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Finding Physicians Fast: Making finding a doctor easier for ESL students

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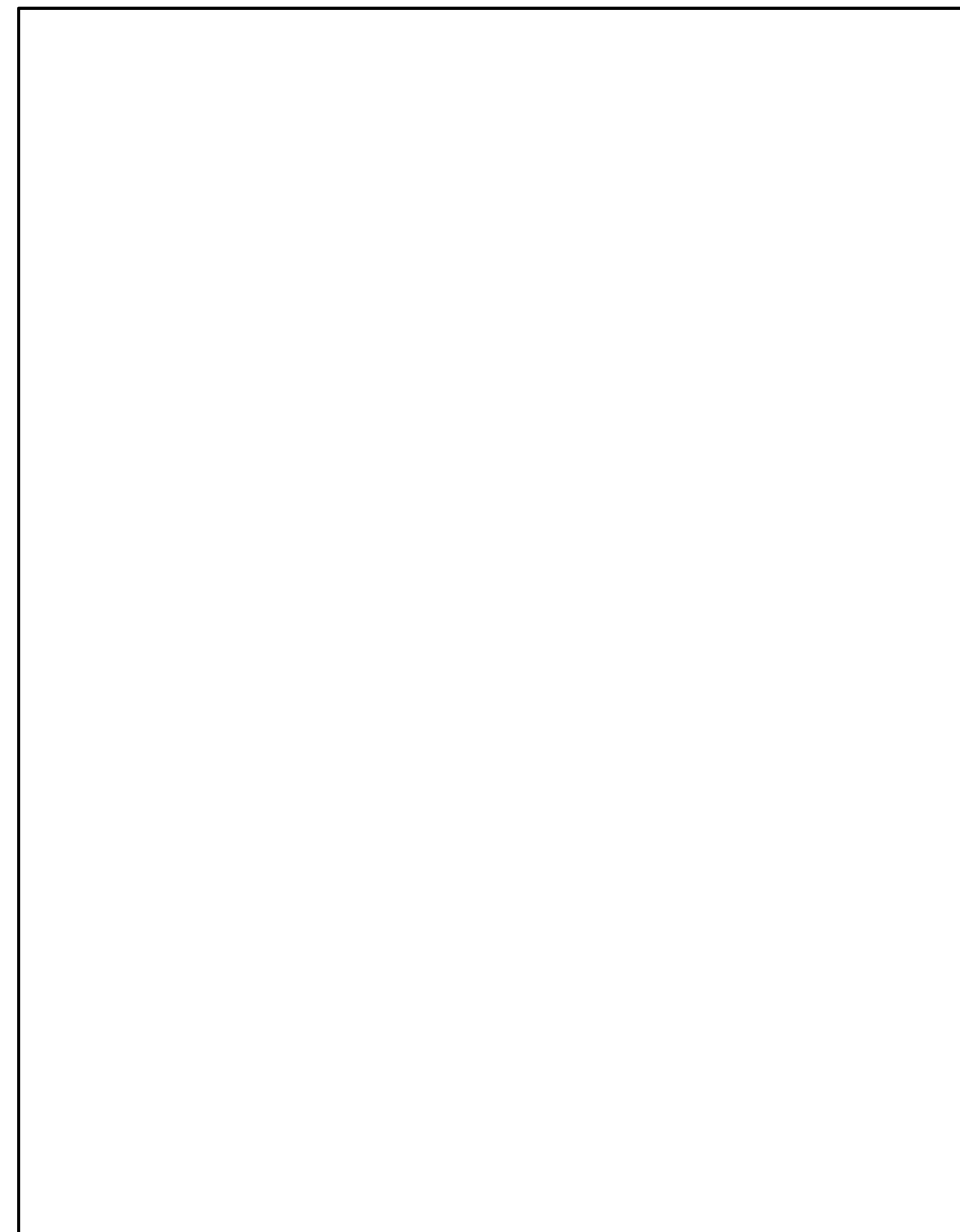
Finding Physicians Fast: Making finding a doctor easier for ESL students

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Abstract

In the realm of healthcare, it is often difficult to decipher how to locate primary physicians. Those living in the US are familiar with the role of family care physicians; however, individuals who have immigrated to the U.S. may not fully understand how to find a family physician. By lowering the readability level of documents to a 6th grade level, we made the information accessible to international students in the Intensive English Program at UD.



Problems

The literacy level of health documents is too high and the language used is too complex, which confuses the readers. The reading level of the IEP students is at a 6th grade level, and both of our documents were at a 12th grade reading level; therefore, these documents would cause them confusion.

Method

For our project, we took two documents that tested at a reading level of 12th grade. We did this by testing the original documents with the SMOG test and the Flesch-Kincaid Test. Through several meetings with the IEP students, we were able to obtain feedback as to how to improve the quality of our document. Then, we cut out unnecessary and confusing language and replaced it with language that was much easier to understand.

