

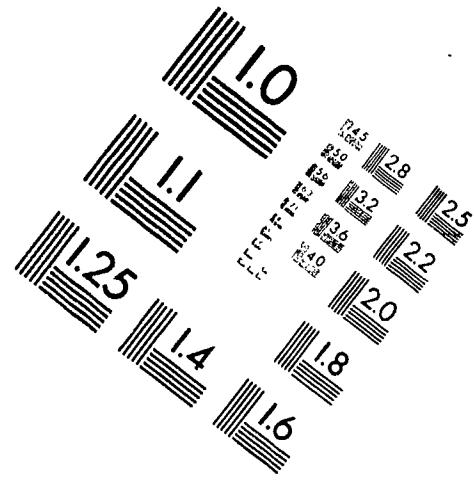
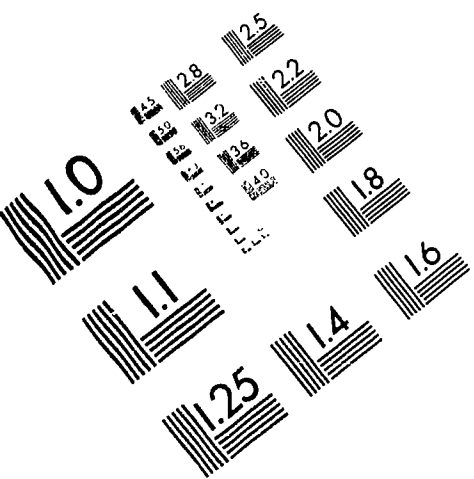


**AIM**

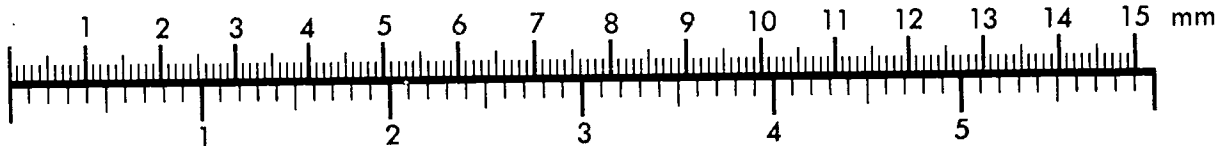
**Association for Information and Image Management**

1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 1100  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

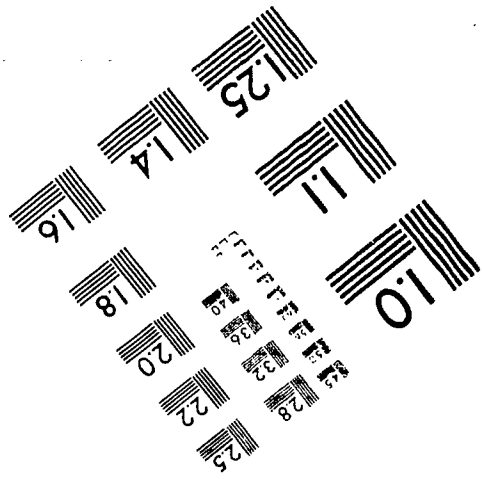
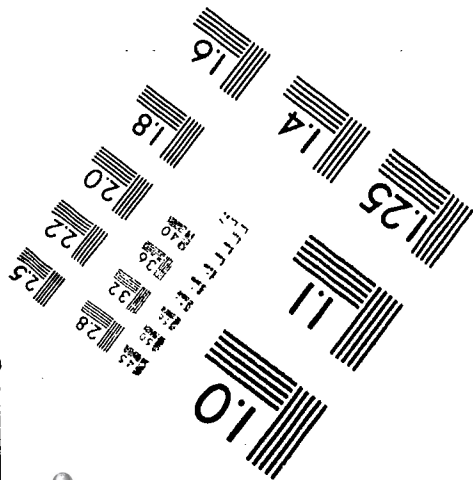
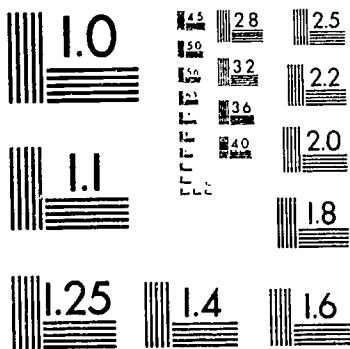
301/587-8202



Centimeter



Inches



MANUFACTURED TO AIM STANDARDS  
BY APPLIED IMAGE, INC.

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 370 964

TM 021 508

TITLE Graphic Supplement for the Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey. Prose, Document, Quantitative.

INSTITUTION Iowa State Dept. of Education, Des Moines.

PUB DATE Mar 94

NOTE 92p.

PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; \*Adult Literacy; Adult Reading Programs; Adults; Educational Assessment; \*Graphs; \*Literacy Education; National Surveys; \*Reading Achievement; State Programs; \*Test Results

IDENTIFIERS \*Graphic Representation; \*Iowa; National Adult Literacy Survey (NCES)

ABSTRACT

This publication presents the results of the Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey as referenced in the publication "Adult Literacy in Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey" in graphic form. The State Adult Literacy Survey was a research project in which 12 states assessed the literacy skills of their adult populations. As a component of the National Adult Literacy Survey, the survey obtained information on literacy levels, average literary proficiencies, and the connection between literacy and education. Literacy was defined for these surveys as the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential. The average prose, document, and quantitative proficiency scores of adults in Iowa were approximately the same as those of adults in the Midwest region, but were higher than those of adults nationwide. The 62 graphs displaying this information are cross-referenced to the specific data tables in the complete report. (SLD)

\*\*\*\*\*

\* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
 \* from the original document. \*

\*\*\*\*\*

ED 370 964

SCOPE OF INTEREST NOTICE

The Eric Facility has assigned this document for processing to:

TMI

In our judgment, this document is also of interest to the Clearinghouses noted to the right. Indexing should reflect their special points of view

CE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

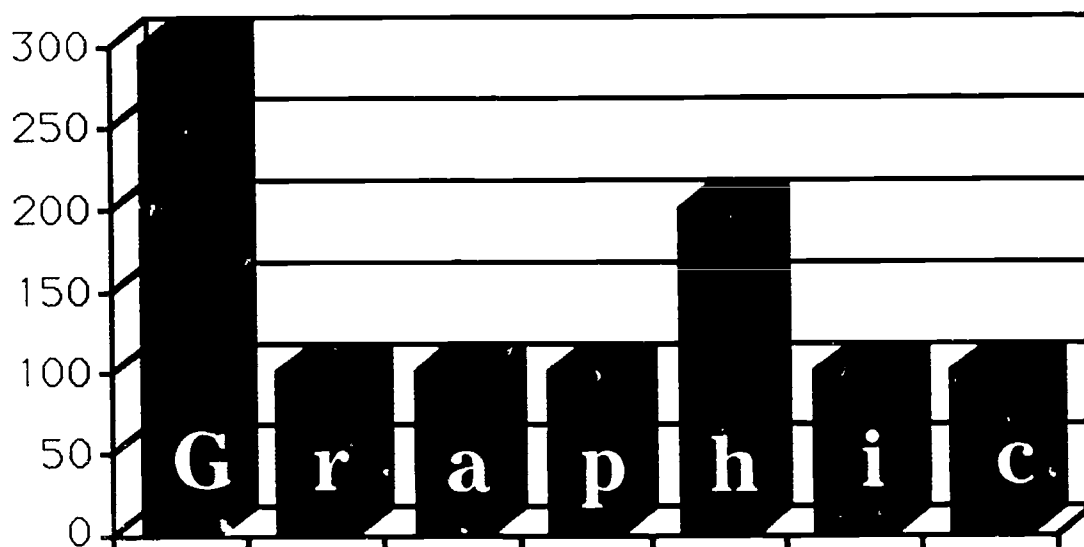
- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

MARY JO BRUETT

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."



## Supplement

for the

# Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey

Prose • Document • Quantitative

Iowa Department of Education

March 1994

State of Iowa  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Ron McGauvran, President, Clinton  
Betty L. Dexter, Vice President, Davenport  
C. W. Callison, Burlington  
Marcia Dudden, Reinbeck  
Sally J. Frudden, Charles City  
Thomas M. Glenn, Des Moines  
Corine A. Hadley, Newton  
Gregory D. McClain, Cedar Falls  
Mary Jean Montgomery, Spencer

**ADMINISTRATION**

Al Ramirez, Ed.D., Director and Executive Officer  
of the State Board of Education  
Gail Sullivan, Special Assistant

**DIVISION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Harriet Custer, Acting Administrator, Division of Community Colleges  
Beverly Bunker, Acting Chief, Bureau of Educational and Student Services  
John Hartwig, Project Director

**Bureau of Data and Word Processing**

Becky Erickson, Graphic Artist

*It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.*

*The Department provides civil rights technical assistance to public school districts, nonpublic schools, area education agencies, and community colleges to help them eliminate discrimination in their educational programs, activities, or employment. For assistance, contact the Bureau of School Administration and Accreditation, Iowa Department of Education.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PREFACE</b> .....	vii
<b>OVERVIEW - Adult Literacy in Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey</b> .....	ix
<b>GRAPHS</b> .....	1
<b>1.0 State, Regional and National Comparisons/Trends</b> .....	2
1.1 Mean Proficiency Levels of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Census Regions, (2) the United States on the Prose Scale .....	3
1.2 Mean Proficiency Levels of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Census Regions, (2) the United States on the Document Scale .....	4
1.3 Mean Proficiency Levels of Persons 16+ Years of Age for (1) Census Regions, (2) the United States on the Quantitative Scale .....	5
1.4 Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Iowa, (2) Midwest Census Region, (3) the United States on the Prose Scale .....	6
1.5 Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Iowa, (2) Midwest Census Region, (3) the United States on the Document Scale .....	7
1.6 Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Iowa, (2) Midwest Census Region, (3) the United States on the Quantitative Scale .....	8

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Page**

1.7 Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16 to 64 Years of Age for Iowa on the Three Literacy Scales ..... 9

1.8 Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16 to 54 Years of Age for Iowa on the Three Literacy Scales ..... 10

1.9 A Comparison of Average Literacy Proficiency Rates to Various Age Cohorts for the Three Literacy Scales: Results for Iowa ..... 11

1.10 A Comparison of the Percent of the Adult Population at the Five Literacy Levels by Various Age Cohorts on the Prose Scale: Results for Iowa ..... 12

1.11 A Comparison of the Percent of the Adult Population at the Five Literacy Levels by Various Age Cohorts on the Document Scale: Results for Iowa ..... 13

1.12 A Comparison of the Percent of the Adult Population at the Five Literacy Levels by Various Age Cohorts on the Quantitative Scale: Results for Iowa ..... 14

**2.0 Gender Comparisons/Trends ..... 15**

2.1 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender for the Prose Scale ..... 16

2.1.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender on the Prose Scale ..... 17

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
2.2 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender for the Document Scale .....	18
2.2.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender on the Document Scale .....	19
2.3 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender for the Quantitative Scale .....	20
2.3.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender on the Quantitative Scale .....	21
<b>3.0 Age Cohort Comparisons/Trends .....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa by Age Cohorts (16-64 Years of Age) on the Prose Scale .....	23
3.1.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16-64 Years of Age) on the Prose Scale .....	24
3.2 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa by Age Cohorts (16-64 Years of Age) on the Document Scale .....	25
3.2.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16-64 Years of Age) on the Document Scale .....	26
3.3 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa by Age Cohorts (16-64 Years of Age) on the Quantitative Scale .....	27
3.3.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16-64 Years of Age) on the Quantitative Scale .....	28



<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>4.0 Educational Attainment Comparisons/Trends .....</b>	<b>29</b>
4.1 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Prose Scale .....	30
4.1.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Prose Scale .....	31
4.2 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Document Scale .....	32
4.2.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Document Scale .....	33
4.3 Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Quantitative Scale .....	34
4.3.1 A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Quantitative Scale .....	35
4.4 Average Years of Schooling Completed by Age Cohorts: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....	36
4.5 Average Years of Schooling Completed by Adults as Compared with their Parents' Highest Level of Education: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....	37

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Page**

**5.0 Employment, Economic Status and Civic Responsibility .....38**

5.1 Prose Average Proficiencies by Labor Force Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation.....39

5.2 Document Average Proficiencies by Labor Force  
Status: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....40

5.3 Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Labor Force  
Status: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....41

5.4 Prose Average Proficiencies by Occupational Category:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation.....42

5.5 Document Average Proficiencies by Occupational  
Category: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the  
Nation .....43

5.6 Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Occupational  
Category: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the  
Nation .....44

5.7 Average Number of Weeks Worked in the Past 12  
Months, by Literacy Level: Results for Iowa, the Mid-  
west, and the Nation .....45

5.8 Median Weekly Wages by Literacy Level: Results for  
Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....46

5.9 Median Annual Household Income, by Literacy Level:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....47

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Page**

5.10 Prose Average Proficiencies by Sources of Nonwage  
Income and Support: Results for Iowa, the Midwest,  
and the Nation .....48

5.11 Document Average Proficiencies by Sources of  
Nonwage Income and Support: Results for Iowa,  
the Midwest, and the Nation .....49

5.12 Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Sources of  
Nonwage Income and Support: Results for Iowa,  
the Midwest, and the Nation .....50

5.13 Prose Average Proficiencies by Poverty Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....51

5.14 Document Average Proficiencies by Poverty Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....52

5.15 Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Poverty Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation .....53

5.16 Prose Average Proficiencies by Voting in Recent  
Elections: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the  
Nation to the Question: "Voted in the Past Five  
Years". .....54

5.17 Document Average Proficiencies by Voting in Recent  
Elections: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the  
Nation to the Question: "Voted in the Past Five  
Years". .....55

5.18 Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Voting in Recent  
Elections: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the  
Nation to the Question: "Voted in the Past Five  
Years". .....56

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>6.0 Language Use and Literacy Practices .....</b>	<b>57</b>
6.1 Reliance on Various Sources of Information About Current Events: Results for Iowa .....	58
6.2 Frequency of Newspaper Reading: Results for Iowa .....	59
6.3 Adults Who Read the Newspaper Regularly, by Parts Read: Results for Iowa .....	60
6.4 Frequency of Library Use: Results for Iowa .....	61
6.5 Amount of Television Usually Watched Each Day: Results for Iowa .....	62
6.6 Frequency of Arithmetic or Mathematics Use: Results for Iowa .....	63
<b>7.0 Socio-Demographic Trends .....</b>	<b>64</b>
7.1 Number of Years Lived in Iowa by Year Cohorts .....	65
7.2 Probability of Moving Out of Iowa in the Next Five Years ...	66
7.3 Average Literacy Proficiency Levels by Enrollment in a Basic Skills Program: Results for Iowa .....	67
7.4 Percentage Opinion as to the Effect of a State's Literacy Rate on Employers' Location Decision: Results for Iowa .....	68
7.5 Percentage Opinion as to Employers' Obligation to Provide Literacy Education for Employees: Results for Iowa .....	69
<b>OBSERVATIONS .....</b>	<b>70</b>

## PREFACE

The purpose of this publication is to provide a graphic presentation of the results of the Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS) as referenced in the publication entitled: *Adult Literacy in Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey*. The graphs are conveniently cross referenced to the specific data tables in the report.

This publication can be adapted to provide a customized presentation to various groups, boards, organizations or governmental entities. The publication is conveniently divided into different sections for ease of use and customizing presentations.

The compiler of this publication would appreciate any comments concerning its effectiveness in presenting the results of the IASALS study.



John Hartwig, Ph.D.  
Iowa Department of Education  
March 1994

## OVERVIEW

- **document literacy**--the knowledge and skills needed to locate and use information contained in materials that include job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and graphs; and
- **quantitative literacy**--the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, to numbers embedded in printed materials, such as to balance a checkbook, coupons, a tip, or complete an order form.

The aim of IASALS is to characterize adults' literacy skills in English based on their performance on diverse tasks that reflect the types of materials and demands they encounter in their daily lives.

To gather information on the literacy skills of adults in Iowa, trained staff interviewed selected individuals aged 16 and older during the first eight months of 1992. These participants were randomly chosen to represent the adult population in the state as a whole. In total, approximately 1,250 adults in Iowa were surveyed, representing approximately 2.1 million adults statewide.

Each survey participant was asked to spend approximately an hour responding to a series of varied literacy tasks as well as questions about his or her demographic characteristics, educational background, employment, income, reading practices, and other areas related to literacy. Based on their responses to the survey tasks, adults received proficiency scores along three scales, each ranging from 0 to 500. The score points along these scales reflect varying degrees of skill in prose, document, and quantitative literacy. To provide a way to examine the distribution of performance within various subpopulations of interest, five levels of proficiency were defined along each scale: Level 1 (0 to 225), Level 2 (226 to 275), Level 3 (276 to 325), Level 4 (326 to 375), and Level 5 (376 to 500).

