

Checking Readability

The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability Test



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<https://research.weill.cornell.edu/irb> 

1

What is readability?

Readability is a measure of how easy a piece of text is to read.

The level of complexity of the text, its familiarity, legibility and typography all feed into how readable your text is.

Readability is a key factor in user experience. Accessible content builds trust with your audience.

<https://readable.com/readability/what-is-readability/>



2

Readability Matters at WCM

- At WCM, all informed consent forms (ICFs) must meet the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level 8 readability standards
 - Shorter sentences and words
 - ~~Utilize vocabulary in a manner consistent with the comprehension of a 14-year-old~~
 - Use language a 9th grader can understand
- ICFs that do not fall within the Level 8 range may be returned by the IRB for revisions



The Flesch-Kincaid Readability Test

- Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula (1948)

$$RE = 206.835 - (1.015 \times ASL) - (84.6 \times ASW)$$



- Flesch Grade Level Readability Formula (1976)

- 90.0 - 100.0: average 5th grader
- 60.0 - 70.0: 8th and 9th graders ← **The sweet spot!**
- 0.0 - 30.0: college graduates



How Do I Check My Score?

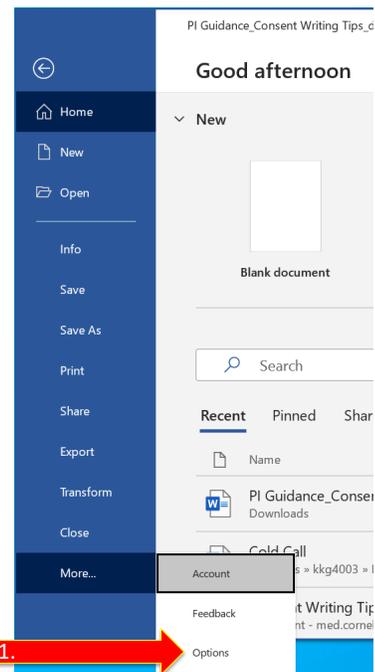
Instructions for PC Users



5

For PC Users

1. From within the document you'd like to score, select **"File"**, then go to **"More"** at the bottom of the menu, then **"Options"**



6

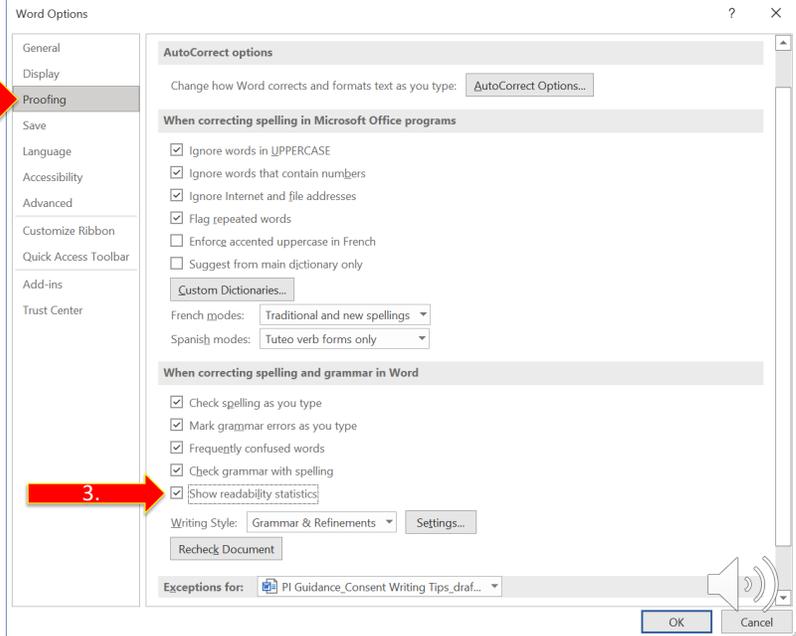


6

For PC Users

2. In the window that pops up, select "Proofing" in the sidebar menu
3. Toward the bottom of the screen, make sure "Show readability statistics" is selected

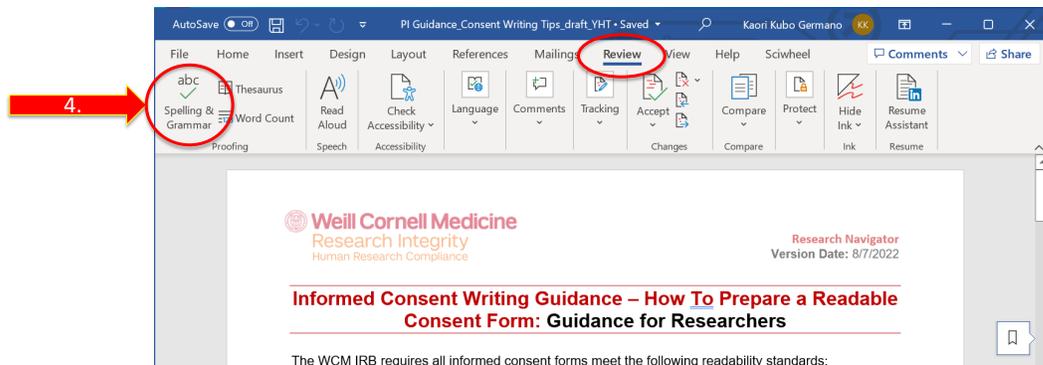
Once you have verified the check box is selected, click "OK"



7

For PC Users

4. In your Word document, go to the "Review" toolbar and click on "Spelling and Grammar"



8

8

For PC Users

- 5. Once your Spelling & Grammar check is complete, click the "OK" button
- 6. A Readability Statistics window will pop up. The Flesch Kincaid Grade Level is your document's score.

projects that involve the collection of blood or other fluids should (s) to be taken. Do not use ml. or cc. as a volume measure, give n teaspoons or tablespoons. Please spell them out rather than words as tel

Microsoft Word

Spelling and grammar check is complete.

