



Flesch Reading Ease Tests

White Paper

History

Flesch Reading Ease Tests is considered to be one of the most trusted and accurate readability tests. Rudolph Flesch, an author, writing consultant, and a supporter of the Plain English Movement, developed this test in 1948. Raised in Austria, Rudolph Flesch studied law and earned a Ph.D. in English from Columbia University. The Flesch Reading Ease Test is a simple approach to assess the readability level of written content. It's also one of the few accurate measures available that we can rely on without too much scrutiny. It has since become a standard readability test used by many US Government Agencies, including the US Department of Defense. However, primarily, we use the test to assess the difficulty of a reading passage written in English.

Scores

Using Flesch Reading Ease Tests will help you avoid readability issues. The following table is helpful to test the readability of a document:

90-100	Very Easy	5 th Grade
80-89	Easy	6 th Grade
70-79	Fairly Easy	7 th Grade
60-69	Standard	8 th & 9 th Grade
50-59	Fairly Difficult	10 th to 12 th Grade
30-49	Difficult	College
0-29	Very Confusing	College Graduate

Atebion's Readability Color Scale



Very Easy

Very Confusing

Sentence Length

Sentences should not contain unnecessary words, as with paragraphs should not have superfluous sentences. This does not mean the writer should only write short sentences, but avoid details which do not add value. However, it is wise to maintain shorter sentences for clarity, enabling the reader to better understand the content.

There is a debate on how long a sentence should be, in relations to quantity of words. Depending on your source, the recommended sentence length varies from 12-17, 25-30 and some say not over 60. It really comes down to who your readers are. What level of education do they have? How busy are they? Are they familiar with your topic? These are factors which should be weighed when determining your sentence length.

A sentence should only convey a single idea. This improves the reader comprehending the content.

However, too many short sentences in series may reduce the conception flow and seem strange to the reader.

Because we realize required sentence lengths should be adjusted for different factors, we allow you to define what a long sentence should be and the highlight color. The default is set for greater than 50 words, but we typically use 20.

Testing Draft Proposals

As a Proposal Writer, the ease with which a contractor can read your proposal is paramount. A document which is difficult to read may contain long or incomplete sentences, or words with excessive syllables. The reader may not gain an understanding of your proposal if they have difficulty understanding the text. Requirements may have been missed or misunderstood, leading to an unacceptable proposal.

If we were to draw a conclusion from the Flesch Reading Ease Tests, then the best text should contain short sentences and words. A score between 60 and 70 is largely considered acceptable.

Document Analyzer – Quality Check

The Flesch Reading Ease Testing is now integrated in Atebion's Document Analyzer, and can be used to assess your Draft Proposals and other documents.



Before analyzing your document, we suggest you select the Keyword Groups “Words2AvoidInProposals” and “PassiveWords” to help reduce the instance of poor readability. All of our Keyword Groups are completely customizable, and new Keyword Groups may be added as well.



Quality Check – Quick Start

Document Analyzer



Select or Create a Project

- A Project is like a folder to hold your documents and associated results



Select a Document

- Select a Document you want to analyze for readability, such as a Draft Proposal.





Analyze Document

- Suggest selecting Keyword Groups: PassiveWords and Words2AvoidInProposal
- ⏪ Run Analysis – Click on the Run button at the bottom of the window



Analysis Results – Quality Check

- ⚙️ Configure Long Sentence the Length (e.g. exceeds 20, 35 or 50 words for a sentence). – Click on the Gear button in the Quality Check area.
- ⏪ Run Quality Check – Click on the Run button in the Quality Check area.
- Review Readability Results (e.g. Flesch Reading Ease scores and long sentences) and write comments for segments which needs to be rewritten in the  Notes area.
- Generate Quality Check Report – Click on the “Generate Report” button
- Email the Report to co-workers – Click on the “Report [Qty]” button, then select the report in list and click the  Email button



Focus on the segments with low Flesch Reading Ease scores by selecting a “Harder than ...” in the Show drop-down control. This will filter out easier segments. See screen image below.

Atebion Document Analyzer

Document Analyzer, Copyright © 2016 -- Release 1.7.16.04 -- Expires in 317 Days.

