

How To

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PSYCHOMETRICS

How to Measure Readability

(Readability means understandability in this case.)

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Method 1. Let your word processing program do it for you.

See if your word processing program has built in readability measures – for example, some versions of Microsoft Word gives Flesch’s Reading Ease, and the Flesch Reading Grade Level.

For general use it is desirable that a document should have a Reading Ease Score higher than 70, and a Reading Grade level less than 7.

Method 2. Use the SMOG formula

McLaughlin's SMOG formula is probably the most useful because it gives the level of reading ability for all readers to understand the piece of writing.

The method involves fairly simple counting – number of 3-syllable words and number of sentences.

Once you have done this simple bit of counting you apply the formula:

$$RGL = 3 + \sqrt{\left(lw \times \frac{30}{NS} \right)}$$

where:

lw = number of words of 3 or more syllables

NS = number of sentences

Method 3. Use the SMOG on-line calculator, and then the calculator below.

This can be found at:

<http://www.harrymclaughlin.com/SMOG.htm>

When you get to the site either paste in or type in the text you want to assess.

The calculator will tell you what the SMOG level is. BUT also make a note of the number of words, and the number of sentences. You will find these details on the output screen.

Method 4. Count syllables, words and sentences yourself and then use the calculator above.

For more details and other formulas see [Readability](#)

This 'How to ...' has a Flesch Reading Ease of 65, and a Flesch Kincaid Reading Grade Level of 6.9, as measured by MS WORD for the Mac.