

2005

2005 Literacy Survey Results

Community Research Institute-Johnson Center

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Community Research Institute[®]

Supporting Community Improvement Through Research and Data Sharing



DOROTHY A. JOHNSON CENTER FOR PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

2005 Literacy Survey Results



Heart of West Michigan
United Way

Methodology:

Purpose

The 2005 Kent County Literacy Survey is an assessment of the English language literacy skills of Kent County residents age 18 and older. The definition of literacy used in this survey is: *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.*

Survey Content

The survey questions were adapted from the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) to allow for national comparison. Questions focus on a board range of tasks that adults perform in order to function at work, at home, and in the community. More specifically, the survey results provide information about background factors associated with literacy, the skill levels of the adults, and the application of literacy skills in daily life.

Methodology Statement

The 2005 Kent County Literacy Survey was conducted during the first three weeks of August. It involved 400 random-digit-dial telephone interviews, resulting in an overall 4.9% margin of error. The survey was available in English and Spanish. When analyzing data for the total sample, responses are weighted to reflect the actual educational attainment levels of Kent County residents.

Respondent Profile (Weighted by Education):

Gender	
Male	27.7%
Female	72.3%

Race	
Hispanic	3.6%
White or Caucasian	83.0%
Black or African American	6.2%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1.1%
American Indian or Native American	1.4%
Multi-racial	2.5%
Don't know/Refused	2.2%

Household Income	
Less than \$10,000	7.6%
\$10,000 to less than \$15,000	3.6%
\$15,000 to less than \$25,000	8.2%
\$25,000 to less than \$35,000	9.4%
\$35,000 to less than \$50,000	14.1%
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	17.0%
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	7.6%
\$100,000 or more	8.8%
Don't know/Refused	23.6%

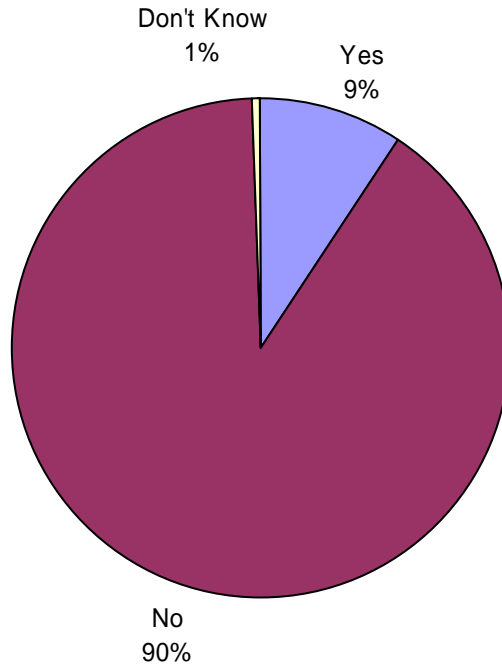
Education: Highest Level of education Completed	
Some high school	12.7%
High school graduate or GED	32.3%
Some College	25.4%
Bachelors Degree	19.6%
Masters Degree	7.8%
Don't know/Refused	2.2%

Location: Resides in Urban, Suburban or Rural Kent County	
Urban	22.8%
Suburban	37.2%
Rural	40.0%

Parental Status: Has School Aged Children	
Yes	27.9%
No	72.1%

Parental Status: Has Children Age 5 or Younger	
Yes	13.6%
No	86.4%

Question 3: Do you have any difficulty seeing words or letters in an ordinary newspaper even when wearing glasses or contact lenses, if you usually wear them?

