’ Google Forms to the Spelling Patterns Assessment Mastery Matrix Google Sheets.

Teacher corrects assessments according to directions and uploads the students’ Google Forms into the [Diagnostic Spelling Assessment Mastery Matrix Google Sheets](#).

Administration

The audio files include the assessment directions. If using the paper format, read the directions, saying–

“This is a test to see if you can accurately spell the words I say out loud. I will first say the spelling word; then repeat it; then use it in a sentence; and then repeat the spelling word once more. Listen carefully because I won’t repeat the words after the test is finished. Please print the spelling words.”

Now dictate the spelling word, the example sentence, and the word again. Don’t elongate the vowel or consonant sounds to emphasize spellings. Keep a consistent pace of about seven seconds per test item. Any longer and students will lose their place or begin daydreaming. Since this is a long test, teachers may elect to take a short stretch break in the middle of the test administration.

Correction

Grade the assessment, marking only the specified sound-spelling pattern for each word. In other words don’t mark the word wrong because of other spelling errors in the word. For example, if the sound-spelling pattern is Long /a/ “__ay” and the word is “payment,” the student spelling of “paiment” would be wrong, but “paymunt” would be right. This selective grading isolates the sound-spelling pattern problem areas for each student. Note that testing with Google Forms does not permit this discrimination, but does provide computer grading.

Recording the Data

Write down the names of your students in alphabetical order on the Diagnostic Spelling Assessment Mastery Matrix. Record a slash (/) for each sound-spelling error. Leave the box blank for each correctly spelled sound-spelling. Or create a spreadsheet from the document. If using Google Forms, upload the data to the Diagnostic Spelling Assessment Google Sheets. Note that the matrix includes 106 test items as used in the grade 8 program.

Diagnostic Spelling Assessment (Canadian English Version)

| | | | | |
|-----|------------|--|------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | bumper | The car bumper had a large dent. | bumper | |
| 2. | foggy | In foggy conditions it is hard to drive. | foggy | |
| 3. | briskly | They walked briskly through the park. | briskly | |
| 4. | medical | His medical condition worsened. | medical | |
| 5. | defiance | The child's defiance created heartache. | defiance | |
| 6. | dreadful | A dreadful sound came out of the trumpet. | dreadful | Short Vowels |
| 7. | provide | She can provide all of the details. | provide | |
| 8. | lately | That happens a lot lately. | lately | |
| 9. | compute | To compute numbers he used a calculator. | compute | |
| 10. | hopeful | I am hopeful that she will visit soon. | hopeful | |
| 11. | attitude | The student had a wonderful attitude. | attitude | |
| 12. | surprise | It could not have been a better surprise. | surprise | |
| 13. | muffle | The headphones muffle the noise. | muffle | |
| 14. | motive | The lawyer found the motive for the crime. | motive | |
| 15. | submarine | A submarine can be very long. | submarine | Silent Final e |
| 16. | eyelashes | Her eyelashes were very long. | eyelashes | |
| 17. | crutches | He had to use crutches because of his ankle. | crutches | |
| 18. | hypothesis | The scientist's hypothesis was tested. | hypothesis | |
| 19. | cartwheel | I could never do a proper cartwheel. | cartwheel | Consonant Digraphs |
| 20. | telegraph | The telegraph was invented in the 1800s. | telegraph | |
| 21. | patriot | A patriot is one who supports his country. | patriot | |
| 22. | payment | I received his payment last July. | payment | |
| 23. | trained | She trained long and hard for the Olympics. | trained | |
| 24. | neighbour | My neighbour wakes up early each morning. | neighbour | Long /a/ |
| 25. | maybe | He thought maybe they would agree. | maybe | |
| 26. | seeking | The captain was seeking buried treasure. | seeking | |
| 27. | ceilings | The apartment had very high ceilings. | ceilings | |
| 28. | lobbying | Student Council is lobbying for a game day. | lobbying | |
| 29. | creature | The iguana is a strange-looking creature. | creature | |
| 30. | radius | The radius of the circle was six inches. | radius | Long /e/ |
| 31. | bicycle | She got a bicycle for her birthday. | bicycle | |
| 32. | delight | The new neighbor is such a delight. | delight | |
| 33. | supply | A huge supply came in yesterday. | supply | |
| 34. | untie | It took me a long time to untie the knot. | untie | Long /i/ |
| 35. | introduce | I would like to introduce my friend. | introduce | |
| 36. | vetoed | The president vetoed the proposed law. | vetoed | |
| 37. | soaking | When you are soaking in a tub, life is fine. | soaking | |
| 38. | fellowship | The hobbit joined the secret fellowship. | fellowship | Long /o/ |
| 39. | human | She was a great human being. | human | |
| 40. | fewer | There are fewer choices than I had thought. | fewer | |
| 41. | rescued | The dog rescued the child from the river. | rescued | Long /u/ |

