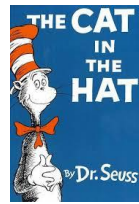


What is the reading grade level of that passage?



VS



When we first are learning to read, our reading level is based on a specific grade. For example, books at a 3rd grade reading level are typically understood by students in the third grade. Other than guessing, how can we determine what the grade level is for a book? (or a small passage).

Some obvious things to consider come to mind. Seemingly, the more words a book has the harder it would be to read. In relation to that, how many sentences does the book have? Are they short sentences (so there are a lot of them) or are they long sentences with lots of words and punctuation?

Another thing to consider is how difficult the words are themselves. Are they big words? As in do they have a lot of syllables?

There are two formulas used to determine the grade-level of a passage

Formula 1: Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level Index (FKGLI)

$$\text{grade level} = 0.39 \left(\frac{\text{Number of words}}{\text{Number of sentences}} \right) + 11.8 \left(\frac{\text{Number of syllables}}{\text{Number of words}} \right) - 15.59$$

Formula 2: Fog index

$$\text{grade level} = .4 \left(\frac{\text{Number of words}}{\text{Number of sentences}} + 100 \left(\frac{\text{Number of COMPLEX words}}{\text{Number of words}} \right) \right)$$

A complex word is defined as a word with **3 or more syllables** EXCEPT in the following cases

- The third syllable is -ed, -es, -ing
- If the word is a proper noun
- If the word is a HYPENATED compound word

Examples:

Complex word	Not a complex word
<p><i>demonstrating</i></p> <p>Why? Yes it ends in -ing BUT even without -ing it would be 3 syllables on its own (demonstrate)</p>	<p><i>updating</i></p> <p>Why? The -ing makes this be a 3 syllable word. Without the -ing (update) is just 2 syllables</p>
<p><i>platypus</i></p> <p>Why? This is a 3 syllable word and it is not a proper noun</p>	<p><i>Sprayberry</i></p> <p>Why? Even though it is 3 syllables it is referring to an exact place (proper noun)</p>
<p><i>jellyfish</i></p> <p>Why? This is a 3 syllable word, yes it is complex, but it is not hyphenated so it is OK.</p>	<p><i>anti-establishment</i></p> <p>Why? Even though establishment is a 4 syllable word it is part of a hyphenated word. Not complex, and it only counts as 1 word.</p>

Assignment:

- 1) Determine the reading level of the opening of the Declaration of Independence (1776).
 - a) First use the FKGLI. (Include the formula with the variables you counted)

 - b) Now use the Fog index (Include the formula with the variables you counted)

 - c) Why are these numbers different?

- 2) Determine the reading level of the passage of Martin Luther King Jr.' "I have a dream" speech
 - a) First use the FKGLI (Include the formula with the variables you counted)

 - b) Now use the Fog index (Include the formula with the variables you counted)

 - c) Why are these numbers different?

- 3) Since both of these documents were meant to reach *all* Americans, which one would do a better job? Why?

- 4) Choose one of the children's books at the front of the class (or one of your own from home)
 - a) What book did you select?
 - b) Predict the reading level.
 - c) Determine the reading level with the FKGLI (Include the formula with the variables you counted)

 - d) Determine the reading level with the Fog (Include the formula with the variables you counted)

 - e) Are you surprised with what you found out? Why?

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

I HAVE A DREAM:

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a *dream* today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when *all* of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual.

Free at last! Free at last!

Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!