The full report offers a comprehensive look at the results of the Iowa survey. It describes the average literacy proficiencies and the levels of proficiency demonstrated by adults in this state, compared with individuals in the region and nation, and explores connections between literacy and an array of variables. Some of the major findings are highlighted in the section summaries that follow.

### Section I--Profiles of Adult Literacy in Iowa

The average prose, document, and quantitative proficiency scores of adults in Iowa were approximately the same as those of adults in the Midwest region, but were higher than those of adults nationwide. In all three of these populations, the average scores on each literacy scale were in either the high end of the Level 2 range (226 to 275) or the low end of the Level 3 range (276 to 325).

# OVERVIEW

## Summary of the Publication Entitled

### *Adult Literacy In Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey*

This Chapter Summary Report contains four sections. The first, Section I, presents information on the literacy levels and average proficiencies of adults in Iowa, the Midwest, and the nation as a whole. In addition, the performance of different subpopulations is compared--adults in different age groups, the native-born and the foreign-born, and those in different racial/ethnic groups, for example. The remaining sections focus primarily on the Iowa results, although regional and national comparisons are discussed where interesting patterns and differences are evident. Section II provides information on the connection between literacy and education. Section III focuses on the relationships between adults' work and community experiences and their literacy skills. Section IV explores literacy and its association with language use, instruction, and reading and writing practices.

The section summary presents a portrait of adult literacy in Iowa based on the results of the State Adult Literacy Survey, a research project in which 12 states assessed the literacy skills of their adult populations. The project, conducted in 1992, is a component of the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), a large-scale study funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by Educational Testing Service.

Many past studies of adult literacy have tried to count the number of "illiterates" in this nation, thereby treating literacy as a condition that individuals either do or do not have. Such efforts are inherently arbitrary and misleading.

The Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS), like the National Adult Literacy Survey of which it is a part, is based on a different definition of literacy and therefore follows a different approach to measuring it.

The following definition of literacy was utilized for both surveys: **using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.** Literacy proficiency was measured along three literacy dimensions:

- **prose literacy**--the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts that include editorials, news stories, poems, and fiction

## OVERVIEW

Fourteen percent of the adults in Iowa had scores in the lowest level defined on the prose scale, 16 percent were in the lowest level on the document scale, and 15 percent were in the lowest level on the quantitative scale. Those who performed in the Level 1 range were varied with respect to their characteristics as well as their skills. Iowa residents who performed in Level 1, for example, were more likely than adults statewide to have less than a high school education; to be age 65 or older; and to have a disability, illness, or condition.

Across the three scales, 22 to 27 percent of Iowa adults had scores in the second lowest proficiency level (Level 2). Thirty-six to 37 percent performed in the third level on each scale, and 19 to 23 percent demonstrated skills in the fourth level. Just 2 to 4 percent of the respondents in Iowa, the Midwest, and the nation performed in Level 5 on each literacy scale--the highest proficiency level defined in the survey.

Older adults (those age 55 to 64 and age 65 and older) were more likely than younger adults to perform in the two lowest levels on each scale. Among the younger age groups, the differences in the percentages of individuals who performed in each level are relatively small, but individuals in the middle age categories were more likely than those in both the younger and the older age groups to reach the highest proficiency levels.

As expected, adults born in the United States tended to be more proficient in English than individuals born abroad, many of whom have learned English as a second language. The number of foreign-born adults in Iowa is too small to provide reliable performance estimates. Nationwide, however, the literacy skills of immigrants who have lived in the United States for six to ten years were similar to those of immigrants who have lived here for one to five years. Foreign-born adults who have lived in this country for more than a decade, however, outperformed individuals who have lived in this country for fewer years.

Because 96 percent of the Iowa population is White, the numbers of Iowa adults in other racial/ethnic groups were too small to provide reliable proficiency estimates. In the region and nation, however, White adults were less likely than African American or Latino adults to demonstrate limited English literacy skills and more likely to demonstrate advanced skills. Native-born Latino adults had higher average literacy scores than African American adults.

Approximately three-quarters of the Iowa survey respondents reported that they had lived in the state for more than 20 years. Fourteen percent had lived there for 11 to 20 years, and the remainder had lived there for fewer years. On average, there are no statistically significant differences in the prose, document, or quantitative literacy scores of adults who had lived in the state for various lengths of time.

Nearly three-quarters of Iowa respondents reported that it was unlikely they would move out of the state in the next five years, while 18 percent said it was somewhat likely and 10 percent said it was very likely. Again, there were no significant differences between the



## OVERVIEW

literacy proficiencies of Iowa adults who planned to leave the state in the next five years and those who expected to remain.

Iowa residents who said they had a limiting physical or mental condition were far more likely than individuals without such a condition to perform in the lowest literacy on each scale and far less likely to reach the highest levels.

Finally, the average prose, document, and quantitative scores of men and women in Iowa are comparable.

### Section II--Education and Training

In general, the educational attainments of adults in Iowa were similar to those of adults nationwide. As expected, adults who had completed higher levels of schooling outperformed those with more limited education. The average proficiencies of adults who had completed 9 to 12 years of education were about 100 points lower than the average scores of those who had finished at least some graduate work, representing a great difference in the difficulty and complexity of literacy skills and strategies.

Some high school graduates in the state, region, and nation did poorly in the assessment. On each literacy scale, 8 to 12 percent of the high school graduates in Iowa performed in the Level 1 range, and another 27 to 34 percent performed in Level 2, while 15 to 21 percent reached the two highest levels on each scale. High school graduates and GED recipients performed comparably in the assessment. Although there appear to be differences between these two groups in the Iowa population, the differences are not statistically significant. As expected, adults who had completed a two-year college degree outperformed those whose highest level of education was a high school diploma, and four-year college graduates performed better still.

The performance differences among various subpopulations can be at least partly explained by differences in years of schooling. Older adults tended to have completed fewer years of schooling than younger adults, for example. Further, the more years of schooling respondents' parents had completed, the more education they themselves were likely to have had.

One-third of the school dropouts in Iowa had participated in a GED or high school equivalency program. Fifty-seven percent of the program participants had earned a diploma, and their average scores were significantly higher than those of participants who did not earn one. Most GED program participants were age 25 or older.

Eleven percent of the adults in Iowa and an equivalent percentage nationwide were currently enrolled in school or college, and their average prose, document, and

## OVERVIEW

scores were significantly quantitatively higher than those of respondents who were not enrolled. Nationwide, 10 percent of those enrolled said they expected to earn a high school diploma or equivalency, 13 percent were pursuing an associate's degree, 38 percent were working on a four-year college degree, and 19 percent were working toward an advanced degree.

Six percent of the Iowa residents were currently or previously enrolled in a program to improve their basic skills. The average proficiencies of individuals who said they had participated in such a program were no different, on average, from the scores of those who had not.

Thirty-eight percent of the Iowa respondents said they did not think they needed to improve their basic skills. Their average proficiencies were significantly higher than those of respondents who indicated various other reasons for not participating in a basic skills program. One-quarter of the adults in the state said they would not take part in a basic skills program because they did not have the time, 12 percent said they had too many conflicts, and another 12 percent said they did not have any information about available programs.

Three-quarters of the Iowa respondents believed that a state's literacy rate affects an out-of-state employer's decision about establishing a new location there. Their average literacy scores were higher than those of adults who did not share this opinion. Fifty-eight percent of the adults in Iowa believed that employers should provide literacy education to employers who need assistance, but their literacy skills were no different, on average, from those who disagreed.

### Section III--Employment, Economic Status, and Civic Responsibility

Approximately half of the adults in Iowa reported that they were employed full time, and another 14 percent said they were employed part time. Five percent were unemployed, laid off, or looking for work, and nearly one-third were in school, keeping house, retired, or doing volunteer work--that is, out of the labor force. In each of the three dimensions of literacy, full-time and part-time employees performed similarly. The average proficiencies of employed adults differed sharply from those of adults who were either unemployed or out of the labor force, however. Employed adults were much more likely to reach the highest literacy levels and much less likely to perform in the lowest levels.

Twenty percent of the adults in Iowa said they worked in managerial, professional, or technical jobs; 23 percent were in sales or clerical occupations; 29 percent worked in craft or service occupations; and 28 percent were in labor, assembly, fishing, or farming jobs. Although some individuals in managerial and professional jobs displayed limited literacy skills, they were less likely than respondents in other types of jobs to perform in the lowest literacy levels and more likely to attain the highest levels.

## OVERVIEW

On each literacy scale, adults who performed in Levels 3, 4, and 5 worked more weeks in the past year than those in Level 2, who worked more weeks than those in Level 1. The average number of weeks worked climbs steadily across the literacy levels. Adults with higher literacy proficiencies were also likely to earn higher weekly wages than adults with more limited skills. Similarly, individuals who performed in the highest literacy levels reported much higher annual household incomes, on average, than adults in the lowest levels.

Adults in Iowa whose families had received AFDC, public assistance, or food stamps in the past year demonstrated lower average proficiencies than adults who reported having received interest from savings.

Individuals who were classified as poor or near poor as a result of their income and household size were much more likely than those who were not poor to demonstrate limited literacy skills. Across the three literacy scales, approximately half of the Iowa residents classified as poor or near poor had proficiencies in the two lowest levels. As a result, their average literacy scores were considerably lower than those of individuals who were not poor.

Respondents in Iowa were as likely as respondents nationwide but less likely than those in the Midwest to have voted in a recent state or national election. Two-thirds of the eligible voters in Iowa said they had voted recently. Literacy appears to be related to voting in Iowa as well as in the Midwest and nation, as voters demonstrated higher average literacy proficiencies than nonvoters.

### Section IV--Language Use and Literacy Practices

Ninety-six percent of the survey respondents in Iowa and 85 percent of those nationwide said they spoke only English before beginning their schooling. In the national sample, these individuals demonstrated higher average proficiencies than adults who spoke another language either in addition to or instead of English.

Nearly all (92 percent) of the Iowa respondents who learned a language other than English before starting school said they usually speak English now, while 4 said they usually speak Spanish and another 4 percent said they usually speak a language other than English or Spanish.

Virtually all of the adults in Iowa described themselves as understanding (99 percent), speaking (99 percent), and reading (98 percent) English either well or very well, and 96 percent perceived themselves writing it either well or very well. Those who described themselves as having limited writing skills did, in fact, demonstrate lower proficiencies than those who rated their skills more highly.

## OVERVIEW

Ninety-seven percent of Iowa respondents said they get some or a lot of information about current events and public affairs from nonprint media, and 86 percent said they get some or a lot of information from print media. Approximately two-thirds reported getting some or a lot of information from personal sources, such as family or friends. Iowa residents who said they get some or a lot of information from print media had considerably higher literacy scores than those who get little or no information from these sources.

The survey results indicate that newspaper reading is quite common, even among adults who displayed relatively limited literacy skills. Fifty-six percent of the adults in Iowa said they read the newspaper every day, and another one-quarter reported reading it a few times a week. Five percent said they read a newspaper less than once a week, and 4 percent said they never read one.

Fourteen percent of the adults in Iowa said they do not read any magazines in English on a regular basis, while the remainder reported reading at least one or two. Similarly, 17 percent of the survey respondents said they had not read any books in English in the past six months, while the remainder had read at least one. Individuals who said they read a few magazines on a regular basis performed far better than those who do not read any, and the more magazines they read the better their performance was likely to be. Similarly, adults who had read a book in English in the past six months performed better in the assessment, on average, than those who had not.

When asked how often they use a library, 31 percent of the adults in Iowa said they never do and another 30 percent said they do so only once or twice a year. Twenty percent of the state's respondents reported using a library on a weekly or daily basis. In general, those who reported frequent use of a library demonstrated better literacy skills than infrequent users.

Virtually all respondents in Iowa (98 percent) said they watch at least some television each day, although 23 percent said they spend no more than an hour on this pastime. The remainder watch at least two hours of television a day. Adults who watch four hours of television demonstrated far lower proficiencies in the assessment, on average, than individuals who watch an hour or less.

Finally, survey respondents were asked how often they read or use various types of materials in English, either for their personal use or for their jobs. Proficiency differences are found on the prose scale between adults who read and write prose frequently and those who do not. Similarly, adults who often use various types of documents had higher average document proficiencies than those who do not. Adults who said they rarely use mathematics were far more likely than those who use it frequently to perform in the lowest levels of quantitative literacy.

Source: L. Jenkins & I. Kirsch (1994, January). *Adult Literacy in Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey*. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service (ETS).

**GRAPHS**

**BEST COPY AVAILABLE**

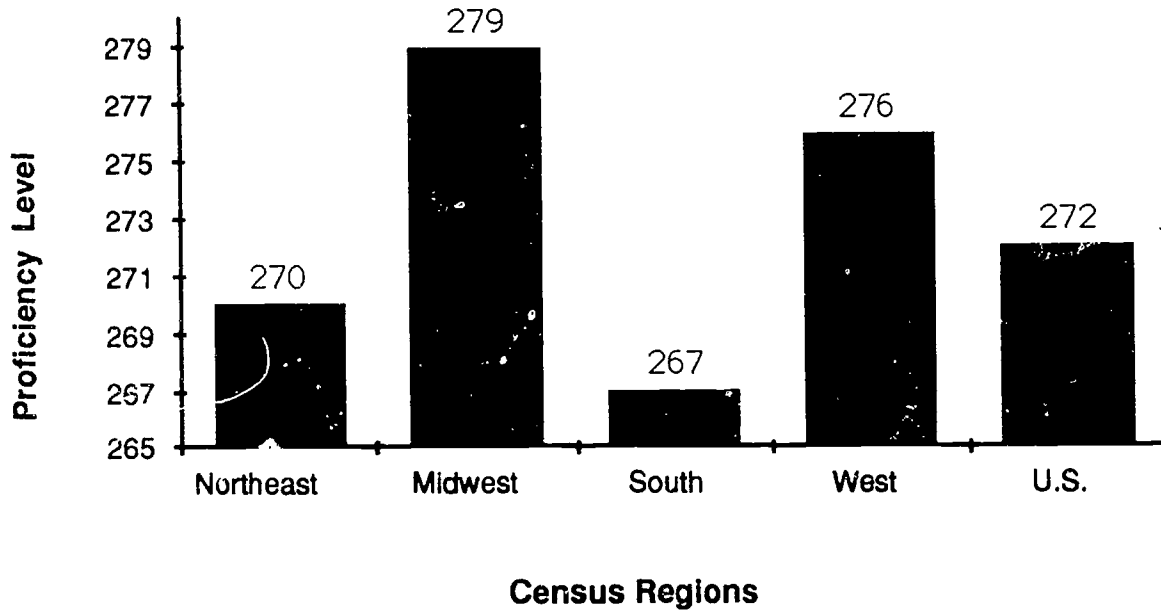
## **1.0 State, Regional and National Comparisons/Trends**

This section provides an overview on state, regional and national comparisons on overall proficiency levels of Iowa's adult population.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Graph 1.1

### Mean Proficiency Levels of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Census Regions, (2) the United States on the Prose Scale

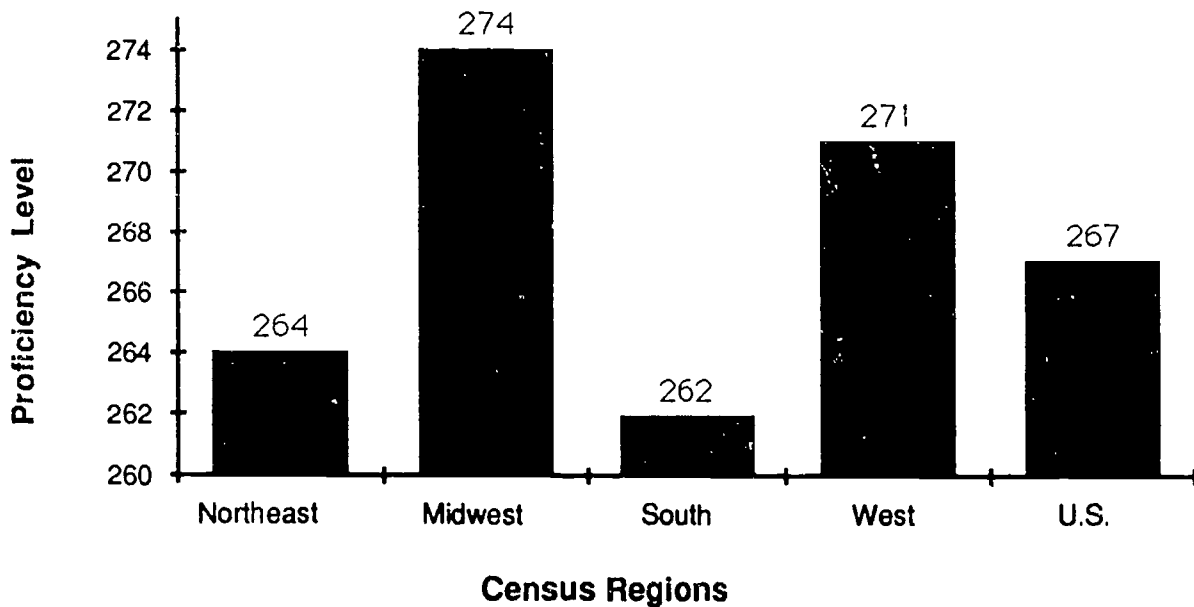


The midwest census region has the highest proficiency level on the prose scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Progress  
Report #10; P.4.)