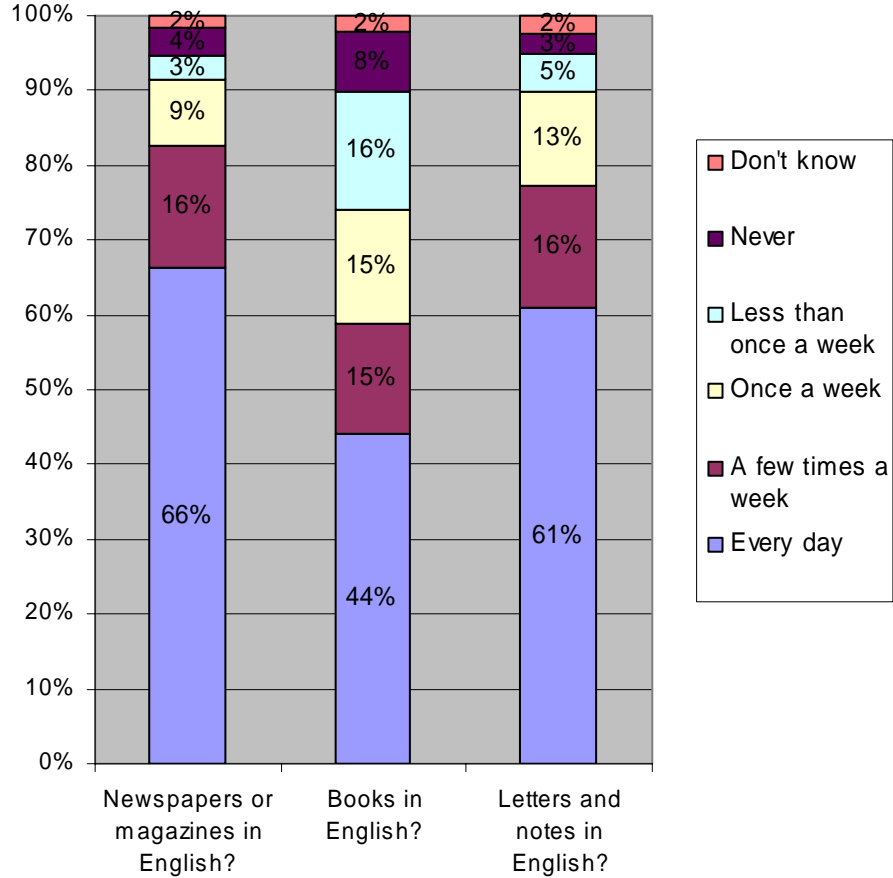


Supporting Data

	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted%
Yes	36.0	37.7	9.4%
No	363.0	361.4	90.1%
Don't know/Refused	2.0	1.9	0.5%

Question 4: How often do you read....in English? Would you say...

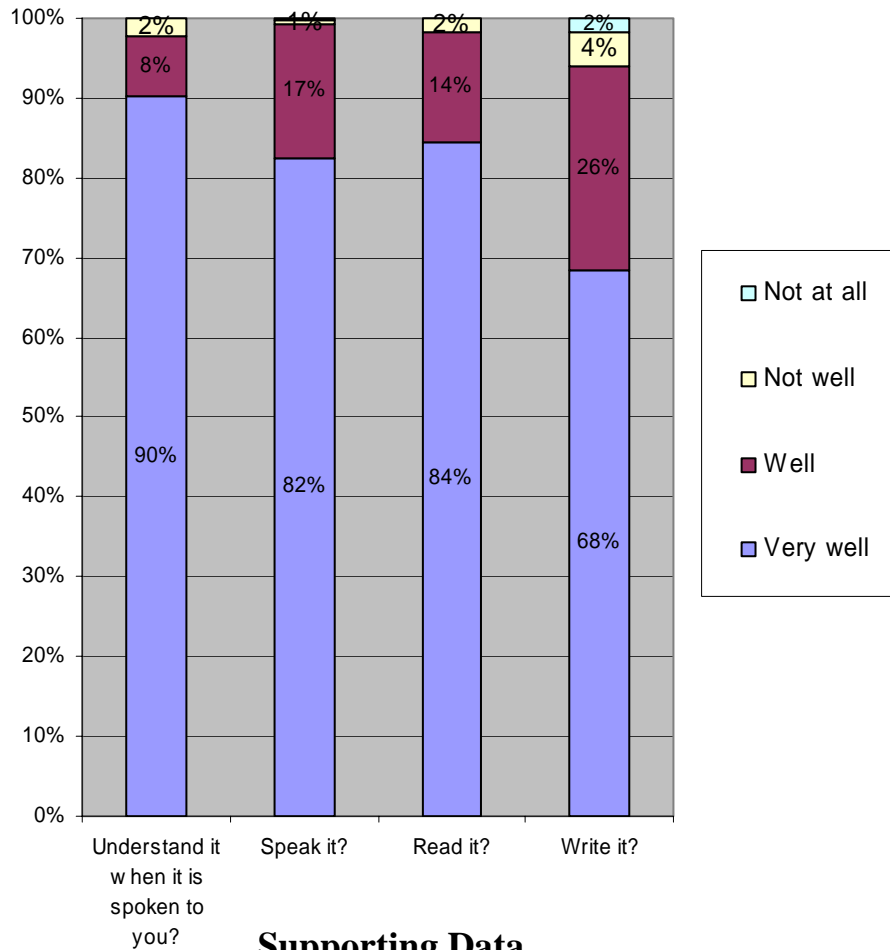
How often do you read...



