Tips on How to Adjust Readability and/or Compute Readability

It helps to understand that readability is impacted by three factors:

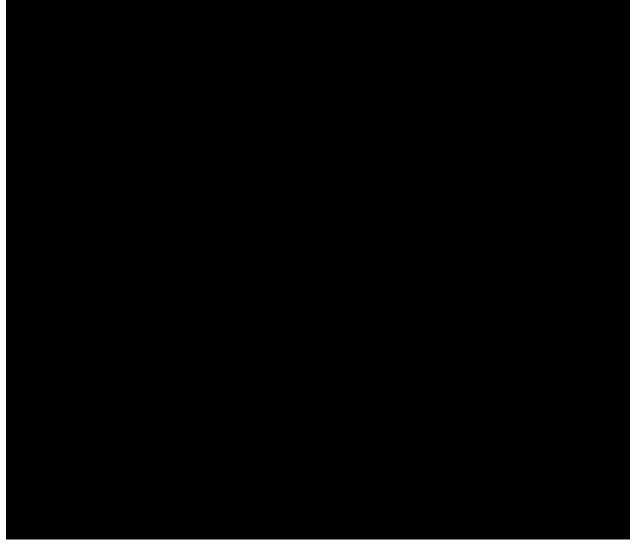| Quantitative factors	Such as number of words in sentences and number of syllables words
Qualitative factors	Such as sentence structure, using words with multiple meanings, levels of meaning or purpose, background knowledge required for comprehension, and language conventions
Reader and task considerations	Such as knowledge or experience of the reader, and purpose and of the text

First Steps Technology computes readability using primarily quantitative formulas. Therefore, the following tips should help you adjust readability for IRB application documents:

x   Reduce length of sentences.

x   Simplify sentence structure.

x   Reduce use of long words.

x   For complex terminology, consider when a substitute word works.

For more detailed ideas, use the PROSE strategy below.

Consider Qualitative and Reader/Task factors of readability.

Figure 1. PROSE Checklist for improving school-to-home written communication.

If you need to create a recruitment letter or communication to individuals, this PROSE strategy may also be helpful. This PROSE strategy comes from the Nagro article (citation below).

How to compute readability:

For consistency in computing readability across formats, please use the online readability program at http://www.readabilityformulas.com/ Click on the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level and Then click on the Flesch Grade Calculator. Copy and Paste your text into the text box. Then click calculate.

Yes, there are other options as well, be the IRB committee will be using this site to check readability of your documents (such as consent, and assent forms).

Nagro, S.A. (2015). PROSE checklist: Strategies for improving school-home written communication. Teaching Exceptional Children, 47(5), 260.