

Eclipse Reading Chart

Courtesy the Rice Space Institute

(<http://rsi.rice.edu>; <http://earth.rice.edu>)

Instructions: Hold at arm's length. Which is the smallest font you can read at the beginning of the eclipse? At half-way? At $\frac{3}{4}$? At totality? (note: you can do this even if overcast!) Don't cheat and use a flashlight!

(36 pt) ECLIPSES

(28 pt) WHY STUDY ECLIPSES?

(24 pt) Eclipses are beautiful

(22 pt) They get us outside to see the sky

(20 pt) Eclipses are historical

(18 pt) Many events were associated with eclipses

(16 pt) Ancient astronomers who predicted eclipses were revered

(14 pt) Eclipses are educational

(12 pt) They teach us about alignments of Sun, Earth and Moon

(11 pt) They show us that the Earth is four times larger than the Moon

(10 pt) Eclipses teach us about energy

(9 pt) We can measure temperature changes during solar eclipses – can be ten deg or more

(8 pt) We can observe the difficulty of reading in faint light – our pupils have less depth of field when open

(7 pt) It's easy to read by daylight or the full moon – our eyes become pinhole cameras and everything is in focus

(6 pt) It's hard to read in the new Moon or during a total lunar or solar eclipse – our pupils have a larger f ratio when enlarged

(5 pt) If you can read this font, you have really good eyes! Even in the daylight, this would be better than 20-20 vision.

(4 pt) OK, stop cheating... admit you can't read this in the dark! By a Snellen eye chart, if you can read 4 pt font at 3 feet, your would have better than 20-15 vision.

(3 pt) Most printers can't even print this size very well.... If you can read this 3 pt type at 3 feet, you have 20-10 vision. Have you considered being a pilot?