## Graph 1.2

### Mean Proficiency Levels of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Census Regions, (2) the United States on the Document Scale



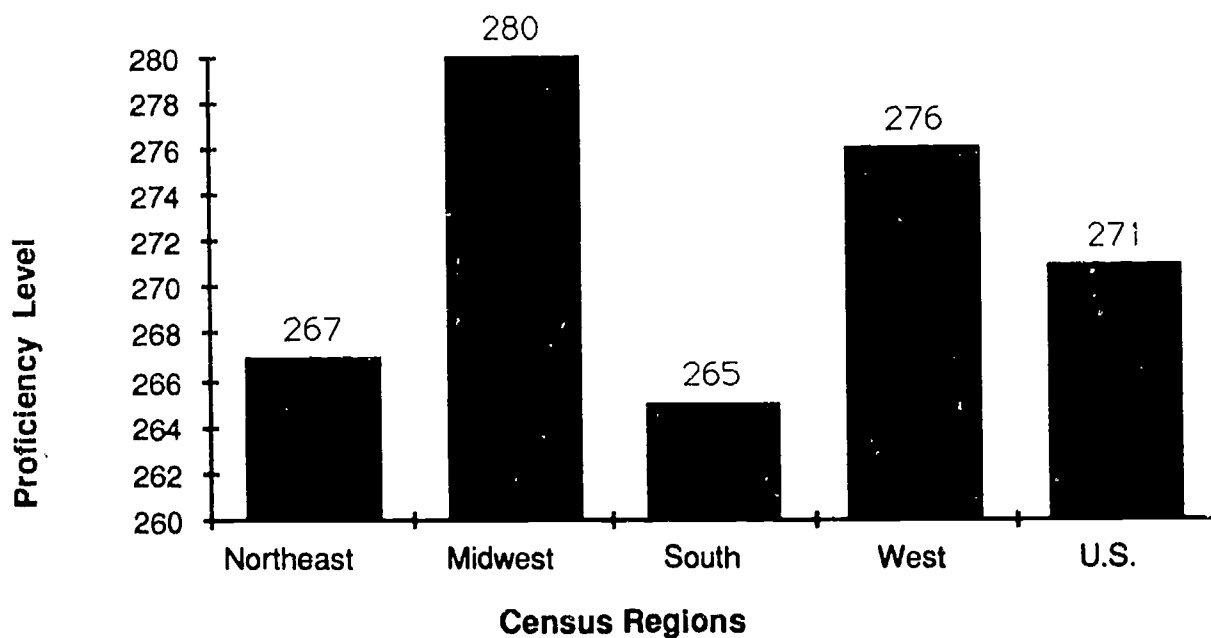
The midwest census region has the highest proficiency level on the document scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Progress  
Report #10; P.4.)



## Graph 1.3

### Mean Proficiency Levels of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Census Regions, (2) the United States on the Quantitative Scale

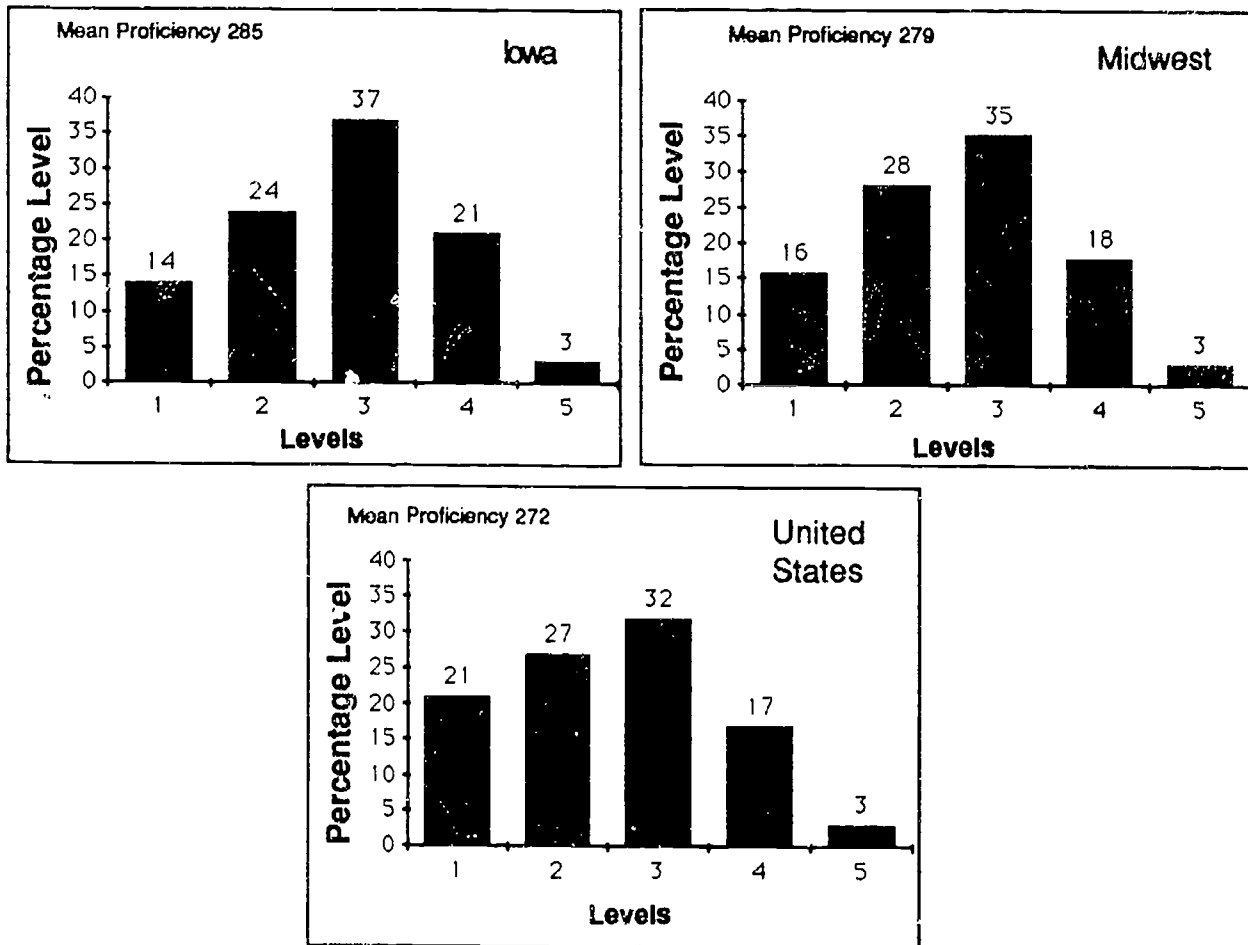


The midwest census region has the highest proficiency level on the quantitative scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1993 (State Literacy Survey Progress  
Report #10; P.4.)

## Graph 1.4

### Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Iowa, (2) Midwest Census Region, (3) the United States on the Prose Scale



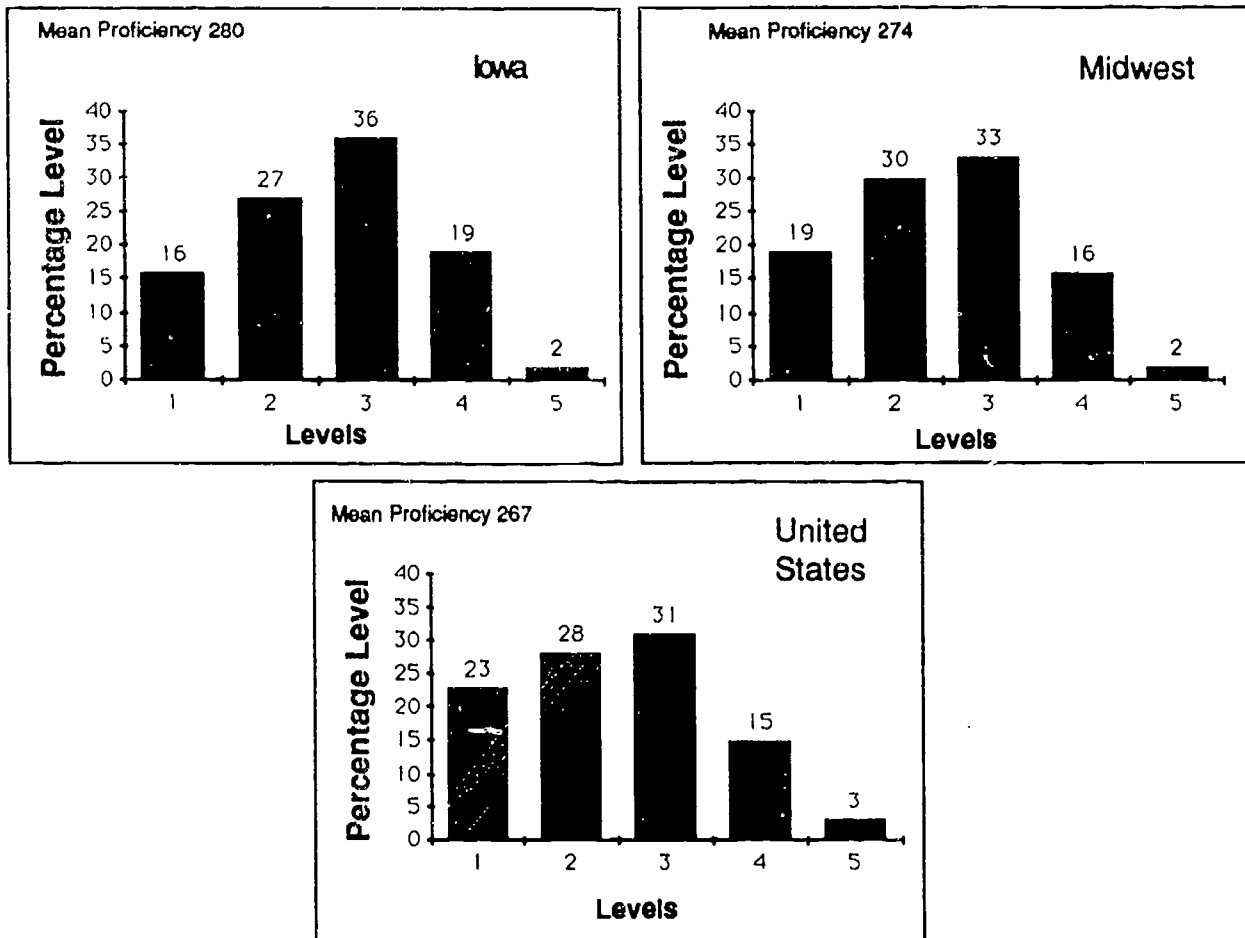
Level 1 (0 to 225)   Level 2 (226 to 275)   Level 3 (276 to 325)   Level 4 (326 to 375)   Level 5 (376 to 500)

Iowa's mean proficiency level is 13 standard score points higher than the nation on the prose scale. Iowa's percentage rates are 9 percentage points higher than the nation on the prose scale for levels 3, 4 and 5.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Figure 1.1)

# Graph 1.5

## Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Iowa, (2) Midwest Census Region, (3) the United States on the Document Scale



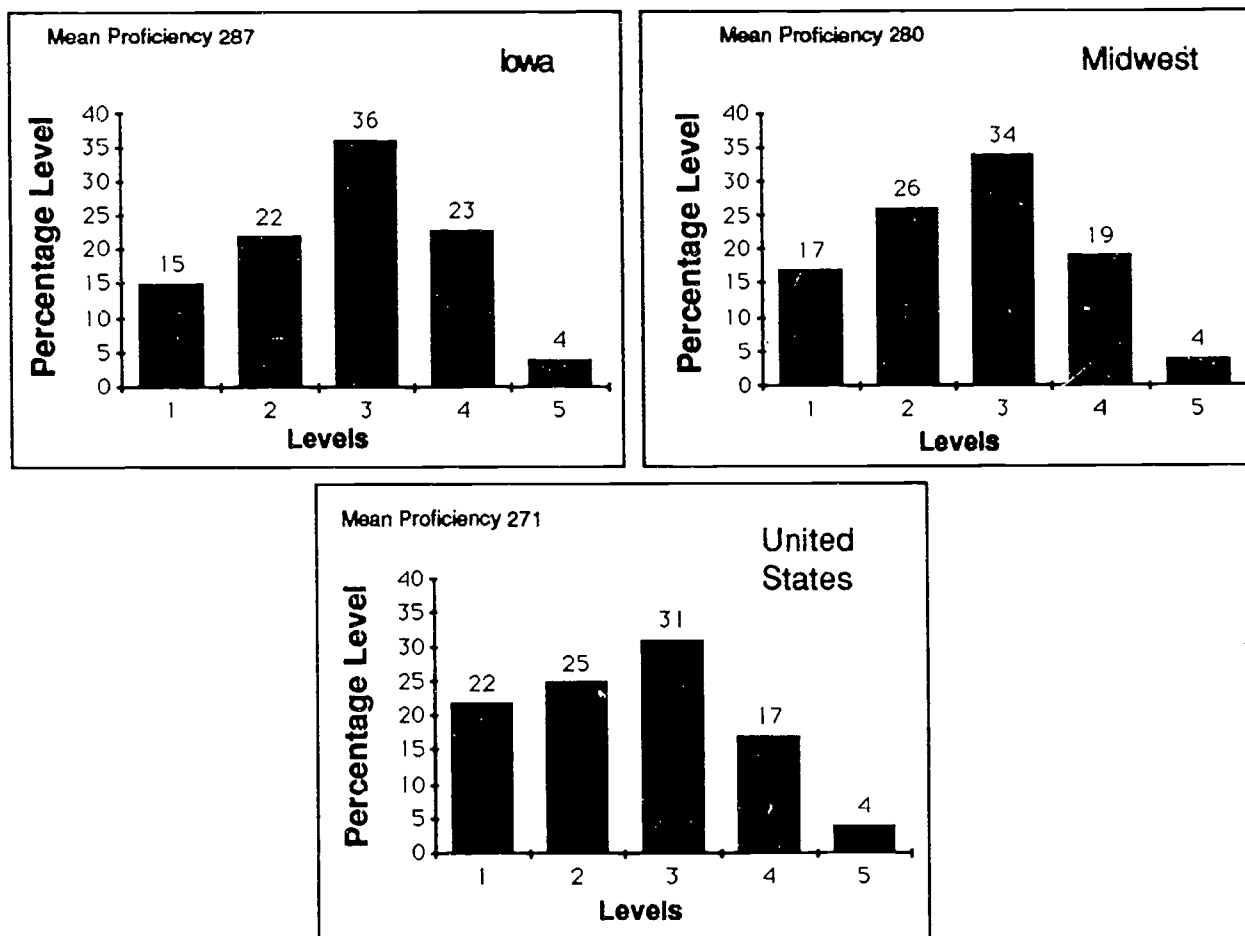
Level 1 (0 to 225) Level 2 (226 to 275) Level 3 (276 to 325) Level 4 (326 to 375) Level 5 (376 to 500)

Iowa's mean proficiency level is 13 standard score points higher than the nation on the document scale. Iowa's percentage rates are 8 percentage points higher than the nation on the document scale for levels 3, 4 and 5.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Figure 1.1)

# Graph 1.6

## Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16+ Years of Age for: (1) Iowa, (2) Midwest Census Region, (3) the United States on the Quantitative Scale