End of Grade 2 Test Items

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| | | | | |
|-----|------------|--|------------|-------------------|
| 42. | poodle | The black poodle loved to eat ice cream. | poodle | |
| 43. | overdue | Your library book is overdue. | overdue | |
| 44. | duty | Do your duty to your country. | duty | |
| 45. | brewing | The coffee is always brewing at her house. | brewing | Long /oo/ |
| 46. | looked | He looked older than he really was. | looked | |
| 47. | butcher | The local butcher was very skilled. | butcher | Short /oo/ |
| 48. | crowded | This school is very crowded. | crowded | |
| 49. | counting | She began counting on her fingers. | counting | /ow/ (cow) |
| 50. | poisoned | The chemical poisoned the water. | poisoned | |
| 51. | destroy | He had to destroy the work of art. | destroy | /oi/ |
| 52. | awful | The engine made an awful sound. | awful | |
| 53. | auditorium | The band played in the auditorium. | auditorium | |
| 54. | already | My teacher already knows the answer. | already | |
| 55. | falling | The child kept falling down the stairs. | falling | /aw/ |

End of Grade 3 Test Items

| | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--|-----------|---------------------|
| 56. | curling | She liked curling her hair with her fingers. | curling | |
| 57. | theatre | They went to the theatre to see the play. | theatre | |
| 58. | firmly | The student held the handle firmly. | firmly | |
| 59. | alarm | A man set off the car alarm. | alarm | |
| 60. | colour | He can name each colour in the rainbow. | colour | r-controlled |
| 61. | cucumber | He likes cucumber in his salad. | cucumber | |
| 62. | procedure | The guard followed the procedure. | procedure | |
| 63. | agony | His face showed the agony of defeat. | agony | Hard/Soft |
| 64. | strangely | Her cousin behaved very strangely. | strangely | c and g |

End of Grade 4 Test Items

| | | | | |
|-----|-------------|--|-------------|------------------------|
| 65. | spicy | The Mexican food was spicy. | spicy | Soft y Long /e/ |
| 66. | identify | No one could identify the stranger. | identify | Soft y Long /i/ |
| 67. | forgetting | I keep forgetting where I placed my glasses. | forgetting | Consonant |
| 68. | commitment | The coach questioned his commitment. | commitment | Doubling |
| 69. | travelling | They wanted to join the travelling circus. | travelling | |
| 70. | dodgeball | The children could not play dodgeball. | dodgeball | |
| 71. | advantage | We had the advantage of playing at home. | advantage | /j/ |
| 72. | believe | I will believe it when I see it. | believe | |
| 73. | receive | Did you receive the letter? | receive | “ie”/“ei” |
| 74. | radios | We listened to our radios. | radios | |
| 75. | bushes | They found the child hiding in the bushes. | bushes | |
| 76. | ladies | The ladies softball team won their game. | ladies | |
| 77. | bookshelves | They dusted the bookshelves. | bookshelves | |
| 78. | women | The women volunteered for the carnival. | women | Plurals |

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| | | | | |
|-----|----------|--|----------|-----------------------|
| 79. | guide | Her family trains guide dogs for the blind. | guide | |
| 80. | designed | Her mom designed the new school sign. | designed | Silent Letters |
| 81. | skating | I had my birthday party at the skating rink. | skating | Drop/Keep |
| 82. | wisely | She wisely asked the teacher for help. | wisely | Final e |

End of Grade 5 Test Items

| | | | | |
|------|-------------|--|-------------|---------------------|
| 83. | catcher | The catcher tagged the runner out. | catcher | |
| 84. | touchdown | Our players scored the winning touchdown. | touchdown | /ch/ |
| 85. | gigantic | The gigantic boulder blocked the road. | gigantic | |
| 86. | sunken | The pirates searched for sunken treasure. | sunken | /k/ |
| 87. | denied | He denied any knowledge of the crime. | denied | Drop/Keep |
| 88. | carrying | We got tired of carrying the baskets. | carrying | Final y |
| 89. | handcuffs | The police officer carried handcuffs. | handcuffs | |
| 90. | careful | Please be careful with that glass vase. | careful | l, f, s, z |
| 91. | rhythm | He could not clap to the rhythm of the song. | rhythm | Greek “rh”/ |
| 92. | chorus | The chorus of the song was repeated. | chorus | “ch”/ “ogue” |
| 93. | catalogue | She browsed the catalogue for sales. | catalogue | |
| 94. | anaesthesia | Doctors administered the anaesthesia. | anaesthesia | Latin “ae” / |
| 95. | apnoea | Mom slept poorly because of her apnoea. | apnoea | “oe” |
| 96. | explosion | A loud explosion followed the car crash. | explosion | |
| 97. | musician | He made his career as a musician. | musician | |
| 98. | emotional | Her poetry triggered an emotional response. | emotional | /ion/ |
| 99. | bubble | She blew a huge bubble with her gum. | bubble | Consonant– |
| 100. | miracle | It was just a miracle that she finished. | miracle | “le” |

End of Grade 6 Test Items

| | | | | |
|------|----------|---|----------|--------------|
| 101. | cousin | She invited her cousin to the party. | cousin | |
| 102. | sympathy | We expressed our sympathy for her loss. | sympathy | Schwa |

End of Grade 7 Test Items

| | | | | |
|------|--------------|--|--------------|----------------------|
| 103. | laughable | His clumsy response was laughable. | laughable | |
| 104. | eligible | I was now eligible to win the grand prize. | eligible | “able”/“ible” |
| 105. | significance | The significance of her research was huge. | significance | “ance”/ |
| 106. | confidence | The teacher earned our highest confidence. | confidence | ”ence” |

End of Grade 8 Test Items