

## **The Lexile Framework for Reading**

### **General Information for Teachers**

The Lexile Framework® for Reading is a scientific approach to reading and text measurement. There are two Lexile measures:

1. Lexile Reader Measure: This measure represents a person's reading ability on the Lexile scale.
2. Lexile Text Measure: This measure represents a text's difficulty level as related to the Lexile scale.

When these two measures are used together, they can help a reader in choosing a book or other reading material that is at an appropriate reading level which takes into account and consideration an appropriate reading comprehension level. The Lexile reader measure can also be used to monitor a reader's growth over time. This type of measure will illustrate growth over a period of time which is extremely helpful to teachers in monitoring reading level growth of children. Lexile measures can be obtained on many different assessments, MAP® being one of these.

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 parents and teachers to encourage reader progress using Lexile measures and a broad range of instructional materials that can be aligned to the Lexile leveling system.

As the most widely adopted reading measure in use today, Lexiles give teachers and parents the confidence to choose materials that will improve student reading skills across school subjects and at home. Tens of thousands of books and tens of millions of articles have Lexile measures, hundreds of publishers Lexile their materials and all major standardized tests can report student reading scores in Lexiles

### **Why Does a Specific Measure Change or Vary?**

Parents and teachers often notice that a student's score on an achievement test differs from one occasion to the next, even when the occasions are close together in time. When scores increase, it is usually *assumed* that this is because the student has learned additional material (though this is not necessarily always true — the student could have made some lucky guesses!). However, when the scores go down there is virtually always concern. Sometimes, students must retake a test (for example because they do not score well enough the first time to meet a promotion standard or some other criterion.) When this happens the second score is usually a little different than the first one. Why? There are two fundamental reasons.

- One reason that a student's score, say in reading, can change from one occasion to the next is that the amount of reading ability the student possesses has actually changed. The student has perhaps benefited from additional instruction and experience, and then becomes a stronger reader. In these cases, the actual amount of the skills being measured has changed. This explanation is more plausible when the time between the two test scores is sufficient for the student to have benefited from additional instruction or experience. To conclude that a change in scores is due to improvement, one has to allow enough time between assessments for improvement to take place.
- A second reason that a student's score in reading could change is that something else affects his or her ability to respond to the test. These might be *internal* or *external* influences, but they have nothing to do with the student's actual reading ability (except that they prevent the student from responding in a way that is indicative of the true level of reading ability.) For example, the student might have been tired on testing day and was not able to respond effectively. Perhaps he or she failed to have breakfast before leaving for school and hunger proved to be a distraction. The possibilities are many. External influences can be just as varied. Perhaps there was noise in the hall while the student was taking the test. Perhaps the light was flickering and causing annoyance. Again, the possibilities are nearly endless.

The key difference in these two cases is that in the first case, the change in the student's score is relevant to the construct being measured. The change represents an actual increase in the student's reading ability. In the second case, the change in the student's score is unrelated to the true attribute of interest. This kind of change is irrelevant to the student's true reading ability, but it keeps us from getting a true picture. Unfortunately, every time a student takes a test any of the above factors can influence the result. Consequently, when a student retakes a test, the score can vary (up or down) for reasons that are relevant to the construct of interest, or for reasons that are irrelevant.

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