

Table 115.—Percent of students at or above selected reading proficiency levels,¹ by sex, race/ethnicity and age: 1971 to 1996

Sex, race/ethnicity, and level	1971	1975	1980	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9-year-olds ²									
Total									
Level 150 ³	90.6 (0.5)	93.1 (0.4)	94.6 (0.4)	92.3 (0.3)	92.7 (0.7)	90.1 (0.9)	92.3 (0.4)	92.1 (0.7)	92.7 (0.7)
Level 200 ⁴	58.7 (1.0)	62.1 (0.8)	67.7 (1.0)	61.5 (0.7)	62.6 (1.3)	58.9 (1.3)	62.0 (1.1)	63.3 (1.4)	63.7 (1.2)
Level 250 ⁵	15.6 (0.6)	14.6 (0.6)	17.7 (0.8)	17.2 (0.6)	17.5 (1.1)	18.4 (1.0)	16.2 (0.8)	16.5 (1.2)	17.7 (0.8)
Male									
Level 150 ³	87.9 (0.7)	91.0 (0.5)	92.9 (0.5)	90.4 (0.5)	90.4 (0.9)	87.9 (1.4)	90.2 (0.8)	90.2 (1.0)	90.7 (0.8)
Level 200 ⁴	52.7 (1.2)	56.2 (1.0)	62.7 (1.1)	58.0 (0.9)	58.4 (1.8)	53.8 (1.9)	56.9 (1.6)	59.2 (1.5)	57.8 (2.0)
Level 250 ⁵	12.0 (0.6)	11.5 (0.6)	14.6 (0.9)	15.9 (0.7)	15.8 (1.4)	16.1 (1.2)	14.2 (1.0)	15.2 (1.2)	15.0 (1.3)
Female									
Level 150 ³	93.2 (0.5)	95.3 (0.3)	96.4 (0.4)	94.2 (0.4)	94.9 (1.0)	92.4 (1.1)	94.4 (0.6)	94.0 (0.8)	94.6 (0.8)
Level 200 ⁴	64.6 (1.1)	68.1 (0.8)	72.7 (1.0)	65.2 (0.8)	66.9 (1.4)	64.2 (1.2)	67.3 (1.2)	67.3 (1.9)	69.5 (1.5)
Level 250 ⁵	19.2 (0.8)	17.7 (0.8)	20.7 (1.0)	18.4 (0.7)	19.1 (1.2)	20.8 (1.2)	18.2 (1.1)	17.8 (1.5)	20.4 (1.4)
White⁶									
Level 150 ³	94.0 (0.4)	96.0 (0.3)	97.1 (0.2)	95.4 (0.3)	95.1 (0.7)	93.5 (0.9)	95.8 (0.5)	95.7 (0.5)	95.9 (0.8)
Level 200 ⁴	65.0 (1.0)	69.0 (0.8)	74.2 (0.7)	68.6 (0.8)	68.4 (1.6)	66.0 (1.4)	69.3 (1.2)	70.1 (1.5)	70.9 (1.5)
Level 250 ⁵	18.0 (0.7)	17.4 (0.7)	21.0 (0.9)	20.9 (0.7)	20.3 (1.5)	22.6 (1.2)	19.6 (1.0)	19.7 (1.5)	21.6 (1.1)
Black⁶									
Level 150 ³	69.7 (1.7)	80.7 (1.1)	84.9 (1.4)	81.3 (1.0)	83.2 (2.4)	76.9 (2.7)	79.6 (2.2)	78.7 (2.4)	83.1 (1.9)
Level 200 ⁴	22.0 (1.5)	31.6 (1.5)	41.3 (1.9)	36.6 (1.5)	39.4 (2.9)	33.9 (3.4)	36.6 (2.2)	38.3 (2.8)	41.3 (3.2)
Level 250 ⁵	1.6 (0.5)	2.0 (0.3)	4.1 (0.6)	4.5 (0.5)	5.6 (1.2)	5.2 (1.5)	4.6 (0.8)	4.4 (1.5)	6.6 (1.3)
Hispanic									
Level 150 ³	—	80.8 (2.5)	84.5 (1.8)	82.0 (2.1)	85.6 (3.5)	83.7 (1.8)	83.4 (2.6)	80.4 (4.6)	84.2 (2.6)
