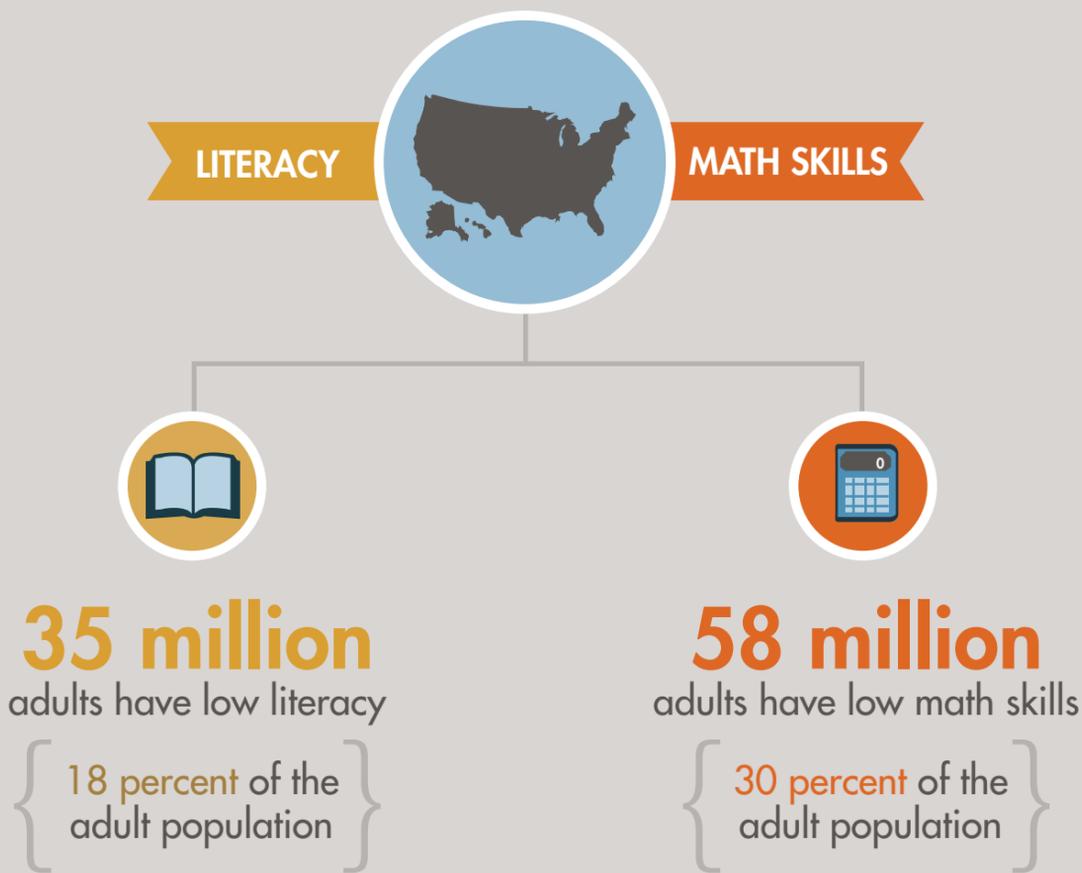


An Education and Workforce Challenge

Millions of United States Workers Have Low Literacy and Math Skills

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 countries ranked above the United States in numeracy.



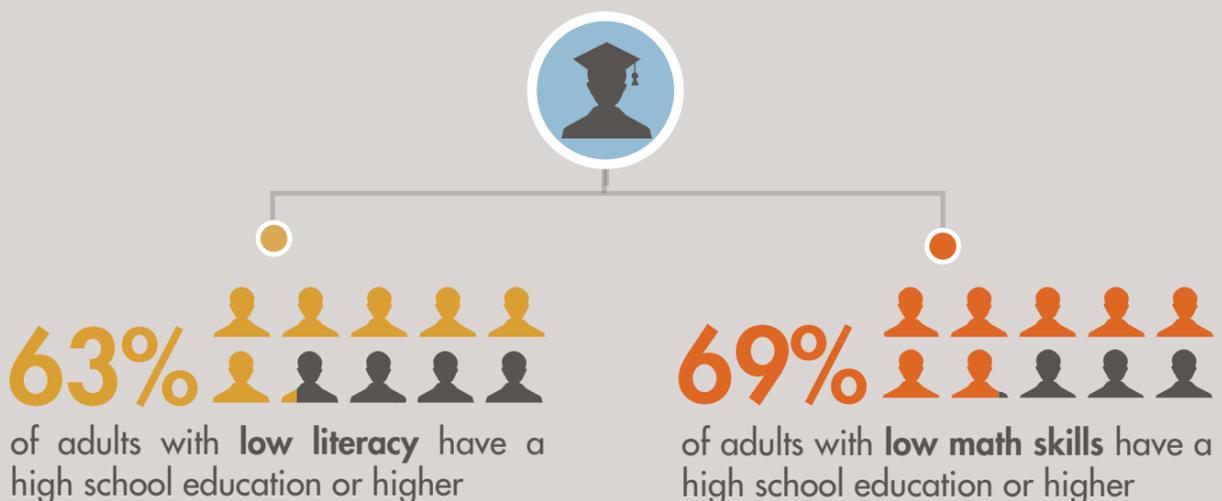
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

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.



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.



Note: The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) assessment, using a nationally representative sample of about 5,000 adults in the U.S., was conducted by the OECD in 24 countries (<http://skills.oecd.org/skillsoutlook.html>). Russian Federation and Cyprus, not OECD member countries, also took part in the assessment. Low literacy or numeracy is defined as being in the lowest two of six possible categories. PIAAC defines literacy as "understanding, evaluating, using and engaging with written text" and numeracy as "the ability to access, use, interpret, and communicate mathematical information and ideas." Results presented here represent independent calculations by American Institutes for Research with PIAAC data.