



# Language Arts & Literature Course Level Assessment

## Pre–K Through Level 7

If the child is younger than 14, complete the course level assessments in this document for the following levels, starting with the assessment you think the child is most likely to pass.

**Level K:** Advanced Kindergarten

**Level 1:** Advanced 1st Grade

**Level 2:** Advanced 2nd Grade

**Level 3:** 3rd Grade/4th Grade

**Level 4:** 4th Grade/5th Grade

**Level 5:** 5th Grade/6th Grade

**Level 6:** 7th Grade/8th Grade

**Level 7:** Advanced 8th Grade/9th Grade

**Note:** The courses are not titled as grade levels; they are numbered levels that do not correspond to public school grade levels. Homeschool children are usually able to learn more in one school year and advance faster. Thus, this curriculum only has 7 levels after Level K before the high school level courses begin. By the time children complete Level 7 of this curriculum, they will have learned the public school standards through Jr. High and much more. However, if children are not yet at an age to start high school courses, children can complete as many Level 8 book studies as desired before starting the high school courses. Level 8 book studies are optional. Children can go straight from Level 7 to the high school courses.

**Note:** Many children just starting The Good and the Beautiful curriculum test below the level matching their grade level. Please keep in mind that these levels do not exactly match grade levels, and because there are only seven levels, students are usually able to catch up and be ready for high school courses by the time they are in ninth grade. Homeschool is different from public school, in that all children the same age should not be expected to all be at the same level in every subject.

## High School

Children in 9th–12th grades, unless they need remedial help with reading, may simply start on The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Course.

Any high-school-aged student who does not need remedial reading help can start the high school course. Students do not need to complete any lower level The Good and the Beautiful courses before starting the high school course because it starts with the basics and covers all foundational concepts. However, the course does move quickly and is more advanced than many high school language arts programs.

**Choose One of Two Paths: Regular Path or Honors Path**

### Regular Path:

The student finishes the course in the length of one school year and moves on to the next high school course.

### Honors Path

The student finishes a high school course in less than the length of one school year (by not needing to watch the many extra help videos, by being a fast reader, or by simply spending more time on the course) and spends the rest of the school year completing our High School Honors Book Studies.

**Q: What should I do if my child is high-school aged but tests at a much lower level than high school?**

**A:** All basic grammar is reviewed in the high school courses. However, high-school children that test at Level 5 or lower in the READING section likely need remedial reading help. You can either have the child start with the level on which he or she tests, or you can have him or her start on the high school course, having the child read all the reading assignments aloud to an adult that can help the child sound out difficult words.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: Does my child need to take the assessment?**

**A:** Not necessarily. You can download Levels 1–5 for free, and the other levels have samples which include all the benchmarks and many sample pages. You can look through these samples and use your own judgement to decide the course level with which to start your child, but the placement assessment is very helpful in determining the appropriate place to start.

## **Q: My child placed much lower than his or her corresponding grade level. What should I do?**

**A:** This is *very* common for children just starting *The Good and the Beautiful* curriculum. This is often because many other curriculums have gaps and holes. Do not worry about starting an older child in a lower level. He or she will likely go through the courses quickly and catch up to his or her corresponding grade level without missing any important foundational principles. Also, when the child reaches high school age, he or she can jump right to the high school course regardless of what levels he or she has completed, which reviews all grammar principles.

## **Q: My child is an advanced reader but is behind in grammar or writing. What should I do?**

**A:** Levels 1, 2, and 3 review all the grammar and spelling principles taught in the previous courses. Thus, advanced readers can usually start one or two levels higher than they place if they only place in a lower level because of grammar and spelling. Levels 4 and above are mainly self-directed. If the child does not have a good foundation in spelling and grammar, consider starting with Level 3. Advanced readers will naturally go through the courses quickly. Also, your child can continue to improve reading skills by reading higher level books on our book list.

## **Q: Will my advanced reader get bored of the reading material if they are placed in a lower level due to spelling and grammar?**

**A:** If an advanced reader is moving down to Level 1 or 2, we suggest skipping the readers. At those levels, the readers are optional (not integrated with the course) and may not appeal to advanced readers.

Supplement with books from *The Good & the Beautiful Book List* that are on the child's reading level. The book list has a separate assessment for reading level; take the short assessment here <http://www.jennyphilips.com/good-beautiful-book-list/>

If an advanced reader is moving to Level 3, we still suggest the Level 3 readers, which contain worthwhile literature that should engage children of any age. However, the Level 3 readers are optional. In Levels 4 and above, the readers are integrated with the course and are necessary. Even advanced readers are likely to not be bored with reading assignments in Levels 4 and above; the reading is engaging and very worthwhile. Also, children can continue to supplement with higher level literature for personal reading time.