Level 200 ⁴	—	34.6 (3.0)	41.6 (2.6)	39.6 (2.2)	45.9 (3.3)	40.9 (2.7)	43.1 (3.5)	37.1 (4.6)	47.5 (3.8)
Level 250 ⁵	—	2.6 (0.5)	5.0 (1.4)	4.3 (0.6)	8.6 (2.3)	5.8 (2.0)	7.2 (2.3)	6.4 (1.6)	7.5 (3.0)
13-year-olds ²									
Total									
Level 150 ³	99.8 (0.0)	99.7 (0.1)	99.9 (0.1)	99.8 (0.0)	99.9 (0.1)	99.8 (0.1)	99.5 (0.3)	99.3 (0.2)	99.6 (0.1)
Level 200 ⁴	93.0 (0.5)	93.2 (0.4)	94.8 (0.4)	93.9 (0.3)	94.9 (0.6)	93.8 (0.6)	92.7 (0.7)	91.7 (0.6)	92.8 (0.6)
Level 250 ⁵	57.8 (1.1)	58.6 (1.0)	60.7 (1.1)	59.0 (0.6)	58.7 (1.3)	58.7 (1.0)	61.6 (1.4)	60.4 (1.2)	61.3 (1.3)
Level 300 ⁷	9.8 (0.5)	10.2 (0.5)	11.3 (0.5)	11.0 (0.4)	10.9 (0.8)	11.0 (0.6)	15.3 (0.9)	14.1 (0.8)	13.8 (1.0)
Male									
Level 150 ³	99.6 (0.1)	99.6 (0.1)	99.8 (0.1)	99.7 (0.1)	99.7 (0.2)	99.7 (0.2)	99.2 (0.4)	99.1 (0.3)	99.5 (0.2)
Level 200 ⁴	90.7 (0.7)	90.9 (0.5)	93.4 (0.6)	92.2 (0.4)	92.8 (1.0)	91.4 (0.9)	90.4 (1.1)	88.8 (1.1)	90.1 (1.1)
Level 250 ⁵	51.6 (1.2)	51.7 (1.1)	55.9 (1.2)	54.0 (0.8)	52.3 (1.9)	52.4 (1.5)	55.5 (2.0)	53.3 (1.9)	54.8 (1.6)
Level 300 ⁷	7.3 (0.5)	7.0 (0.4)	9.1 (0.7)	9.0 (0.4)	8.6 (0.9)	7.6 (0.8)	12.8 (1.1)	10.1 (0.7)	10.3 (1.0)
Female									
Level 150 ³	99.9 (0.1)	99.9 (0.1)	99.9 (0.0)	99.9 (0.1)	100.0 —	99.9 —	99.8 —	99.6 (0.2)	99.8 —
Level 200 ⁴	95.2 (0.4)	95.5 (0.4)	96.1 (0.4)	95.8 (0.0)	96.9 (0.6)	96.3 (0.6)	95.0 (0.7)	94.9 (0.6)	95.3 (0.5)
Level 250 ⁵	64.0 (1.1)	65.5 (1.2)	65.4 (1.1)	64.0 (0.7)	65.0 (1.4)	65.0 (1.5)	67.5 (1.4)	67.9 (1.7)	67.5 (1.5)
Level 300 ⁷	12.3 (0.6)	13.5 (0.7)	13.5 (0.6)	13.2 (0.5)	13.2 (0.9)	14.5 (0.9)	17.7 (1.1)	18.4 (1.1)	17.1 (1.3)
White⁶									
Level 150 ³	99.9 (0.0)	99.9 (0.0)	100.0 —	99.9 (0.0)	99.9 —	99.9 (0.1)	99.8 (0.1)	99.6 (0.2)	99.8 —
Level 200 ⁴	96.2 (0.3)	96.4 (0.2)	97.1 (0.2)	96.2 (0.3)	96.0 (0.6)	96.0 (0.6)	95.9 (0.6)	95.0 (0.7)	95.9 (0.5)
Level 250 ⁵	64.2 (0.9)	65.5 (0.9)	67.8 (0.8)	65.3 (0.7)	63.7 (1.5)	64.8 (1.2)	68.5 (1.4)	68.1 (1.3)	70.1 (1.4)
Level 300 ⁷	11.3 (0.5)	12.1 (0.5)	13.6 (0.6)	13.1 (0.5)	12.4 (0.9)	13.3 (0.9)	18.1 (1.1)	17.2 (1.0)	17.2 (1.4)
Black⁶									
Level 150 ³	98.6 (0.3)	98.4 (0.3)	99.3 (0.3)	99.4 (0.2)	99.8 —	99.4 —	98.7 —	98.6 —	99.4 —