Supporting Data

	Q4a. How often do you read newspapers or magazines in English?			Q4b. How often do you read books in English?			Q4c. How often do you read letters and notes in English?		
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
Every day	277	266.0	66.3	196	177.1	44.2	262	244.4	61.0
A few times a week	66	65.0	16.2	63	59.2	14.8	61	65.9	16.4
Once a week	31	36.2	9.0	56	60.9	15.2	44	50.2	12.5
Less than once a week	14	12.8	3.2	56	63.2	15.8	18	20.2	5.0
Never	9	14.5	3.6	21	32.0	8.0	9	11.0	2.7
Don't know	4	6.6	1.7	9	8.6	2.1	7	9.2	2.3

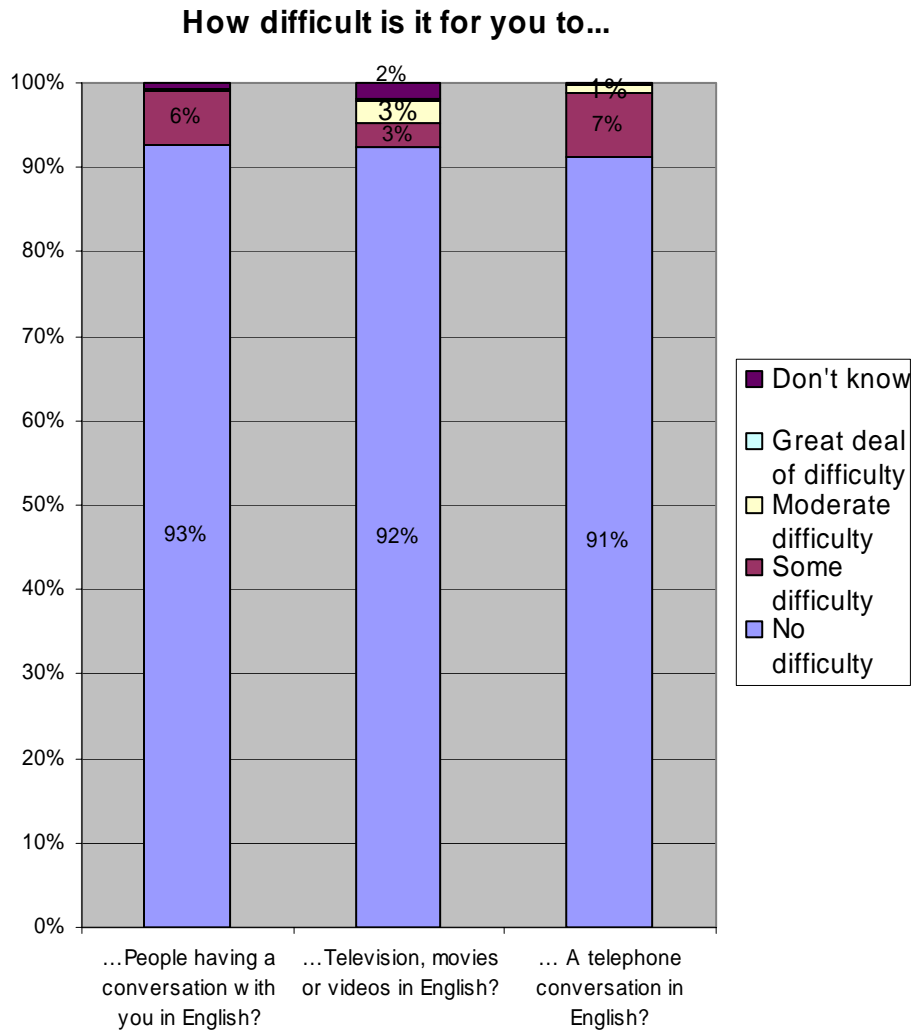
**Question 5: With regard to the English Language, how well do you...
Would you say...?**



Supporting Data

	Q.5a With regard to the English language... How well do you understand it when it is spoken to you?			Q.5b With regard to the English language... How well do you speak it?			Q.5c With regard to the English language... How well do you read it?			Q.5d With regard to the English language... How well do you write it?		
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
Very well	370	359.9	89.8%	338	329.6	82.2%	348	336.7	84.0%	299	274.1	68.4%
Well	23	30.4	7.6%	59	67.4	16.8%	47	55.7	13.9%	86	102.4	25.5%
Not well	6	8.5	2.1%	2	2.2	0.5%	4	6.7	1.7%	12	17.5	4.4%
Not at all	0	0.0	0.0%	1	1.1	0.3%	0	0.0	0.0%	4	6.9	1.7%
Don't know	2	2.2	0.5%	1	0.7	0.2%	2	1.9	0.5%	0	0.0	0.0%