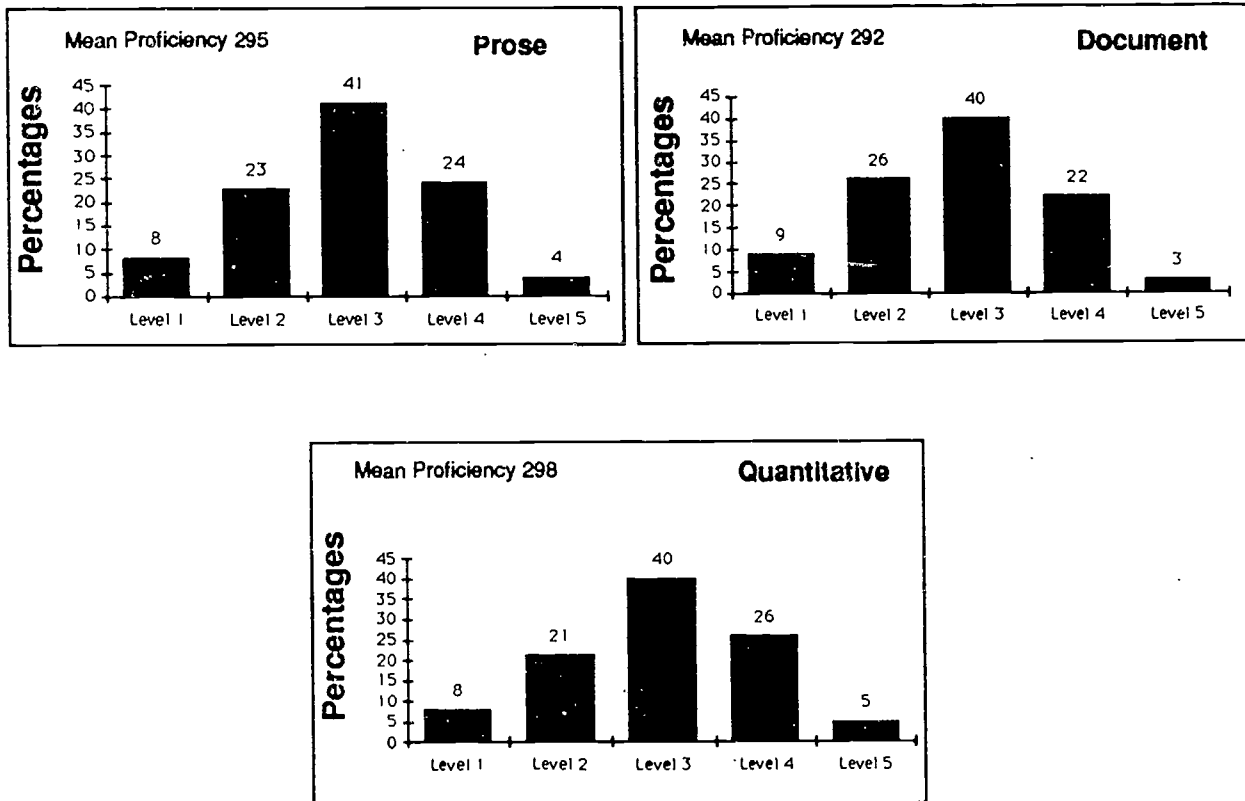
Level 1 (0 to 225) Level 2 (226 to 275) Level 3 (276 to 325) Level 4 (326 to 375) Level 5 (376 to 500)

Iowa's mean proficiency level is 16 standard score points higher than the nation on the quantitative scale. Iowa's percentage rates are 11 percentage points higher than the nation on the quantitative scale for levels 3, 4 and 5.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Figure 1.1)

## Graph 1.7

### Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16 to 64 Years of Age for Iowa on the Three Literacy Scales



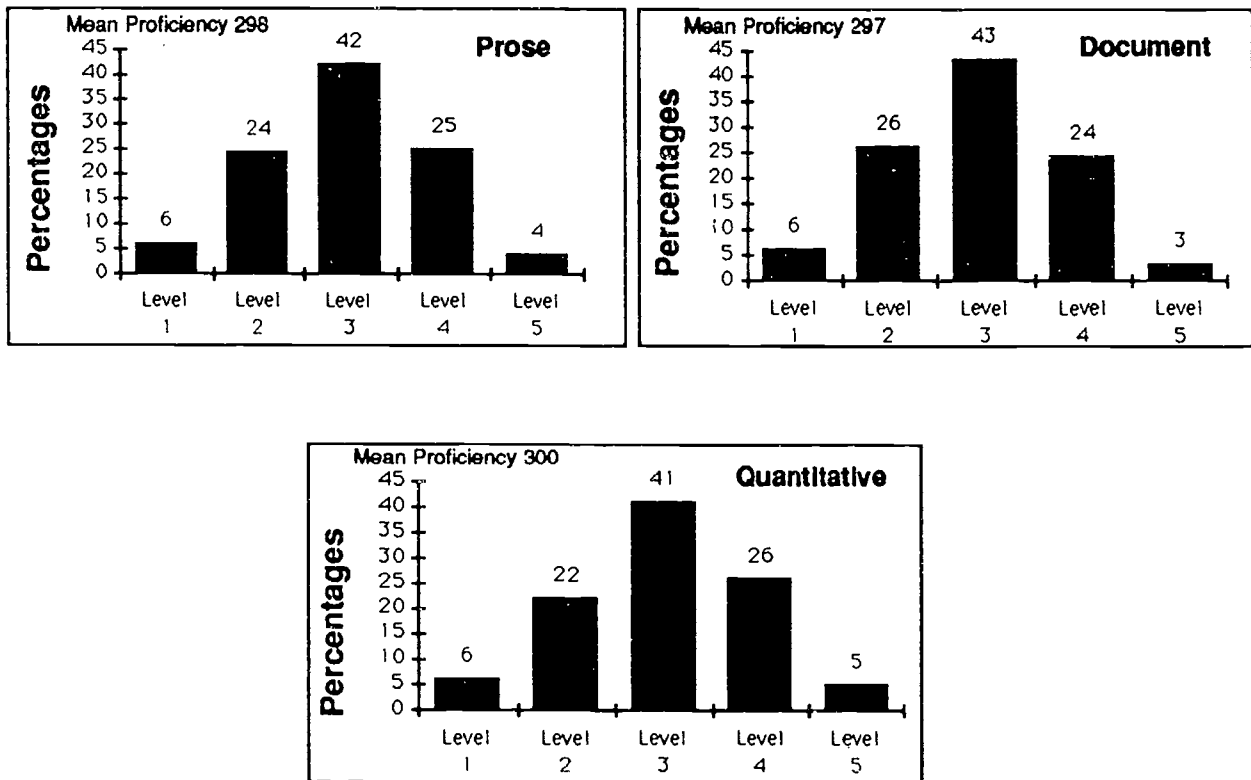
Level 1 (0 to 225) Level 2 (226 to 275) Level 3 (276 to 325) Level 4 (326 to 375) Level 5 (376 to 500)

Iowa's mean proficiency levels and percentage levels rise for Iowa's adult population between the ages of 16-64 as opposed to ages 16+.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Tables 1.1A)

## Graph 1.8

### Mean Proficiency Levels and Percentage Comparisons of Persons 16 to 54 Years of Age for Iowa on the Three Literacy Scales



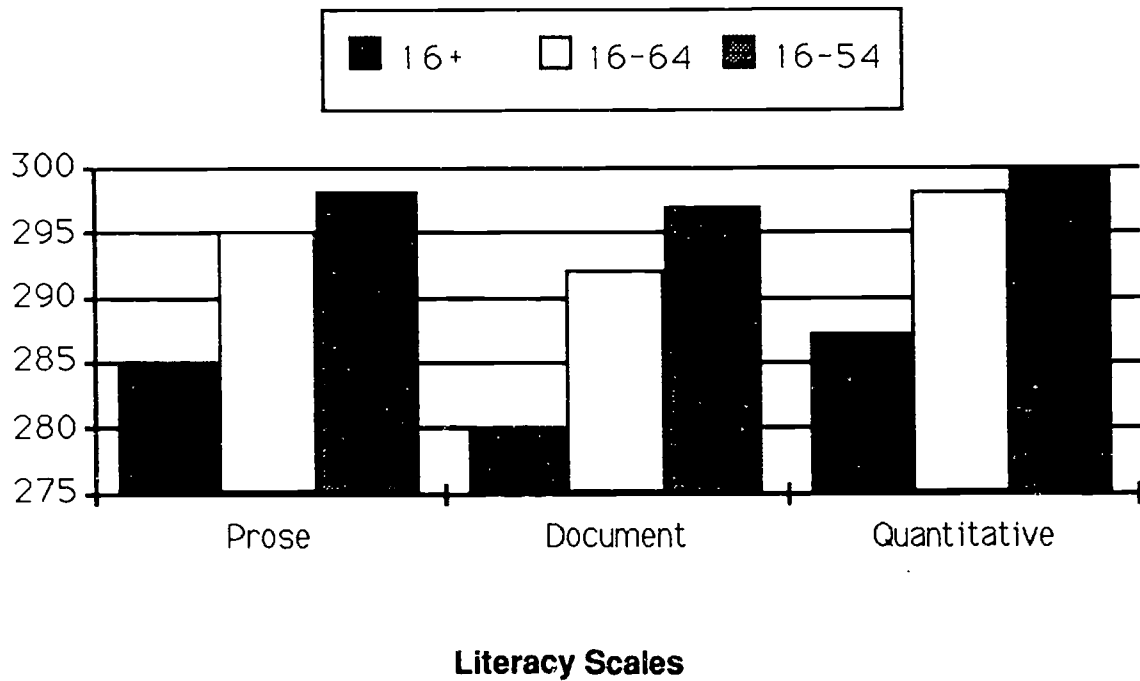
Level 1 (0 to 225)   Level 2 (226 to 275)   Level 3 (276 to 325)   Level 4 (326 to 375)   Level 5 (376 to 500)

Iowa's mean proficiency levels and percentage levels rise for Iowa's adult population between the ages of 16-54 as opposed to ages 16+.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
 Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Percentages and average proficiencies interpolated from Tables 1.3P, 1.3D, 1.3Q)

**Graph 1.9**

**A Comparison of Average Literacy Proficiency Rates to Various Age Cohorts for the Three Literacy Scales: Results for Iowa**

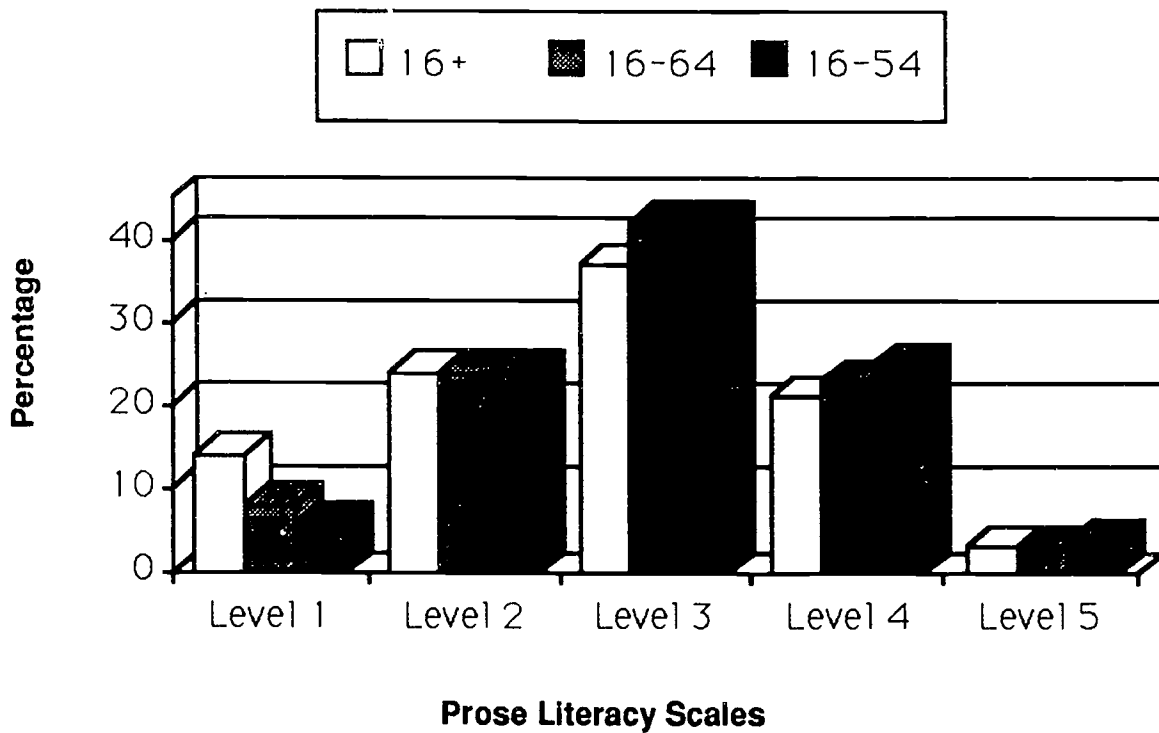


Average literacy proficiency rates increase as age cohorts decrease.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Tables 1.1A & 1.1B).

**Graph 1.10**

**A Comparison of the Percent of the Adult Population at the Five Literacy Levels by Various Age Cohorts on the Prose Scale: Results for Iowa**



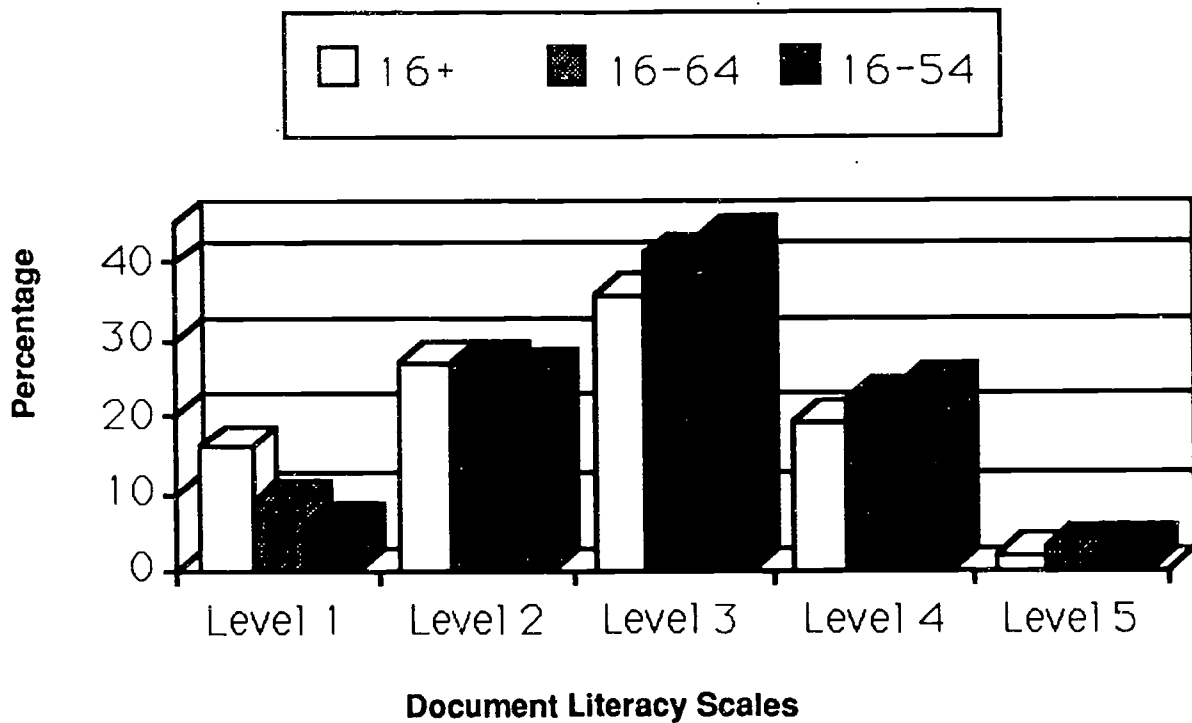
The percent of the adult population scoring at prose levels 3, 4, 5 increase as age cohorts decrease.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS); Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Percentages for age cohort 16+; Figure 1.1. Percentages for age cohorts 16-64 and 16-54 interpolated from Table 1.3P).



