

Language Complexity

| Descriptors | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|---|---|--|
| TEXT COMPLEXITY | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | Information Density | An average of one to three verbs, nouns or adjectives per sentence | An average of four to six verbs, nouns or adjectives per sentence | An average of seven to ten verbs, nouns or adjectives per sentence | An average of greater than 10 verbs, nouns or adjectives per sentence |
| | Passage Length | One to three paragraphs | Four to six paragraphs | Six to ten paragraphs | More than ten paragraphs |
| LANGUAGE FORM AND STRUCTURE | | | | | |
| | Language Forms | Mostly simple sentences and/or grammatical forms | A few more sophisticated sentences and/or grammatical forms (e.g., compound S, prepositional phrases) | A mix of sophisticated and simple sentences or grammatical forms | A substantial number of more complex sentences and/or grammatical forms (e.g., relative clauses, adverbials, passive voice, reported speech) |
| VOCABULARY | | | | | |
| | Vocabulary | All high frequency, commonly used vocabulary | Few content-specific,, metaphoric, uncommon meaning, or idiomatic words | A number of content-specific, technical, metaphoric, uncommon meaning and/or idiomatic words or expressions | A large number of content-specific, technical, metaphoric, uncommon meaning' or idiomatic words or expressions |

Source: Cook and MacDonald (2012). Presentation for Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.