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**Achieve3000's LevelSet^{TM} Assessment
Frequently Asked Questions**

This document contains common questions about the LevelSet Assessment and the Lexile Framework for Reading. Click one of links below to go directly to the questions that pertain to that section.

Understanding Lexiles and the Lexile® Framework

What is the Lexile Framework?
The Lexile Framework is a scientific approach to reading and text measurement that has become the most widely adopted reading measure in use today. Developed by MetaMetrics, beginning with a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in 1984, Lexile measures are the result of more than 20 years of ongoing research.

The Lexile Framework is unique because it measures text difficulty and reader ability on the same scale. This makes for an exceptionally effective matching of readers to appropriate texts. The Lexile Framework has been aligned to many national and state norm-referenced assessments, including the Common Core. In 2003, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) chose the Lexile Framework as its own measure of text difficulty. For more information go to www.lexile.com/about-lexile/How-to-get-lexile-measures/

Lexile measures are based on the relationship between two well-established predictors of how difficult a text is to comprehend: semantic difficulty and syntactic complexity. In the Lexile system, semantic difficulty is measured using the mean log word frequency, which is the logarithm of the number of times a word from the text appears in each five-million words of a corpus of nearly 600-million words. Syntactic difficulty is a measure of the length of the sentences in a passage. Long sentences are likely to contain more clauses and therefore communicate not only more information and ideas, but also an interrelationship between them. Researchers also speculate that longer sentences require the reader to retain more information in short-term memory. The Lexile equation takes into account both the measurement of word frequency and sentence length, resulting in a measure of reading difficulty expressed as a Lexile. For more information, visit the Metametrics website at http://lexile.com.

Why did Achieve3000 choose the Lexile Framework for Reading?
Achieve3000 chose to use the Lexile Framework after an intensive study of many readability measures. A key advantage to using the Lexile scales, as opposed to other readability measures, is that the Lexile Framework evaluates both text difficulty and reader ability using the same scale. This means the ability to comprehend and the material being read are evaluated using the same criteria, lending it greater effectiveness in terms of matching readers with appropriate texts Since the Lexile Framework has been extensively validated by research—including a 15-year study funded by the National Institute of Health—Achieve3000 and the education community are confident in its superior ability to match readers to text.

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How Does Achieve3000 use students' Lexile Levels?
Achieve3000 uses Lexile levels to scientifically match students to an appropriately-leveled passage. Students receive a Lexile measure initially from the LevelSet pre-test assessment. From that point on, their Lexile levels are adjusted on the 1st of each month by the system as they work through the program.

In much the same way as Achieve measures each student's Lexile level, each reading passage is assigned a discrete Lexile measure, thereby placing students and text on the same Lexile scale.

Achieve3000 then uses this information to match readers to text. When a student logs in, the system automatically finds the content that most closely matches her Lexile level. The student will generally receive an article that is no more than 50 points above her Lexile level. In this way, students read about the same topics as their classmates, but the difficulty level of the passage is tailored to their individual Lexile levels. For example, in a 6th-grade class, Frances has a Lexile level of 960L, while her classmate has a Lexile level of 770L. Their reading selections will be about the same current news event, but the level of the passage presented will be at different Lexile levels. In this way, both students read a "tailor made" article.

Students who are identified as Developing Readers may require additional assistance when reading the content. They may get this assistance through use of the audio support or through teacher intervention.

This method leads to an expected 75% comprehension rate—the content is not too difficult to be frustrating, but difficult enough to be challenging and to encourage reading progress. We encourage you to monitor student performance to ensure that students are scoring above 75% on the Activities.

LevelSet Assessment Specifications

Is the LevelSet assessment considered a norm-referenced test or a criterion-referenced test?
LevelSet is a criterion-referenced assessment. The test measures mastery of specific reading skills and this facilitates matching appropriately-leveled reading materials to students. In addition, the Activities in Achieve3000 are used in a criterion-reference manner, measuring comprehension of the materials.

How many questions are on the test?
The LevelSet assessment has 30 questions. To ensure students complete test items that are appropriate for their reading levels, the system will adapt to an easier version of the test if several successive items are missed. Most students will receive 30 questions, but some students may receive up to 40 items if several items are missed and the system needs to move to an easier level of the assessment.

How many levels are on the test and how are students assigned the appropriate level?
LevelSet is available in both English and Spanish. For each language, there are 11 versions, corresponding to grade levels 2-12.

