

**DC 132
Handout 12**

FLESCH FORMULA

1. Get a sample of 100 words. Start each sample at the beginning of the paragraph. Put a pencil mark after the 100th word. Count as a word all letters, or numbers or symbols surrounded by white space. Count contractions and hyphenated words as one word: 1948, \$19,892, C.O.D., e.g., etc.
2. Count the average sentence length by counting the number of words and then dividing it by the number of sentences in the sample. If the 100th word mark falls at the middle of the sentence, count it as one sentence if the word falls after more than half of the words in it.

In counting a sentence, count each unit of thought that is grammatically independent of another sentence or clause, if its ending is marked by a period, exclamation point, question mark, colon or semi-colon.

3. Multiply the average sentence length by 1.015.
4. Count all syllables and multiply .846. This is the average word length.
5. Add the results of 3 and 4.
6. Subtract the total from 206.835. This is the reading ease score.

$$\text{Reading ease} = 206.835 - (1.015)(\text{average sentence length} + (.846)(\text{syllables per 100 words}))$$

| Reading Ease | Description of Style | Typical Magazine | School Level | Syllables Per 100 Words | ASL |
|--------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 90-100 | very easy | comics | grade 5 | 125 | 8 |
| 80-90 | easy | pulp fiction | grade 6 | 131 | 11 |
| 70-80 | fairly easy | slick fiction | grade 7 | 139 | 14 |
| 60-70 | standard | Time | 1-2 HS | 147 | 17 |
| 50-60 | fairly difficult | Harper's | 3-4 HS | 155 | 21 |
| 30-50 | difficult | academic | 1-4 College | 167 | 25 |
| 0-30 | very difficult | scientific | College graduate | 190 | 29 |

Exercise on Readability

Compute and interpret the Flesch reading ease score of the following sample materials:

Sample No. 1

http://twonavels.multiply.com/journal/item/84/back_to_London

Back to London

As the train that I am on right now which is coming out of the Manchester Picadilly station is slowly gaining speed, I look at the overhead bars on the rails which held the electrical lines which I assume give the train its power. And as I looked, I couldn't help but feel like a child again. It's like one of those times when my parents would take me to Manila for summer or Christmas vacation and when we're on the airport now back to Leyte. It feels as if I allowed certain things to take hold of me and be part of my life and now I'm seeing them removed from me. It's like a dream from a sleep you're just about to wake up from. You want to hold on because you feel it's yours and that's how things should be. But really, the best attitude about the most precious things in your life is just to release them. Watch them from afar, watch them up close, really doesn't make a super big difference. After all, the Little Prince has said that he has many friends to discover and things to understand.