

GROUP GRADUATED SYLLABLE SURVEY

The Group Graduated Syllable Survey consists of 50 modified cloze (fill-in-the-blank) sentences in which students choose from three multisyllabic words the one that best completes the sentence. The Group Graduated Survey begins with the easiest syllable patterns and moves up to increasingly difficult patterns.

Administering the Survey

Explain the purpose of the Survey to students. Tell students that this is a test to see how well they can read words that have more than one syllable. Explain that information from the test will be used to plan lessons and activities that will help them become better readers. Tell students that the test has a series of sentences and that each sentence has a blank where a word has been left out. Explain that they are to choose from three words the one that best fits in the blank. Tell them that the test will begin with words that have just two syllables, but that the test will increase in difficulty and that it will include words that have four or five syllables. Tell students that they might not be able to fill in the blanks for all the sentences, but that they should do the best they can. Do the sample item with them. Ask if there any questions. Tell students to begin, but inform them that there is no time limit.

You may want to administer the Survey in sections. If students do poorly on the first section, there would be no need to administer the entire Survey. If time allows, you may want to administer the Individual Survey instead of the Group Survey. That way struggling students will not be subject to attempting to read an excessive number of items that might be too difficult.

Interpreting the Group Graduated Syllable Survey

Students who score 5 or less may not have a sufficient grasp of basic single-syllable phonics. Administer the Phonics Inventory, which is available on the website <Buildingliteracy.org> under the Free Resources tab, to get a better sense of where students are in their literacy development. A score of 6 to 45 on the Group Survey indicates a need for instruction in syllabic analysis. The test items assess key syllabic patterns as follows: Items 1-5: short-vowel patterns

Items 6-11: long-vowel patterns

Items 12-18: *r*-vowels

Items 19-28: other vowels: /aw/, /oy/, /ow/, short and long /oo/

Items 29-30: schwa-*a* patterns

Items 31-33: *-ture* patterns

Items 34-36: *-tion* patterns

Items 37-39: *-sion* patterns

Items: 40-42: *cial, tial* patterns

Items 43-50: words that have four or more syllables

Guessing is a factor in the Group Graduated Syllable Survey. To verify test results, administer the Individual Graduated Syllable Survey or have students read aloud some of their responses from the Group Graduated Syllable Survey.

Students' performance can be highly variable. They may trip over some easy patterns, but read some difficult patterns with ease. In my use of the program, I selected patterns to teach based on assessment data and ongoing observation. However, before teaching a pattern, I invited students to read the pattern words. Sometimes they could read all the pattern words, so instead of spending time with a known element we moved ahead. At other times, they could read some but not all of the pattern words, so we focused on those that were challenging. What I learned from my students was the need for ongoing assessment, so that the focus was on what needed to be learned. This enabled us to make the best use of instructional time.

Instructional Programs for Developing Syllabic Analysis

An author-created instructional program for developing syllabic analysis can be found at buildingliteracy.org. The program covers the ten multisyllabic patterns noted above and three others. Other high-quality programs that develop syllabic analysis include the following:

- Megawords (School Specialty- EPS Instruction & Intervention)
- Rewards (Sopris Learning)
- SIPPS (Developmental Studies Center)

Group Graduated Syllable Survey

Name _____ Grade ____ Date _____ Score /50

Underline the word that best fits the sense of the sentence.

Sample: A _____ can hop.

racket rabbit radish

1. Jeb's lunch was in his _____.

backpack backtrack backward

2. The birds began to sing at _____.

sunup sunfish sunburn

3. The _____ ant steals crumbs from the nests of other ants.

robber rubber runner

4. The fish will eat _____.

insists insects instants

5. Did you _____ to what she said?

listen lending little

6. The _____ is spinning a web.

spider spinach spineless

7. Put your name on the top of the _____.

payment paper palace

8. A robot can go places where _____ can't go.

hurdles huddles humans

9. Animals _____ to find food and water.

migrate mistake mislead

10. Rats and mice are _____.

rollers rodents roundish

11. I don't know what you mean. Please _____.

exclaim explain excuse

12. You can make notes in the _____.

margin market marble

13. Make sure you correct all _____.

errors efforts empires

14. Catfish eat bugs that are on the _____ of the water.

surface surplus surroundings

15. The class took a trip to an apple _____.

order orchard orchestra

16. A _____ looks like it is full of needles.

porpoise porcupine portion

17. The broken bike needs to be _____.

repaired replied repeated

18. You have no choice. You are _____ to finish your homework.

received recorded required

19. We laughed at the funny _____.

cardboard carton cartoon

20. The _____ had only 12 pages.

bonnet booklet bottle

21. That jet is _____ fast.

supper supplier super

22. The batter is using a _____ bat.

wooden woolen woven

23. Who is the _____ of the book that you are reading?

auto author autograph

24. A blue whale is an _____ animal.

autumn awesome awful

25. No one could _____ the long word.

pronounce possess profit

26. Only four snakes in the United States are _____.

pointer poisonous positive

27. A tornado is a _____ storm.

powdery powerful plowing

28. The storm _____ many homes.
developed devoted destroyed
29. Your dentist _____ is at 12 o'clock noon.
agreement achievement appointment
30. We watched the sharks being fed at the _____.
aquarium appearance attendance
31. The pirates buried their _____.
treatment treasure traveler
32. Water freezes when the _____ falls to 32 degrees.
temporary temptation temperature
33. The sheep are in the _____ .
pastime pasture partner
34. *Dr.* is the _____ for the word *doctor*.
appreciation addition abbreviation
35. After winning the contest, the class had a _____.
circulation celebration consideration
36. If you are not sure how the machine works, read the _____.
explanation exclamation examination
37. The class had a _____ about the need to help each other.
disappearance disappointment discussion
38. Jason's _____ of the difficult article was good. He understood all the main facts.
composition concentration comprehension
39. Some animals have very good _____. They can see better than humans can.
vision violence vicious
40. The _____ played some songs for us.
mumblers musicians museums
41. Spinach is a _____ food.
nutritious numerical northeastern
42. There was a _____ on TV for a new breakfast cereal.
commercial command communication

43. My friend and I had lots to talk about so we had a long _____.

conservation conversation constellation

44. The storm was _____ so no was prepared for it.

unexplored unexpected uneventful

45. I will ask Ann to help us even though she does not want to _____.

participate persuade preparation

46. Big Foot is not real. Big Foot is an _____ monster.

important imaginary immediate

47. The hat did not cost much. It was _____.

independent inattention inexpensive.

48. Cars and buses are a popular means of _____.

transportation translation transplantation

49. You are late. You must leave for school _____.

imaginary importantly immediately

50. No one knew who the _____ stranger was.

mysterious material manufacturer

Answer Key for Group Graduated Syllable Survey

1. backpack	14. surface	27. powerful	40. musicians
2. sunup	15. orchard	28. destroyed	41. nutritious
3. robber	16. porcupine	29. appointment	42. commercial
4. insects	17. repaired	30. aquarium	43. conversation
5. listen	18. required	31. treasure	44. unexpected
6. spider	19. cartoon	32. temperature	45. participate
7. paper	20. booklet	33. pasture	46. imaginary
8. humans	21. super	34. abbreviation	47. inexpensive
9. migrate	22. wooden	35. celebration	48. transportation
10. rodents	23. author	36. explanation	49. immediately
11. explain	24. awesome	37. discussion	50. mysterious
12. margin	25. pronounce	38. comprehension	
13. errors	26. poisonous	39. vision	