

The SMOG ANALYSIS is one of the most common and easy to use readability tests. Use it to check the reading level needed to understand your printed materials. In general, the 6-8th grade level will be appropriate for most general audiences, but consider the educational attainment of your target audience to determine the correct readability level. Source: Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, You Can Prepare Easy-to-Read Materials (Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, 1994). NOTE: Grade level predicts the grade-level difficulty +/- 1.5 grades.

To determine the approximate reading level of a publication, use the following steps:

1. Mark off 10 consecutive sentences each at the beginning, middle, and end of the piece.
 - A sentence is a string of words that ends with a period (.), a question mark (?), or an exclamation point (!).

2. Count the total number of words containing three or more syllables (polysyllabic), including repetitions, in those 30 sentences.
 - Hyphenated words count as one word
 - Numbers and abbreviations should be pronounced to count the number of syllables.
 - Proper nouns should be counted as well if they are polysyllabic.

3. Use the conversion chart below to determine the approximate reading level.
 - Keep in mind that some polysyllabic words (e.g., exercise) are the simplest and clearest way in which to say something. In other cases, a one- or two-syllable word (e.g., larynx) might be more difficult. Use your judgment, and try to write as simply as possible.

SMOG conversion chart

<i>Polysyllabic Word Count</i>	<i>Grade level</i>
0-2	4
3-6	5
7-12	6
13-20	7
21-30	8
31-42	9
43-56	10
57-72	11
73-90	12
91-110	13
111-132	14
133-156	15
157-182	16
183-210	17
211-240	18

