

Analysis of the Blumenfeld Oral Reading Assessment Test (BORAT – Version A)

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This “Analysis of the BORAT” will study the sequenced orthographic organization of the test. Quotes are from the test instructions.

“The first 23 columns test the student’s knowledge of the English alphabetic system in its entire range of vowel and consonant spelling forms. This knowledge is generally known as ‘basic decoding skills.’”

“Columns 24, 25, 27, and 28 test reading ability with a variety of two-syllable words. Columns 26, 29 and 30 consists of three-syllable words. Column 31 consists of common multisyllabic words used in and out of school.

“Columns 32-36 consist of more difficult multisyllabic words generally found in such adult-level reading matter as the *Reader’s Digest*. Columns 32-36 consist of multisyllabic words from employment display ads in the *Sunday Boston Globe*.”

I. Basic Decoding Skills

Columns Phonetic Elements Tested

1. Short vowels; beginning consonants: b, d, h, l, m, p, s; ending consonants: b, d, g, m, p, t x
2. Short vowels; beginning consonants: c, d, f, g, j, w, y; ending consonants: b, d, g, m, p, t, w
3. Long a spellings
4. Long e spellings
5. Long i spellings
6. Long o spellings
7. Long u spellings
8. Long oo spellings
9. /ou/ spellings
10. /oi/ spellings
11. /ar/ spellings
12. “a” as in all
13. /er/ spellings: er, ir, ur, ear, wor,
14. Short vowel nonsense syllables; beg. cons: b, h, j, l, m, s, t, z; ending cons: b, f, , n, v, x, z
15. Short vowels; Beginning consonant blends: bl, br, cl, cr, dr, dw, fl, fr, gr, pr
Short vowels: Ending consonant blends: st, (sh), mp, (dge), rf, (sh), nt, ft, mpt
17. Beginning consonant blends: thr, br, tw, sw, str, cr, br,
Ending consonant blends: st, (sh), tch, (ch), ngth, xt, pt, ft
18. Words ending in “le.”
19. Misc. words
20. Consonant digraphs, th, ch, wh, sh, and some blends etc.
21. Alternate spellings for /sh/: ti, si, ci, and /tu/ as in rapture.
22. Ch as /k/, ps as /s/, short y.
23. Ph and gh as /f/.

II. Advanced School Decoding Skills

24. Two-syllable words
25. Two-syllable words
26. Three-syllable words
27. Two-syllable words
28. Two-syllable words
29. Three-syllable words
30. Three-syllable words
31. Multisyllabic School words

III. Basic Adult-level Reading

32. Multisyllabic words
33. Multisyllabic words
34. Multisyllabic words
35. Multisyllabic words
36. Multisyllabic words

III. Advanced Adult-level Reading

37. Multisyllabic words
38. Multisyllabic words

The following are merely *rough indicators* of the columns that a student should be able to read based on the Grade/Score Parameters in the BORAT instructions. This table was created by Donald Potter to see how the scoring corresponded with the organization of the phonics elements in the BORAT and the corresponding organization in *Alpha-Phonics*.

Grade Levels by Columns

Third-grade:	25 columns	110 – 130 errors
Fourth-grade:	27 columns	95 – 109 errors
Fifth-grade:	29 columns	75 – 94 errors
Sixth-grade:	31 columns	55 – 74 errors
Seventh-grade:	33 columns	45 – 54 errors
Eight-grade:	34 columns	40 – 44 errors
Ninth-grade:	35 columns	35 – 39 errors (9 th , 10 th , and 11 th are very close)
Tenth-grade:	35 columns	30 – 34 errors
Eleventh-grade:	35 columns	25 – 29 errors
Twelfth-grade:	36 columns	20 – 24 errors

Mr. Blumenfeld notes that the test is for testing oral reading skills from third-grade through adult. “First and second-graders can be tested by using the first 23 columns only. They will inform the tester on how well the child is mastering the English alphabet system.” He adds, “Most important to note is **where** the errors were made. If a student misreads many words in the first 23 columns, then that student has a serious lack of basic phonetic knowledge and is primarily a sight-reader. If the student did well on the first 23 columns but then began to falter with the multisyllabic words, then this student simply has not had enough challenging, vocabulary-rich reading in school or at home.”

Conclusion: The BORAT proves to be a comprehensive instrument for testing a reader’s oral knowledge of the English alphabet system.

A sample of the BORAT Version A is appended along with the Instructions, which also contain information on when and how the test was normed. I first used the test on 11/9/1996.