

Placement Test Details

Part 1 Phonemes: Students scratch out the words they hear. Simple.

The test will show which sounds they have problems with. Page 5 of every unit has a Pronunciation Party which helps fix their problems.

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	ban	fan	van	pan
2	bed	fed	ved	ped
3	berry	ferry	very	Perry
4	lip	rip	nip	whip
5	bun	pun	fun	vun
6	light	night	right	white
7	deed	dad	dead	did
8	fast	fest	feast	fit
9	least	list	last	lest
10	fool	full	pool	pull

Pronunciation party 1:50

L	R	N	W	B	P	F	V	i	æ	ε	ɪ
lip	rip	nip	whip	base	pace	face	vase	reed	rad	red	rid
lay	ray	nay	way	bed	ped	fed	ved	beat	bat	bet	bit
lead	read	need	weed	berry	Perry	ferry	very	eat	at	et	it
low	row	no	woe	bar	par	far	var	feet	fat	fet	fit

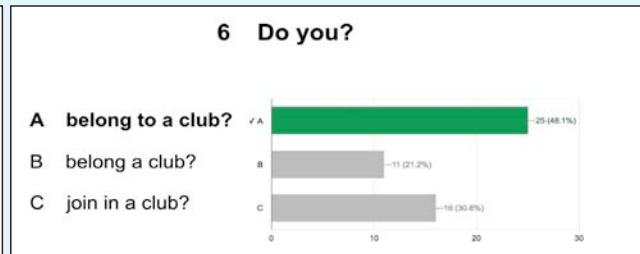
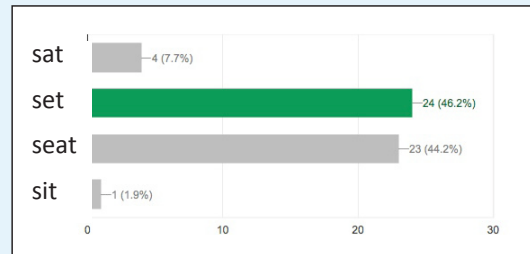
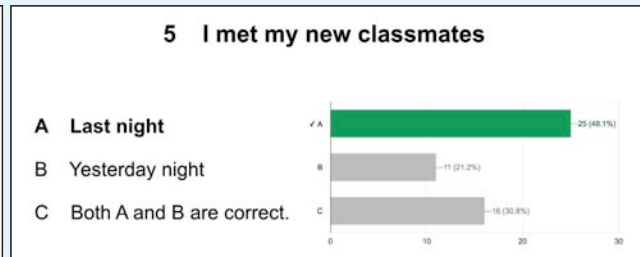
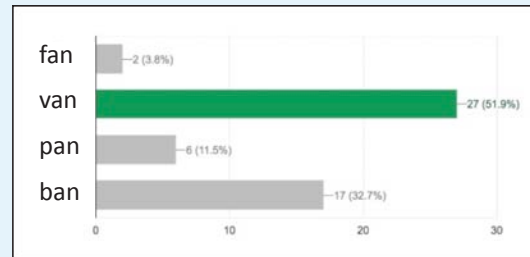
First, show students that they have problems.
Then, show them how to fix them.

Part 2: Has short questions and answers. Don't test their short-term memory ability, test their ability.

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 What year are you? | 5 I met my new classmates | 6 Do you |
| A I'm a sophomore | A last night | A belong to a club |
| B I'm 20 years old. | B yesterday night | B belong a club |
| C I'm 2nd grade. | C both A and B are correct | C join in a club |

Below is some neat information you get when you use the Google Quiz.

You can scroll through the test and show students which were the biggest problem areas.