Create a Project > Select a Document > Run Analysis > **Analyze the Results** > Run Deep Analysis > Analyze Deep Results

Proj: Demo
Doc: DEMO_RFP

Analysis Results

Segments Qty: 48 of 58 Quality Check: Flesch Reading Ease

Parsed Segments

Number	Caption	Keywords	Quality	L...
Header Area	Header Area	shall [1]	29.3	
(c)	Other documents, exhibits, and attachments ...		53.64	
(d)	All revisions and modifications thereto dated ...		53.64	
1.0	GENERAL			
1.1.1	PROGRAM MANAGEMENT.	require [1], shall [2]	41.88	1
1.1.2	MANAGEMENT PLAN(S).	require [3], required...	23.31	3
1.1.2	MANAGEMENT PLAN(S).	require [2], required...	39.93	3
1.1.3.1	SCHEDULE(S).	critical [1], require [...]	52.43	2
1.1.3.3	EARNED VALUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.	shall [6], will [2]	54.51	2
1.1.4	REQUIREMENTS MANAGEMENT.	require [3], shall [2]	28.09	1
1.1.5	RISK MANAGEMENT.	shall [2]	0.06	1
1.1.7	CORRECTIVE ACTION.	shall [8]	33.68	1
1.1.8	OPERATIONAL SECURITY (OPSEC).	require [1], shall [2]	18.78	1

Quality Check Flesch Reading Ease

Show: Harder than Standard Generate Report Reports [11] ...

The Flesch Reading Ease is a readability test designed to indicate comprehension difficulty when reading a passage of contemporary academic English.

Very Easy Very Confusing

0-29	College Graduate	Very Confusing
30-49	College	Difficult
50-59	10th to 12th Grade	Fairly Difficult
60-69	8th & 9th Grade	Standard
70-79	7th Grade	Fairly Easy
80-89	6th Grade	Easy
90-100	5th Grade	Very Easy

Selected Segment

SECTION C - DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATION/WORK STATEMENT

PART 1 - CONTRACT LINE ITEM DESCRIPTION

GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK
The Contractor shall perform the Detail Design and Construction of the ship(s) at the Contractor's facilities in accordance with:

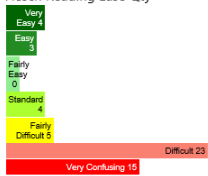
Close Keywords Tools Previous Next Help Train Me

After running the quality Check, you will see the ratings as shown above. Next click the “Generate Report” button. See image below for an example report; note that long sentences are shown highlighted in Blue.

