

How to Give the Word Meaning Test (WMT)

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?

- 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
- Begin 1-2 levels below the learner's word recognition level.
 - Example: If your learner's word recognition grade level is 6.0, you should start the WMT at Level 4, beginning with the word, "connect."

How Do I Give the Test?

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

until you finish a list on which a learner does not give at least 4 correct meanings.

Learner A: Going forward

Started at Level 6: 4 out of 5 correct responses
Proceeded to Level 7: 5 out of 5 correct responses
Proceeded to Level 8: 4 out of 5 correct responses
Stopped after Level 9/10: 3 out of 5 correct responses

Learner A's score is 8.0 GE.

- 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.

Learner B: going back

Started at Level 7: 2 out of 5 correct
Went back to Level 6: 3 out of 5 correct
Stopped after Level 5: 4 out of 5 correct

Learner B's score is 5.0 GE.

How Do I score the WMT?

For the WMT, you score the test in "real time"; that is, you will have to decide whether a learner has given a correct response while you are giving the test (this is so because the number correct 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:

[✓ or X]

_____ home _____

_____ train _____

_____ confuse _____

_____ start _____

_____ climb _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ touch _____

_____ visit _____

_____ finish _____

_____ fence _____

_____ pretend _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ beast _____

_____ explain _____

_____ guard _____

_____ ordinary _____

_____ distant _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ connect _____

_____ interruption _____

_____ ruin _____

_____ inventor _____

_____ candidate _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ energetic _____

_____ victorious _____

_____ territory _____

_____ urge _____

_____ oppose _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ surrender _____

_____ occupation _____

_____ decline _____

_____ consume _____

_____ dismal _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ confide _____

_____ acquaintance _____

_____ resume _____

_____ ample _____

_____ obligation _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ cease _____

_____ aggression _____

_____ reputation _____

_____ perseverance _____

_____ proposition _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ dispute _____

_____ agitate _____

_____ initiate _____

_____ audible _____

_____ prominent _____

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:

[✓ or X]

_____ tedious _____

_____ repulsive _____

_____ indifferent _____

_____ inconsistent _____

_____ punctual _____

Number Correct _____

4 or 5 correct? Go to next level.
3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level.

Word Meaning Test: Examples of Acceptable Responses

Note: 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.

Also note that you may accept a response that gives the meaning for another part of speech—for example, if a learner tells what “aggressive” (adjective) means instead of the target word “aggression” (noun)—as long as the main concept is included.

Level 1:

home

Main concept: place where a person lives

train

Main concepts: railway car; subway
to teach

confuse

Main concept: mix up

start

Main concept: begin

climb

Main concept: go up or down

Level 2:

touch

Main concepts: come in contact with
feel something
put your hand on something

visit

Main concept: go to a person or place

finish

Main concepts: bring to an end
done; over; completed

fence

Main concepts: gate; barrier
something that you put around the yard to protect it

pretend

Main concepts: 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."

Level 3:

beast

Main concepts: monster; animal
cruel, nasty person

explain

Main concepts: 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

Main concepts: protect
someone who watches prisoners

ordinary

Main concepts: normal; everyday; average

distant

Main concept: far off

Level 4:

connect

Main concepts: join together
attach one thing to another

interruption

Main concepts: 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

Main concepts: destroy
really spoil something

inventor

Main concepts: makes things
the one who thought it up
a person that designed something out of his own imagination

candidate

Main concepts: someone who runs for office

Level 5:

energetic

Main concepts: very active
full of pep

victorious

Main concept: having won

territory

Main concepts: land area
someone's property

urge

Main concepts: basic desire
push forward

oppose

Main concepts: be against
challenge
object

Level 6:

surrender

Main concept: to give up

Sample sentence: "The man surrendered after holding everyone hostage."

occupation

Main concepts: job; something you do for a living

decline

Main concepts: become less; go lower
refuse; reject
to turn something down; say no to something

consume

Main concepts: eat or drink up; digest
use it up

dismal

Main concepts: gloomy; dark; grayish

Level 7:

confide

Main concepts: entrust to another; give somebody your trust
tell a secret to somebody

acquaintance

Main concepts: person you know; person you just met
be familiar with someone or something

resume

Main concepts: go on with
re-start; begin where you left off

ample

Main concepts: plenty; more than enough; abundance of something

obligation

Main concepts: duty; something you have to do

Sample sentence: "You are obligated to take the trash out every weekend."

Level 8:

cease

Main concepts: stop
come to an end

aggression

Main concepts: hostile behavior; an attack
showing a lot of attitude and using physical force to get what you want
being militant

reputation

Main concepts: the opinion of others
how you're known; how people look at you
good or bad description of a person's character

perseverance

Main concepts: sticking to an aim
persistent; going to keep going

proposition

Main concepts: formal statement
plan or undertaking; an offer; a deal; a business request

Level 9/10:

dispute

Main concepts: disagreement; argument; quarrel
to fight over

agitate

Main concepts: to disturb; to aggravate
swish around, like a washing machine

initiate

Main concepts: to do first
to start something, you are the first to start something
to take into a group

audible

Main concept: can be heard

prominent

Main concepts: standing out
well-known

Sample sentence: "He is the most prominent lawyer in the city."

Level 11/12:

tedious

Main concepts: tiresome; boring; dull; laborious
time-consuming, aggravating work
a long, repetitive, boring thing

repulsive

Main concepts: disgusting
something that makes you really sick to your stomach

indifferent

Main concepts: not caring about what is happening
neither good nor bad

Sample sentence: "She is indifferent to what's going on in the world."

inconsistent

Main concepts: not compatible with; not in harmony with
not done on a regular basis; not all the time
different every time

punctual

Main concept: on time