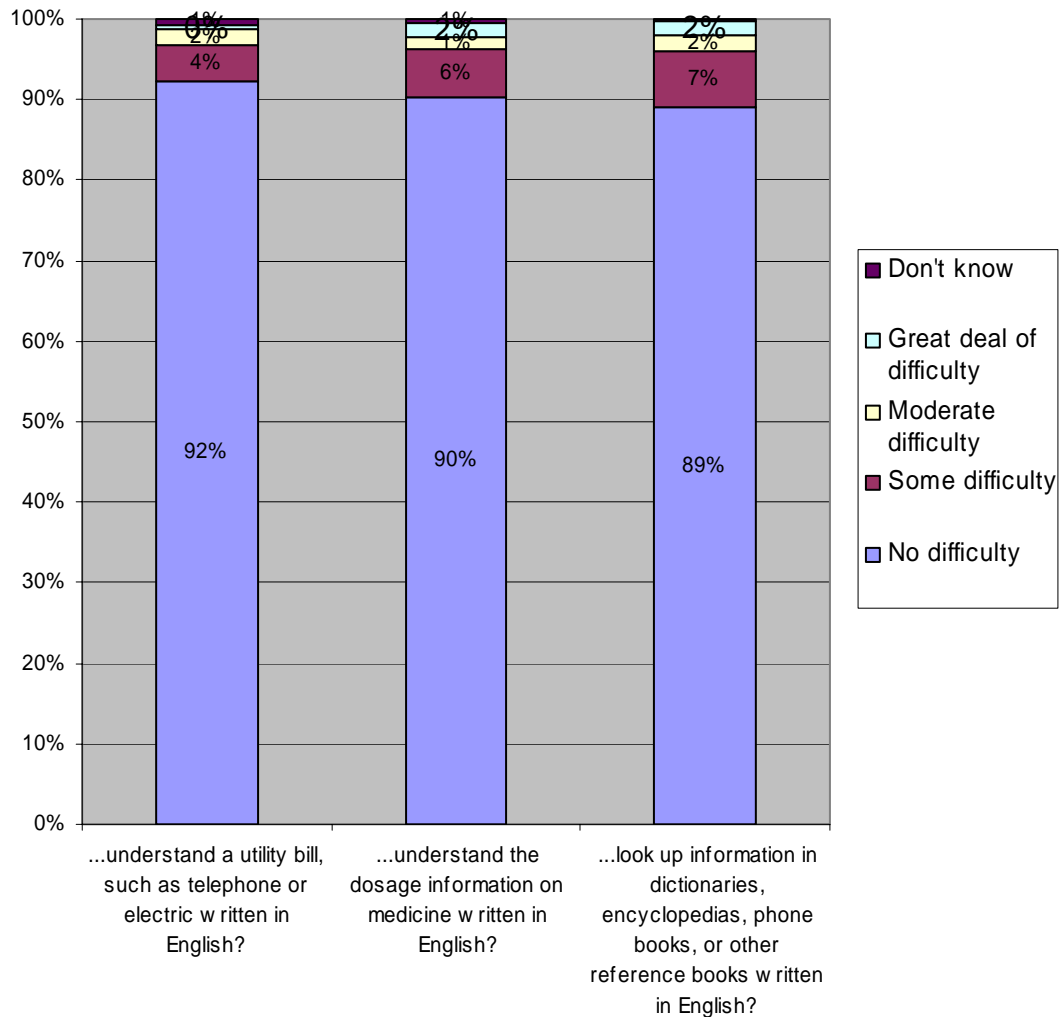
Question 6: How difficult is it for you to...in English? Would you say you have...?



Supporting Data

	Q6a. How difficult is it for you to understand people having a conversation with you in English?			Q6b. How difficult is it for you to understand television, movies or videos in English?			Q6c. How difficult is it for you to understand a telephone conversation in English?		
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
No difficulty	377	371.3	92.6%	377	369.8	92.2%	371	366.0	91.3%
Some difficulty	20	25.5	6.4%	12	11.8	2.9%	25	29.8	7.4%
Moderate difficulty	1	1.1	0.3%	5	10.1	2.5%	4	4.1	1.0%
Great deal of difficulty	0	0.0	0.0%	1	0.9	0.2%	0	0.0	0.0%
Never tried	0	0.0	0.0%	1	3.6	0.9%	0	0.0	0.0%
Don't know	3	3.1	0.8%	5	4.8	1.2%	1	1.1	0.3%

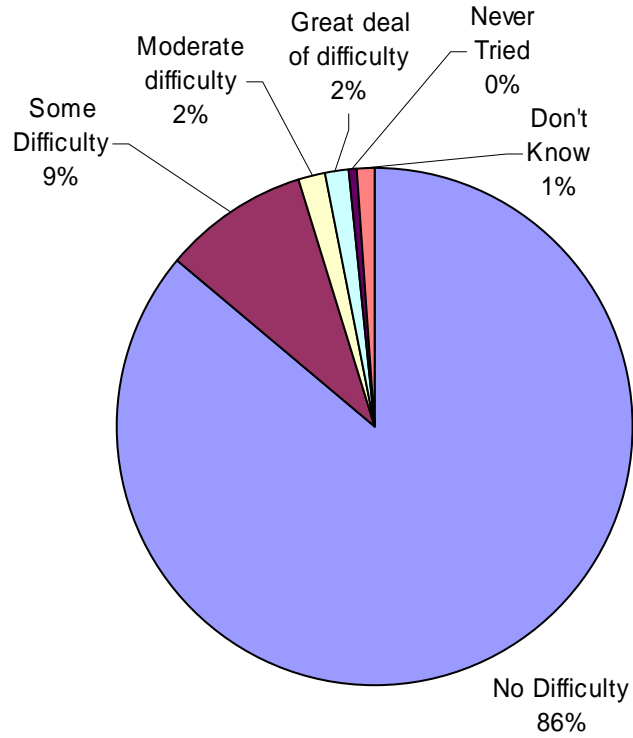
Question 7: How difficult is it for you to...in English? Would you say you have...?



