

# Flesch-Kincaid Readability Test

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## Vocabulary

Repeat each vocabulary word and definition after the teacher.

- **Rudolf Flesch** A famous linguist, most famous for his book “Why Johnny Can't Read”
- **J. Peter Kincaid** The founding director of the Modeling and Simulation Ph.D. program at the University of Central Florida, also a scientist for the US military
- **Readability test** A measure of how easy something is to read
- **Core measures** Things by which something may be judged or decided
- **Weighting factors** Something that could be used to give more importance to certain things if you're averaging a score
- **Evaluation** Something you form an idea about the number of, amount of, or value of
- **Method** A way of doing something
- **To assess** To calculate or find out the quality or value of something
- **Technical manuals** A document or book containing instructions for using, maintaining, supporting and training about something
- **Insurance policy** A contract which determines how much money the person who's insured is required to pay in an accident
- **Legal document** An official paper concerning a legal matter, usually created by a lawyer
- **An'da** “And the“ (pronounced quickly)
- **Wit'da** “With the“ (pronounced quickly)

## Passage

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Read the passage with the teacher, asking questions about content, and then answer the questions on the next page.

The **Flesch–Kincaid readability tests** are **readability tests** designed to indicate how difficult a passage in English is to understand. There are two tests, the **Flesch** Reading Ease Test, **and the Flesch–Kincaid** Grade Level Test. Although they use the same **core measures** (word length and sentence length), they have different **weighting factors**. **Rudolf Flesch** devised the Reading Ease **Evaluation**; somewhat later, he and **J. Peter Kincaid** developed the Grade Level **evaluation** for the United States Navy. This **method** was first used by the Army for **assessing** the difficulty of **technical manuals** in 1978 and soon after became a United States Military Standard. Pennsylvania was the first U.S. state to require that automobile **insurance policies** be written at no higher than a ninth-grade level of reading difficulty. This is now a common requirement in many other states and for other **legal documents** such as **insurance policies**. Scientists have calculated the **Flesch** score for the seven Harry Potter books. The average **Flesch** score for Harry Potter was 72.83, **with the** highest score (81.32) for Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone **and the** lowest score (65.88) for Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix.

Courtesy of Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flesch%E2%80%93Kincaid\\_readability\\_tests](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flesch%E2%80%93Kincaid_readability_tests)

## Checking Understanding

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1. What are the Flesch–Kincaid readability tests?
2. Who created the Flesch–Kincaid readability tests?
3. How are the 2 tests mentioned in the article different?
4. Which U.S. state was the first to require that insurance policies be written at no higher than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading level?
5. What is a common requirement in many states for legal documents?
6. Which Harry Potter book is the easiest to read? Which is the hardest to read?
7. How to pronounce “And the” quickly?
8. How to pronounce “With the” quickly?

## Conversation Questions

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*Take turns asking the questions with your teacher, and if there's any time left over you can free chat*

- Did you ever hear of Rudolf Flesch before this article?
- What do you think about the idea that legal documents have to be written at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level?
- If documents are written at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level what does that say about society and reading abilities?
- What is the easiest book you've ever read?
- What's the hardest book you've ever read?
- What's the fastest you've ever read a book cover to cover?
- Do you ever try to read novels in English? Or just in your native language?
- Who's your favorite author?
- What do you think about these readability tests?
- Do you often go to the library?
- Do you prefer to read real books or e-books?
- Do you agree with the evaluations of the Harry Potter books?
- Do you think that television and the internet will make books obsolete?
- Have you ever tried to write a book? Was it easy? Hard?
- What's the most common thing that you read? Online news articles? Magazines?