An assessment of adult skills by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that about 18 percent of 16- to 65-year-olds in the United States have low literacy skills and 30 percent have low skills in working with and using mathematical information (numeracy).

This represents millions of American adults, including many working adults, who struggle to use written text and numbers. Among the 22 OECD member countries included in the assessment, 12 countries ranked above the United States in literacy and 17 counties ranked above the United States in numeracy.

**LITERACY**
- **58 million** adults have low math skills (30 percent of the adult population)

**MATH SKILLS**
- **35 million** adults have low literacy (18 percent of the adult population)

**EMPLOYMENT STATUS**
Adults with low literacy or math skills were more likely to be unemployed and out of the labor force than those with high skills. Still, millions of employed individuals have low literacy or low numeracy.

**LITERACY**
- **23 million** employed adults have low literacy (16 percent of the employed population)

**MATH SKILLS**
- **36 million** employed adults have low math skills (25 percent of the employed population)

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**
A high school education does not guarantee that a person will have high levels of skills. More than half of those with the low levels of skills have at least a high school diploma and many have higher degrees.

- **63%** of adults with low literacy have a high school education or higher
- **69%** of adults with low math skills have a high school education or higher