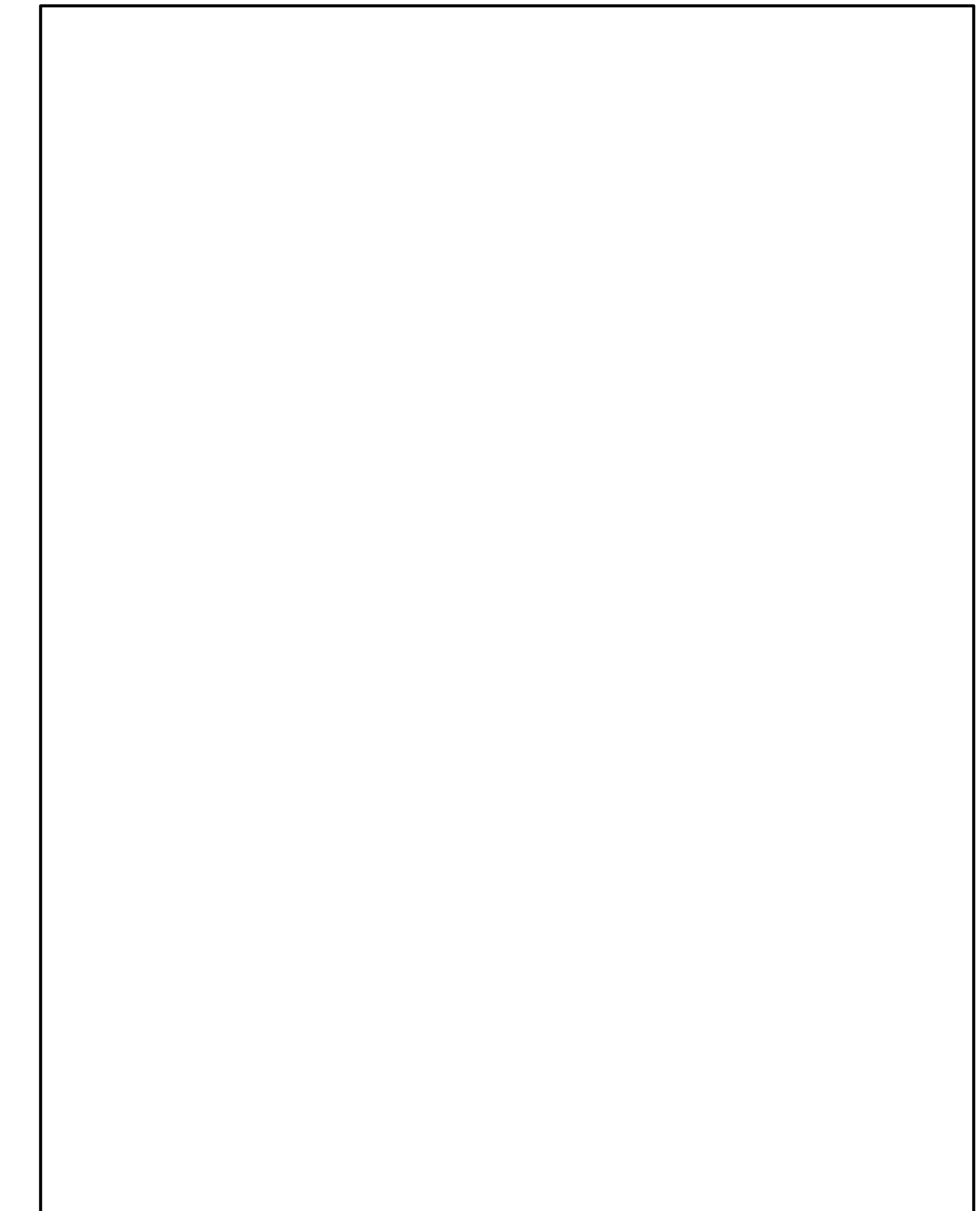
Method of Revision

We essentially revised our own document by adding a few definitions for complex yet necessary words, adding a concluding paragraph detailing what to do after visiting a doctor, and by revising a handful of sentences that the students found complicated. We made these changes in order to simplify our document even further and in order to make sure that the IEP students could fully understand our methods of finding a family doctor.



Result

We were able to produce a document that tested at a 6th grade reading level according to the SMOG test. Based on the feedback that we got from the IEP students, they understood the document that we gave them, so we believe we were successful in presenting a simplified health document that students with a low reading level were able to understand fully.



Conclusion

Our revised text tested well with the IEP students. The revised text was simplified to a 6th grade reading level and this helped the IEP students understand the information that we were trying to convey to them. We used a flowchart to convey our information, with a step by step process of finding a family doctor and what to do if you do or do not have insurance. The IEP students were able to follow the flowchart and understand how to find a doctor and other types of healthcare professionals.