## **Q: What if my child took the assessment after finishing the course and he or she didn't pass to move on to the next assessment?**

**A:** This is not common. However, if this is the case after you followed instructions, completed the entire course book, and felt that the child made progress, move to the next course. If you felt that the child did not make good progress, or if the child does not pass the assessment after finishing the NEXT course (two in a row), it is suggested you have the child tested for a reading or learning disability.

Note: Usually, you do not need to have your child take this assessment after finishing each course. Simply move to the next course level.

### Q: My young child placed in a high level. Are they really ready for it?

**A:** You will have to use your best judgement, especially taking into consideration the child's handwriting and writing abilities. The biggest struggles for younger children in high levels are usually writing assignments and the fact that our assessments obviously cannot test all grammar principles, so there may be gaps in learning some principles if younger children start on a high level. **It is usually recommended that you do not start any child more than one grade level above his or her corresponding grade level** (but then let the child move through the levels as quickly as her or she is able.) Here is our grade comparison chart:

**Level K:** Advanced Kindergarten/Regular 1st Grade

**Level 1:** Advanced 1st Grade/Regular 2nd Grade

**Level 2:** Advanced 2nd Grade/Regular 3rd Grade

**Level 3:** 3rd Grade/4th Grade

**Level 4:** 4th Grade/5th Grade

**Level 5:** 5th Grade/6th Grade

**Level 6:** 7th Grade/8th Grade

**Level 7:** Advanced 8th Grade/9th Grade

### Q: Will starting my advanced reader on a lower level slow down his or her reading progress?

**A:** Even advanced readers usually benefit by reviewing and cementing foundational phonic principles, which will help them know how to sound out challenging words when they encounter them. Advanced readers usually go through the courses quickly and catch up to higher levels. In the meantime, you can help your child continue reading progress by completing the following items:

1) Supplement with books from *The Good & the Beautiful Book List* that are on the child's reading level. The book list has a separate assessment to assess just reading level; take the short assessment here <http://www.jennyphillips.com/good-beautiful-book-list/>.

2) Read books that are 2–3 levels higher than the child's personal reading level together with the child, switching off every paragraph or page. When reading on their own, children often just skip through challenging words. Reading out loud with the parent or teacher pushes the child to sound out challenging words.

3) Have the child listen to audio books (from *The Good & the Beautiful Book List*) that are 2–3 levels higher than his or her reading level.

### Q: Will my child ever be able to catch up?

**A:** Start the child on the level for which he or she tested and be consistent each day with doing the recommended time for the course (see the About the Course section at the beginning of each course book). Then, do not stress! If a child does not have reading disabilities, he or she can start with the first high school course as soon as they reach fourteen years old. They do not need to finish through Level 7 first. For example, if a child just completed Level 5 and just turned 14, he or she can jump to the High School 1 course. This is because our standard high school courses review the principles learned in the lower levels.

## Pre-K to Level K Assessments

**Pre-K:** If your child can count to five and recognize pictures of and say the words for apple, monkey, alligator, garbage can, elephant, and dinosaur, they are ready for the course. Most children will be ready to start the course at age three or four.

**Level K Primer:** A child should start this course when the following criteria is met:

- He or she can sing most of the alphabet with or without the help of a parent.
- He or she knows the majority of letters and their sounds but ***has not mastered all of them.***
- He or she can count to ten and knows basic shapes and colors.

**Level K:** A child should start this course when the following criteria is met:

- The child meets the criteria for the Level K Primer and has also mastered all the letters and their sounds. Have the child take the assessment test below to see if all letters and sounds are mastered.
- Note: It is suggested that children who do not know long or short vowels and/or have not yet learned to read simple words but know all of their letters, start with the Level K Primer course. It is a shorter course, and children should get through it quickly. The first several lessons of the Level K course cover long and short vowels and reading simple words, but it goes very quickly. Children who take the Level K Primer course will be better prepared for the speed of the Level K course.