Supporting Data

	Q7a. How difficult is it for you to understand a utility bill, such as telephone or electric written in English?			Q7c. How difficult is it for you to understand the dosage information on medicine written in English?			Q7e. How difficult is it for you to look up information in dictionaries, encyclopedias, phone books, or other reference books written in English?		
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
No difficulty	374	368.4	91.9%	370	362.6	90.4%	373	356.8	89.0%
Some difficulty	13	17.3	4.3%	18	23.5	5.9%	20	27.8	6.9%
Moderate difficulty	6	8.4	2.1%	6	6.0	1.5%	5	8.0	2.0%
Great deal of difficulty	2	1.6	0.4%	4	6.6	1.7%	2	7.3	1.8%
Never tried	2	1.9	0.5%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Don't know	4	3.4	0.8%	3	2.3	0.6%	1	1.1	0.3%

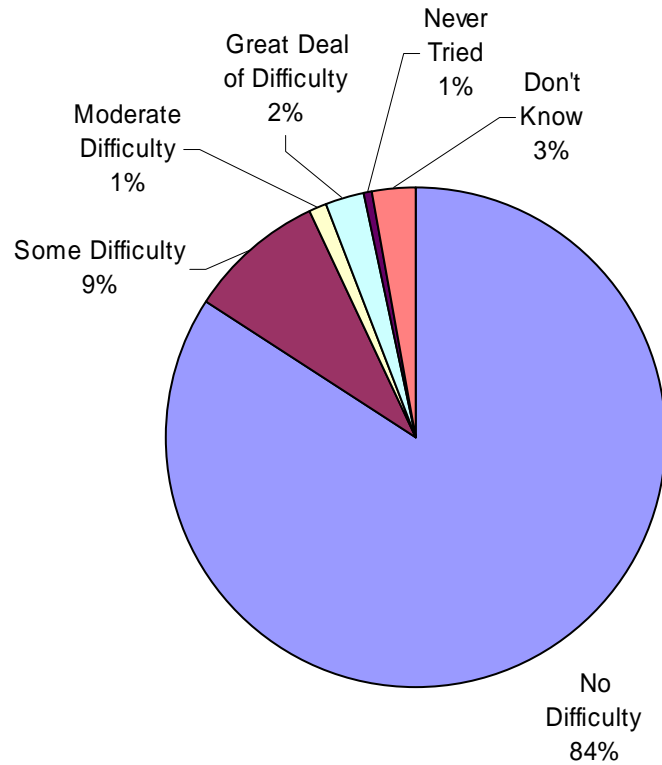
Question 8: How difficult is it for you to fill out forms in English at clinics, hospitals or your doctor's office? Would you say you have...



Supporting Data

	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
No difficulty	359	344.9	86.0%
Some difficulty	30	36.6	9.1%
Moderate difficulty	5	7.4	1.9%
Great deal of difficulty	3	5.8	1.5%
Never tried	2	1.8	0.4%
Don't know	2	4.4	1.1%

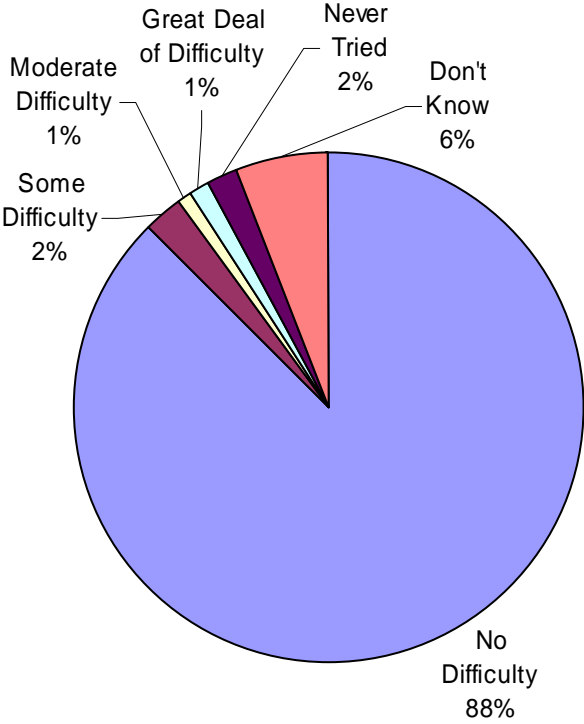
Question 9: How difficult it is for you to fill out forms in English for financial services, such as a bank? Would you say you have....



