Diagnostic Assessments of Reading:
Word Meaning Test

The Word Meaning Test (WMT) is an assessment of expressive vocabulary. It is an oral test that you will give to your learners individually. Scores are given as Grade Equivalents (GE).

How Do I Know Where to Begin?

Begin 1-2 levels below the learner's word recognition level.

The WMT is divided into 10 levels:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9/10	Level 11/12

For example, if your learner's word recognition grade level is 6.0, start the WMT at Level 4, beginning with the word, "connect."

How Do I Give the Word Meaning Test?

1. Say to the learner: "I'm going to say a word and ask you to tell me what it means."

2. Then, beginning with the first word on the list, say: *"Tell me what _____ means."* Write down as much of the learner's response as you can in the space provided after each word.

3. Sometimes, a learner will misunderstand a word you have pronounced. (For example, a learner might misunderstand "connect" as "correct.") If this happens, stop the learner and say, *"I will say the word again. _____. Tell me what _____ means."* If the learner still does not understand the target word, write down the response and note on the test that the learner misunderstood the word.

4. If you are not sure whether the learner knows the meaning of the word, you may use the prompt, *"Tell me more"* to get additional information. Please do not use any other prompts.

How Do I Know When to Go Forward, Go Back, or Stop?

In order to master a level—and go on to the next level—a learner must give the correct meanings for 4 out of the 5 words. Continue to higher levels until you finish a list on which a learner does *not* give at least 4 correct meanings.

Example A:	a) Started at Level 6:	4 out of 5 correct responses
Going Forward	b) Proceeded to Level 7:	5 out of 5 correct responses

c) Proceeded to Level 8:   4 out of 5 correct responses

d) Stopped after Level 9/10: 3 out of 5 correct responses

This learner's score is 8.0 GE, as that is the last level at which this learner gave at least 4 correct meanings.

Sometimes, you will start the test on a level that is too difficult for a learner. If this happens, try the previous level instead of moving forward. For example, if you begin with Level 7, but the learner gives only 2 of 5 correct meanings on that level, the next list you should give is Level 6.

Example B:
Going Back

a) Started at Level 7:   2 out of 5 correct

b) Went back to Level 6:   3 out of 5 correct

c) Stopped after Level 5:   4 out of 5 correct

This learner's score is 5.0 GE, as that is the level at which this learner gave at least 4 correct meanings.

How Do I score the Word Meaning Test?

Score the Word Meaning Test in "real time." You will have to decide whether a learner has given a correct response *while* you are giving the test, because the number of correct meanings on each level determines which level you will give next (as explained in the section above).

For this reason, **it is very important that you familiarize yourself with the acceptable responses before you give the test.** Feel free to keep the list of acceptable responses near you when you give your first few tests; you can then refer to it if you are not sure about a response.

Occasionally, a learner will give a meaning that is extremely difficult to judge while you are giving the test. You'll need more time to decide if the meaning is acceptable. If this happens to you, make sure that you don't let that response be the one to stop the test. Keep going to the next level! It is better to push the learner a little bit than to stop testing too soon.

Because the test is scored in real time, you will have the learner's score as soon as you have finished. The score is the **highest** level on which a learner correctly gives 4 or more correct responses. You will notice that Levels 9/10 and 11/12 are combined, respectively. If a learner's highest level is 9/10, the score is recorded as 10.0 GE. Similarly, if a learner's highest level is 11/12, the score is recorded as 12.0 GE.

Word Meaning Test, Level 1

home	[✓or X]

train	[✓or X]

confuse	[✓or X]

start	[✓or X]

climb	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➞

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 2

touch	[✓or X]
visit	[✓or X]
finish	[✓or X]
fence	[✓or X]
pretend	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➔

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 3

beast	[✓or X]

explain	[✓or X]

guard	[✓or X]

ordinary	[✓or X]

distant	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➞

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 4

connect	[✓or X]
interruption	[✓or X]
ruin	[✓or X]
inventor	[✓or X]
candidate	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➞