For students' first pretests with Achieve3000, they receive a level of the assessment that corresponds to their grade in school. Students in Achieve Intervention and Achieve Language will receive a level that is two grade levels below their class grade, and students in Achieve Enrichment will receive a level that is one grade level above their class grade.

The level of assessment for all LevelSet assessments following students' first pretest will be determined by their current Lexile level, not their grade in school or program placement.

How can I give a student a different version of the test?
If you believe that your student would benefit from being administered a different version of the test (for example, an easier version for a student reading far below grade level), you can manually set the test version for individual students by editing the student Academic Profile. For example, if you have a 10th-grade student reading at a 3rd-grade reading level, you may want to administer an easier version of LevelSet to avoid a frustrating test

experience for the student. You can change the LevelSet Grade Level to the 3rd or 4th grade version so she will not receive the 10th grade assessment when logging in for the first time.

To make this adjustment, go to:

- *ADMIN > User Administration > Edit student and teacher information.*
- Select the student you wish to reset.
- Scroll to the bottom of the screen and select *LevelSet Grade Level.*
- Any changes made to a student profile must be submitted (saved) for them to take place.

How do I assign LevelSet in Spanish?

If you have a student who will take LevelSet in Spanish, you must assign that student to the Language Edition -- Full Spanish. The Spanish version of the assessment is then automatically delivered to the student.

How do dual language students take LevelSet?

If you have students who will use Achieve3000 in both English and Spanish, they will need to take the test once in English and once in Spanish. As you set up your class, be sure to mark the class "DUAL LANGUAGE." When the student first logs in, a drop-down menu will appear for the class in English (default) and the class in Spanish. Students will need to click the English class to see LevelSet in English. Students should then click the Spanish Class to take the assessment in Spanish.

Does LevelSet have alternate forms?

In both English and Spanish, LevelSet has three alternate forms that are administered randomly to students.

LevelSet Assessment - Administration

When is LevelSet administered?

LevelSet can be administered up to three times a year. Typically, it is administered once at the beginning of the school year (or the first time students log in) and again at the end of the school year. For the pretest, the assessment displays automatically and students cannot enter the Achieve3000 program until it is completed. An interim assessment is also available, which is administered mid-year. By default, this interim assessment is set for all students. It can be turned off or set for sub-groups of students and modify the dates it is available. For more information on LevelSet scheduling, review the classroom, school, and district LevelSet guides.

How do I assign LevelSet to my students for the first time?

You do NOT need to assign the LevelSet pretest. The assessment is automatically delivered to students when they first log in to Achieve3000. The test is only available to students during school hours or the time range you set in the Supervised Student Work Time field in the program. For more information on LevelSet scheduling, review the classroom, school, and district LevelSet guides.

What can I do to prepare my students to take LevelSet?

It is very important for you to adequately prepare students and the testing environment for LevelSet. Students should be well-rested and motivated to try their best. The test environment should be quiet, and computers should be ready and working. These tactics will help ensure that test scores accurately reflect students' reading levels. Click here to access the document: How Do I Prepare By Students for LevelSet? that is located in the Lexiles and LevelSet Learning Path.

After students have completed the assessment, how do I see the results?

As soon as one student in any of your classes finishes LevelSet, the top left bulletin board on the Teacher's Edition Home page will display the following message: "LevelSet scores are available!" This message will remain available as long as any student in any of your classes has taken LevelSet within the past three weeks. This message is a reminder to check your students' LevelSet scores and act upon any that don't match what you know about students' reading abilities.

After I click on the link about available LevelSet scores, I see a message about LevelSet scores that need my immediate review. What does this mean?
We inform teachers if a LevelSet test is completed in a potentially invalid way. There are three reasons a test can be flagged as invalid: if it is completed too quickly (in less than five minutes), too slowly (in more than 60 minutes), or with a patterned-response-type behavior (for example, the student answered A to every question, or alternated A and B). You can see which students completed a LevelSet test in a potentially invalid way using the *Possibly Invalid LevelSet Administrations* report. Additionally, in the report 'How has Lexile performance changed over time,' a footnote will appear next to any potentially invalid LevelSet assessment. You should have a conversation with these students to ensure an honest good-faith effort was made on the test. Using the 'Possibly Invalid LevelSet Administrations' report, teachers should confirm potentially invalid LevelSet assessments as valid or invalid. Teachers should use their professional judgment and knowledge of the student to decide if the assessment was a valid administration or not. For any assessment confirmed as invalid, teachers may reset or readminister the assessment. Please note that invalid LevelSet assessments may be readministered once per student per testing occasion. Please also note that, after teachers confirm an assessment as valid or invalid, the footnote will no longer appear on the report 'How has Lexile performance changed over time.'