Level 200 ⁴	74.2 (1.7)	76.9 (1.3)	84.1 (1.7)	85.5 (1.0)	91.3 (2.2)	87.7 (2.3)	82.0 (2.7)	80.6 (2.3)	82.7 (2.8)
Level 250 ⁵	21.1 (1.2)	24.8 (1.6)	30.1 (2.0)	34.6 (1.2)	40.2 (2.3)	41.7 (3.5)	38.4 (2.7)	35.6 (3.5)	35.1 (3.7)
Level 300 ⁷	0.8 (0.2)	1.5 (0.3)	1.8 (0.5)	2.8 (0.5)	4.6 (1.2)	4.6 (0.8)	5.7 (1.4)	3.9 (1.2)	3.1 (0.9)
Hispanic									
Level 150 ³	—	99.6 (0.3)	99.7 —	99.5 —	99.2 —	99.1 (0.5)	98.1 —	98.7 —	98.7 —
Level 200 ⁴	—	81.3 (2.3)	86.8 (2.4)	86.7 (1.5)	87.4 (2.6)	85.8 (2.4)	83.4 (3.5)	82.4 (2.7)	86.1 (2.8)
Level 250 ⁵	—	32.0 (3.6)	35.4 (2.6)	39.0 (2.1)	38.0 (4.4)	37.2 (2.9)	40.9 (5.1)	33.9 (3.9)	39.8 (3.9)
Level 300 ⁷	—	2.2 (1.0)	2.3 (0.6)	4.1 (0.7)	4.4 (1.9)	3.9 (1.2)	6.0 (1.9)	4.3 (1.8)	5.5 (1.7)
17-year-olds ²									
Total									
Level 150 ³	99.6 (0.1)	99.7 (0.1)	99.9 (0.1)	100.0 (0.0)	100.0 —	99.9 —	99.8 (0.1)	99.8 (0.1)	100.0 —
Level 200 ⁴	96.0 (0.3)	96.4 (0.3)	97.2 (0.3)	98.3 (0.1)	98.9 (0.3)	98.1 (0.3)	97.1 (0.4)	96.8 (0.5)	97.4 (0.5)
Level 250 ⁵	78.6 (0.9)	80.1 (0.7)	80.7 (0.9)	83.1 (0.5)	85.7 (0.8)	84.1 (1.0)	82.5 (0.8)	80.8 (1.0)	81.4 (0.9)
Level 300 ⁷	39.0 (1.0)	38.7 (0.8)	37.8 (1.1)	40.3 (0.8)	40.9 (1.5)	41.4 (1.0)	43.2 (1.1)	41.0 (1.2)	38.6 (1.4)
Male									
Level 150 ³	99.4 (0.1)	99.5 (0.2)	99.8 (0.1)	99.9 (0.0)	100.0 —	99.8 —	99.7 (0.2)	99.7 —	99.9 —
Level 200 ⁴	94.7 (0.4)	95.3 (0.4)	96.3 (0.5)	97.6 (0.2)	98.5 (0.5)	97.0 (0.6)	96.3 (0.7)	95.5 (0.9)	96.3 (0.8)
Level 250 ⁵	74.4 (1.0)	75.6 (0.8)	77.9 (1.0)	79.6 (0.6)	82.9 (1.4)	79.7 (1.4)	78.4 (1.2)	76.2 (1.5)	76.7 (1.2)
Level 300 ⁷	33.9 (1.1)	33.7 (1.0)	35.0 (1.3)	35.4 (0.8)	37.1 (2.3)	36.1 (1.5)	38.4 (1.6)	35.6 (1.9)	32.8 (2.1)
Female									
Level 150 ³	99.8 (0.1)	99.8 (0.1)	99.9 —	99.9 —	100.0 —	100.0 —	99.9 —	99.9 —	100.0 —
Level 200 ⁴	97.3 (0.3)	97.5 (0.4)	98.1 (0.3)	99.0 (0.1)	99.3 (0.3)	99.2 (0.3)	97.9 (0.4)	98.0 (0.5)	98.6 (0.4)
Level 250 ⁵	82.6 (1.0)	84.3 (0.9)	83.6 (1.0)	86.8 (0.6)	88.2 (1.1)	88.6 (1.0)	86.8 (1.1)	85.6 (1.2)	86.4 (1.1)
Level 300 ⁷	44.0 (1.2)	43.6 (0.9)	40.7 (1.2)	45.0 (0.9)	44.4 (2.0)	46.8 (1.3)	48.5 (1.5)	46.5 (1.5)	44.7 (1.6)
White⁶									
