

Everyday Accessibility: Checking Grade Level and Plain Language

Grade Level:

You can check the grade level and clarity of your document in MS Word and other programs. There are many scales, but three common ones are the Flesch Reading Ease score, and the Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level score and the SMOG (Simple Measure of Gobbledygook). These scores are based on factors like sentence length and word size. For most documents, a reading ease score of 60-70, and a grade level of 7-8 is best. Using short sentences, short easy words, and taking out jargon and some descriptive words are ways to increase the readability and lower the grade level of your writing. You can check the scores in MS Word, but programs like Grammarly or Readable give suggestions and tips in your writing to make it easier to understand.

The links below can help you check and correct readability issues in your writing.

[Checking Readability Scores in MS Word](#)

[Readable](#)

[Grammarly](#)

Plain Language Summary:

If it is not possible to use plain language in your document, consider writing a plain language summary. A plain language summary is an overview and synthesis of the information in your document, written for a non-specialist audience. In the summary, you explain the concepts with accuracy and precision, but using language that most readers would understand.

Information on creating plain language summaries:

[Evidence for Democracy's Plain Language Toolkit](#)

[Inclusion Nova Scotia's Plain Language Translation](#)

For more information on accessibility in Kings County contact kingsaccessibility@countyofkings.ca