

Rapid Estimate of Adolescent Literacy in Medicine (REALM) Teen©

(Please note: The REALM-Teen is 1 page)

Purpose:

The REALM-Teen is a brief, reliable instrument for assessing adolescent literacy skills in English and reading below grade level and is ideal for use with teens in grades 6-12. This one-page instrument consisting of 66 health words arranged in increasing order of difficulty on three widely spaced columns. The REALM-Teen can be administered and scored in under 3 minutes and is strongly correlated with standardized literacy assessments. Among adults, low levels of literacy have been repeatedly linked to lower socioeconomic status and poorer health outcomes. Teens who do not master reading will eventually transition into adulthood without the prerequisite literacy skills needed to obtain, process, and understand basic information and services\ needed to make appropriate health decisions. Reading recognition does not imply comprehension or proper interpretation. Note: The REALM-Teen is a reading-recognition test. The selection of medical- and health-related words commonly used in adolescent client education materials increases relevance for use in health care settings.

General Guidelines:

- This form is usually only completed once, and ideally as early as possible.
- Many low literate individuals will attempt to hide their deficiency, may feel ashamed and/or be embarrassed. You may need to provide encouragement and reassurance. A positive, sensitive, respectful attitude is essential when introducing REALM-Teen to your client.

The copy given to the client should be laminated on lime green paper.

Administration and Scoring:

1. Give your client the laminated copy of the REALM-Teen word list. Attach your copy of the form to a clipboard. Hold the clipboard at an angle so that your client is not distracted by your scoring procedure.
2. The following is a suggested script to introduce the REALM-Teen to your client, but you may adapt this as needed:
 - *“Sometimes I or other health professional, may use medical words that you aren’t familiar with”*
 - *“I would like you to take a look at this list of words to help me get an idea of what medical words you are familiar with. This will help me know what kinds of Nurse-Family Partnership resources to share with you.”*
 - *“Start with the first word, [point to first word in the left-handed column with pencil/pen] and please say all of the words you know.”*
 - *“If you come to a word you do not know, you can sound it out or just skip it and go on.”*

Note: Do not use the words “read” and “test” when introducing and administering the REALM-Teen. These words may make your client feel uncomfortable and unwilling to participate.

3. If the client takes more than 5 seconds on a word, encourage the client to move along saying, “Let’s try the next word.”
4. If the client begins to miss every word or appears to be struggling or frustrated, tell the client, “Look down at the list, are there any other words on this list that you recognize?”

5. Count as an error any word that is not attempted or mispronounced (see “Special Considerations” for pronunciation/scoring guidelines).
6. Scoring options:
 - a) Place a check mark (✓) in the box next to each word the client pronounces correctly; or
 - b) Place an X in the box next to each word the client does not attempt or mispronounces.
7. Scoring should be strict, but take into consideration any problems which could be related to dialect or articulation difficulties. Use the dictionary if in doubt. Count as correct any self-corrected word.
8. Count the number of correct words in each list to give you the “Raw Score”. Match this score with its grade equivalent found in table below.

Score Interpretation

Raw Score	Grade Range Equivalent	Literacy Skills
0-37	3rd Grade and Below	These adolescents will have a 5-fold quarter likelihood of reading below grade level. They are reading below grade level and may be at risk of school failure.
38-44	4th to 5th Grade	
45-58	6th to 7th Grade	Will struggle with most client education materials; may have skills to pass GED.
59-62	8th to 9th Grade	
63-66	10th Grade and Above	Will be able to read most client education materials.

Please refer to the REALM-Teen Manual for more detailed information:
<http://healthliteracy.bu.edu/documents/2/REALM-TEEN%20MANUAL.pdf>

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Client Name: _____

Client ID: _____

Nurse ID: _____

Date: _____

Check when completed: Pregnancy Intake Pregnancy 36 Weeks Infancy 1-8 weeks
 Infancy 12 months Toddler 18 months Other: _____

Race: _____

Age: _____

Current or highest school grade completed: _____

Location: Home Other: _____

<u>List 1</u>	<u>List 2</u>	<u>List 3</u>
eye	fever	nutrition
Pill	pimple	alcoholism
Fat	virus	antibiotic
Skin	calories	complications
Throat	allergy	delinquency
Bleed	marijuana	penicillin
Weight	pelvic	puberty
stress	asthma	menstrual
death	emergency	pneumonia
liquid	infection	constipation
disease	exercise	diagnosis
drug	medicine	nausea
mouth	violence	acne
ounce	prevention	anemia
heart	suicide	hepatitis
risks	depression	adolescent
diet	prescription	bulimia
teaspoon	abnormal	fatigue
period	injury	anorexia
cancer	ointment	tetanus
stomach	seizure	bronchial
Headache	diabetes	obesity

List 1 _____ List 2 _____ List 3 _____
Raw Score _____

Client Copy

List 1

Eye _____
Pill _____
Fat _____
Skin _____
Throat _____
Bleed _____
Weight _____
stress _____
death _____
liquid _____
disease _____
drug _____
mouth _____
ounce _____
heart _____
risks _____
diet _____
teaspoon _____
period _____
cancer _____
stomach _____
headache _____

List 2

fever _____
pimple _____
virus _____
calories _____
allergy _____
marijuana _____
pelvic _____
asthma _____
emergency _____
infection _____
exercise _____
medicine _____
violence _____
prevention _____
suicide _____
depression _____
prescription _____
abnormal _____
injury _____
ointment _____
seizure _____
diabetes _____

List 3

nutrition _____
alcoholism _____
antibiotic _____
complications _____
delinquency _____
penicillin _____
puberty _____
menstrual _____
pneumonia _____
constipation _____
diagnosis _____
nausea _____
acne _____
anemia _____
hepatitis _____
adolescent _____
bulimia _____
fatigue _____
anorexia _____
tetanus _____
bronchial _____
obesity _____