

Lexiles

The Lexile Framework for Reading is an approach to reading measurement that matches students to appropriately challenging reading materials. The Lexile Framework measures both reader ability and text difficulty on the same scale, called the Lexile scale. This approach allows families and teachers to encourage reader progress using Lexile measures and a broad range of Lexile products, tools and services.

What is The Lexile Framework for Reading?

The Lexile Framework® for Reading is a scientific approach to reading and text measurement. It includes the Lexile® measure and the Lexile scale. The Lexile measure is a reading ability or text difficulty score followed by an “L” (e.g., “850L”). The Lexile scale is a developmental scale for reading ranging from below 200L for beginning–reader material to above 1700L for advanced text. All Lexile Framework products, tools and services rely on the Lexile measure and scale to match reader and text.

Because so many companies have built products around the Lexile Framework, teachers can now connect all the different components of the curriculum. Once you have a student's Lexile measure , you can connect him or her to tens of thousands of books and tens of millions of articles from periodicals, newspapers, reference books and transcripts to find material targeted to the student's reading level.

Why do testing companies and states put Lexiles on their standardized tests?

Lexile measures are the most widely adopted reading measures in use today. Tens of thousands of books and tens of millions of newspaper and magazine articles have Lexile measures — more than 450 publishers Lexile their titles. In addition, all major standardized reading tests and many popular instructional reading programs can report student reading scores in Lexiles.

By offering students Lexile measures in addition to their standard assessment scores, testing companies and states are providing an

important tool for helping to build reading skills. Now, teachers can contact their district testing coordinator for a roster of their students' Lexile measures, enabling them to personalize reading instruction, and to better communicate student reading needs to parents. As a result, Lexile measures tie day-to-day work in the classroom to critical high-stakes tests. This provides interim assessment and feedback while using the same consistent measurement to easily track progress, all without additional testing.

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What is the Lexile Map?

The Lexile Map provides a graphic representation of texts and titles matched to appropriate levels of reading ability. While there is not one set level of expected comprehension, the Lexile Framework targets readers to text where the reader is expected to have 75-percent comprehension. At the same time, students, teachers, parents and others can moderate this level by adjusting the relationship between the reader and text.

How is a text's Lexile measure determined?

Lexile measures are based on two well-established predictors of how difficult a text is to comprehend: semantic difficulty (word frequency) and syntactic complexity (sentence length). In order to Lexile a book or article, text is split into 125-word slices. Each slice is compared to the nearly 600-million word Lexile corpus - taken from a variety of sources and genres - and words in each sentence are counted. These calculations are put into the Lexile equation. Then, each slice's resulting Lexile measure is applied to the Rasch psychometric model to determine the Lexile measure for the entire text.

For example, books like "Arthur and the Recess Rookie" (370L), "Arthur Goes to Camp" (380L) and "Arthur, Clean Your Room!" (370L) fall within the Lexile Range of a typical second grader. These books have shorter sentences and words appear frequently. Conversely, books in the "Harry Potter" series (which measure between 880L and 950L), "Little Women" (1300L) and "Don Quixote" (1410L) contain longer sentences and more complex words.

What is the Lexile Book Database and what can I do with it?

Once you have a student's Lexile measure, you can search the Lexile Book Database to find books that are similar to the student's reading level.

How will this benefit my students and me?

The Lexile Framework help teachers set measurable goals, monitor and evaluate reading programs, and easily track progress without additional testing. In addition, it provides teachers with an excellent means of encouraging parental involvement by giving parents a clear idea of their child's progress, and a selection of books that the child should be reading. Time spent reading outside of school is a powerful predictor of future academic and workplace success.

How can the Lexile Framework help parents?

The Lexile Framework provides a clear, nonjudgmental way of communicating a student's reading abilities to parents. It helps generate reading lists that help parents guide their children to appropriately challenging reading materials. Lexiles can also be used to promote summer reading, and to select books that will provide more easily understood background information for homework assignments. When standards and scores are reported in Lexiles, families can be provided with examples of student goals or achievements by converting the Lexile measure into a range of familiar texts for outside reading.

How does the Lexile Framework differ from other leveled reading programs?

Lexiles are uniquely independent, accurate and actionable:

- * Lexiles are instrument independent. A wide variety of test, instructional software, book and article publishers have adopted Lexile measures. States and districts are not limited to a single supplier.

- * Lexiles use the same method and scale to measure readers and text. The same measurement approach and a common scale means greater accuracy in matching readers with text.

- * Lexiles apply to everyday reading. A student's Lexile measure is more than a test score. It applies to books and articles that a student encounters daily – at school, home and in the library – creating a strong school-home connection.

What does a Lexile measure tell me about what a student can read?

Lexile measures allow you to manage student reading comprehension. When reader and text measures match, the reader is "targeted." This is the basis for selecting text that is targeted to a student's reading ability, and the result is an expected 75-percent comprehension rate – not too difficult to be frustrating, but difficult enough to encourage reading progress. The student's interests, parental views on what constitutes age-appropriate material and teacher's instructional aims are also vital issues in managing a reader's growth.

Targeted readers report competence, confidence and control over the text. When a text measure is greater than a reader's measure, comprehension drops dramatically, and the subjective experience is one of frustration, inadequacy and lack of control. Conversely, when a reader's measure exceeds a text measure, comprehension goes up dramatically, and the reader experiences total control and automaticity. It is important to remember that a student's Lexile measure isn't a measure of his or her intelligence. The Lexile Framework is designed to match a student's reading ability (wherever it falls on the scale) with a text's readability (likewise, wherever it falls on the scale) for optimal reading success and enjoyment.

Why is the "75-percent comprehension" number so significant? Lexile measures allow you to manage comprehension. Matching a reader's Lexile measure to a text with the same Lexile measure leads to an expected 75-percent comprehension rate — not too difficult to be frustrating, but difficult enough to be challenging and to encourage reading progress. You can further adjust anticipated comprehension simply by choosing more or less difficult texts within a student's Lexile range, which spans 50L above and 100L below their Lexile measure.

Should students always choose material with increasingly higher Lexile measures?

While students should be encouraged to move on to more demanding material as their skills develop, it is not necessary for them to advance to a higher Lexile measure with each new book. By reading several titles at one Lexile measure, young readers can build confidence and comfort in their degree of reading comprehension before moving on to books at a higher measure.

Is it possible to tie grade-level equivalents to Lexile measures?

Because of the many problems associated with grade–level equivalents, there is not a direct translation from a specific Lexile® measure to a specific grade level. Within any classroom, there will be a range of readers and a range of materials to be read. For example, in a fifth–grade classroom there will be some readers who are ahead of the typical reader (about 250L above) and some readers who are behind the typical reader (about 250L below). To say that some books are “just right” for fifth graders assumes that all fifth graders are reading at the same level. The Lexile Framework® for Reading is intended to match readers with texts at whatever level the reader is reading.

If a student is an excellent reader, that does not mean he or she will comprehend a text typically found at a higher grade level. Without the necessary background knowledge, the words may not have much meaning. A high Lexile measure for a grade indicates that the student can read grade–level–appropriate materials at a higher comprehension level (maybe 90 percent). In the classroom, if a teacher is conducting a lesson on the solar system, he or she can recommend supplemental readings at a variety of levels—the weaker readers can read easier texts and the stronger readers can read harder texts. The educational levels displayed on the Lexile map indicate approximately the middle 50 percent of materials found in a typical grade–level classroom