

## MEASURING SCALE FOR ABLITY IN SPELLING

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	50	2nd													
	3rd	100	99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	50	3rd										
				4th	100	99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	50	4th							
						5th	100	99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	50	5th					
								6th	100	99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	50	6th			
										7th	100	99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	59	7th	
												8th	100	99	98	96	94	92	88	84	79	73	66	58	50

- A:** me do  
**B:** and go at on  
**C:** a it is she can see run  
**D:** the in so no now man ten bed top  
**E:** he you will we an my up last not us am good little ago old bad red  
**F:** of be but this all your out time may into him today look did like six boy book  
**G:** by have are had over must make school street say come hand ring live kill late let big mother three land cold hot hat child ice play sea  
**H:** day eat sit lot box belong door yes low soft stand yard bring tell five ball law ask just way get home much call long love then house year to I as send one has some if how her them other baby well about men for ran was that his led lay  
**I:** nine face miss ride tree sick got north white spent foot blow block spring river plant cut song winter stone free lake page nice end fall feet went back away paper put each soon came Sunday show Monday yet find give new letter take Mr. after thing what than its very or thank dear west sold told best form far gave alike add  
**J:** seven forget happy noon think sister cast card south deep inside blue post town stay grand outside dark band game boat rest east son help hard race cover fire age gold read fine cannot May line left ship train saw pay large near down why bill want girl part still place report never found side kind life here car word every under most made said work our more when from wind print air fill along lost name room hope same glad with mine  
**K:** became brother rain keep start mail eye glass party upon two they would any could should city only where week first sent mile seem even without afternoon Friday hour wife state July head story open short lady reach better water round cost price become class horse care try move delay pound behind around burn camp bear clear clean spell poor finish hurt maybe across tonight tenth sir these club seen felt full fail set stamp light coming cent night pass shut easy  
**L:** catch black warm unless clothing began able gone suit track watch dash fell fight buy stop walk grant soap news small war summer above express turn lesson half father anything table high talk June right date road March next indeed four herself power wish because world country meet another trip list people ever held church once own before know were dead leave early close flower nothing ground lead such many morning however mind shall alone order third push point within done body  
**M:** trust extra dress beside teach happen begun collect file provide sight stood fix born goes hold drill army pretty stole income bought paid enter railroad unable ticket account driven real recover mountain steamer speak past might begin contract deal almost bought less event off true took again inform both heart month children build understand follow charge says member case while also return those office great Miss who died change wire few please picture money ready omit anyway  
**N:** except aunt capture wrote else bridge offer suffer built center front rule carry chain death learn wonder tire pair check prove heard inspect itself always something write expect need thus woman young fair dollar evening plan broke feel sure least sorry press God teacher November subject April history cause study himself matter use thought person nor January mean vote court copy act been yesterday among question doctor hear size December dozen there tax number October reason fifth  
**O:** eight afraid uncle rather comfort elect aboard jail shed retire refuse district restrain royal objection pleasure navy fourth population proper judge weather worn contain figure sudden forty instead throw personal everything rate chief perfect second slide farther duty intend company quite none knew remain direct appear liberty enough fact board September station attend between public friend during through police until madam truly whole address request raise August Tuesday struck getting don't Thursday  
**P:** spend enjoy awful usual complaint auto vacation beautiful flight travel rapid repair trouble entrance importance carried loss fortune empire mayor wait beg degree prison engine visit guest department obtain family animal favor Mrs. Husband amount human view election clerk though o'clock support does regard escape since which length destroy newspaper daughter answer reply oblige sail cities known several desire nearly  
**Q:** sometimes declare engage final terrible surprise period addition employ property select connection firm region convict private command debate crowd factory publish represent term section relative progress entire president measure famous serve estate remember either effort important due include running allow position field ledge claim primary result Saturday appoint information whom arrest themselves special women present action justice gentleman enclose await suppose wonderful direction forward although prompt attempt whose statement perhaps their imprison written arrange  
**R:** forenoon lose combination avenue neighbor weight wear entertain salary visitor publication machine toward success drown adopt secure honor promise wreck prepare vessel busy prefer illustrate different object provision according already attention education director purpose common diamond together convention increase manner feature article service injure effect distribute general tomorrow consider against gain complete search treasure popular Christmas interest  
**S:** often stopped motion theater improvement century total mention arrive supply assist difference examination particular affair course neither local marriage further serious doubt condition government opinion believe system possible piece certain witness investigate therefore too pleasant  
**T:** guess circular argument volume organize summon official victim estimate accident invitation accept impossible concern associate automobile various decide entitle political national recent business refer minute ought absence conference Wednesday really celebration folk  
**U:** meant earliest whether distinguished consideration colonies assure relief occupy probably foreign expense responsible beginning application difficulty scene finally develop circumstance issue material suggest mere senate receive respectfully agreement unfortunate majority elaborate citizen necessary divide  
**V:** principal testimony discussion arrangement reference evidence experience session secretary association career height  
**W:** organization emergency appreciate sincerely athletic extreme practical proceed cordially character separate February  
**X:** immediate convenient receipt preliminary disappoint especially annual committee  
**Y:** decision principle  
**Z:** judgment recommend allege