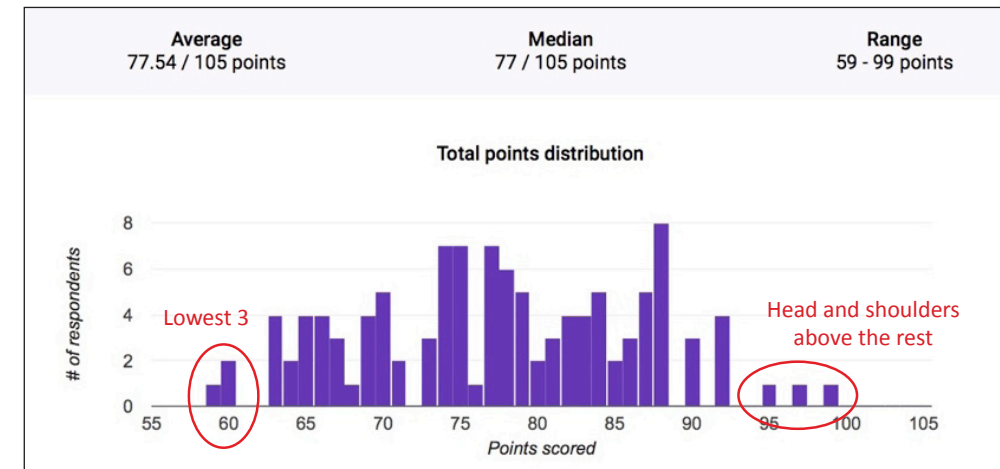
Personally, I'm not big on correcting. Whenever I have to choose between going over mistakes or having them start a new conversation topic, I chose conversations. It's more fun and the effects are longer lasting.

The Google Test can grade hundreds of students in seconds, and give individual diagnostics. It goes like this.

1. They take the usual paper test, marking their answers on the answer sheet. 11 minutes.
2. They get their phone, click the link, and enter their answers. 5 minutes.
3. As students submit, they can see their scores, and what they got wrong.
4. After the last student submits, I can show results to the whole class on the big board.
5. I download to Excel, click "Sort" and this gives their first test partners.

Below are the results from 4 classes, a total of 110 students. The grades spread is 40 points, from 59 - 99. On their college entrance exam, all students scored in the top 15%. Therefore, the grade spread on this test should be about 20 points, however, it is 40. The entrance test assessed their English language knowledge, this test measures ability. By using pronunciation and prepositions, this test measures familiarity with English, exposure to English.

You can easily see that three students are head and shoulders above the rest. And 3 are below. Thus, on the first conversation test, the top 3 students would be partners, likewise the bottom 3. I know all this without speaking to any students, nor having heard them speak.



The *Writing for Speaking Support Materials* book has photocopiable Information-gap Pronunciation Activities for each unit. These are an intense pronunciation workout. Each activity takes about 30 - 40 minutes and while students are doing that, you can collect their textbooks and do a homework check.

A 5 FOOD

1. In squares below you are looking for 18 FOOD vocabulary. 7 are written horizontal and 11 are vertical.

2. Your partner has your answers on the bottom of their sheet, and you have your partner's answers at the bottom of this sheet.

B 5 FOOD

1. You are looking for 18 FOOD vocabulary. 7 are written across and 11 are vertical.

2. Your partner has your answers on the bottom of their sheet, and you have your partner's answers at the bottom of this sheet.

Placement Accuracy

	Bad-pad-fad	Prepositions	Listening Conversation	Score
	5 minutes 75 items	10 minutes 30 items	12 minutes 48 items	
1	74	29	46	98
2	74	25	46	96
3	73	22	43	91
4	69	27	39	89
5	72	21	41	88
6	72	22	39	88
7	71	22	39	87
8	74	20	37	86
9	71	22	37	86
10	70	19	38	84
11	67	23	37	84
12	72	25	29	83
13	72	19	34	83
14	70	21	30	80
15	67	23	31	80
16	59	20	41	79
17	67	18	34	79
18	64	19	34	77
19	60	17	38	76
20	70	14	30	75
21	70	17	27	75
22	68	12	32	74
23	60	20	32	74
24	55	20	36	73
25	65	23	22	73
26	64	15	30	72
27	69	11	29	72
28	66	15	27	71
29	67	17	24	71
30	64	12	31	71
31	58	20	29	71
32	63	14	29	70
33	62	12	30	69
34	62	17	22	67
35	65	18	18	67
36	64	10	27	67
37	65	10	24	65
38	61	16	21	65
39	57	15	23	63
40	63	9	23	63
41	63	13	19	63
42	55	14	25	62
43	63	13	18	62
44	64	13	17	62
45	56	19	19	62
46	59	15	18	61
47	53	10	28	60
48	58	9	20	57
49	45	11	29	56
50	50	13	22	56
51	53	10	22	56
52	54	16	14	55
53	50	13	10	48