Supporting Data

	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
No difficulty	350	337.0	84.0%
Some difficulty	32	35.7	8.9%
Moderate difficulty	6	5.2	1.3%
Great deal of difficulty	4	9.5	2.4%
Never tried	3	2.4	0.6%
Don't know	6	11.3	2.8%

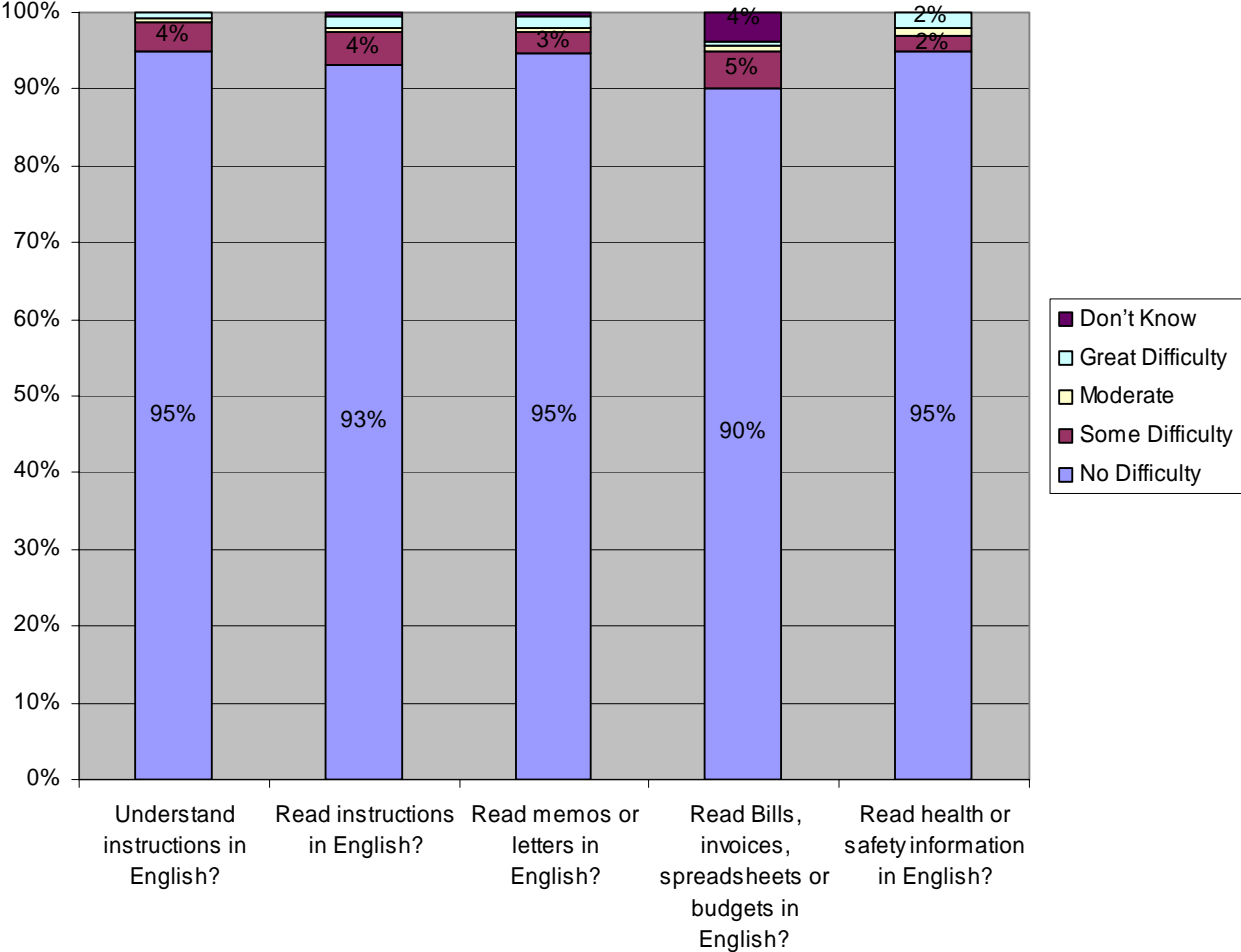
**Question 10: How difficult is it for you to fill out a job application?
Would you say you have...**