### To Administer the Assessment

Point to each letter below, and have the child say the sound, say the name of the letter, and indicate whether the letter is uppercase (capital) or lowercase. If the child misses any letters or sounds, have the child practice those letters and sounds until they are mastered. The child will then be ready for the Level K course.

a	w	c	d	L	f	g	h	i
j	B	l	D	n	P	p	R	r
s	t	u	v	Q	x	y	S	J
A	M	C	O	z	G	U	W	K
b	H	E	k	F	T	V	q	X
N	o	e	Y	I	Z	m		

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## Level 1 Assessment

- If the child passes the Level K Assessment but not the Level 1 Assessment, start the child on the Level K course.
  - If the child passes the Level 1 Assessment, administer the Level 2 Assessment.
  - If the child passes the Level 1 Assessment but not the Level 2 Assessment, start the child on the Level 1 course.
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**The child must pass both the Reading and the Grammar & Spelling sections to pass the Level 1 Assessment.**

### Reading Assessment

1. As the child reads the sentences below, keep track of the time, and mark the number of incorrect words.
2. If the child says a word incorrectly but corrects it, do not count the word as incorrect. Do not help the child with any of the words. If the child takes longer than about three seconds to try to read a word, tell the child the word, and then mark the word as incorrect. If the child is distracted by something, stop the timer until the child is ready to continue.
3. The child must read sentences 1-9 within two minutes, with no more than three mistakes.

1. My name is Bill. I like to play with my mom and dad.
2. We have so much fun.
3. Dad helps me ride a bike on the path.
4. We eat lunch at the lake and see a ship.
5. A frog comes to look at the chips and the cake on the plates.
6. We stay still as we look at an ant.
7. Then we fly a kite in the sky.
8. We go swimming and hiking, too.
9. The day has ended, and my family is praying.

### Grammar & Spelling Assessment - The Child Must Pass All of the Following Items

1. The child can spell 5 of the 6 following words: **talk, house, eight, heard, learn, people.**
2. The child can identify the noun (baby) and verb (laughs) in this sentence: **The cute baby laughs happily.**
3. The child can correctly spell at least 2 of these 3 sets of homophones: **to/two/too | be/bee | for/four**

**What if my child only barely missed passing this assessment?** You would likely be fine to advance child to the next level. However, we usually suggest placing the child in a lower level if in any doubt, as the child will likely move quickly through the course and will not end up with gaps in learning foundational principles.

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## Level 2 Assessment

- If the child passes the Level 1 Assessment but does not pass the Level 2 Assessment, start the child on the Level 1 course.
- If the child passes the Level 2 Assessment, administer the Level 3 Assessment.
- If the child passes the Level 2 Assessment but not the Level 3 Assessment, start the child on the Level 2 course.

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**The child must pass both the Reading and the Grammar & Spelling sections to pass the Level 2 Assessment.**

### Reading Assessment

1. As the child reads the words below, keep track of the time, and mark the number of incorrect words.
2. If the child says a word incorrectly but corrects it, do not count the word as incorrect. Do not help the child with any of the words. If the child takes longer than about three seconds to try to read a word, tell the child the word, and then mark the word as incorrect. If the child is distracted by something, stop the timer until you are ready to continue.
3. To pass the assessment, the child must read all of the words in 1 minute 50 seconds or less with no more than four mistakes.

soil	spice	target	towel	heaven
enjoy	office	forever	leave	riding
bacon	shouted	thirteen	laundry	whisker
ginger	freedom	circus	rainbow	lady
center	sweeping	birthmark	jewel	groove
fancy	travel	spoonful	review	responsible
toadstool	growled	wrist	awful	English
changing	tower	around	meant	government

### Grammar & Spelling Assessment - The Child Must Pass All of the Following Items

1. The child can spell 5 of the 6 following words: **build, would, brought, because, caught, clothes.**
2. The child can identify the verb (is) and adjective (nice) in this sentence: **The boy over there is nice.**

**What if my child only barely missed passing this assessment?** You would likely be fine to advance child to the next level. However, we usually suggest placing the child in a lower level if in any doubt, as the child will likely move quickly through the course and will not end up with gaps in learning foundational principles.

## Level 3 Assessment

- If the child passes the Level 2 Assessment but does not pass the Level 3 Assessment, start the child on the Level 2 course.
- If the child passes the Level 3 Assessment, administer the Level 4 Assessment.
- If the child passes the Level 3 Assessment but not the Level 4 Assessment, start the child on the Level 3 course.

**Important Note:** Level 3 is the last level that covers phonics principles and is parent directed. Many older children find they need to start with Level 3 in order to improve their reading skills and learn foundational grammar that is needed for the higher levels, which are self-directed. Don't worry about starting older children with Level 3; they will likely enjoy it and go through it quickly.