**Graph 1.11**

**A Comparison of the Percent of the Adult Population at the Five Literacy Levels by Various Age Cohorts on the Document Scale: Results for Iowa**

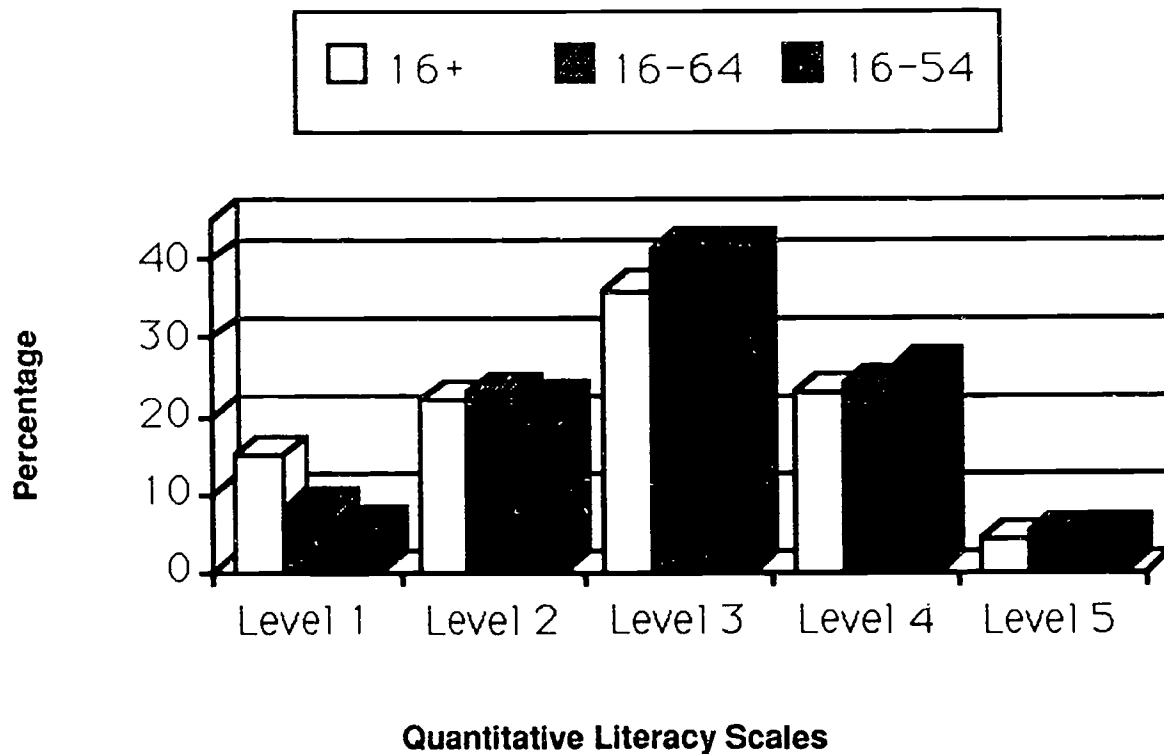


The percent of the adult population scoring at prose levels 3, 4, 5 increase as age cohorts decrease.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS) Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Percentages for age cohort 16+; Figure 1.1. Percentages for age cohorts 16-64 and 16-54 interpolated from Table 1.3D).

## Graph 1.12

### A Comparison of the Percent of the Adult Population at the Five Literacy Levels by Various Age Cohorts on the Quantitative Scale: Results for Iowa



The percent of the adult population scoring at prose levels 3, 4, 5 increase as age cohorts decrease.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Percentages for age cohort 16+; Figure 1.1. Percentages for age cohorts 16-64 and 16-54 interpolated from Table 1.3Q).

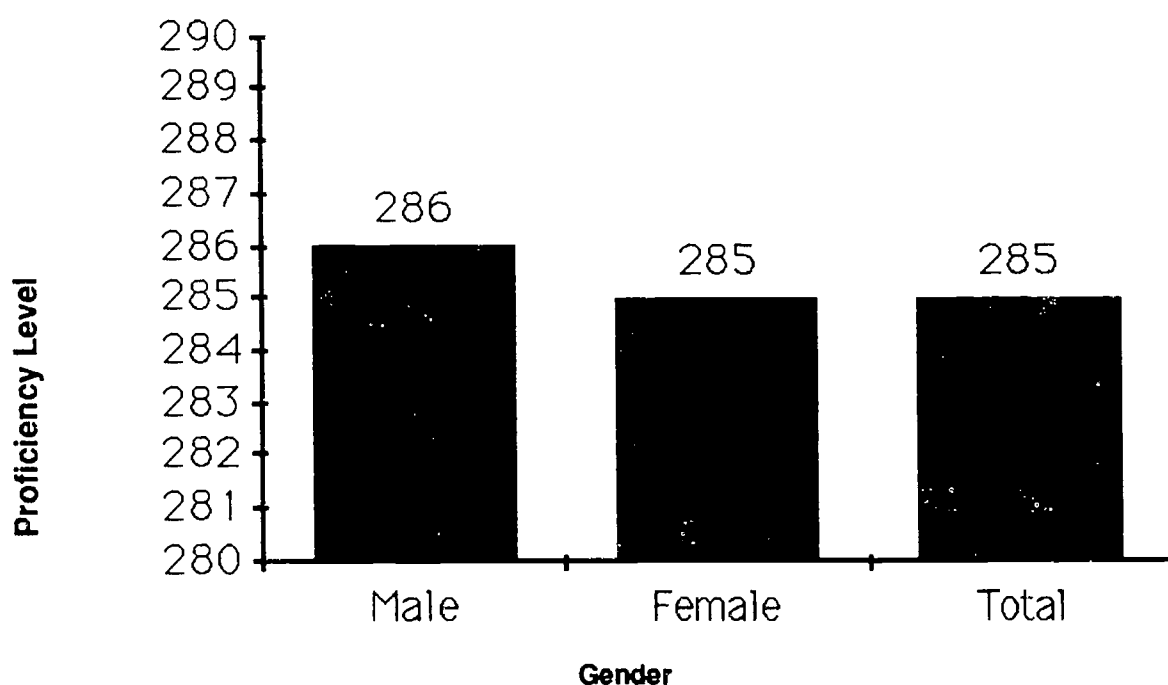
## 2.0 Gender Comparisons/Trends

This section provides an overview on comparison of gender performance on the three literacy scales.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Graph 2.1

### Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender for the Prose Scale

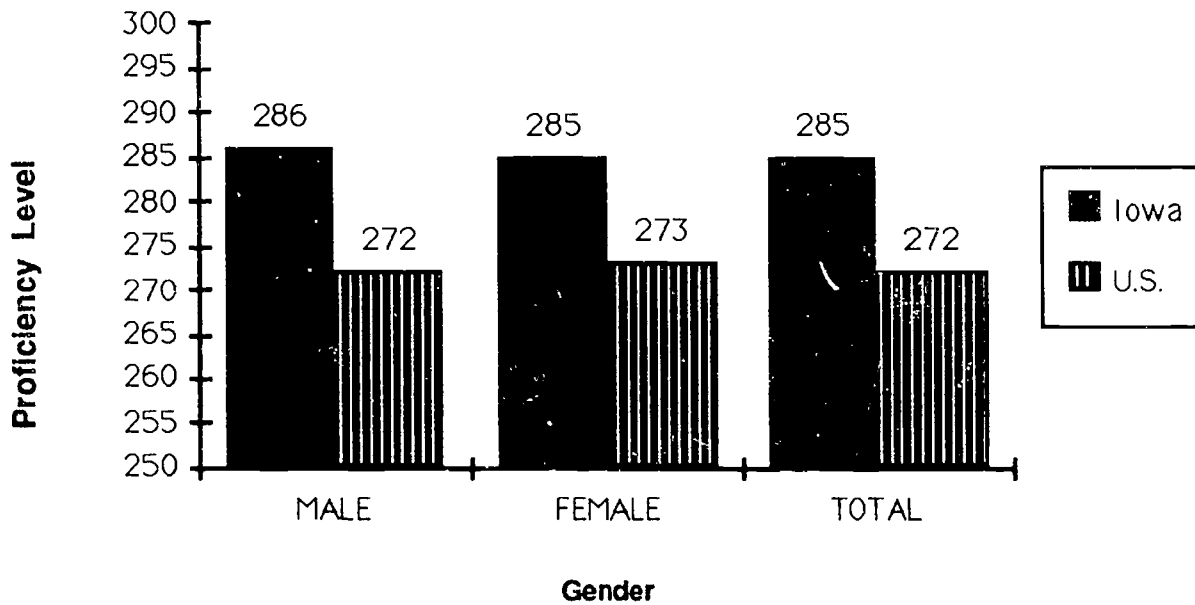


Males and females scored equally on the prose scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.12 P)

## Graph 2.1.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender on the Prose Scale

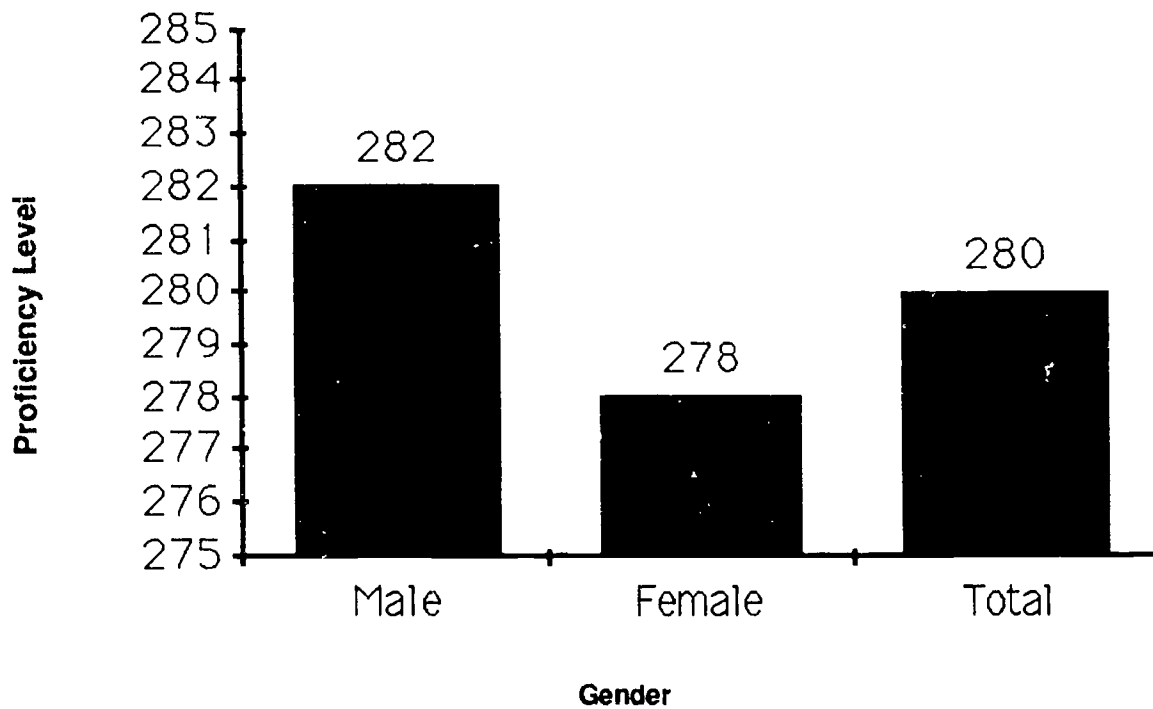


Iowa scored an average of 13 standard score points higher than the U.S. on the Prose Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.12P)

## Graph 2.2

### Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender for the Document Scale

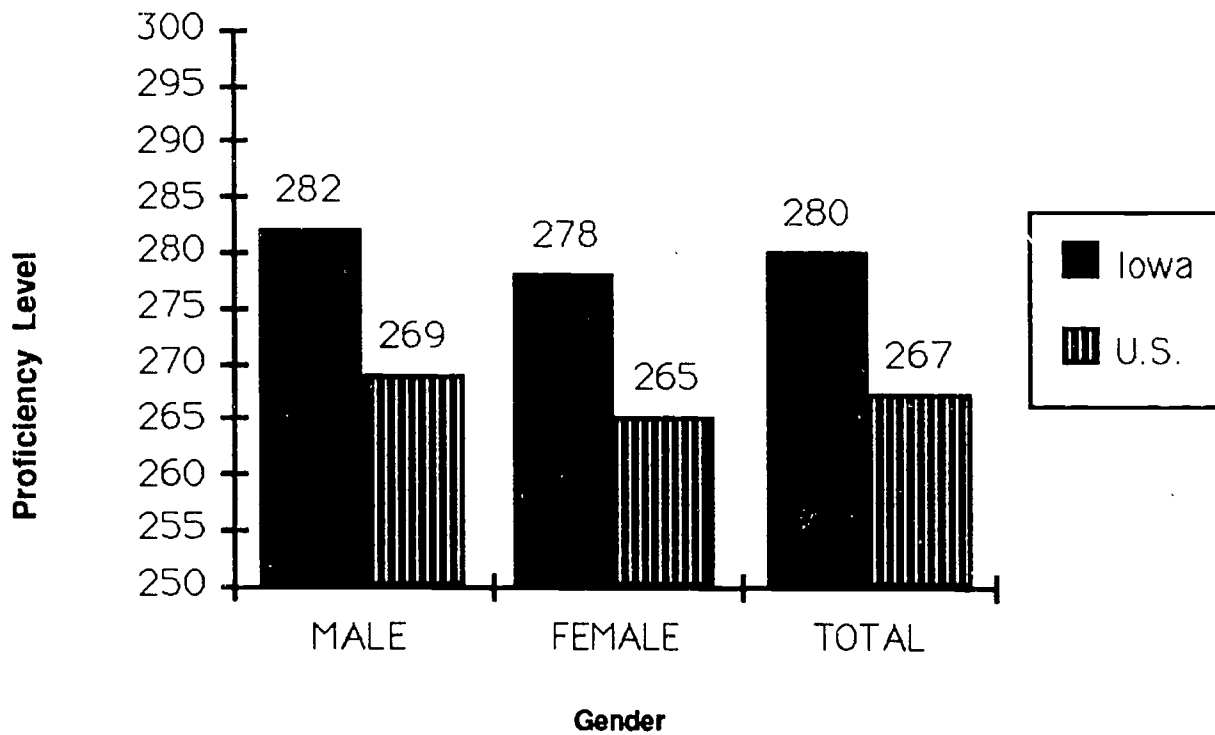


Males scored slightly higher than females on the document scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.12D)

## Graph 2.2.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender on the Document Scale

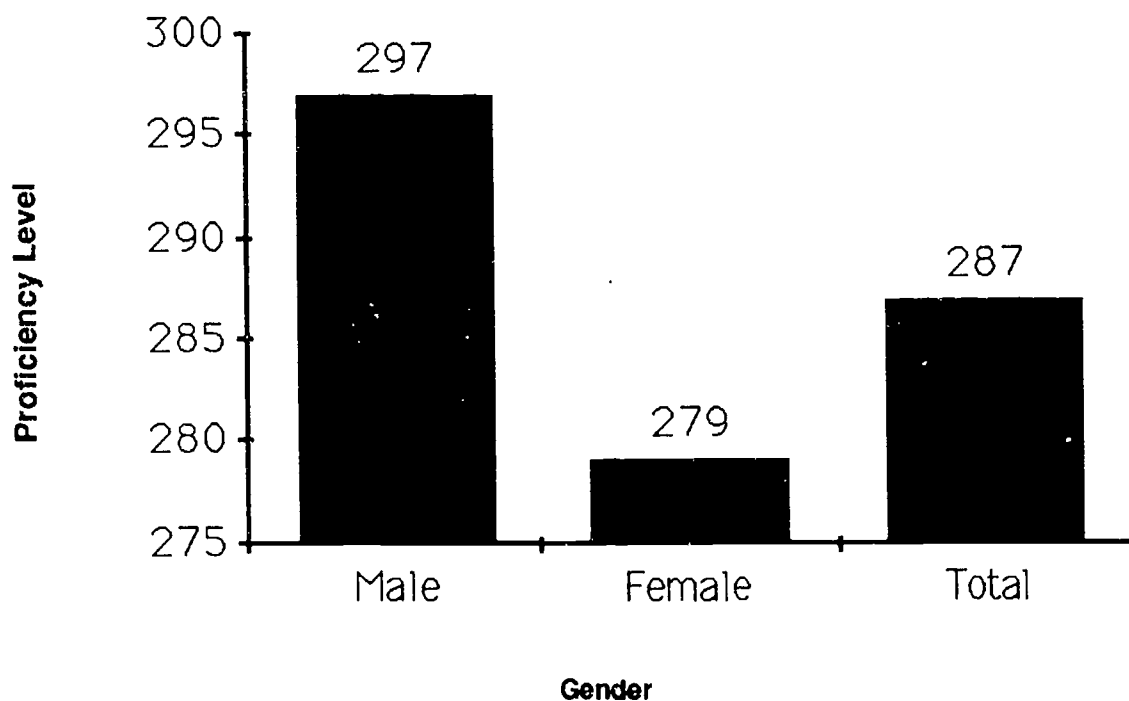


Iowa scored an average of 13 standard score points higher than the U.S. on the Document Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.12D)

