

Exercise Twelve: Evaluating a Page Using a Plain Language Checklist

This exercise is the same as [Exercise 11](#) except that you have the opportunity to select the text you want to edit.

1. Choose a webpage to review. Ideally, you would select either a page you have written or a page that you have the power to edit, but any page will do.
2. Copy the content of the page into Microsoft Word.
3. Use the spell checker to obtain a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level for the page. Aim for nine or below, depending on your audience.
4. Use what you have learned in this course and the [Plain Language Checklist](#) to edit the page. Simplify, clarify, and improve the content.
5. Use [Hemingway App](#) to review the page content for additional tips.

Page Content for Revision:

Takeaways/answers on next page.

Exercise Twelve Takeaways

- What tools did you find the most helpful?
- Do some techniques work better for the type of content you will be writing?
- Think about the process you will use in future to make sure you're writing in Plain Language

Review of Key Considerations

Does your revised text meet the following criteria from the Plain Language Checklist?

- Scan-ability: Look at the page with fresh eyes. Is it easy to scan and pick out main points?
- Purpose: Is it clear who and what the page is for?
- Know your [audience](#). Plain language at high levels, technical detail below
- Start with the most important information. Put details below
- Keep [sentences short](#)
- Keep paragraphs short and on topic
- [Cut unnecessary words](#)
- Use the [shortest word](#)
- Choose everyday words. Avoid acronyms and jargon
- [Define acronyms](#) the first time you use them
- Write in the present tense
- Use [active voice](#). “We mailed your form on May 1” not “Your form was sent on May 1.”
- [Tone](#): use conversational pronouns (you, us, our, we). Use contractions (we’re instead of we are)