

Thinkfinity Literacy Network

Quick Facts About Literacy and English Language Learners

- The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) found that 5% of the adult population in the U.S.—11 million adults—are nonliterate in English.
Kutner, M., Greenberg, E., & Baer, J. (2006). *National Assessment of Adult Literacy: A first look at the literacy of America's adults in the 21st century* (NCES 2006-470). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- Immigrants comprise more than 12% of the U.S. population, and their children more than 20%. If current trends continue, children of immigrants will represent at least a quarter of all U.S. children by 2010.
The Urban Institute. (May, 2006). *Children of immigrants: Facts and figures*. Washington, DC: Author.
- 22% of children under age 6 are children of immigrants, but 93% of these children were born in the United States.
The Urban Institute. (May, 2006). *Children of immigrants: Facts and figures*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Between 1992 and 2003, there was a decrease in the percentages of White, Black, and Asian/Pacific Islander adults with *Below Basic* prose, document, and quantitative literacy, while there was an increase in the percentage of Hispanic adults with *Below Basic* prose and document literacy.
Kutner, M., Greenberg, E., Jin, Y., Boyle, B., Hsu, Y., and Dunleavy, E. (2007). *Literacy in everyday life: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy* (NCES 2007-480). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- 82% of adults who learned English at 16 years of age or older who had never enrolled in an adult ESL class had *Below Basic* prose literacy, compared with 63% of adults who had attended such classes and 69% of adults who were currently enrolled.
Kutner, M., Greenberg, E., Jin, Y., Boyle, B., Hsu, Y., and Dunleavy, E. (2007). *Literacy in everyday life: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy* (NCES 2007-480). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- In 2005, Hispanic children were the least likely to be enrolled in center-based early childhood care or education programs; 43% of Hispanic children were enrolled, compared with 70 percent of Asian children, 67% of Black, non-Hispanic children, and 59% of White, non-Hispanic children.
Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2006). *America's children in brief: Key national indicators of well-being, 2006*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

- While 75% of students who receive special assistance to learn to speak English speak Spanish, hundreds of thousands come from homes where other languages are spoken. American Educational Research Association. (2004). English language learners: Boosting academic achievement. *Research Points (2)*1.
- Poverty poses a serious challenge to children's access to quality learning opportunities and their potential to succeed in school. In 2000, Hispanics comprised just under 12 percent of the U.S. population, but Hispanic individuals comprised about 21 percent of those living in poverty in the United States. As for Hispanic children specifically, 28 percent were living in poverty. Llagas, C. (2003). *Status and trends in the education of Hispanics* (NCES 2003-008). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- In 2000, the dropout rate for Hispanics was 28%, compared to 7% for Whites and 13% for Blacks. Llagas, C. (2003). *Status and trends in the education of Hispanics* (NCES 2003-008). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- In 2005, 20% of Hispanic 12th-graders scored at or above Proficient on reading achievement, compared to 43% of White students. National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). *The nation's report card: 12th-grade reading and mathematics 2005*. (NCES 2007-468). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.