



# Increasing Intensive English Program Students' Understanding of the Health Effects of Smoking Tobacco

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## Abstract

The focus of our health literacy project was to create understandable health information about the effects of smoking for the students in the Intensive English Program (IEP) at UD. Using field tests and editing of an existing document by the FDA, we reduced the document's reading level and increased the IEP student understanding of the topic.

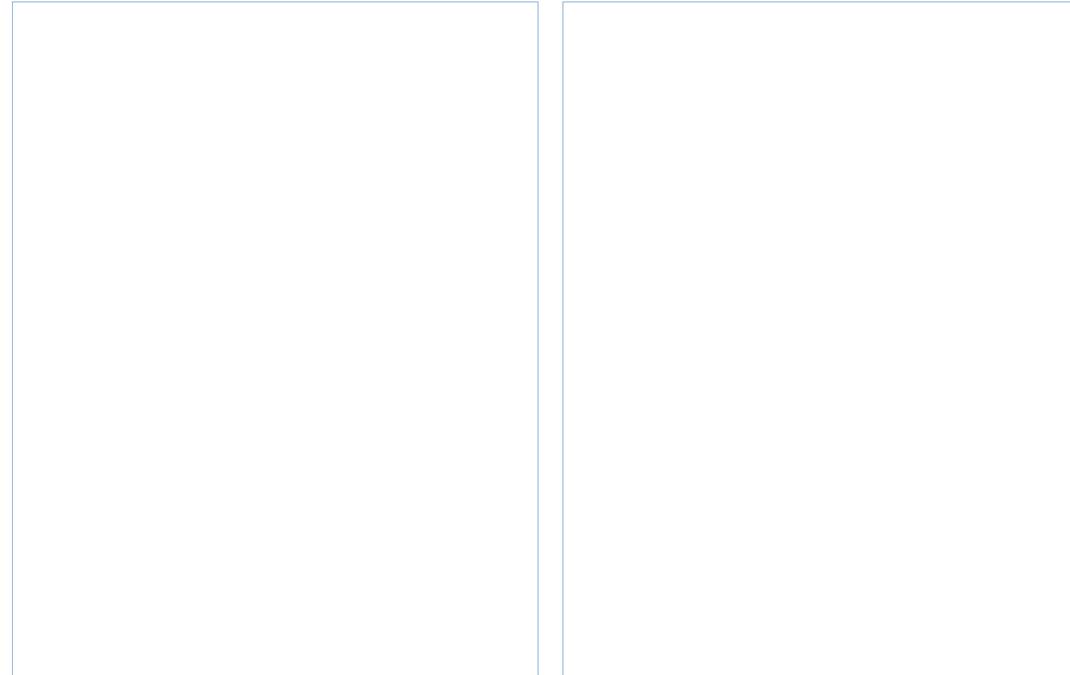
## Methods

A SMOG test was used to determine the literacy (grade) level of the original document. To determine the domain challenges, a Health Literacy Load Analysis was conducted. The four domains of health literacy are fundamental literacy, scientific literacy, civic literacy, and cultural literacy. We also met with the IEP students twice to determine changes to make to our document.

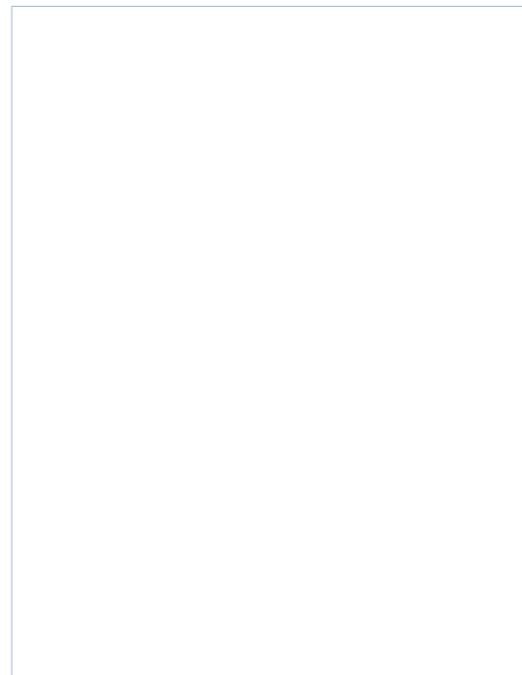
## Results

We were able to simplify and clarify the document to lower the reading level from grade 12.84 to 6.5 based on the SMOG Test. We cut out unnecessary material and language, focusing on the topics the IEP students were specifically interested in. We also added relevant images and changed the format of the original document. Our work made for a more readable document at an appropriate reading level for our target audience.

## Original Document at 12th grade Reading Level:



## Final Document at 6th grade Reading Level:



## Discussion of Results

The results of our project demonstrate that simplified documents with clear, concise language are effective in making health information more understandable for those with lower literacy. The original document was written at too high of a reading level and contained many culturally irrelevant statistics. By decreasing the amount of information, simplifying language and layout, and adding pictures with descriptions the document became better suited for lower literacy audiences.

## Conclusion

Our revised document was created at a much lower reading level than the original text. Therefore, the IEP students were able to comprehend the information far easier than the original FDA document. By excluding difficult terms and unnecessary information, the document focused on important facts in the simplest terms to ensure the IEP students could understand the concept of the text. The project has demonstrated the idea that medical documents can be revised for lower literacy readers. Unnecessary embellishments and vocabulary do not necessarily improve the effect of a document and can even hinder the reader's understanding of the information.