

FAST PACING

According to James V. Smith in his book *The Writer's Little Helper* ©2006, bestsellers have a pacing REI (Reading Ease Index) of no lower than 65 in any chapter. He describes how to obtain the REI for any piece of writing by using the readability tools that come with Microsoft Word. (Click the checkbox in preferences and any time you run spell check, Word will produce the report.)

REI Guidelines

	REI Based on Bestseller
Words per sentence	15 max
Characters per word	4.5 max
Passive voice	< 5%
Flesch Reading Ease	80 minimum
Flesch-Kincaid Level	6 max
Pacing Composite*	>65

*Pacing composite is calculated by taking the Flesch Reading Ease score and subtracting the Flesch-Kincaid Level. The ideal example above would be $80 - 6 = 74$.

Pacing Guidelines

Level of Pacing	REI Composite Score Range
Breakneck (red zone)	> 86
Thriller (orange zone)	80-85
Compelling (green zone)	74-79
Downshift/breather (blue zone)	65-73

Again, these numbers are based on national bestsellers and not literary fiction.