

Document Level 2

Scale range: 226 to 275

Tasks in this level are more varied than those in Level 1. Some require the reader to match a single piece of information; however, several distractors may be present, or the match may require low-level inferences. Tasks in this level may also ask the reader to cycle through information in a document or to integrate information from various parts of a document.

Average difficulty value of tasks in this level: 249

Percentage of adults performing in this level: 28%

Some tasks in Level 2 ask readers to match two pieces of information in the text. For example, one task with a difficulty value of 261 directs the respondent to look at a pay stub and to write "the gross pay for this year to date." To perform the task successfully, respondents must match both "gross pay" and "year to date" correctly. If readers fail to match on both features, they are likely to indicate an incorrect amount.

What is the gross pay for this year to date?

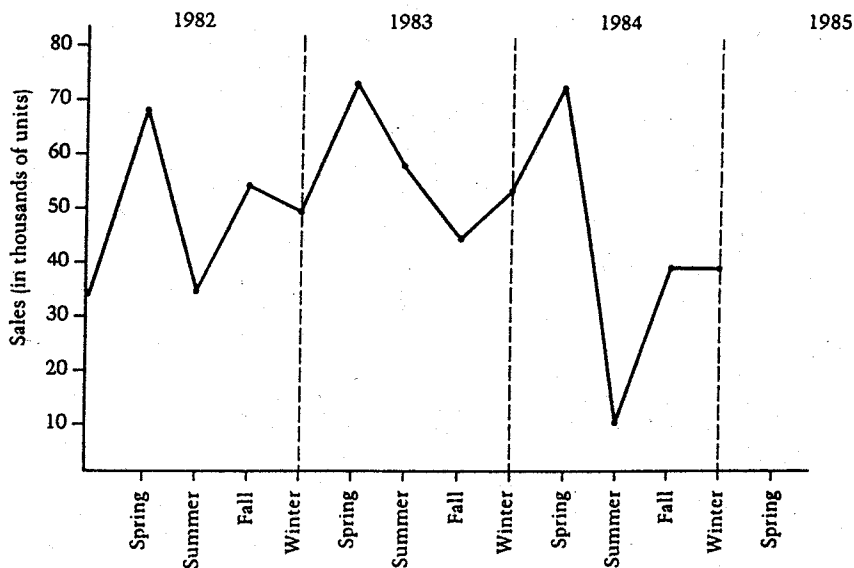
HOURS				PERIOD ENDING	REGULAR	OVERTIME	GROSS	DEF. ANN.	NET PAY
REGULAR	TIME SHIFTS	OVERTIME	TOTAL	03/15/85					
500			500	CURRENT	62500		62500		45988
				YEAR-TO-DATE			426885		
TAX DEDUCTIONS				OTHER DEDUCTIONS					
	FED. W/M	STATE W/M	CITY W/M	FICA	CR UNION	UNITED FD	PERS INS	MISC.	MISC CODE
CURRENT	10894	1375		3831					
YEAR TO DATE	73498	8250		26167					
NON-NEGOTIABLE									
OTHER DEDUCTIONS									
CODE	TYPE	AMOUNT	CODE	TYPE	AMOUNT	CODE	TYPE	AMOUNT	
07	DEN	412							

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A second question based on this document — What is the current net pay? — was also expected to require readers to make a two-feature match. Accordingly, the difficulty values of the two items were expected to be similar. The task anchored at about the 200 point on the scale, however, and an analysis of the pay stub reveals why its difficulty was lower than that of the previous task. To succeed on the second task, the reader only needs to match on the feature “net pay.” Since the term appears only once on the pay stub and there is only one number in the column, this task requires only a one-feature match and receives a difficulty value that lies within the Level 1 range on the document scale.

Tasks in Level 2 may also require the reader to integrate information from different parts of the document by looking for similarities or differences. For example, a task with a difficulty value of 268 asks respondents to study a line graph showing a company’s seasonal sales over a three-year period, then predict the level of sales for the following year, based on the seasonal trends shown in the graph.

You are a marketing manager for a small manufacturing firm. This graph shows your company’s sales over the last three years. Given the seasonal pattern shown on the graph, predict the sales for Spring 1985 (in thousands) by putting an “x” on the graph.



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