### Graph 2.3

## Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender for the Quantitative Scale



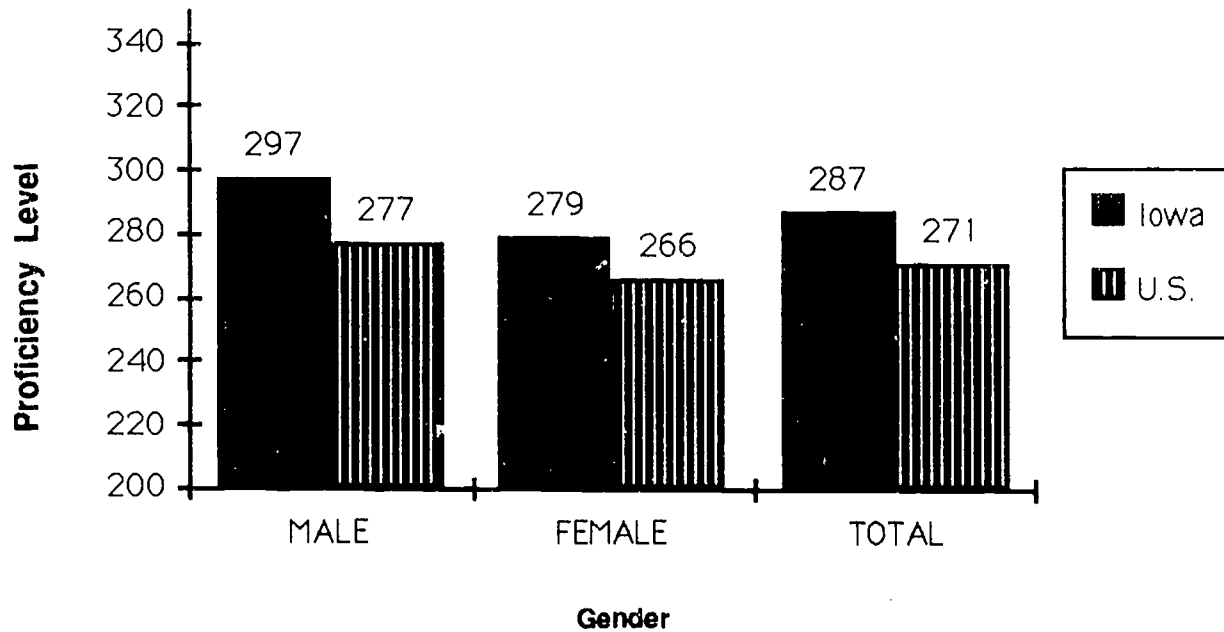
Males scored higher than females on the quantitative scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.12Q)



## Graph 2.3.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Gender on the Quantitative Scale



Iowa scored an average of 16 standard score points higher than the U.S. on the Quantitative Scale.

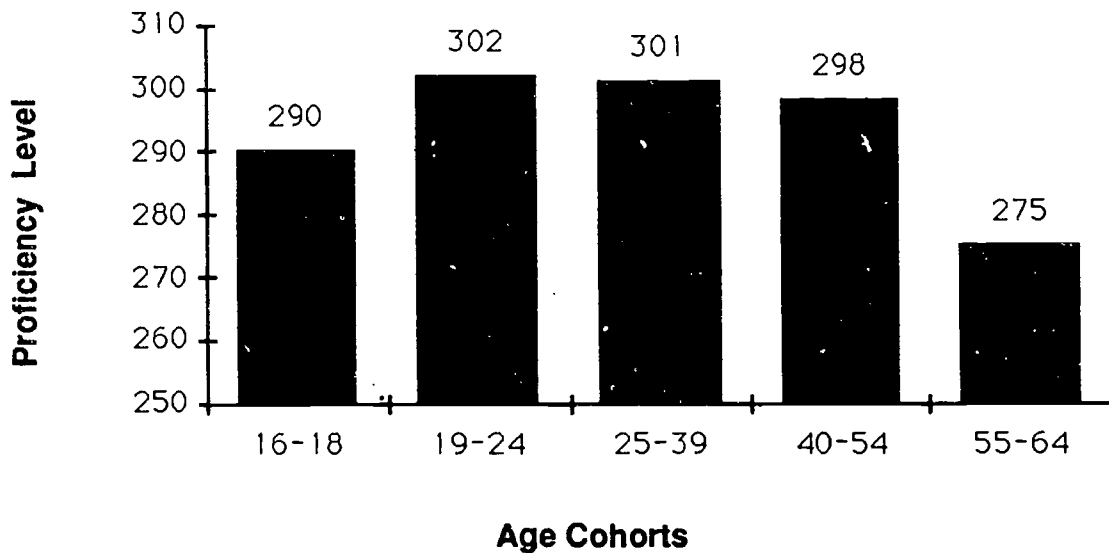
Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.12Q)

### **3.0 Age Cohort Comparisons/Trends**

This section provides an overview on comparison of various age cohorts on the three literacy scales.

### Graph 3.1

## Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa by Age Cohorts (16-64 Years of Age) on the Prose Scale

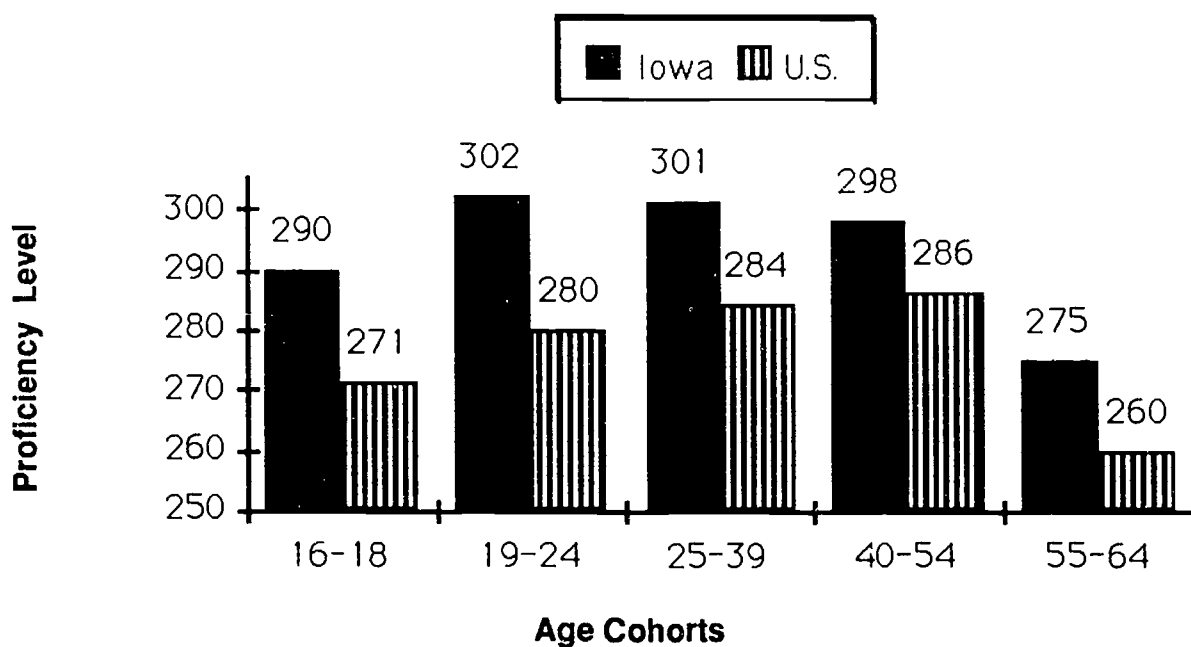


The proficiency levels remain constant for age cohorts 16-54 then demonstrate a decline for age cohort 55-64 on the prose scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Progress  
Report #10; Table 1P.)

### Graph 3.1.1

## A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16-64 Years of Age) on the Prose Scale

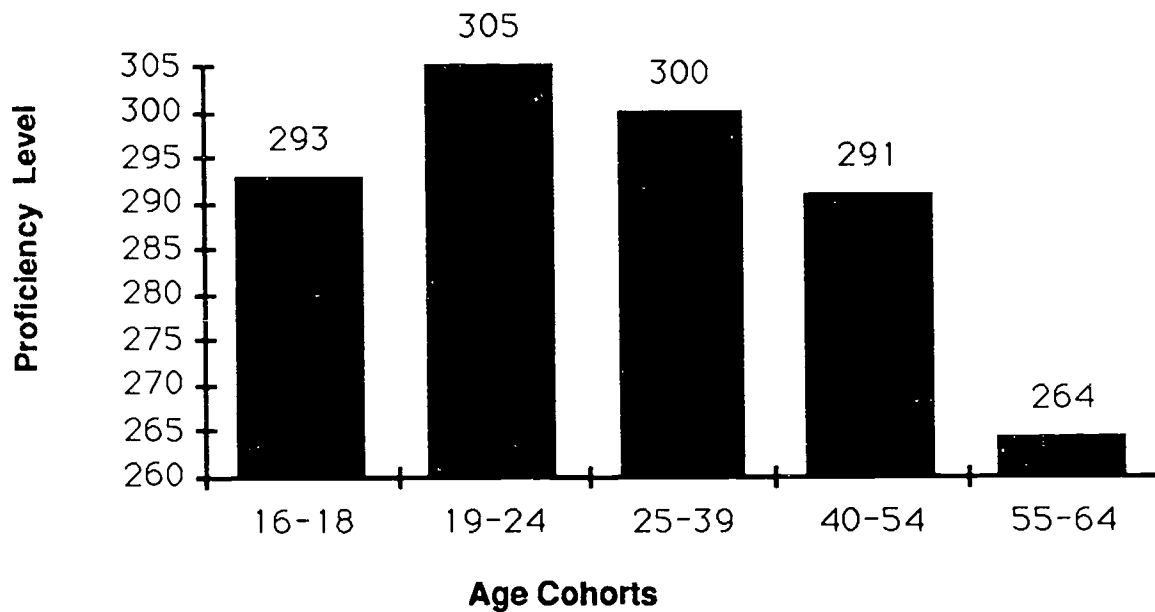


Iowa scored an average range of 15-17 standard score points higher than the U.S. on the Prose Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Progress Report #10; Table 1.P and Figure 1.5 in NALS)

## Graph 3.2

### Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa by Age Cohorts (16-64 Years of Age) on the Document Scale

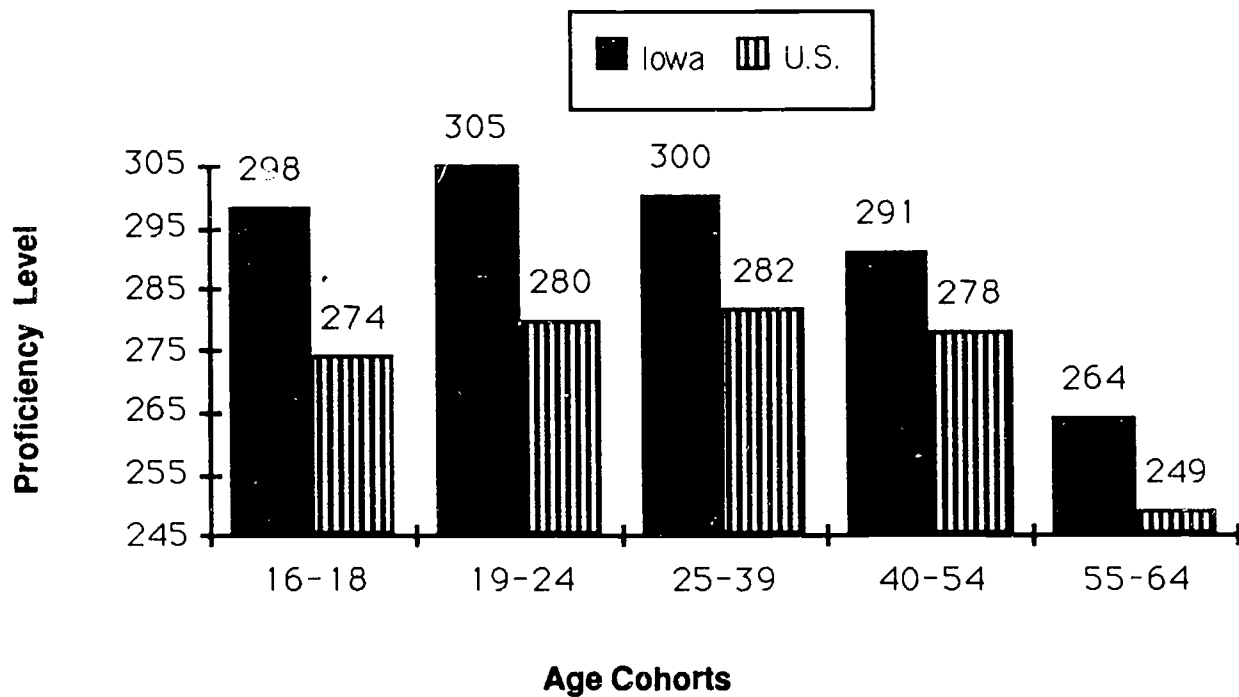


The proficiency levels remain constant for age cohorts 16-54 on the document scale then demonstrate a decline for age cohort 55-64.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Progress  
Report #10; Table 1D.)

### Graph 3.2.1

## A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16-64 Years of Age) on the Document Scale

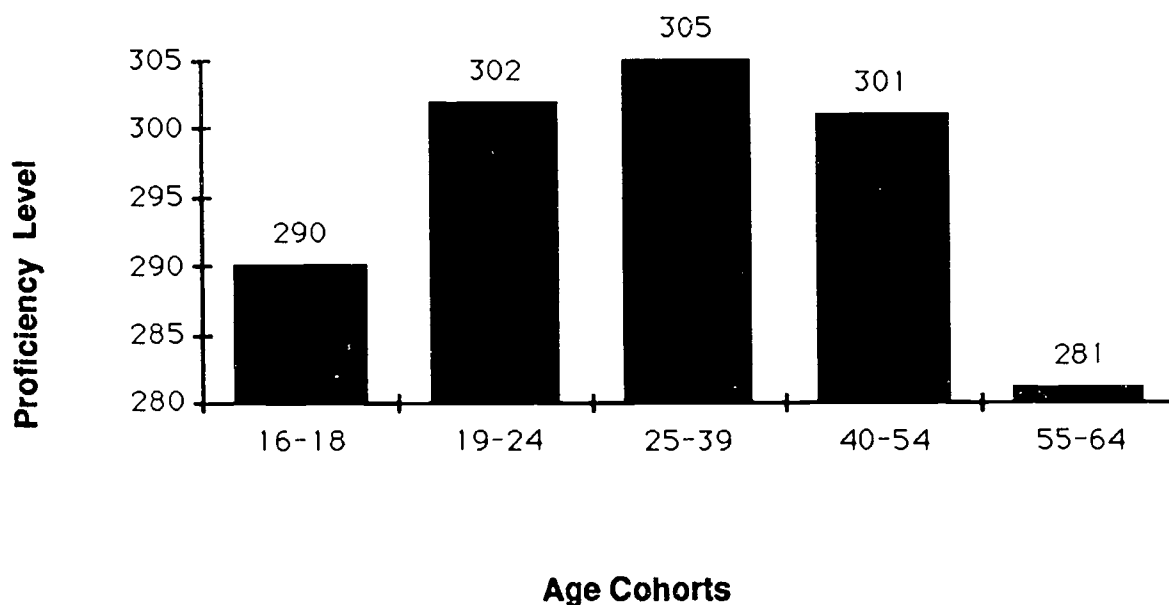


Iowa scored an average range of 13-14 standard score points higher than the U.S. on the Document Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Progress Report #10; Table 1D & Figure 1.5 in NALS.)