Level 150 ³	99.9 (0.0)	99.9 (0.0)	100.0 —	100.0 —	100.0 —	100.0 —	99.9 —	100.0 —	100.0 —
Level 200 ⁴	97.9 (0.2)	98.6 (0.1)	99.1 (0.1)	99.0 (0.1)	99.3 (0.3)	98.8 (0.2)	98.6 (0.3)	98.1 (0.4)	98.5 (0.4)
Level 250 ⁵	83.7 (0.7)	86.2 (0.6)	86.9 (0.6)	88.0 (0.5)	88.7 (0.9)	88.3 (1.1)	88.0 (0.9)	86.2 (1.1)	86.8 (0.8)
Level 300 ⁷	43.2 (0.9)	43.9 (0.8)	43.3 (1.1)	46.3 (0.9)	45.4 (1.6)	47.5 (1.2)	50.1 (1.4)	47.7 (1.4)	45.1 (1.6)
Black⁶									
Level 150 ³	97.6 (0.4)	97.7 (0.8)	99.0 (0.3)	99.9 —	100.0 —	99.6 —	99.1 —	99.5 —	99.8 —
Level 200 ⁴	81.9 (1.5)	82.0 (1.8)	85.6 (1.7)	95.9 (0.5)	98.0 (1.0)	95.7 (1.3)	91.6 (1.6)	93.4 (2.0)	94.8 (2.0)
Level 250 ⁵	40.1 (1.6)	43.0 (1.6)	44.0 (2.0)	65.7 (1.2)	75.8 (2.4)	69.1 (2.8)	61.4 (2.3)	65.7 (4.1)	67.2 (4.1)
Level 300 ⁷	7.7 (0.9)	8.1 (0.7)	7.1 (0.8)	16.2 (0.9)	24.9 (3.1)	19.7 (1.8)	16.9 (2.5)	21.5 (3.7)	18.0 (2.1)
Hispanic									
Level 150 ³	—	99.3 (0.4)	99.8 —	99.8 —	99.9 —	99.7 —	99.8 —	99.0 —	99.9 —
Level 200 ⁴	—	88.7 (2.4)	93.3 (1.8)	95.6 (0.7)	96.3 (2.4)	95.9 (2.1)	93.4 (2.3)	91.1 (3.4)	94.0 (1.9)
Level 250 ⁵	—	52.9 (4.1)	62.2 (3.1)	68.3 (2.1)	71.5 (4.8)	75.2 (4.7)	69.2 (4.0)	63.0 (4.4)	64.2 (4.4)
Level 300 ⁷	—	12.6 (2.7)	16.5 (2.1)	21.2 (2.3)	23.3 (3.7)	27.1 (3.3)	27.3 (3.2)	20.1 (3.0)	20.0 (4.7)

¹ As measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

² Excludes persons not enrolled in school.

³ Able to follow brief written directions and carry out simple, discrete reading tasks.

⁴ Able to understand, combine ideas, and make inferences based on short uncomplicated passages about specific or sequentially related information.

⁵ Able to search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations about literature, science, and social studies materials.

⁶ Data for 1971 include persons of Hispanic origin.

⁷ Able to find, understand, summarize, and explain relatively complicated literary and informational material.

—Data not available.

NOTE.—Standard errors appear in parentheses.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *NAEP 1996 Trends in Academic Progress*, by Educational Testing Service. (This table was prepared May 1999).