



Environmental Health in Plain Language: A Resource Guide

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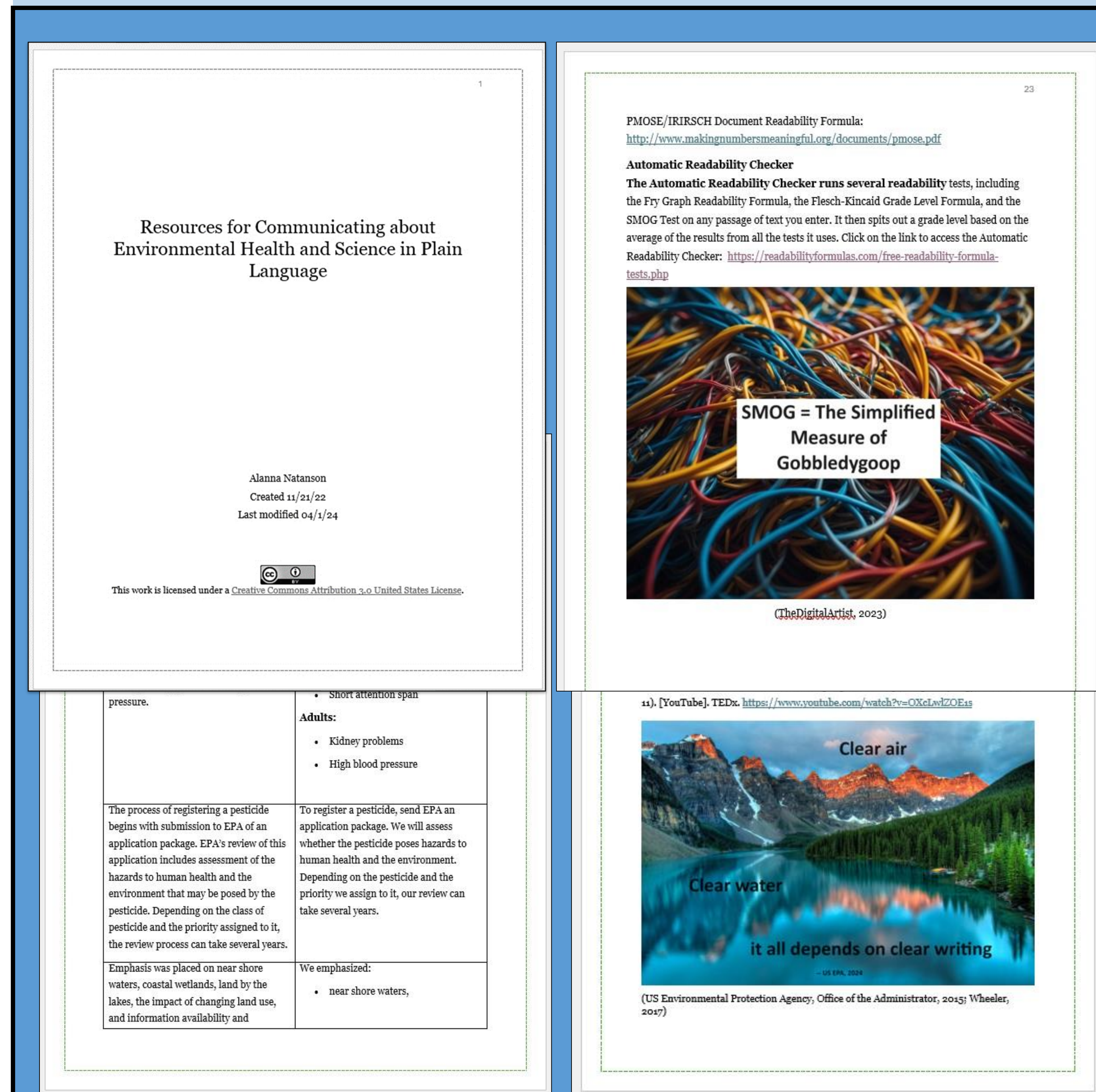
Background

- Environmental health is the science of protecting people's bodies from the effects of the world around us, including pollution and climate change (Medline Plus 2016).
- Plain language is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it (PLAIN, 2024).
- Plain language about environmental health in government policies encourages people to seek help and reduce pollution (NCEH 2023).
- Jargon, complex units of measure, and tricky technical processes prevent straightforward environmental messages (NCEH 2023).
- Lots of tools suggest how to overcome these obstacles and discuss health and the environment clearly.
- Tools are spread across the Internet and books, sometimes in hard-to-find locations.

Design

- **Target audience:** Public health/environmental communicators, policymakers, and students.
- **Objective:** Centralize tools that help experts describe the effect of the environment on health in plain, clear language.
- **Author perspective:** Library science graduate student, native English speaker.
- **Methods:** Searching "plain language" in [NSCEP](#), [NCEH website](#), [EPA Library Catalog](#).
- Citation searching on [IHA Health Literacy listserv](#), [NNLM Guide](#), existing helpful websites.

Results



See Guide Here

Key Sections:

- What is Plain Language? [Share feedback](#)
- Debunking Plain Language Myths
- Environmental Concepts in Plain Language
- Environmental Health Infographics
- Trainings, Handbooks, Assessment Tools
- Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Plain Language

Interactive: Reflection activities.

Allows reader to stay up to date:

- Cites upcoming modifications to trainings.
- Links to database-specific search strategies.

Conclusion

Observations:

- [National Center for Environmental Health](#) (CDC) offers numerous plain language resources.
- Federal [PLAIN](#) working group frequently uses Environmental Protection Agency text to show good plain language translations.

Future improvements:

- Seek target audience feedback.
- Include science or risk communication resources.
- Update after [PLAIN](#) issues new federal guidelines.
- Add forthcoming generative AI tools.

Significance:

- Guide supports Environmental Health Literacy (EHL)
 - EHL involves an "understanding of the connection between environmental exposures and human health" (Finn and O'Fallon, 2015, 495).
 - A key part of EHL is "making risk messaging more understandable." Plain language enhances understanding (Finn and O'Fallon, 2015, 499).
- Guide fits into environmental justice efforts.
 - Environmental justice includes "meaningful involvement" in government decisions or activities for all people (EPA, 2024).
 - To be involved, people must first understand what they read about environmental impacts.
 - Plain language fosters inclusive and antiracist instruction (Jones, 2023).

References

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