

# Five Steps to Writing That is Easy to Read

## 1: Make each sentence about one thing

- Don't stuff sentences full of information. Use shorter simpler ones to say the same things.
  - **Original:** The award-winning Healthy Athletes program and the more than 155,000 health care professionals trained on the specific health care concerns of people with intellectual disabilities have distributed 110,000 free pairs of prescription eyewear and completed more than 1.7 million free examinations to Special Olympics athletes worldwide in more than 134 countries. *(One sentence, 48 words)*
  - **Revised:** Healthy Athletes is an award-winning Special Olympics program. More than 155,000 health care professionals have been trained on the health care needs of people with intellectual disabilities. The program has given out 110,000 free pairs of glasses. Special Olympics athletes in 134 countries have received more than 1.7 million free exams through the program. *(Four sentences)*
- Break and simplify long sentences put together with “, and”
  - **Original:** More than 2,600 Special Olympics athletes and coaches from 106 nations will compete in Austria, and ESPN's global television networks and digital media will bring extensive coverage to sports fans around the world.
  - **Revised:** More than 2,600 Special Olympics athletes and coaches from 106 nations will compete in Austria. ESPN will cover the games extensively on TV and the web for sports fans around the world.
- Break weak clauses into separate sentences.
  - **Original:** As athletes gain the confidence that comes with achievement, they feel empowered and ready to take on new challenges.

**Revised:** Athletes gain confidence through achievement. They feel empowered and ready to take on new challenges.

## 2: Simplify the words you use

Use short words in place of long ones.

<del>Utilize</del> Use	<del>Equitable</del> Fair	<del>Leverage</del> Make good use of
<del>Activate</del> Get involved	<del>Collaborate</del> Work with	<del>Disparities</del> Unfair differences
<del>Sport Opportunities</del> Sports	<del>Health Justice</del> fair access to health care	<del>Catalyze</del> Make happen, prompt
<del>Social Inclusion</del> feeling welcome in society	<del>Opportunities</del> Chances	<del>Expectations</del> Hopes
<del>Transformation</del> Deep changes	<del>Competitions</del> Games, matches and races	<del>Receive access to</del> Can get

- Leave out words you don't need. (*Carlos ran fast ~~in order~~ to win the race.*)
- Use a few words in place of a long one. (*Games, matches and races* instead of *competitions*; *spoke* instead of *utilized their voices*; *glasses and contacts* instead of *prescription eyewear*)
- Keep sentences to no more than about 12 words. Mix short sentences with longer ones.

### 3: Turn your nouns into verbs

Look for words that are related to verbs. Try to use the verb instead of the noun

- **Original:** ESPN's global television networks and digital media will bring extensive coverage to sports fans around the world.
- **Revised:** ESPN will cover the games extensively on TV and the web for sports fans around the world.
- **Original:** Families give our athletes the kind of love, support and encouragement that no one else can.
- **Revised:** Families love, support and encourage our athletes like no one else can.

### 4: Be bolder

Don't say what we *want to do*. Say what we *do*.

- **Original:** *The goal of Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools is to create school communities of acceptance and respect. (verb = is)*
- **Revised:** Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools creates school communities where students accept and respect each other. (verbs = creates, accept and respect)

### 5: Measure readability at Readability-Score.com

As you are measuring, use these abbreviations. *Put the original text back before publishing!*

- Intellectual disability (use ID)
- Special Olympics (use SO)
- Eunice Kennedy Shriver (use EKS)

The goal is to get to a score of 70 or higher. Do your best. Getting into the 60s might be the best you can do.

### Bonus Step: Explain Special Olympics Terms

Explain what Special Olympics terms mean. "Special Olympics-ese" includes these many words, phrases and people:

<i>Young Athletes</i>	<i>Eunice Kennedy Shriver</i>	<i>Divisioning</i>	<i>Unified Schools</i>
<i>Global Messenger</i>	<i>Global Ambassador</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Youth Activation</i>
<i>Inclusive</i>	<i>Fit Feet</i>	<i>Healthy Athletes</i>	<i>Tim Shriver</i>
<i>Athlete</i>	<i>Teammate</i>	<i>Unified Partner</i>	<i>Region</i>

*...and many more*

### Bonus Step: Explain Special Olympics Phrases

Since 1968, Special Olympics has been telling the world that people with intellectual disabilities only need a chance to show they can succeed. *And it all happens through the simple power of sport.*

We know what *the power of sports* is. It is a kind of shorthand for us. Others don't. Make it clear.

Since 1968, Special Olympics has been telling the world that people with intellectual disabilities (ID) only need a chance to show they can succeed. *Through our sports, people with ID discover new strengths and talents. They develop skills that lead to success and confidence.*