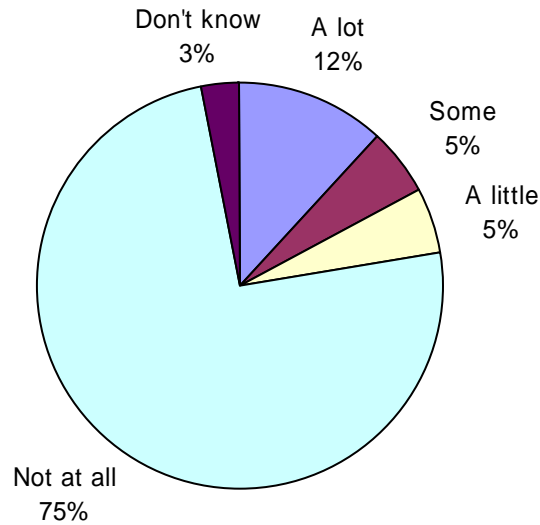
Supporting Data

	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
No difficulty	360	351.0	87.5%
Some difficulty	8	9.8	2.4%
Moderate difficulty	3	3.0	0.7%
Great deal of difficulty	3	5.8	1.5%
Never tried	8	8.2	2.0%
Don't know	19	23.2	5.8

Question 12: At work, how difficult is it for you to...



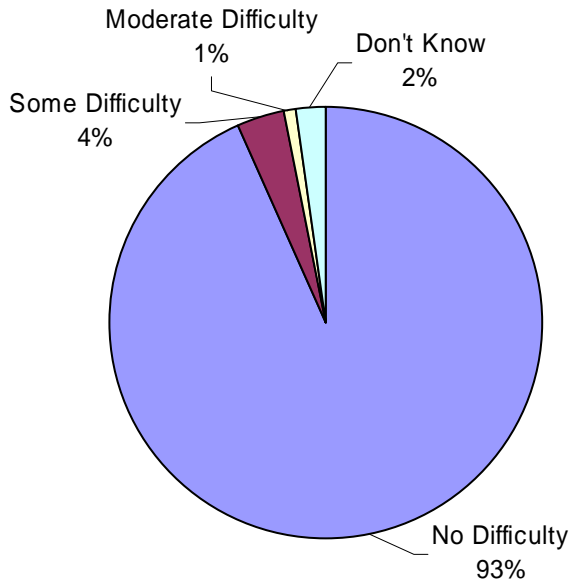
Question 13: How much do you think your reading skills limit your job opportunities, for example, to get a promotion or a different job you would like to have?



Supporting Data

Perceived impact of reading ability on employment advancement			
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
A lot	28	27.0	12.0%
Some	12	11.8	5.3%
A little	9	11.5	5.1%
Not at all	180	167.2	74.6%
Don't know	4	6.6	3.0%

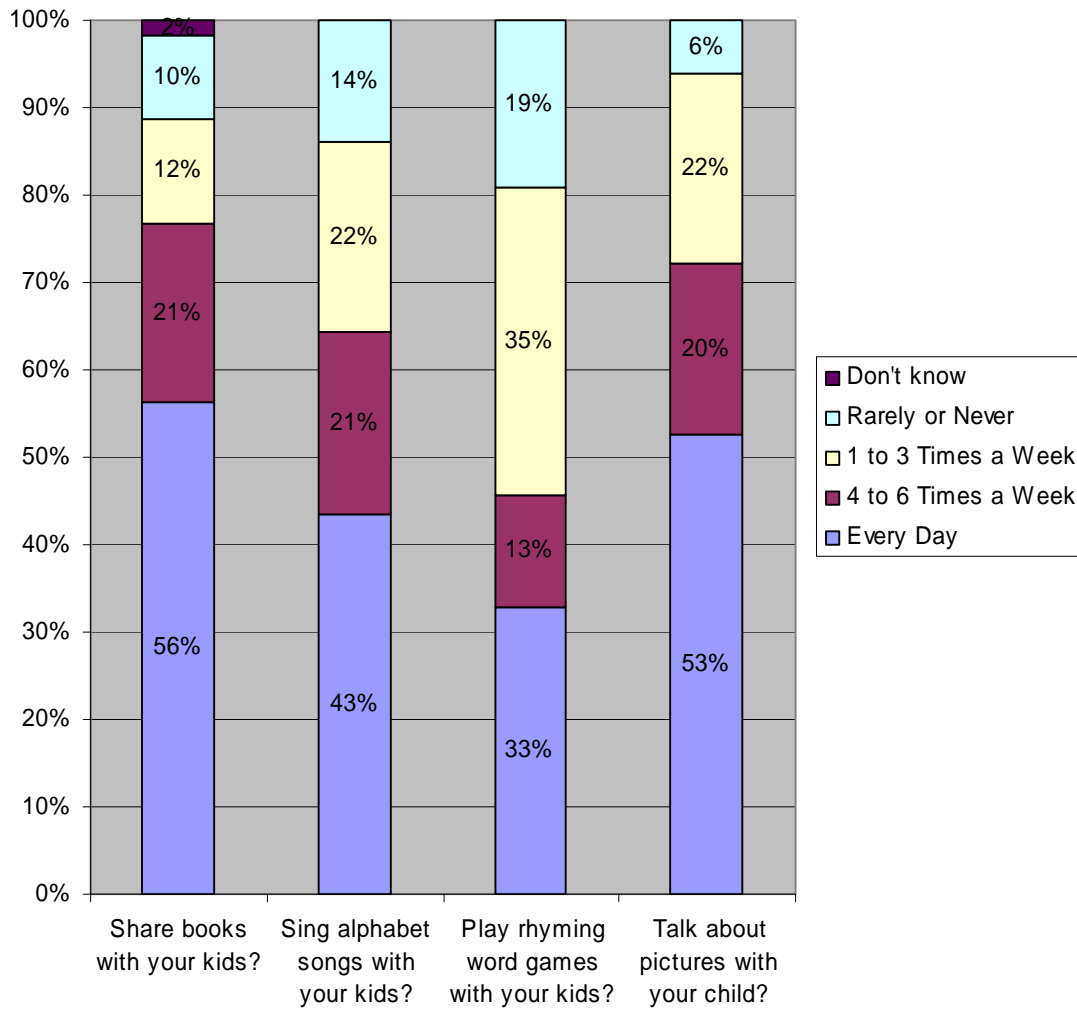
Question 15: How difficult is it for you to read notes sent home from school? Would you say you have...