Summary



Flesch Reading Ease Qty



Show Harder than Easy

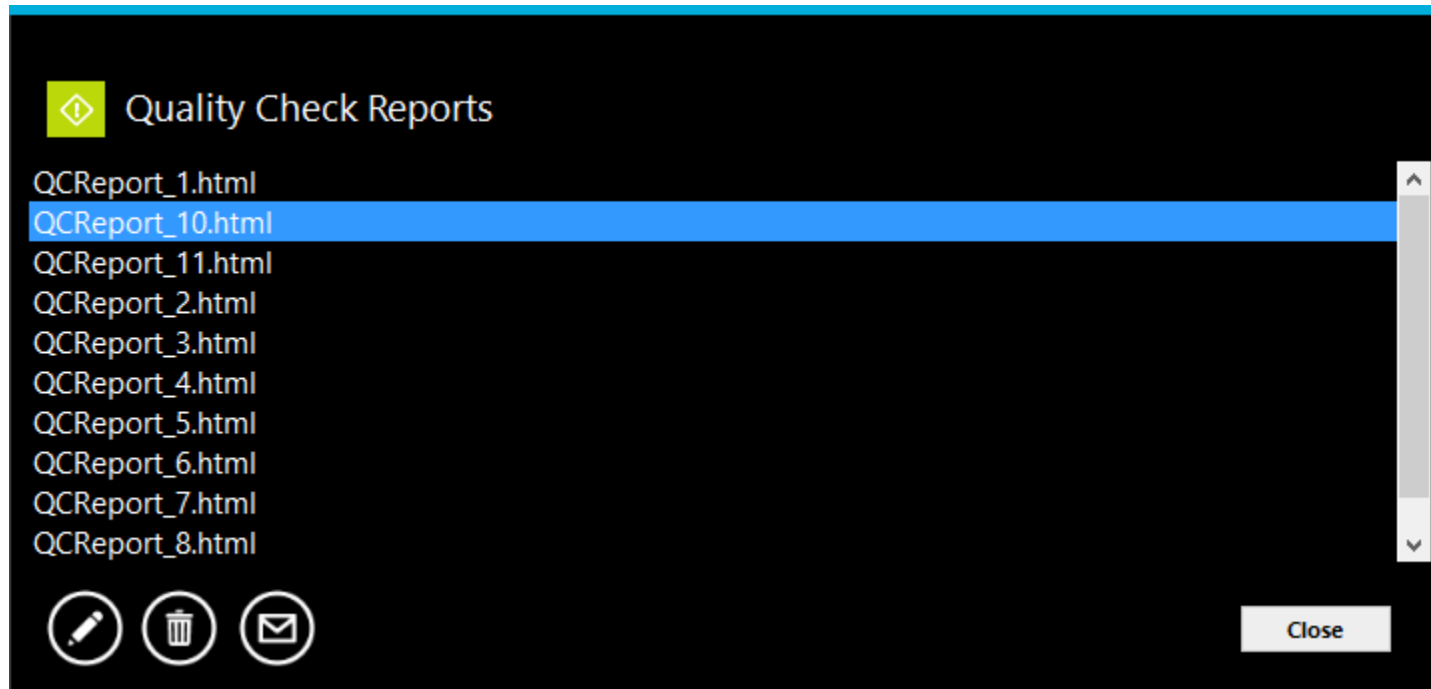
53.98	M.1	Clauses and Provisions Incorporated by Reference	<p>M.1 Clauses and Provisions Incorporated by Reference</p> <p>This screening information request (SIR) or contract, as applicable, incorporates by reference the provisions or clauses listed below with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Offerors and contractors must obtain the full text via Internet at http://conwrite.faa.gov (on this web page, select "View/Download"). Upon request, the Contracting Officer (CO) will make the full text available.</p> <p>Table 1: Applicable Clauses</p> <p>Clause</p> <p>Title</p> <p>3.2.4-31</p> <p>Evaluation of Options (April 1996)</p> <p>3.6.1-10</p> <p>Evaluation of Contractor Participation in the FAA Mentor Protégé Program (January 1999)</p>
42.33	M.2.1	Award Selection	<p>M.2.1 Award Selection</p> <p>This acquisition is being conducted in accordance with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Acquisition Management System (AMS). Award will be made to the Offeror whose proposal conforms to the requirements of this SIR and provides the best overall value to the Government. The best value approach provides the opportunity for technical and price trade-offs, and does not require that award be made to either the Offeror submitting the highest rated proposal or the Offeror submitting the lowest price, although the ultimate award may be to either one of those Offerors. The Government reserves the right to make no award in response to this SIR if it deems no proposal represents the best value to the Government.</p> <p>The Source Selection Evaluation Team (SSET) and the Source Selection Official (SSO) will strive for maximum objectivity and will apply sound business judgment to evaluate each Offeror's proposed solution against the stated evaluation criteria. Both the written SSO Evaluation Report and any briefings to the SSO will be conducted 'in the blind' using code names for each Offeror to protect the integrity of the source selection process.</p> <p>The SSO will assign or approve additional FAA or contract support personnel, as necessary, during the source evaluation process.</p> <p>M.2.2 Participation of Contract Support Personnel</p> <p>The Government intends to utilize contract support for this source evaluation, including representatives from the following organizations, to evaluate and rate proposals:</p> <p>* AvMet Applications Inc.</p>

Kathy, please review this segment.

Above, example of a Quality Check report.



Another feature in our Document Analyzer that will assist you and your team is the Notes. After analyzing your document and running the Quality Check, you can add Notes to difficult readability segments. These notes can be used to create writing assignments and otherwise communicate information within your team. Your Segment Notes will be included in the Quality Check report and then simply share the report with your co-workers, as shown in the image below.





For additional information on Plain Language Guidelines see link: <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/bigdoc/fullbigdoc.pdf>

Atebion's Document Analyzer is easy to use and inexpensive. Most users realize a Return on Investment (ROI) the first time they use it. Integrating Quality Check with the Flesch Reading Ease Readability Testing adds significant value. It will highlight ambiguous content in your documents, and ultimately lead you to write better proposals.

Visit www.AtebionLLC.com, and download a free trial of our Document Analyzer.