Russell Sage Foundation, New York City  
Division of Education  
Leonard P. Ayres, Director

The data of this scale are computed from an aggregate of 1,400,000 spellings by 70,000 children in 84 cities throughout the country. The words are 1,000 in number and the list is the product of combining different studies with the object of identifying the 1,000 commonest words in English writing. Copies of this scale may be obtained for five cents apiece. Copies of the monograph describing the investigations which produced it may be obtained for 30 cents each. Address the Russell Sage Foundation. Division of Education, 130 East 22d Street, New York City. Copyright 1915.

### **Ayres' Instructions for using *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling***

All the words in each column (group) are of approximately equal spelling difficulty. The steps in spelling difficulty from each column to the next are approximately equal steps. The numbers at the top indicate about what percent of correct spellings may be expected among the children of the different grades. For example, if 20 words from column H are given as a spelling test, it may be expected that the average score for an entire second grade spelling them will be about 79 per cent. For a third grade it should be about 92 per cent, for a fourth grade about 98 per cent, and for a fifth grade about 100 per cent. The limits of the groups are as follows: 50 means from 46 through 54 per cent; 58 means from 55 through 62 per cent; 66 means from 63 through 69 per cent; 73 means from 70 through 76 per cent; 79 means from 77 through 81 per cent; 84 means from 82 through 86 per cent; 88 means from 87 through 90 per cent; 92 means from 91 through 93 per cent; 94 means 94 and 95 per cent; 96 means 96 and 97 per cent; while 98, 99 and 100 per cent are separate groups. By means of these groupings a child's spelling ability may be located in terms of grades. Thus if a child were given a 20 word spelling test from the words of column O and spelled 15 words, or 75 per cent of them, correctly it would be: proper to say that he showed fourth grade spelling ability. If he spelled correctly 17 words, or 85 per cent, he would show fifth grade ability, and so on.

### **Notes from Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter**

**July 21, 2004:**

Ayres' book, *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling* is available for FREE on my web site: [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net). Originally the Chart was available in the back of the book or as a separate item. The words on the chart were originally printed in the same columns as the statistics. For convenience, I printed the words in rows below the Chart in order to fit the entire chart on a single sheet of letter size paper.

Many thanks to Miss Geraldine Rodgers who sent me a photocopy of Ayres' book and chart. The advertisement was included for historical interest. Of course it is impossible to purchase the book from the Russell Sage Foundation. Users of the Chart will want to read Miss Rodgers' *Introduction* to Ayres book and her paper urging a comparative study of students in Ayres day with students today, both of which are available on the Education page of the [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) web site. Gerry has several books available from [www.AuthorHouse.com](http://www.AuthorHouse.com).

I have published a detailed "Historical Introduction to Ayres," written by Miss Rodgers.

<http://donpotter.net/pdf/ayres-historical-introducti.pdf>

There is a paperback edition of Ayres' book available from Mott Media, Milford Michigan. My edition made absolutely no use of that volume. There is a typo in the Mott Media edition: *lose* in Section P should be *loss*.

Reformatted to fit on a letter size page on 2/14/13. Corrections were made by comparison with the original 1914 edition on 3/4/13.

We plan to begin testing phonics-first versus Guide-Reading students with Ayres's Spelling Test as soon as possible.