

*Dale-Chall Readability Index Computation Sheet

Refer to Dale & Chall (1948) for a more detailed account of these readability procedures

Directions: Select a text sample of 100-150 words from an intermediate or advanced level text (grades 5-college). Complete the steps below to compute a readability index.

1. Count the *total number* of words in the reading sample.

Total Number of Words = _____

2. Count the *number of sentences* in the reading sample.

Number of Sentences = _____

3. Compute the *average sentence length* by dividing the number of words (item 1) by the number of sentences (item 2):

$$\boxed{} \div \boxed{} = \boxed{}$$

Number of Words Number of Sentences Avg. Sentence Length

4. *Count up the number of words in the sample that are *not* found on the Dale Word List ('*difficult words*'). Count each difficult word each time that it appears:

Number of Difficult Words = _____

5. Compute *percentage of difficult words* by dividing the number of difficult words (item 4) by the total number of words in the sample (item 1) and then multiplying by 100:

$$\left(\boxed{} \div \boxed{} \right) * 100 = \boxed{}$$

Number of Difficult Words Total Number of Words Percentage of Difficult Words

6. Plug values from items 3 & 5 into this formula to compute Dale-Chall Readability Index:

Dale-Chall Readability Index: (0.0496 * _____ Avg. Sentence Length) +

(0.1579 * _____ Percent Difficult Words) + 3.6365 = _____ Raw Score

Dale-Chall Raw Score to Grade Conversion Table:

Formula	Corrected	Formula	Corrected
Raw Score	Grade Levels	Raw Score	Grade Levels
4.9 and below	----4 th Grade and Below	8.0 to 8.9-----	11-12 th Grade
5.0 to 5.9-----	5-6 th Grade	9.0 to 9.9-----	13-15 th Grade (College)
6.0 to 6.9-----	7-8 th Grade	10.0 and above----	16-(College Graduate)
7.0 to 7.9-----	9-10 th Grade		

Dale, E., & Chall, J.S. (1948). A formula for predicting readability. *Educational Research Bulletin*, 27, 37-53.

*General Guidelines for identifying 'Difficult Words' in the Dale-Chall Readability Formula (Refer to Dale & Chall (1948) for a more detailed account of these readability procedures):

Familiar Words. Count the following as familiar or 'known' words:

- Words appearing on the Dale Familiar Word List (and their abbreviations—e.g., "U.S." for "United States").
- The names of people and places (whether or not they appear on the list).
- Plural and possessive endings of nouns from Dale Familiar Word List
- Variants of words from the Dale Familiar Word List that have these verb form endings: *-s, -ies, -ing, -n, -ed, -ied*).
- Adjectives formed by adding *-n* to a proper noun (e.g., *American*).
- Variants of words from the Dale Familiar Word List that have these adverbial, comparative, or superlative endings added: *-ly, -er, -ier, -est, -iest*.
- Hyphenated words (if *each* element of the hyphenated word appears separately on the Dale Familiar Word List).
- Numbers appearing in digit form (e.g., "42", "34,993").

Unfamiliar ('Difficult') Words. Difficult words (those not on the Dale Familiar Word List) are counted as often as they appear in the text. (The word *tornado*, for example, does not appear on the Dale List. If *tornado* appeared 5 times in a text sample, it would be counted as 5 difficult words.)

Count the following as unfamiliar or 'unknown' words:

- Words *not* appearing on the Dale Familiar Word List (other than the names of people and places).
- Irregular noun plurals, even if the singular form appears on the Dale Familiar Word List (e.g., *oxen* would be counted as difficult, even though *ox* appears on the list).
- Nouns formed by adding *-er* or *-r* to a word on the list (unless that *-er* or *-r* term itself appears on the list).
- Variants of words from the Dale Familiar Word List that have irregular verb form endings—unless those variant forms also appear on the Dale List.
- Words from the Dale List that have two or more endings added (e.g., *clip+(p)ing+s*).