.61 .64 .68 .71

Correlations to speaking ability
The SAT test is .53. Measurably less.

Here are the placement test results for spring 2013: four classes, a total of 53 students. No English majors.

All of the students who took this test placed within the top 15% of the Korean SAT test. However, within 30 minutes this test separated that 15% by 50 points.

I believe that the SAT test measures intelligence, knowledge and attention span for cramming. This test measures ability.

This test accurately assesses speaking ability because the test is biased toward better speakers. Better speakers are better at listening, better at prepositions, and better at the sounds of English (bat, bet, beat, bit).

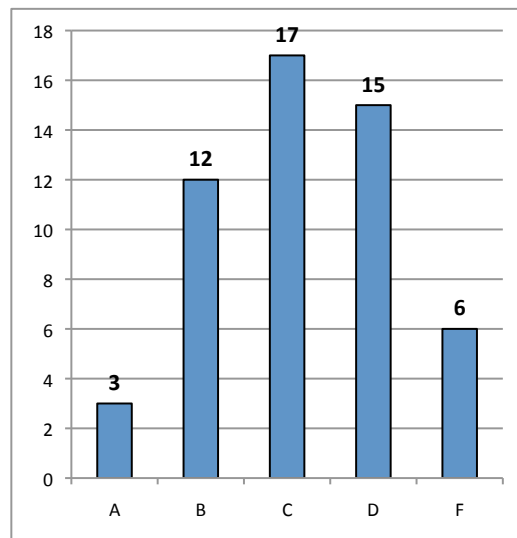
Can I prove that? Yes, because at the end of the semester I correlated their speaking ability to their placement test score. The American SAT test is considered .53 accurate (1.0 is perfect accuracy). This test is more accurate.

GRADING ON A CURVE

Here is another use I have for the placement test. We must grade on a curve. 30% A, 35% B, 35% C.

On the second week I tell the class.

As you can see, there is a wide spread of ability. If I give good, challenging tests, there will be a wide spread of grades. This is honest, fair, and just. Your final grade will be based on your performance and your ability.



This is not a high-stakes test. It's a quickie placement test that quickly shows the range of ability in class, which can help you soften the grading curve blues.

Actionable Feedback

Below are the corrected placement tests for three university freshmen. I give these back to students during the second week so they can see which sounds they have trouble with.

The students below got 95, 85 and 71 correct out of 120 items. Interestingly, they all did about the same in Part 2 (It must be said there is a lot of guessing going on). Their ability grade spread comes from Part 1, the *bad-pad-fad* listening pronunciation part (which takes only 5 minutes). I know these students and their scores accurately reflect their relative speaking ability.

The test is very accurate, and it provides actionable feedback for their pronunciation problems.

95

85

71

The Placement Test shows students their pronunciation problems. Page 5 of every unit has pronunciation practice to help fix those problems. You can also download pronunciation activities, one for to each unit.

A

6 SCHOOL

You are looking for 12 SCHOOL vocabulary. 6 are horizontal and 6 are vertical.

Your partner has the information you need at the bottom of their sheet, and you have the information they need at the bottom of this sheet.

B

6 SCHOOL

You are looking for 12 SCHOOL vocabulary. 7 are horizontal and 5 are vertical.

Your partner has the information you need at the bottom of their sheet, and you have the information they need at the bottom of this sheet.