**The child must pass both the Reading and the Grammar & Spelling sections to pass the Level 3 Assessment.**

### Reading Assessment

1. As the child reads the words below, keep track of the time, and mark the number of incorrect words.
2. If the child says a word incorrectly but corrects it, do not count the word as incorrect. Do not help the child with a word. If the child takes longer than about three seconds to try to read a word, tell the child the word, and then mark the word as incorrect. If the child is distracted by something, stop the timer until you are ready to continue.
3. To pass the assessment, the child must read all of the words in two minutes or less with no more than four mistakes.

cheetah	general	wildflower	delicious	kneading	centipede
balloon	engine	grinding	triumph	numb	unremarkable
boiling	appear	cranky	cough	kneeling	observe
earthquake	overheard	donkey	overweight	honeycomb	stomachache
equally	hassle	poodle	through	sorrow	solution
required	wholesome	navy	wheat	oboe	precious
squawk	excited	fever	despair	disagreeable	badger
worse	detective	straightaway	prairie	knitting	ketchup

### Grammar & Spelling Assessment - The Child Must Pass All of the Following Items

1. The child can spell 4 of the 6 following words: **tomorrow, straight, example, ledge, trouble, climb.**
2. The child has learned about (not necessarily mastered) 5 of the 7 following principles: contractions, subjects, prepositions, adverbs, when to use DGE when spelling a word, when to use TCH when spelling a word, commas in a series.

## Level 4 Assessment

- If the child passes the Level 3 Assessment but does not pass the Level 4 Assessment, start the child on the Level 3 course.
- If the child passes the Level 4 Assessment, administer the Level 5 Assessment.
- If the child passes the Level 4 Assessment but not the Level 5 Assessment, start the child on the Level 4 course.

**The child must pass both the Reading and Grammar sections to pass the Level 4 Assessment.**

### Reading Assessment

1. As the child reads the words below, keep track of the time and mark the number of incorrect words. If the child says a word incorrectly but corrects it, do not count the word as incorrect. Do not help the child with any of the words. If the child takes longer than about three seconds to try to read a word, tell the child the word, and then mark the word as incorrect. If the child is distracted by something, stop the timer until you are ready to continue.
2. To pass the assessment, the child must read all of the words in 90 seconds or less with no more than four mistakes.

national	stationary	glacier	trough	sausages
version	influential	devotional	issue	measure
position	leather	threatened	thoroughly	neutral
caution	jealousy	tissue	sourdough	campaign
glacier	artificially	disguise	gnarled	fragrance
mansion	feud	plague	foreign	experiencing
occasionally	mileage	antique	embroider	knapsack

**Grammar Assessment - To pass this section, the child must earn 3 points out of 5 possible points.**

Write the following green sentences on a separate sheet of paper (without the underlines).

	out of 5
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When the sun rose above the lake, I woke up. It was a nice day so I opened the window.

Tell child the following instructions. Give child one point for each question answered correctly.

1. In the first sentence, underline the independent clause and double underline the dependent clause.
2. Point to the preposition. [above]
3. Point to the coordinating conjunction. [so]
4. Place a comma in the correct spot. [after "day"]
5. Point to the subordinating conjunction. [when]

## Level 5 Assessment

- If the child passes the Level 4 Assessment but does not pass the Level 5 Assessment, start the child on the Level 4 course.
- If the child passes the Level 5 Assessment, administer the Level 6 Assessment.
- If the child passes the Level 5 Assessment but not the Level 6 Assessment, start the child on the Level 5 course.

**The child must pass both the Reading and Grammar & Spelling sections to pass the Level 5 Assessment.**

### Reading Assessment

1. To pass this section, the child must read all of the words in 2 minutes with no more than four mistakes.
2. As the child reads the words below, keep track of the time and mark the number of incorrect words. If the child says a word incorrectly but corrects it, do not count the word as incorrect. Do not help the child with any of the words. If the child takes longer than about three seconds to try to read a word, tell the child the word, and then mark the word as incorrect.

vibrant	meringue	hydrogen	bicentennial
contaminated	wrestle	tyrant	accurately
gorgeous	territorial	analyst	honorable
architecture	condominium	antique	rhythmical
brilliantly	souvenir	binoculars	symphony
campaign	bouquet	architect	excruciating
dangerous	individualistic	pupils	miscellaneous
gnome	exceptionally	schedule	machinery
disease	boulevard	chaos	contagious
dialogue	immeasurable	archeology	nausea
intrigue	immaturely	legislature	psychology

**Grammar & Spelling Assessment - To pass this section, the child must earn 12 points out of 19 possible points.**

1. Say the following words and have the child write the words. Give 1 point for each word spelled correctly:  out of 10

libraries, neighbor, inactive, ladies, succeed, because, autumn, piece (*piece of pie*), island, excellent

2. Write the sentence in green on a separate paper. Then ask the child to point to a VERB, NOUN, PRONOUN, ADJECTIVE, ADVERB, ARTICLE, and PREPOSITION. Give one point for each correct answer.

