14.9% of adults in Iowa have low literacy
Iowa ranks 10 out of 50 in the U.S.

1 in 9 counties in Iowa have populations where 20% or more of the residents have below basic literacy.

How does low literacy affect equity and quality of life?
In counties where at least 20% of the population have below basic literacy, we see that many health, economic, and educational outcomes fall short.

Unemployment
- 5.0% low literacy counties
- 3.6% other counties
- 3.9% state

Median Income
- $53,985
- $54,146
- $58,580

Adults Without a High School Degree
- 14.8%
- 8.4%
- 8.0%

No Access to Healthcare
- 7.7%
- 5.6%
- 4.9%

Residents Below the Poverty Line
- 13.9%
- 10.9%
- 10.9%

Demographics

Households Where Limited English is Spoken
The percentage of households where no adult speaks English "very well."
Below basic literacy is defined as scoring level 1 or below on the PIAAC International Adult Literacy Survey. 4th grade reading scores come from the NAEP reading assessment. 4th grade ELA test performance data comes from edopportunity.org. Self-Reported health comes from the Community Health Status Indicators. All other data comes from the American Community Survey. PIAAC data is not available by city.

Visit map.barbarabush.org for county-level PIAAC data.