2003 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LITERACY (NAAL)

The 2003 **National Assessment of Adult Literacy** is a nationally representative assessment of English literacy among American adults age 16 and older. Sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), NAAL is the nation's most comprehensive measure of adult literacy since the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS).

In 2003, over 19,000 adults participated in the national and state-level assessments, representing the entire population of U.S. adults who are age 16 and older, most in their homes and some in prisons from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Approximately 1,200 inmates of federal and state prisons were assessed in order to provide separate estimates of literacy for the incarcerated population.

There were no statistically significant changes in the average prose and documented literacy of the adult population of the United States between 1992 and 2003. Average quantitative literacy increased between 1992 and 2003.

NAAL'S DEFINITION OF LITERACY- The ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

NUMBER OF ADULTS IN EACH PROSE LITERACY LEVELS

Prose Literacy

> **Below Basic: 30 million adults (14% of population)**
> > no more than the most *simple* and *concrete* literacy skills

> **Basic: 63 million adults (29% of population)**
> > can perform simple and everyday literacy activities

> **Intermediate: 95 million adults (44% of population)**
> > can perform moderately challenging literacy activities

> **Proficient: 28 million adults (13% of population)**
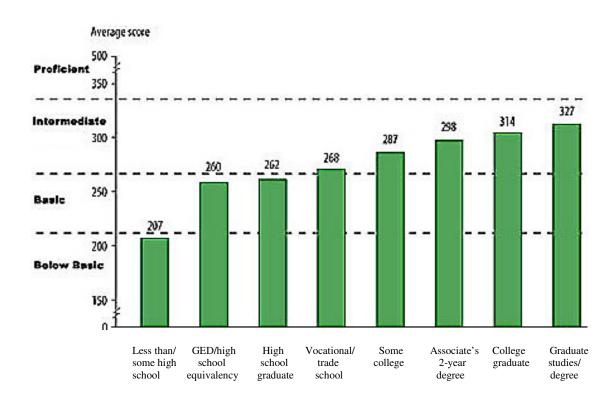> > can perform complex and challenging literacy activities

ADULTS WITH BELOW BASIC PROSE LITERACY

Several population groups are overrepresented in the *Below Basic* level.

	Percent in Prose *Below Basic* Population	Percent in Total NAAL Population
Did not graduate from high school	55	15
No English spoken before starting school	44	13
Hispanic adults	39	12
Black adults	20	12
Age 65+	26	15
Multiple disabilities	21	9
Weekly earnings less than $500	58	30

Source: http://nces.ed.gov/naal/kf_demographics.asp#2**Performance in 2003**

LITERACY INCREASED WITH THE COMPLETION OF MORE EDUCATION

National Center for Education Statistics

Indirect estimate of percent lacking *Basic* prose literacy skills and corresponding credible intervals in all counties: Florida 2003

Location	Population size[1]	Percent lacking *basic* prose literacy skills[2]	95% credible interval[3]	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Florida	13,040,318	20	17.0	22.9
Alachua County	169,977	11	5.0	20.8
Baker County	16,056	15	7.2	25.7
Bay County	118,059	11	5.6	19.9
Bradford County	18,178	17	8.4	28.1
Brevard County	397,485	10	4.8	17.5
Broward County	1,319,437	22	16.0	30.4
Calhoun County	8,933	18	9.3	30.6
Charlotte County	127,727	12	5.8	20.7
Citrus County	104,859	13	6.1	21.9
Clay County	118,194	9	4.2	16.3
Collier County	226,107	17	8.7	28.6
Columbia County	44,223	15	7.4	25.5
DeSoto County	24,218	34	19.1	51.1
Dixie County	10,267	18	9.2	30.6
Duval County	598,700	12	5.9	21.3
Escambia County	214,854	12	5.9	20.9
Flagler County	51,896	11	5.2	18.7
Franklin County	6,935	17	8.8	29.3
Gadsden County	32,464	25	13.1	40.9
Gilchrist County	11,152	14	7.1	24.9
Glades County	8,124	21	10.9	33.9
Gulf County	9,863	16	8.0	27.2
Hamilton County	9,037	24	12.7	38.7
Hardee County	19,196	35	20.4	52.9
Hendry County	24,807	42	25.6	60.9
Hernando County	116,114	12	5.6	20.8
Highlands County	73,524	18	9.0	29.4
Hillsborough County	803,203	15	9.5	23.3
Holmes County	13,764	17	8.6	28.8
Indian River County	96,967	12	5.8	20.6
Jackson County	32,558	17	8.5	28.5
Jefferson County	10,449	17	8.6	28.6
Lafayette County	4,760	22	11.7	36.2
Lake County	196,348	12	5.6	20.5
Lee County	393,327	13	6.6	22.9
Leon County	182,695	10	4.6	18.5
Levy County	28,113	16	7.9	26.8
Liberty County	4,694	20	10.4	33.7
Madison County	13,365	21	11.0	35.1

Location	Population size[1]	Percent lacking *basic* prose literacy skills[2]	95% credible interval[3]	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Manatee County	224,505	13	6.7	23.1
Marion County	219,916	14	7.1	23.9
Martin County	108,412	11	5.2	18.6
Miami-Dade	1,760,714	52	41.5	64.2
Monroe County	65,035	14	7.3	24.6
Nassau County	47,570	10	4.9	18.1
Okaloosa County	132,798	9	4.4	16.3
Okeechobee County	27,203	24	13.2	39.4
Orange County	716,098	20	14.0	29.3
Osceola County	153,290	19	9.5	31.7
Palm Beach County	949,738	14	7.1	24.8
Pasco County	308,011	12	5.9	21.5
Pinellas County	735,477	11	6.6	18.9
Polk County	383,735	16	8.3	27.6
Putnam County	54,438	18	9.2	30.4
Santa Rosa County	99,870	9	4.5	16.5
Sarasota County	286,597	10	5.0	18.3
Seminole County	294,437	11	7.0	18.1
St. Johns County	111,989	7	3.5	13.6
St. Lucie County	167,263	16	8.2	27.1
Sumter County	44,408	16	8.0	26.6
Suwannee County	28,304	18	9.1	30.0
Taylor County	14,182	18	9.5	30.8
Union County	7,827	17	8.8	29.3
Volusia County	366,883	12	6.0	21.1
Wakulla County	19,520	12	6.1	21.6
Walton County	35,501	13	6.3	21.9
Washington County	15,967	17	8.6	28.4

[*] The state and county Federal Information processing Standards (FIPS) codes are standardized unique state and county identifiers. The first two positions identify the state, and the last three positions identify the county. For more information, see http://www.census.gov/geo/www/fips/fips.html

[1] Estimated population size of persons 16 years and older in households in 2003.

[2] Those lacking *Basic* prose literacy skills include those who scored *Below Basic* in prose and those who could not be tested due to language barriers.

[3] The estimated percent lacking *Basic* prose literacy skills has a margin of error as measured by the associated credible interval. There is a 95% chance that the value of the percent lacking *Basic* prose literacy skills is contained between the lower and upper bound.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy