

The Fog Index

Instructions for analysing your written work

- 1 Select a sample of your work that has around 100 words
- 2 Find out the average number of words in a sentence from your sample by counting the number of complete sentences and then dividing that into the number of words
- 3 You will then need to count the number of words which have three or more syllables. You must NOT include words with capital letters, compound words such as bookkeeper, and words that end in *-es* or *ed*
- 4 Add the average number of words per sentence to the total number of three or more syllabled words and then multiply by 0.4

Calculation

a) $\frac{\text{number of words}}{\text{number of sentences}} =$

b) $\frac{\text{average number of words (a)}}{\text{syllabled words}} =$

c) $\frac{\text{total of b)}}{0.4} =$

Notes

Example

For example: if you average 20 words to a sentence, and ten complex words in every 100 words, your total is 30. Four-tenths of this is 12. That is your Fog Index.

Readers Digest has a Fog Index of between 8 and 9. *Time* magazine is about 11 as is The Sun newspaper. If you're higher than 13 you're hard to read. The Daily Telegraph has a readability factor of 15.

The following Churchill quote has a Fog Index of 3.2. "We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France. We shall fight in the seas and oceans. We shall fight on the beaches, in the fields, in the streets, and in the hills. We shall never surrender." (**Winston Churchill**)