The small bunny hopped very quickly across my lawn.

article adjective noun verb adverb adverb preposition pronoun noun

out of 9

## Level 6-7 Assessment

The child should pass the Level 5 Assessment before taking this assessment.

### Grammar & Spelling Assessment

Say the following sentence aloud and have the child write it: **Because the weather has an effect on their mood, the captain's assistant lets the soldiers take multiple breaks during the autumn.**

**Give one point for each of the following words that the child spelled correctly:** because, weather, effect, their, captain's (apostrophe must be included), assistant, soldiers, breaks, multiple, autumn.

<input type="text"/>	out of 10
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**Give two points if the child started the sentence with a capital letter, ended with a period, and included the comma in the correct place.**

<input type="text"/>	out of 2
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**Give two points if the child can correctly underline the dependent clause** [because the weather has an effect on their mood] **without blindly guessing.**

<input type="text"/>	out of 2
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**Give two points for each of the following items the child can identify in the sentence:** subordinating conjunction [because], preposition [during], pronoun [their], adjective [multiple].

<input type="text"/>	out of 8
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**Give two points if the child can correctly identify the sentence structure** [complex].

<input type="text"/>	out of 2
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**Give two points if the child can name the seven coordinating conjunctions** [for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so].

<input type="text"/>	out of 2
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**TOTAL POINTS: \_\_\_\_\_/26 possible**

- If the child scores **14 points or less on the Spelling & Grammar section**, the child should start with Level 5, regardless of his or her reading skills.\*
- If the child scores **between 15 and 21 points on the Spelling & Grammar section**, the child should start on Level 6, regardless of his or her reading skills.\*

\*Fast readers will naturally go through the courses quickly and catch up to their reading level without missing foundational learning in grammar and spelling.

- If the child scores **22 points or higher on the Spelling & Grammar section**, the child should read the passage on the next page. While the child reads, keep track of time and the number of mistakes.

If the child can read the passage in **less than 1 minute 20 seconds with no more than four mistakes**, the child should start on Level 7.

If the child takes **between 1 minute 21 seconds and 1 minute 40 seconds to read the passage with no more than six mistakes**, the child should start on Level 6.

If the child takes **longer than 1 minute 40 seconds to read the passage or has more than six mistakes**, the child should start on Level 5.

### Reading Passage (Level 6-7 Assessment)

Down the chambers and along the constricted headings, toward the foot of the slope, came little groups leaving the mine, with dinner pails and tools, discussing earnestly, often resentfully, the situation of their forced strike and the deceitful men they were obliged to obey.

Fifteen or twenty departing miners were holding an especially animated conversation. They were all walking in single file along the treacherous route by which the mine cars went.

Where the route crossed from the airway to the heading, a door had been placed, to be opened whenever the cars approached and to be shut immediately upon their departure.

That door was attended by a solitary boy.

To this point the party had now come, and one by one they filed through the opening, while Bennie, the door boy, stood holding back the door to let them pass.

“Ho, Jack, take the door boy with you!” shouted someone in the rear.

The great, broad-shouldered, rough-bearded man who led the procession turned back to where Bennie, apparently lost in astonishment at this unusual occurrence, still stood with his hand on the door.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What if the child does not know sentence diagramming?**

A: Place the child in the level on which they tested regardless of whether or not they can diagram sentences. However, if the child does not have experience with diagramming, he or she can watch the videos on [www.jennyphillips.com/videos](http://www.jennyphillips.com/videos), which teach and give practice with diagramming:

**Q: What if my child is only one point or two away from passing an assessment?**

A: You would probably be fine going either way—up or down a level. Use your best judgement. Does the child need to cement basics and gain confidence, or does the child need to be challenged? Most children do better starting with a lower level.

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## High School

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The **high school courses** review all needed basic grammar principles, even basic principles such as nouns and verbs. The high school courses also review the basics of writing. Children of normal learning abilities that are 14 years old or older do not need to do an assessment and can start with a high school course.

*Note:* Because the lower levels are so advanced, it is not helpful to have the child take the lower level assessments unless you are questioning if they need remedial reading help. **Children ages 14+ that don't need remedial help with reading can simply start with the High School 1 course.**

*Note:* If you are questioning whether or not the child needs remedial reading help, test the child with the lower level assessments. Children ages 14+ that test at Level 5 or lower **on the reading sections** could benefit from starting on the level at which they test and then starting high school courses after completing Level 6. Children who test at Level 6 can start the high school course, but might have to spend more time than normal on the course.