

Edgar Allan Poe, in his short story, "The Gold Bug"
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=PoeGold.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/parsed&tag=public&part=1&division=div1>)
wrote:

"Now, in English, the letter which most frequently occurs is e. Afterwards, the succession runs thus: a o i d h n r s t u y c f g l m w b k p q x z. E predominates so remarkably that an individual sentence of any length is rarely seen, in which it is not the prevailing character."

According to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Letter_frequency Poe didn't quite get it right. Here are the frequencies given there:

e t a o i n s h r d l c u m w f g y p b v k j x q z

12.702% e	9.056% t	8.167% a	7.507% o	6.966% i
6.749% n	6.327% s	6.094% h	5.987% r	4.253% d
4.025% l	2.782% c	2.758% u	2.406% m	2.360% w
2.228% f	2.015% g	1.974% y	1.929% p	1.492% b
0.978% v	0.772% k	0.153% j	0.150% x	0.095% q
0.074% z				

Sample encryption:

g qdm mozaz cgmo qdkkh. cz qdm mozaz, cz mcu. dis g qdgs, "ouc g cgqo cz ods
qupzmogix mu su!" muu czm mu xu ubm dis muu tuks mu ykdh vdck.

"odez iu nzda, kgmmkz ngqo," qdgs moz tdm gi moz odm. "mozqz mogixq daz xuus mogixq." dis oz xdez mozp d ydm. "mozh daz mdpz. uo, qu mdpz! mozh odez tupz ozaz mu ykdh. mozh cgkk xgez hub qupz nbi ui mogq czm, czm, czm sdh."

g tdi ouks by mozqz vuulq dis moz pgkl dis moz tdlz! dis moz nggo ui d adlz!

dis uba nggo tdpz suci, muu. oz nzkk gimu d yum!

Here are the character counts:

45 z	42 m	35 d	34 u	32 o	21 g	18 q	18 i	16 s	15 k
13 c	8 h	8 a	8 p	7 x	6 n	6 t	5 b	5 y	4 e
4 l	2 v								