Supporting Data

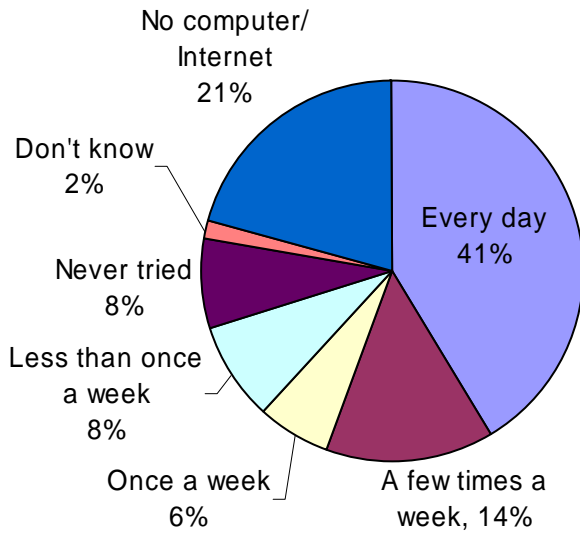
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
No difficulty	108	104.5	93.3%
Some difficulty	4	4.2	3.7%
Moderate difficulty	1	0.7	0.6%
Great deal of difficulty	0	0	0%
Never tried	0	0	0%
Don't know/Refused	3	2.6	2.3%

Question 17: In the last month, how often did you...

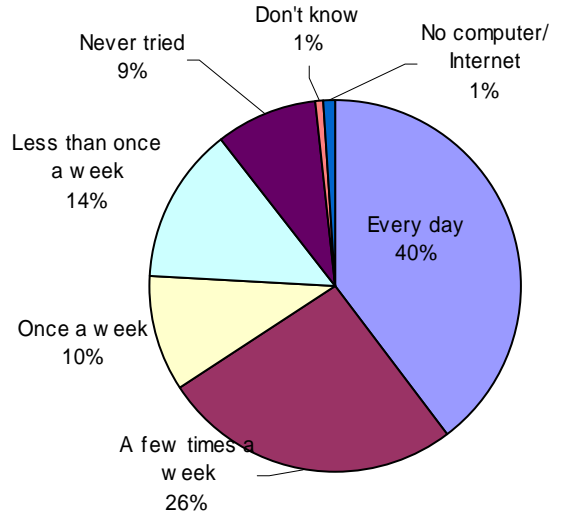


Question 18: How often do you...?

...Send or receive an email message?



...Find information on the internet?



Supporting Data

	Q18a. How often do you send or receive an email message?			Q18b. How often do you find information on the internet?		
	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %	Unweighted Count	Weighted Count	Weighted %
Every day	190	166.2	41.4	139	126.4	39.8
A few times a week	60	56.3	14.0	92	82.5	25.9
Once a week	23	24.5	6.1	35	32.5	10.2
Less than once a week	30	33.3	8.3	41	43.2	13.6
Never tried	27	31.8	7.9	24	28.1	8.8
Don't know	6	6.0	1.5	2	1.9	0.6
No computer/ Internet	65	83.0	20.7	3	3.3	1.0

Question 19: How much help do you get from family members or friends with...? Would you say...?

