

Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine-Short Form

The Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine-Short Form (REALM-SF) is a 7-item word recognition test to provide clinicians with a valid quick assessment of patient health literacy. The REALM-SF has been validated and field tested in diverse research setting, and has excellent agreement with the 66-item REALM instrument in terms of grade-level assignments.

REALM-SF Validation study: Arozullah AM, Yarnold PR, Bennett CL, et al. Development and validation of a short-form, rapid estimate of adult literacy in medicine. *Med Care* 2007 November;45(11):1026–33. PMID: 18049342

Note: The REALM-SF was developed with AHRQ funding, independently of REALM. To obtain permission to use the REALM, contact Dr. Terry Davis at tdavis1@lsuhsc.edu.

Administering the REALM-SF: Suggested Introduction

"Providers often use words that patients don't understand. We are looking at words providers often use with their patients in order to improve communication between health care providers and patients. Here is a list of medical words.

Starting at the top of the list, please read each word aloud to me. If you don't recognize a word, you can say 'pass' and move on to the next word."

Interviewer: Give the participant the word list. If the participant takes more than 5 seconds on a words, say "pass" and point to the next word. Hold the scoring sheet so that it is not visible to the participant.

Scores and Grade Equivalents for the REALM-SF

SCORE	GRADE RANGE
0	Third grade and below; will not be able to read most low-literacy materials; will need repeated oral instructions, materials composed primarily of illustrations, or audio or video tapes.
1-3	Fourth to sixth grade; will need low-literacy materials, may not be able to read prescription labels.
4-6	Seventh to eighth grade; will struggle with most patient education materials; will not be offended by low-literacy materials.
7	High school; will be able to read most patient education materials.

<https://www.ahrq.gov/health-literacy/quality-resources/tools/literacy/index.html>

E-011320-MD

REALM-SF Score Sheet

Patient ID #: _____ Date: _____

Examiner Initials: _____

Behavior _____

Exercise _____

Menopause _____

Rectal _____

Antibiotics _____

Anemia _____

Jaundice _____

**TOTAL
SCORE** _____

Cut along the dotted line and give the word list below to the patient.

Behavior

Exercise

Menopause

Rectal

Antibiotics

Anemia

Jaundice