You can reduce the number of students with potentially invalid scores by preparing students and the test environment for LevelSet testing. Please refer to these resources located in the Lexiles and LevelSet Learning Path:
- How Do I Prepare My Students for LevelSet?
- LevelSet Administration Guide: A Tool for Helping Your Students to Do their Best on LevelSet

How often may I re-administer LevelSet?
LevelSet may be re-administered once per student per testing occasion (e.g., Pre-Test is one testing occasion).

May I change a student's Lexile after completion of LevelSet?
Yes. You may change student Lexiles for three weeks following completion of LevelSet. Please note that the LevelSet score itself cannot be changed. Lexiles should only be changed with good reason; for example, it was discovered that the student did not wear his glasses the day of the test and could not see the items. After the three-week window, changes to Lexiles are strongly discouraged and must be completed by contacting Customer Support. As noted above, preparing students and the test environment for the LevelSet assessment will reduce the number of reading-level changes teachers need to complete. Please refer to these resources located in the Lexiles and LevelSet Learning Path:
- How Do I Prepare My Students for LevelSet?
- LevelSet Administration Guide: A Tool for Helping Your Students to Do their Best on LevelSet

Interpreting LevelSet Scores

How should I interpret Lexile scores?
Achieve3000 follows MetaMetrics recommendations regarding interpretation of Lexile scores: Students' Lexiles should be compared to the Lexile bands for being on track for College and Career for the students' grade.

The chart on the following page shows the College and Career Readiness bands used within the Achieve3000 system. These bands were developed by MetaMetrics and are based on the current, 'stretch' Lexile bands put forth by the Common Core. To use the chart, look for the row corresponding to the student's grade and find the column corresponding to her current Lexile. This will tell you how the student is progressing toward college and career readiness.

For example, Sonya is a fourth grade student and has a Lexile of 700L. Looking at the Lexile bands within the grade 4 row, we can see that Sonya is approaching being on track for college and career readiness.

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College and Career Readiness

Grade	Not On Track		On Track	
	Falls Far Below	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
1	BR111L and Below	BR110L – 185L	190L – 530L	535L and Above
2	150L and Below	155L – 415L	420L – 650L	655L and Above
3	265L and Below	270L – 515L	520L – 820L	825L and Above
4	385L and Below	390L – 735L	740L – 940L	945L and Above
5	500L and Below	505L – 825L	830L – 1010L	1015L and Above
6	555L and Below	560L – 920L	925L – 1070L	1075L and Above
7	625L and Below	630L – 965L	970L – 1120L	1125L and Above
8	660L and Below	665L – 1005L	1010L – 1185L	1190L and Above
9	775L and Below	780L – 1045L	1050L – 1260L	1265L and Above
10	830L and Below	835L – 1075L	1080L – 1335L	1340L and Above
11/12	950L and Below	995L – 1180L	1185L – 1385L	1390L and Above

Some of my students' Lexile scores have a BR in front of them. What does that mean?
Beginning Reader (BR) is a code given to readers and text that are below 0L on the Lexile scale. In some cases, for readers, a BR code is followed by a number and L (e.g., BR150L). A Lexile reader measure of BR150L indicates that the Lexile measure of the reader is 150 units below 0L. The smaller the number following the BR code, the more advanced the reader is. For example, a BR150L reader is more advanced than a BR200L reader.