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 5

energetic	[✓or X]

victorious	[✓or X]

territory	[✓or X]

urge	[✓or X]

oppose	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. →

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 6

surrender	[✓or X]

occupation	[✓or X]

decline	[✓or X]

consume	[✓or X]

dismal	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➔

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 7

confide	[✓or X]
acquaintance	[✓or X]
resume	[✓or X]
ample	[✓or X]
obligation	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➞

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 8

cease	[✓or X]
aggression	[✓or X]
reputation	[✓or X]
perseverance	[✓or X]
proposition	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➞

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 9/10

dispute	[✓or X]

agitate	[✓or X]

initiate	[✓or X]

audible	[✓or X]

prominent	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➚

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Word Meaning Test, Level 11/12

tedious	[✓or X]
repulsive	[✓or X]
indifferent	[✓or X]
inconsistent	[✓or X]
punctual	[✓or X]

Number Correct: _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level. ➞

3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level. ↺

Examples of Acceptable Responses for the Word Meaning Test

A response is acceptable if it encapsulates the target word's main concept, as given below. Where appropriate, we also provide examples of sentences some test takers have used successfully to give a word's meaning.

You may accept a response that gives the meaning for another part of speech as long as the main concept is included. For example, a learner tells what "aggressive" (adjective) means instead of the target word "aggression" (noun).

Level	Word	Main Concepts
1	home	place where a person lives
	train	railway car; subway to teach
	confuse	mix up
	start	begin
	climb	go up or down
2	touch	come in contact with feel something put your hand on something
	visit	go to a person or place
	finish	bring to an end done, over, completed
	fence	gate; barrier something that you put around the yard to protect it
	pretend	make believe to act out something that's not real to fake that you're doing something *sample sentences:* "When people act, they're pretending to be other persons." "That child is pretending to be an elephant."
3	beast	monster; animal cruel, nasty person
	explain	make someone understand give directions or tell about something carefully make clear

		sample sentence: "I wrote this letter, but you don't know what I'm talking about. I'll explain it so that you understand."
	guard	protect someone who watches prisoners
	ordinary	normal; everyday; average
	distant	far off
4	connect	join together attach one thing to another
	interruption	break in an activity butting in; disturbing when someone is talking, and you cut in sample sentence: "It's an interruption when you're in a meeting and someone comes and knocks on the door."
	ruin	destroy really spoil something
	inventor	someone who makes things: the one who thought it up a person that designed something out of his own imagination
	candidate	someone who runs for office
5	energetic	very active full of pep
	victorious	having won
	territory	land area someone's property
	urge	basic desire push forward
	oppose	be against challenge object
6	surrender	to give up sample sentence: "The man surrendered after holding everyone hostage."
	occupation	job; something you do for a living
	decline	become less; go lower

		refuse; reject to turn something down; say no to something
	consume	eat or drink up; digest use it up
	dismal	gloomy; dark; grayish
7	confide	entrust to another; give somebody your trust tell a secret to somebody
	acquaintance	person you know; person you just met be familiar with someone or something
	resume	go on with re-start; begin where you left off
	ample	plenty; more than enough; abundance of something
	obligation	duty; something you have to do *sample sentence:* "you are obligated to take the trash out every weekend."
8	cease	stop come to an end
	aggression	hostile behavior; an attack showing a lot of attitude and using physical force to get what you want being militant
	reputation	the opinion of others how you're known; how people look at you good or bad description of a person's character
	perseverance	sticking to an aim persistent; going to keep going
	proposition	formal statement plan or undertaking; an offer; a deal; a business request
9/10	dispute	disagreement; argument; quarrel to fight over
	agitate	to disturb; to aggravate swish around, like a washing machine
	initiate	to start something, you are the first to start something to do first to take into a group

	audible	can be heard
	prominent	standing out well-known *sample sentence:* "He is the most prominent lawyer in the city."
11/12	tedious	tiresome; boring; dull; laborious time-consuming, aggravating work a long, repetitive, boring thing
	repulsive	disgusting something that makes you really sick to your stomach
	indifferent	not caring about what is happening neither good nor bad *sample sentence:* "She is indifferent to what's going on in the world."
	inconsistent	not compatible with; not in harmony with not done on a regular basis; not all the time different every time
	punctual	on time