

# Basic Facts on Adult Literacy

- 50% of American adults cannot read a book written at an eighth grade level
- 44% of the American adults do not read a book in a year
- 3 out of 4 people on welfare can't read
- 20% of Americans read below the level needed to earn a living wage
- 50% of the unemployed between the ages of 16 and 21 cannot read well enough to be considered functionally literate
- Between 46 and 51% of American adults have an income well below the poverty level because of their inability to read
- Illiteracy costs American taxpayers an estimated \$20 billion each year
- School dropouts cost our nation \$240 billion in social service expenditures and lost tax revenues
- 3 out of 5 people in American prisons can't read
- To determine how many prison beds will be needed in future years, some states actually base part of their projection on how well current elementary students are performing on reading tests
- 85% of juvenile offenders have problems reading
- Approximately 50% of Americans read so poorly that they are unable to perform simple tasks such as reading prescription drug labels
- 85 percent of all juveniles who interface with the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate / over 70 percent of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth grade level

## Sources & Additional Information:

Begin to Read [www.begintoread.com](http://www.begintoread.com)

Get Georgia Reading [www.getgeorgiareading.org](http://www.getgeorgiareading.org)

Literacy Project Foundation [literacyprojectfoundation.org](http://literacyprojectfoundation.org)

Reading is Fundamental [www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org)



123 North Main Street  
Fitzgerald  
229-426-5080  
[www.fbhcl.org](http://www.fbhcl.org)