One or more of my students has a yellow icon next to their name on reports. What does that mean?
In the Achieve3000 program, Developing Readers are identified based on their performance on LevelSet and on the multiple choice activities. Their performance suggests they are on their way to becoming independent readers. Their performance in the Achieve3000 program suggests they need sustained practice at their current reading level and may need assistance completing the multiple choice activities. For this reason, the Lexile levels of those students who have been identified as Developing Readers will remain at their current levels until they complete another LevelSet assessment. An interim LevelSet assessment will be available for scheduling about mid-way through the academic year to measure their reading progress and update these students' Lexile measures in the program. Developing Readers students are identified in Achieve3000 reports with a yellow triangle

Sometimes, students categorized as Developing Readers did not take the LevelSet assessment seriously and have a score much lower than their true reading abilities. If the system has identified test results as being potentially invalid, you will see a superscript next to their LevelSet score on the report 'How has Lexile performance changed over time?' For more information, you should consult the report titled 'Possibly Invalid LevelSet Administrations'. This report can be found in by selecting Admin > Assessment Communications.   You have the option of readministering the assessment from within this report. For more information about addressing invalid LevelSet assessment results, please consult the Learning Center.

My students' Lexile scores from Achieve3000 aren't the same as the Lexiles they have received on other assessments. How do I know which one is correct?
When comparing two tests that are designed to measure reading ability, the tests may result in different scores. There are a few reasons this occurs. Every test has a margin of error, known as *measurement error*. Error can result from many things, including factors related to the individual students, the testing situation, and many other

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sources. For example, sometimes a student may know the answers, but she is tired, distracted, or nervous; or, the student may misunderstand the test instructions. Essentially, this means that no test can provide a perfectly accurate measure of student reading. **Indeed, because of normal measurement error, it is highly unlikely for a student to receive identical Lexile measures even if he/she takes the same test twice.**

You should review all of a student's reading assessments, rather than focusing on only one measure. This will give a better understanding of a student's reading ability and can help make instructional decisions.

Measuring Ongoing Lexile Performance

How are Lexiles reviewed and updated throughout the school year?
For typical students, Lexile levels are reviewed by the system at the end of each month. If a student has completed at least four Activities related to the on Lexile Article since the last time their Lexile was updated, the system has enough information to evaluate the student's Lexile level to ensure the student is properly placed. The system examines students' responses on these Activities and combines that with information it already knows about the student to yield an updated Lexile score. Sometimes the Lexile stays the same, suggesting the student is properly placed. An increase in Lexile suggests the student gained reading skills. This might result in more difficult content being delivered to the student to match her progressing reading level. Students identified as Developing Readers remain at their initial Lexile levels to provide sustained practice with that level of text. Upon completion of a mid-year interim LevelSet assessment, the Lexile level is updated and Developing readers will receive content at this new level for the remainder of the academic year.

How does the system combine Activity performance and past information about the student to arrive at an updated Lexile?
The formula used to update student Lexile levels in between LevelSet assessments is known as a Bayesian algorithm. Bayesian methodology is a statistical approach for controlling the level of uncertainty in predicting a student's score by incorporating the student's prior scores into an adjustment to the current score. The more confident we are about the prior information, the lower the uncertainty and the smaller is the standard deviation of the prior information (Yen and Fitzpatrick, 2006). The result is that the adjusted score is a more accurate measure of the student's "true" ability level. Because it is a complex algorithm that relies on statistical probabilities, it may be difficult to understand why the system makes adjustments for some students and not others. As a general rule of thumb, students need to score above 75% on the Activities to increase their Lexile score in any given month.

When I look at the Activity report, one of my students has a superscript number next to an Activity score. What does this mean?
Achieve3000 informs teachers when an Activity is completed in one of three potentially invalid ways: too fast, too slow, or with a patterned response (e.g., all As). Activities completed in less than two minutes and more than 13 minutes will result in an alert, as will Activities completed with a patterned response. However, students in Achieve Intervention receive double time (26 minutes) before an activity is considered invalid. Any Activity identified as potentially invalid will not count toward the monthly review of students' Lexiles. You should have a follow-up conversation with students after seeing an alert to ensure best efforts on the Activities.

How long will I have each month to review Lexile scores that are suggested to decline and decide how to handle them?
You have one week to review Lexile scores that are suggested to decline. If you do not review and act upon scores that are suggested to decline, the student's Lexile will remain the same as the previous month. Additionally, there will be a superscript next to the student's Lexile on the report 'How has Lexile performance changed over time?' and the student's Lexile will not be eligible for a Lexile adjustment for 4 weeks and the completion of 8 activities.

Reference

Yen, W.M. & Fitzpatrick, A.R. (2006). "Item Response Theory." In R.L. Brennan (Ed.), *Educational Measurement* (Fourth Edition, pp. 111-154). Sponsored jointly by National Council on Measurement in Education and American Council on Education. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.