OK

5.

Readability Statistics

Counts	
Words	947
Characters	5,331
Paragraphs	53
Sentences	57
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.4
Words per Sentence	14.6
Characters per Word	4.9
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	54.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9.0
Passive Sentences	21.0%

OK

6.



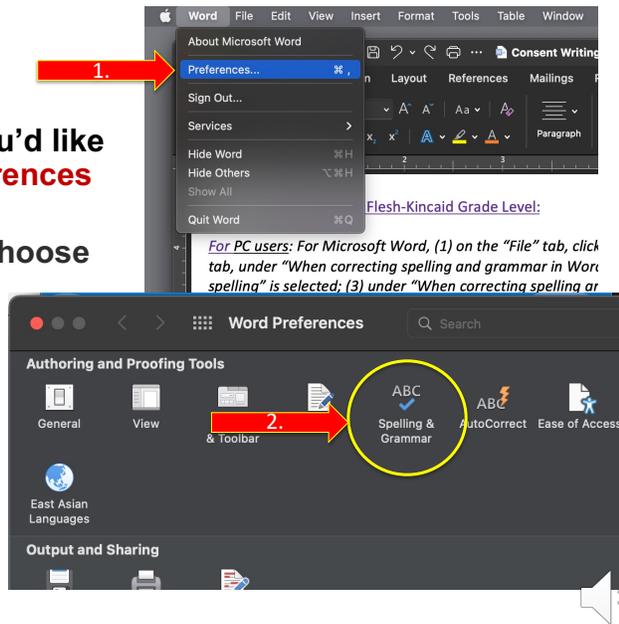
How Do I Check My Score?

Instructions for Mac Users



For Mac Users

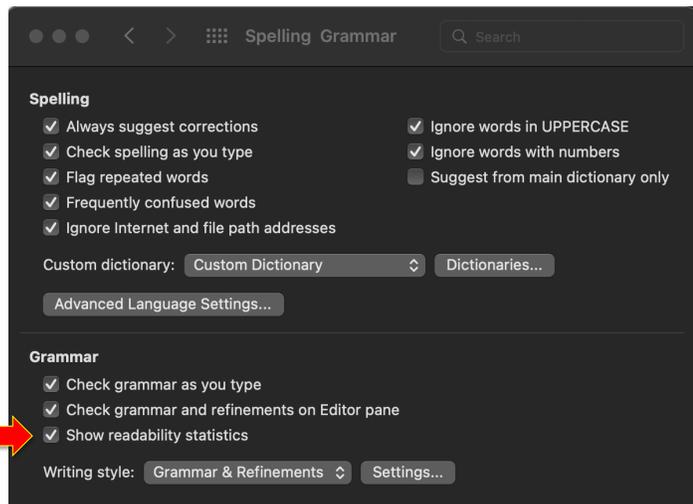
1. From within the document you'd like to score, select **Word > Preferences** on the browser toolbar.
2. In the window that pops up, choose **"Spelling & Grammar"**



For Mac Users

3. Under the Grammar heading, make sure the check box next to **"Show readability statistics"** is selected

Once you have verified the check box is selected, you may x out of the window.



For Mac Users

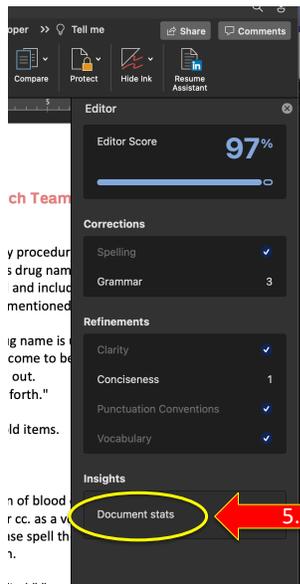
4. In your Word document, go to the "Review" toolbar and click on "Editor"



13

For Mac Users

- 5. In the sidebar that pops up, click on the "Document Stats" button.
- 6. If you click on it again, you will receive this pop-up message:



14

For Mac Users

- Your Grade Level score

Readability Statistics

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Paragraphs	51
Sentences	57
Averages	
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Words per Sentence	14.6
Characters per Word	4.9
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	54.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9
Passive Sentences	21%

OK



Interpreting your score

Score	School level (US)	Notes
100.00–90.00	5th grade	Very easy to read. Easily understood by an average 11-year-old student.
90.0–80.0	6th grade	Easy to read. Conversational English for consumers.
80.0–70.0	7th grade	Fairly easy to read.
70.0–60.0	8th & 9th grade	Plain English. Easily understood by 13- to 15-year-old students.
60.0–50.0	10th to 12th grade	Fairly difficult to read.
50.0–30.0	College	Difficult to read.
30.0–10.0	College graduate	Very difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates.
10.0–0.0	Professional	Extremely difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates.

Flesch, Rudolf. "How to Write Plain English". University of Canterbury. Archived from the original on July 12, 2016



