What does the Lexile measure mean?

There are two Lexile® measures: a Lexile reader measure and a Lexile text measure. Each has a separate, though related meaning. When used together, the measures can help a reader choose a book at an appropriate level of difficulty. The Lexile reader measure also can be used to monitor a reader's growth in reading ability over time.

The Lexile reader measure tells where a person's reading ability is on the Lexile scale. Lexile reader measures are reported from 0L (0 Lexile) to 2000L (2000 Lexile). The Lexile scale is a developmental scale for reporting reading ability, so a higher number means a higher level of reading ability. A Lexile reader measure usually is obtained by having the reader take a test of reading comprehension. The reader's score on the test is reported as a Lexile measure. Readers who score below 0L receive a score of BR (Beginning Reader).

The Lexile text measure tells where a book's readability is on the Lexile scale. Lexile text measures, like Lexile reader measures, are reported from 0L (0 Lexile) to 2000L (2000 Lexile). Scores below OL are reported as BR, which indicates that the text is at a level appropriate for a Beginning Reader. The lower a book's Lexile measure, the easier it will likely be to comprehend. For example, a text with a Lexile measure of 850L will most likely be easier for a reader to comprehend than a text with a measure of 950L.

It is important to note that the Lexile measure of a book refers to its text difficulty only. A Lexile measure does not address the content or quality of the book. Lexile measures are based on two well-established predictors of how difficult a text is to comprehend: word frequency and sentence length. Many other factors affect the relationship between a reader and a book, including its content, the age and interests of the reader, and the design of the actual book. The Lexile measure is a good starting point in the book-selection process, with these other factors then being considered.

A very useful feature of Lexile measures is that they can be used to predict how well a reader will comprehend a text that has a Lexile measure. For example, if a reader has a Lexile measure of 600L (600 Lexile), the reader will be forecasted to comprehend approximately 75% of a book with the same Lexile measure (600L). When the Lexile measures and the Lexile scale were developed, the 75% comprehension rate was set at the point where the difference between the Lexile reader measure and the Lexile text measure is 0L. The 75% comprehension rate is called "targeted" reading. This rate is based on independent reading; if the reader receives help, the comprehension rate will increase. The target reading rate is the point at which a reader will comprehend enough to understand the text, but also will face some reading challenges. At this point, a reader is not bored by text that is too easy, but also does not experience too much difficulty in understanding.



For more information, visit www.Lexile.com. In some cases, a reader may not want to choose a book at the 75% forecasted comprehension rate. The reader may choose a book that will be more challenging (less than 75% forecasted comprehension). At other times, the reader may choose a book for easy, independent reading (90% or higher forecasted comprehension). To adjust the forecasted comprehension rate, simply look for a text that has a different Lexile measure. If the Lexile text measure is higher than the Lexile reader measure, forecasted comprehension goes down. If the Lexile text measure is lower than the Lexile reader measure, forecasted comprehension goes up. For example, if a reader wants to read a book independently at a 90% comprehension rate, he or she simply can choose a book with a Lexile text measure approximately 250L below his or her Lexile reader measure. A reader with a Lexile measure of 900L would choose a book with a Lexile text measure around 650L. Table 1 shows how changing the Lexile text measure changes the forecasted comprehension rate.



TABLE 1: Comprehension rates for the same reader with different books.

Lexile Reader Measure	Lexile Text Measure	Book Titles	Forecasted Comprehension
1000L	750L	The Handmaid's Tale	90%
1000L	1000L	The Lagoon and Other Stories	75%
1000L	1250L	Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby	50%
1000L	1500L	Don Quixote	25%

When choosing books, it is best to consider a range of Lexile measures, rather than only focusing on one Lexile measure. This "Lexile range" is the suggested range of Lexile measures that a reader should be reading. The Lexile range for a reader is 50L above his or her Lexile measure to 100L below. This range takes into account measurement error found in the tests and in the measurement of books. If a student attempts material above his or her Lexile range, the level of challenge may be too great for the student to be able to construct very much meaning from the text when reading independently. Likewise, material below the reader's Lexile range may provide that student with little comprehension challenge. Material above or below the reader's Lexile range can be used for specific instructional purposes.

The Lexile scale is a developmental scale, meaning it can be used to show whether a reader's ability is developing over various proficiency levels. This feature allows educators to monitor a reader's growth over time. If a student's reading growth slows down too much or even stalls, it may be necessary to provide supplemental reading instruction.



To find the Lexile measure of books, go to www.Lexile.com.



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