Frequently Asked Questions: Using The Lexile® Framework for Reading with the Common Core State Standards and the RIT Scale

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What is the Lexile range shown on MAP Reports?

The Lexile range is a measure (displayed as a 150-point range) resulting from a correlation between the NWEA Reading RIT score and the MetaMetrics® Lexile scale that helps identify level-appropriate reading material for an individual student.

How is Lexile measured on the MAP assessment?

NWEA Research collaborated with MetaMetrics (developers of the Lexile) to develop an algorithm to calculate the Lexile measure and range from the RIT scale. The relationship between the Reading RIT score and the Lexile range is a simple linear transformation of the observed Reading RIT score. MetaMetrics provided NWEA with a set of items that had Lexile estimates. After performing a correlation study, NWEA derived a formula to show the relationship between RIT and Lexile.

Does NWEA apply the Lexile text measure to all Reading and Language items?

NWEA applies the Lexile text measure only to passage assets for the MAP Reading and Language Usage tests. This is because the Lexile Framework is designed to measure conventional prose text only; the Lexile text measure is not recommended for texts such as lists or multiple choice questions.

What are some limitations of the Lexile measure in determining the text complexity of a passage?

The two factors used to establish a Lexile measure are word frequency (the frequency of words that are not familiar to a student) and sentence length (which adds a level of syntactic complexity). Texts that lack conventional punctuation, such as poetry and recipes, cannot be measured, as the sentence length is not accurately "read" by the Lexile Analyzer®. Additionally, some texts may contain sophisticated content and complex themes but stylistically are composed of short sentences and/or "high frequency" or familiar words.

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These texts require careful application of qualitative measures. (The novel *Grapes of Wrath*, for example, falls into the grades 2-3 range on the Lexile scale, but its complex themes and mature content make it an appropriate text for higher grades.) NWEA content level experts carefully review assets for grade-level appropriateness by using a qualitative rubric to evaluate levels of meaning and knowledge demands.

How has the Lexile measure changed with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

MetaMetrics realigned the Lexile bands to support the text complexity that the CCSS require. Working backwards from the level of text students need to be able to handle at the college and career readiness level, they provide a Lexile band for each grade band. These ranges are the level of texts students need to be able to independently engage with as they move through school in order to end up being able to interact with college and career level texts once they graduate.

The Lexile bands have been updated to include the new ranges or "stretches" for the Common Core State Standards.

Grade Band	Current Lexile Band	"Stretch" Lexile Band*
K-1	N/A	N/A
2-3	450L–725L	420L–820L
4-5	645L–845L	740L–1010L
6-8	860L–1010L	925L–1185L
9-10	960L–1115L	1050L–1335L
11-CCR	1070L–1220L	1185L–1385L

* Common Core State Standards for English, Language Arts, Appendix A (Additional Information), NGA and CCSSO, 2012

Source: The Lexile® Framework for Reading: Text Complexity Grade Bands and Lexile® Bands
http://www.lexile.com/using-lexile/lexile-measures-and-the-ccssi/text-complexity-grade-bands-and-lexile-ranges/

What other measures are in place to address text complexity as NWEA acquires and develops Common Core passages for passage-associated item sets?

NWEA provides item writers with specifications that indicate the desired readability and/or grade range for each passage in order to help achieve a particular level of text complexity. Three quantitative readability scores – *Lexile, Flesch-Kincaid,* and *Coh-Metrix* – are recorded for each passage. A rubric is completed to apply qualitative measures of text complexity to each passage using the following criteria: *Levels of Meaning, Structure, Language Convention and Clarity,* and *Knowledge Demand*. These readabilities are adjusted or maintained as needed throughout the development process.

How do the new "stretch" Lexile bands correlate with the RIT scale?

Although the expectations around text complexity and Lexile have changed with the CCSS, the correspondence between the Lexile scale and the RIT scale has not changed. What has changed has been a shift in focus on the level of complexity of texts that students need to be able to handle on their own at the end of each grade and by the time they graduate.

Using the Lexile bands from the new research on text complexity from the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, the associated RIT bands would be:

Grade Band	"Stretch" Lexile Band	Associated RIT Band
2nd-3rd	420L-820L	190-212
4th-5th	740L-1010L	208-223
6th-8th	925L-1185L	218-232
9th-10th	1050L-1335L	225-241
11th-CCR	1185L-1385L	232-244

What resources are available to educators to help students who are reading and comprehending text at, below, or above the Common Core "stretch" Lexile bands?

The following links will direct educators to some resources to help students as they read and apply strategies to comprehend complex text:

- Achieve the Core (Student Achievement Partners)
  Common Core Close Reading sample lessons across grade levels, including strategies for helping struggling readers interact with the text.
- Aspects of Text Complexity: Vocabulary Research Base by David Liben (Gates Foundation)
  Research base on vocabulary instruction as a way to improve comprehension of complex text.
- Implementing the Common Core State Standards: A Primer on "Close Reading of Text" (The Aspen Institute)
  Attributes of Close Reading lessons and considerations for teachers and district leaders on Close Reading implementation.
- Up-Close Reading: Tackling Complex Text (Scholastic, Inc.)
  Article by Shari Edwards on how to choose text and use strategies with students to accomplish Close Reading.
- Smart and Bored: Are We Failing Our High Achievers? (Scholastic, Inc.)
  Article by Samantha Cleaver on strategies for engaging high-achieving students.

Where can I find more information on the Lexile Framework?

- The Lexile® Framework for Reading: Common Core Standards

Review the following research briefs from MetaMetrics:

- The Lexile® Framework for Reading Quantifies the Reading Ability Needed for "College & Career Readiness"
- Bending the Text Complexity Curve to Close the Gap
- The Text Complexity Continuum in Grades 1-12

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