### Graph 3.3

## Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa by Age Cohorts (16-64 Years of Age) on the Quantitative Scale

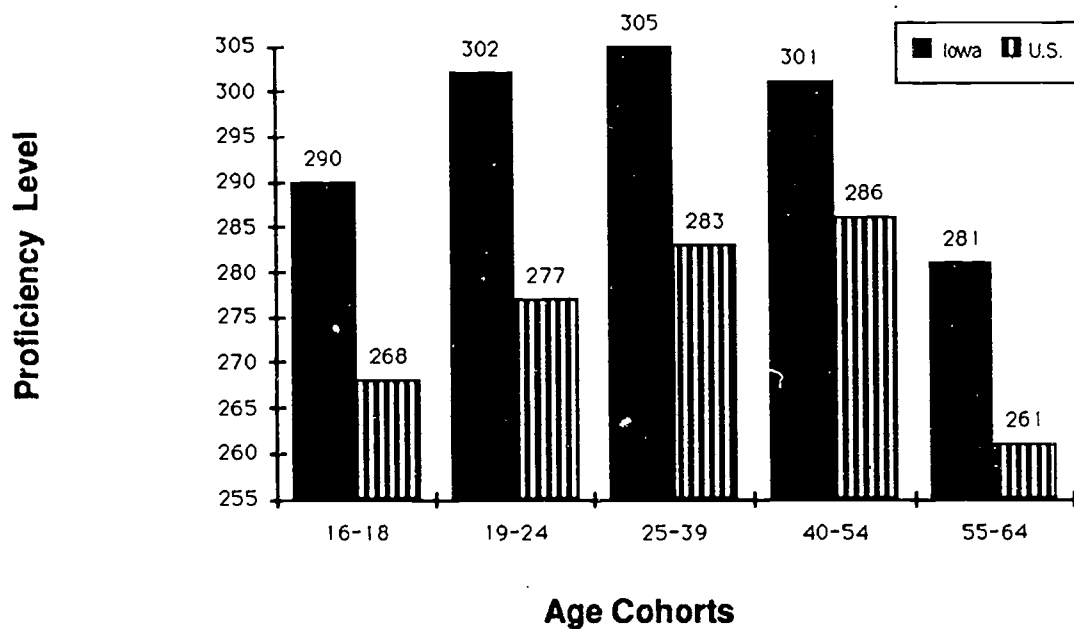


The proficiency levels remain constant for age cohorts 16-54 then demonstrate a decline for age cohorts 55-64 on the quantitative scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Report #10;  
Table 1.Q)

## Graph 3.3.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16-64 Years of Age) on the Quantitative Scale



Iowa scored an average range of 15-25 standard score points higher than the U.S. on the Quantitative Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (State Literacy Survey Report #10; Table 1.Q & Figure 1.5 in NALS.)



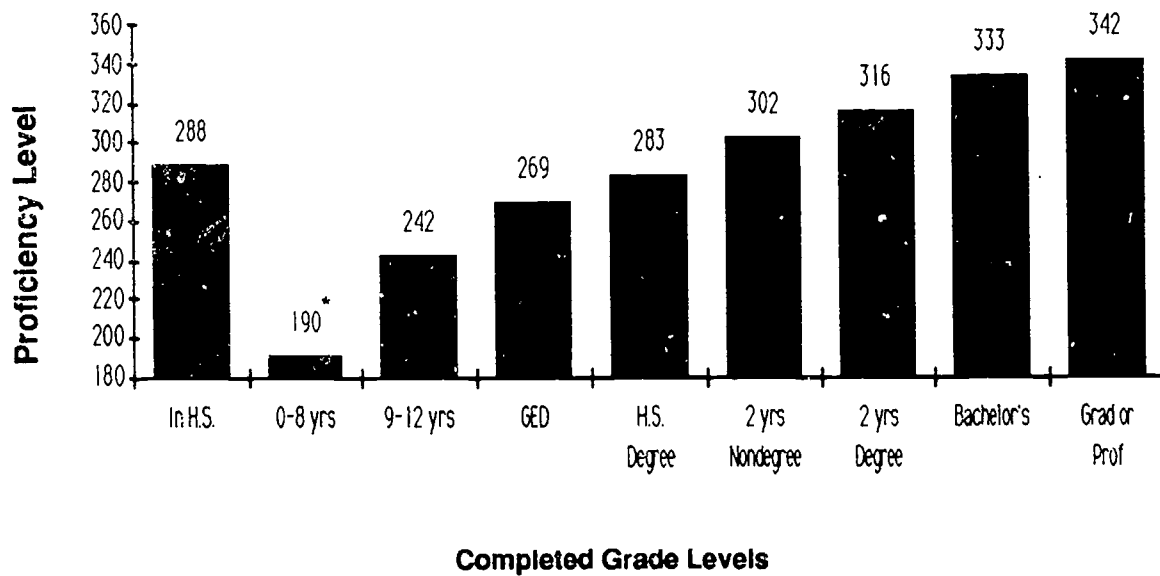
## 4.0 Educational Attainment Comparisons/Trends

This section presents several different perspectives of educational attainment by proficiency level on the three literacy scales.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Graph 4.1

### Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Prose Scale



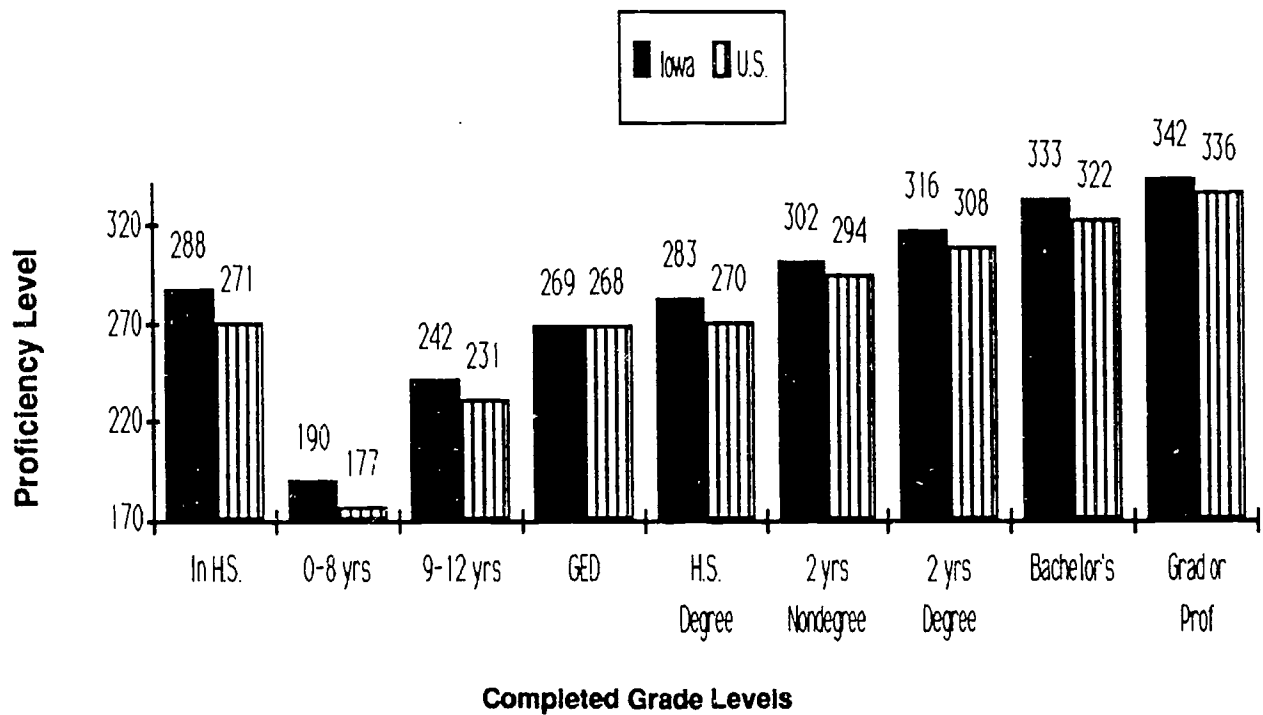
Prose literacy proficiency increases with educational attainment.

\*Prose mean proficiency level interpolated from NALS data. IASALS sample was insufficient to permit a reliable population estimate.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.1P.)

## Graph 4.1.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Prose Scale

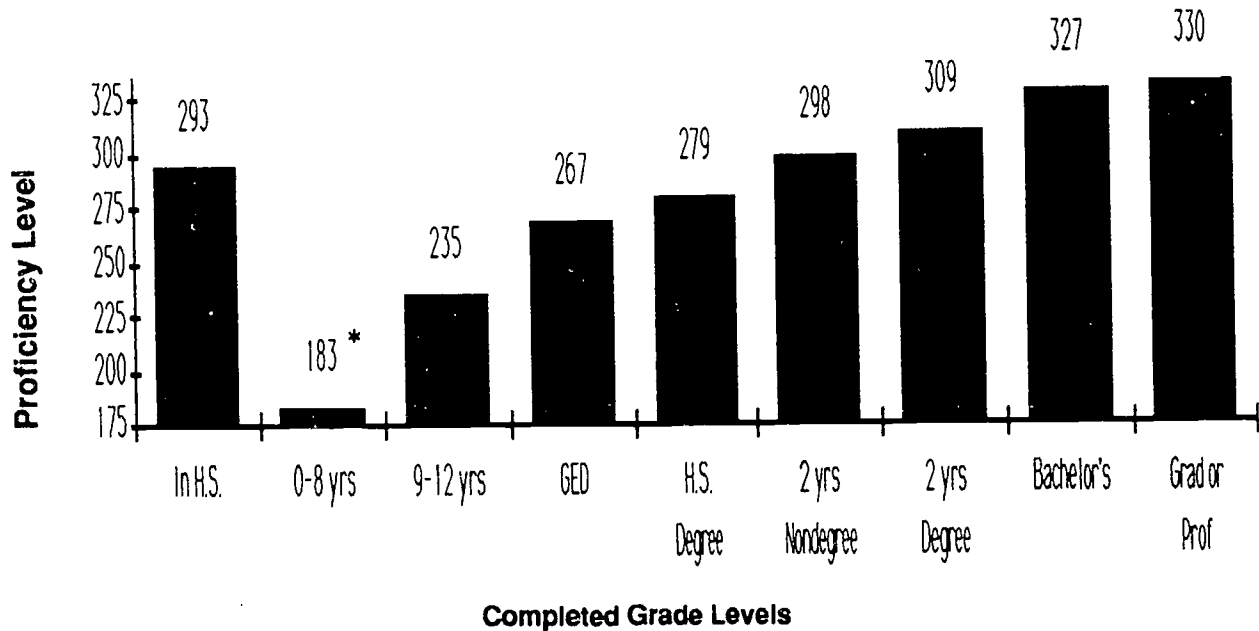


Iowa scored an average range of 8-17 standard score points above the U.S. on the Prose Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.1P.)

## Graph 4.2

### Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Document Scale



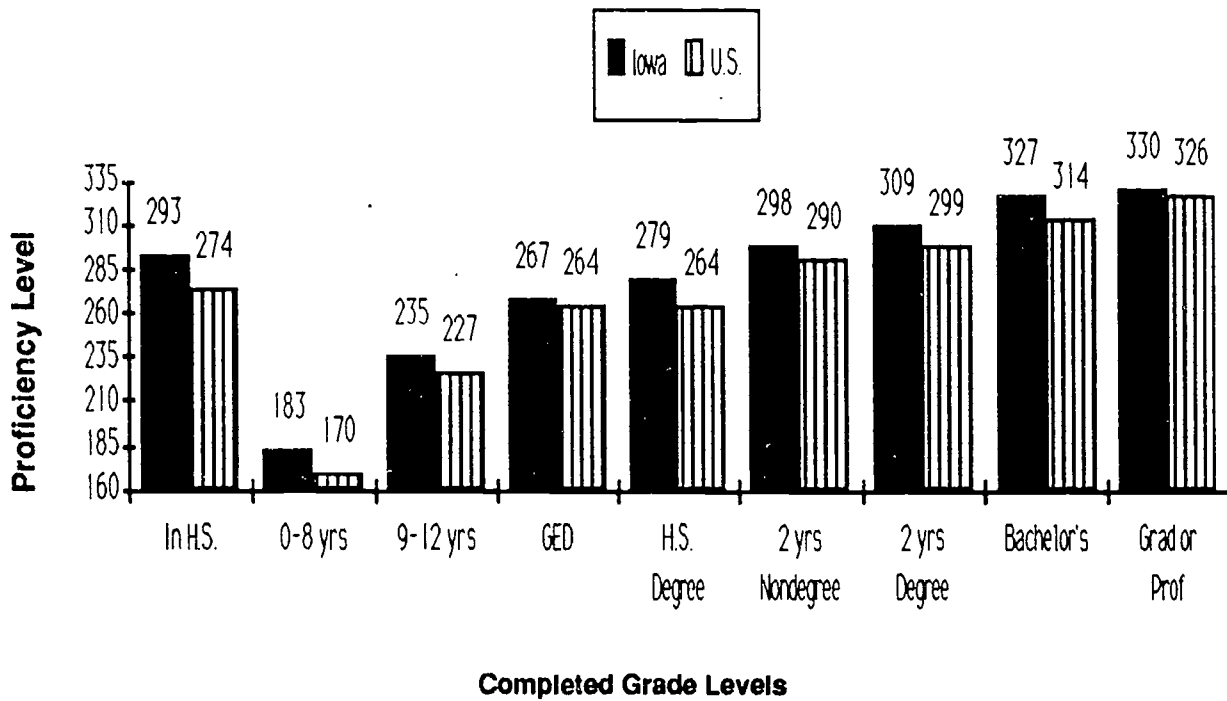
Document literacy proficiency increases with educational attainment.

\*Document mean proficiency level interpolated from NALS data. IASALS sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable population estimate.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.1D.)

## Graph 4.2.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Document Scale

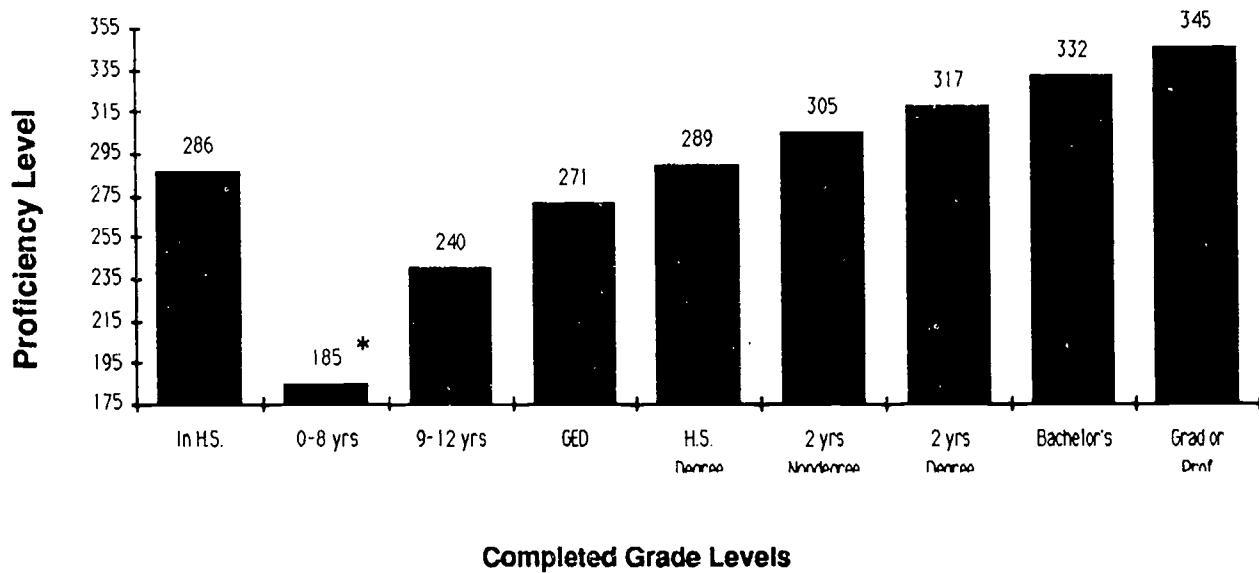


Iowa scored an average range of 8-19 standard score points above the U.S. on the Document Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.1D.)

