

Number Of Children



All 4-year-olds in 2000



4th Graders in 2005



8th Graders in 2005




12th Graders in 2005

By the Fourth Grade, fewer than one-third of all American children are reading at or above grade level. They are unlikely ever to catch up. The early VANISHING POTENTIAL of America's children is unacceptable.

NOTES

Number of Children Reading At or Above Grade Level

 Represents 10,000 children

**First Bar:** In 2000, there were 3.9 million four-year-olds. (Source: U.S. Census 2000 Microdata (IPUMS))

**Second Bar:** In 2005, when the four-year-olds reached Fourth Grade, only 30 percent read at or above grade level. (Source: National Assessment of Education Progress 2005 Reading Assessment Scores)

**Third Bar:** In 2005, 29 percent of all Eighth Graders read at or above grade level. (Source: National Assessment of Education Progress 2005 Reading Assessment Scores)

**Fourth Bar:** In 2005, 34 percent of Twelfth Graders read at or above grade level. (Source: National Assessment of Education Progress 2005 Reading Assessment Scores) The graph shows a small improvement between the Eighth and Twelfth Grades. The most likely reason is that students with low reading skills are more likely to drop out of school between the administration of the tests in Eighth and Twelfth Grades. Therefore, students in school in Twelfth Grade likely have higher reading skills than the larger group of children who were in school in the Eighth Grade.

The 2005 National Assessment of Education Progress scores were used for this graph, because data are not available for 2007 Twelfth Grade scores.