

EBSCOhost Student Success Tools

A Student Guide to Lexiles



This guide gives you practical information about Lexiles—what they are, what they mean, and how you can use them to find reading materials that match your reading ability and interests.

Perhaps you already recognize the term “Lexile” as the reading level number for an article in an EBSCOhost database search. Or maybe you know that a Lexile is a measure of your reading ability based on your score from a reading test. But do you know what the number really means?

What is a Lexile?

A Lexile is a measure of reading ability and text difficulty. Lexiles are part of The Lexile Framework® for Reading, a formula that matches readers to books and articles based on their reading ability. Lexile measures are expressed as a number followed by an “L.” They range from below 200L for beginning readers and text to above 1700L for advanced readers and text.

You can think of using Lexiles in terms of choosing a new pair of shoes. When you know your foot size, you can pick the right shoe size and the style you like best. Lexiles work like that. When you know your Lexile measure, you can choose books and articles that are the “right fit” for your reading ability and interests.

Lexiles are the most widely used reading measure in use today. More than 100,000 books and 80 million articles have Lexile measures. Each year, more than 20 million students across the country receive a Lexile measure at school.

Lexiles are not based on specific grade levels. In your classroom, you and your classmates will have different reading abilities. Lexiles are intended to match you with the right books and articles at whatever level you are reading.

How Can Lexiles Help Me Find Reading Materials?

Lexiles can help you find books and articles based on your individual reading ability and interests. For example, if you are a 980L reader, you should be able to read and understand most texts at this level. It is best to find materials within a range of 100L below and 50L above your Lexile measure. Texts below 980L will be easier to read; texts above 980L will be more challenging.

I don’t know my Lexile measure. Can I get a Lexile measure from EBSCOhost, based on the magazines I like to read?

If you or your teachers do not know your actual Lexile measure, you can use EBSCOhost to estimate your reading ability. Log into EBSCOhost on your library’s computer and choose a database with Lexiles, such as Primary Search, Middle Search Plus or MAS Ultra. On the **Basic Search** screen, check **Full Text**, then type in a magazine name in the **Publication** field. Click

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Search. EBSCOhost will bring up all of the articles from that magazine. Each article will have a different Lexile measure, which will give you a general idea of the magazine's reading level.

Now, choose an article that interests you. If the article is too easy to read, its Lexile may be lower than your actual reading ability. If the article is too difficult to read, its Lexile measure may be above your reading ability. Remember, this will only be an estimate of your actual Lexile measure.

Can I use books I like to find my Lexile measure?

There is a free Lexile Book Database on the Lexile Web site that provides Lexile measures for the books you like to read. The database can be found by following this link:

<http://lexile.com/fab/>.

You can use the Lexile Book Database to estimate your Lexile measure. For example, if the book you choose is too easy to read, its Lexile measure may be lower than your actual reading ability. If you have trouble understanding the content, the Lexile measure may be too high.

Good luck and good reading!