**Graph 4.3**

**Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's  
Population (16+ Years of Age)  
by Education Level for the Quantitative Scale**



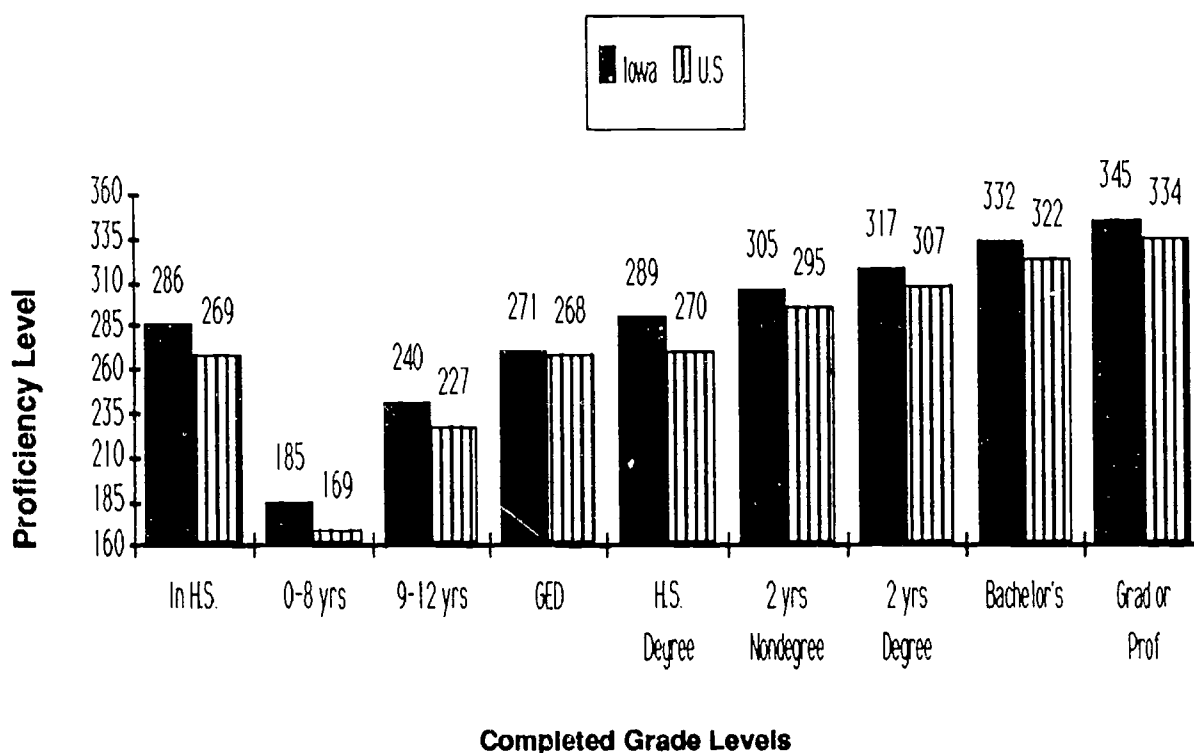
Quantitative literacy proficiency increases with educational attainment.

\*Quantitative mean proficiency level interpolated from NALS data. IASALS sample was insufficient to permit a reliable population estimate.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.1Q.)

## Graph 4.3.1

### A Comparison of Mean Proficiency Levels for Iowa's and the United States' Population (16+ Years of Age) by Education Level for the Quantitative Scale

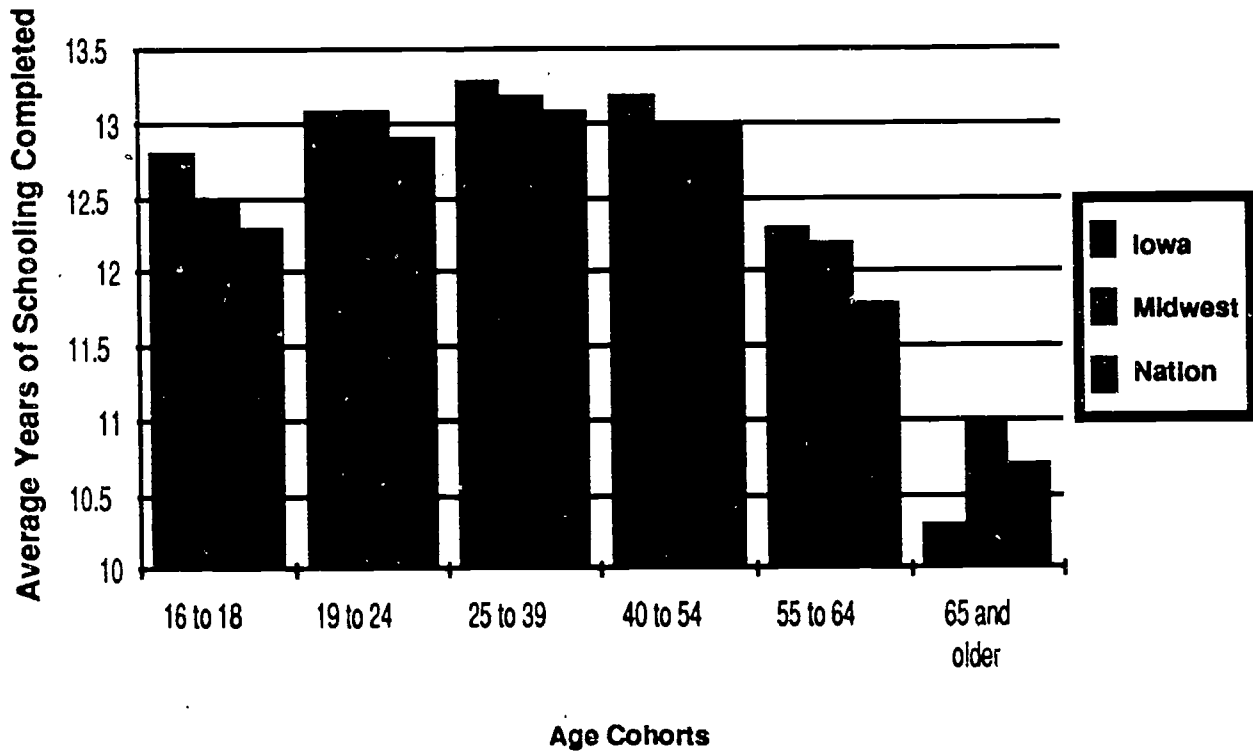


Iowa scored an average range of 10-19 standard score points above the U.S. on the Quantitative Scale.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.1Q.)

## Graph 4.4

### Average Years of Schooling Completed by Age Cohorts: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation



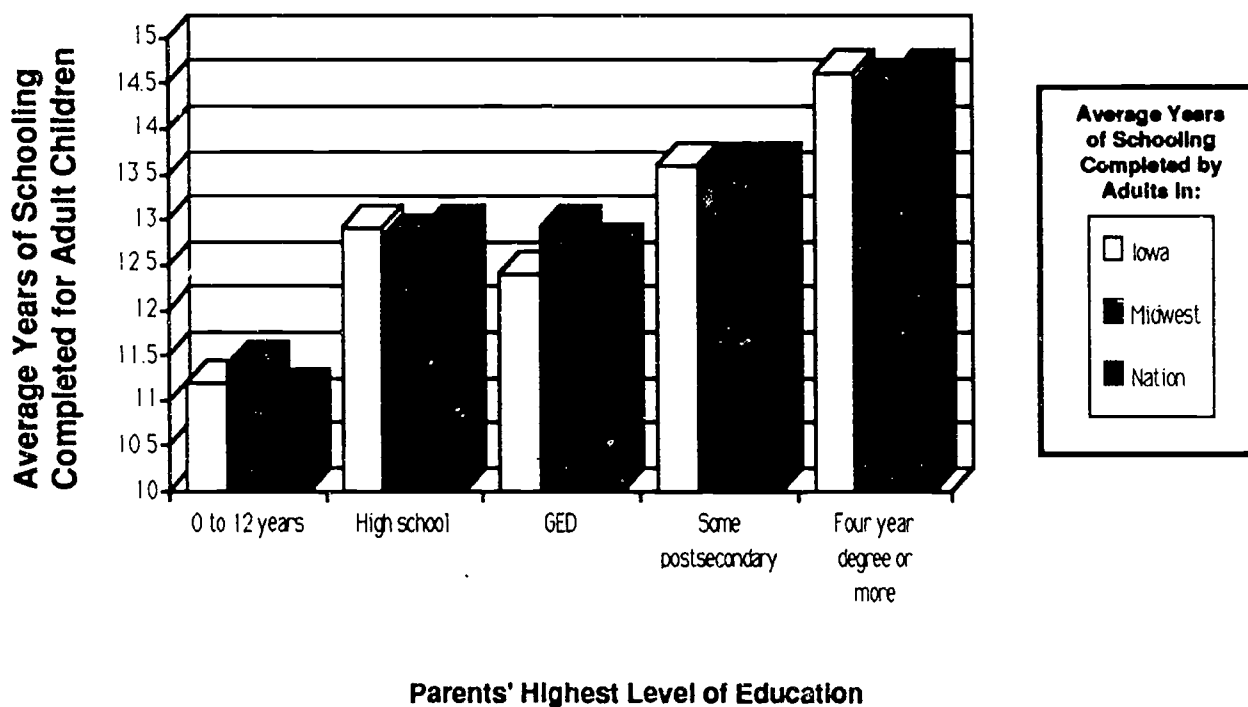
Average years of schooling tend to increase from the youngest age group to the middle age groups and then decline across the older age groups.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.2)



## Graph 4.5

### Average Years of Schooling Completed by Adults as Compared with their Parents' Highest Level of Education: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation



The more education parents completed the more education their adult children were likely to complete.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.2)

## **5.0 Employment, Economic Status and Civic Responsibility**

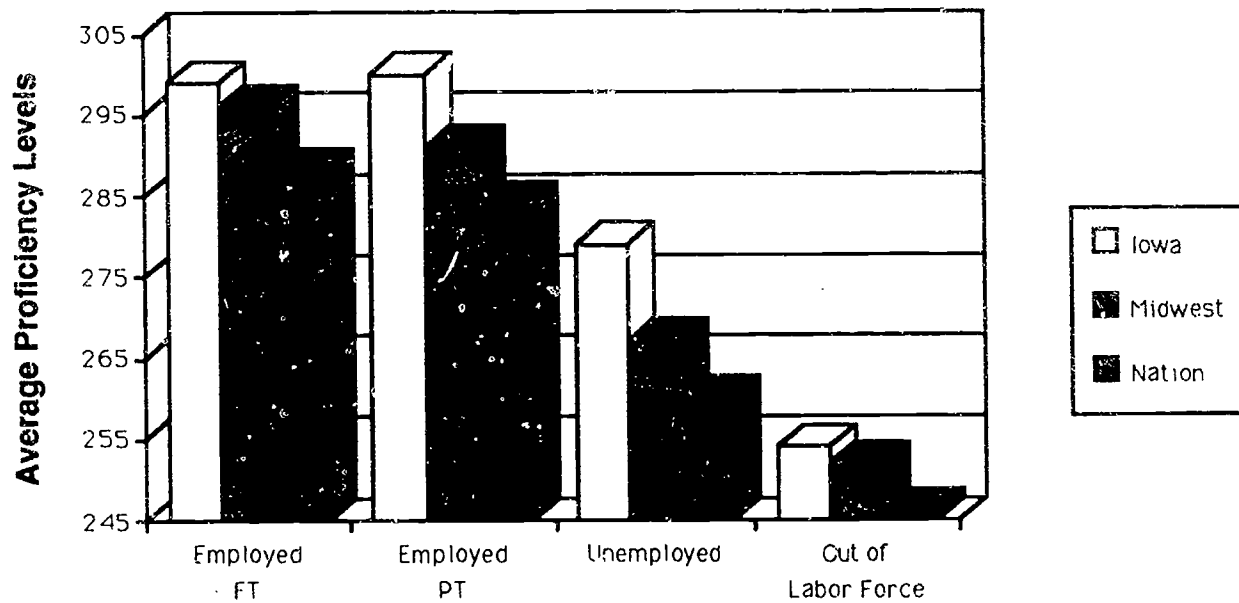
This section provides an overview on comparison of various aspects of employment, economic status and civic responsibility. The variables which are presented include:

- (1) labor force status,
- (2) occupational categories,
- (3) income,
- (4) weeks worked,
- (5) other civic variables.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**Graph 5.1**

**Prose Average Proficiencies  
by Labor Force Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**

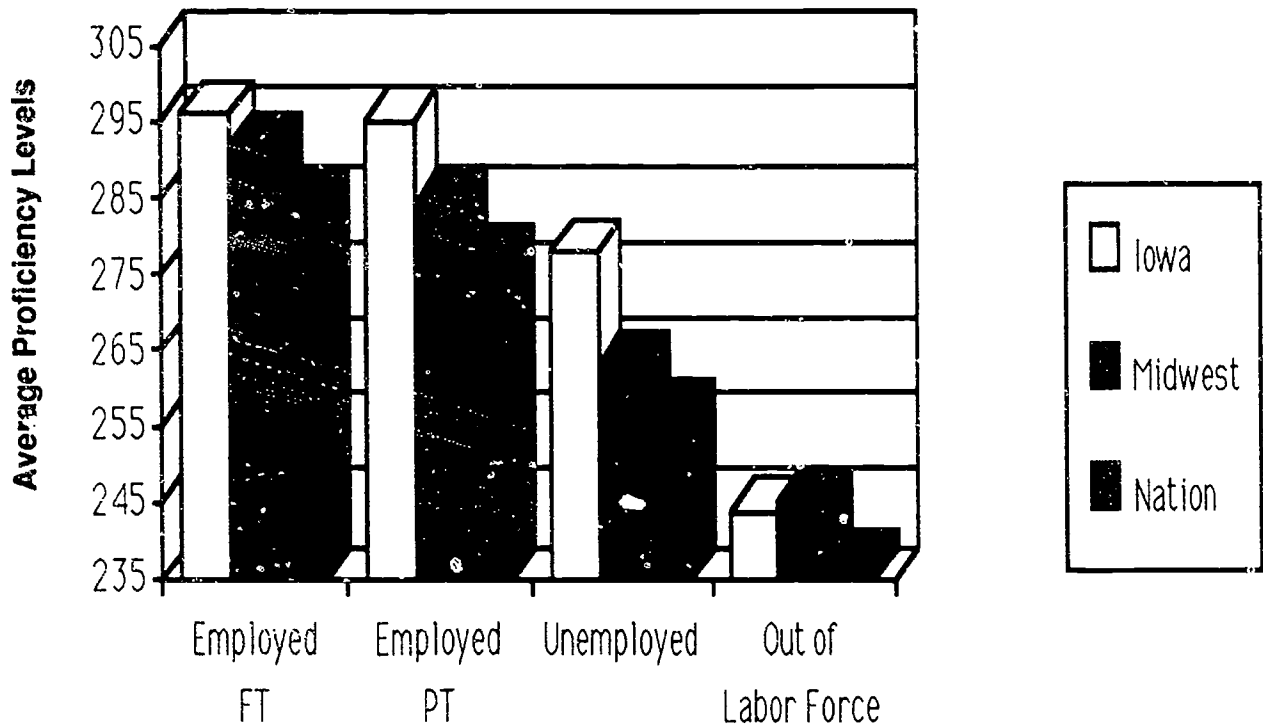


Employed adults reach higher proficiency levels than those who are unemployed or out of the labor force.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.1P)

**Graph 5.2**

**Document Average Proficiencies  
by Labor Force Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**

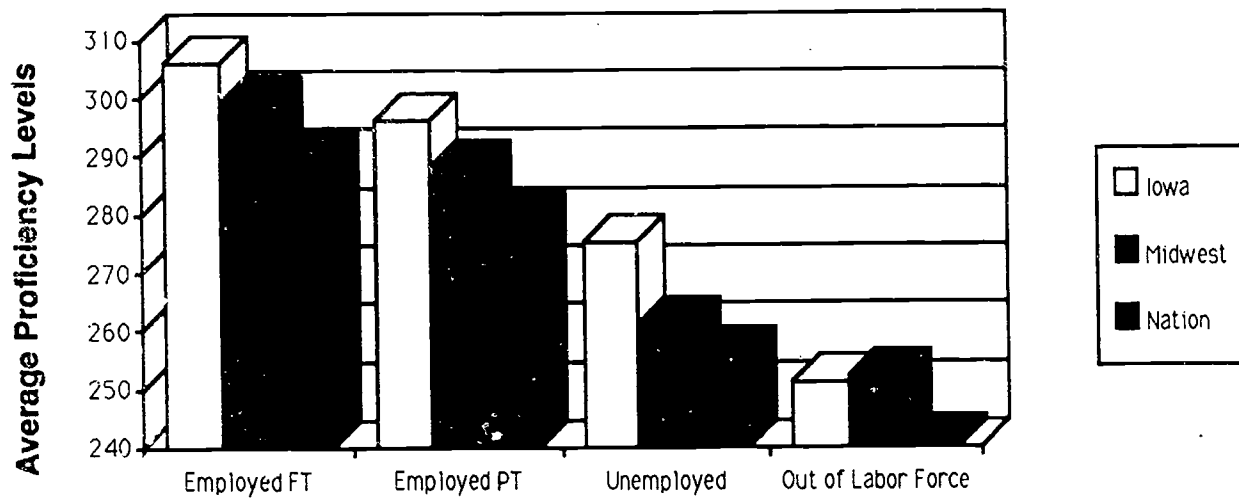


Employed adults reach higher proficiency levels than those who are unemployed or out of the labor force.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.1D)

## Graph 5.3

### Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Labor Force Status: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation

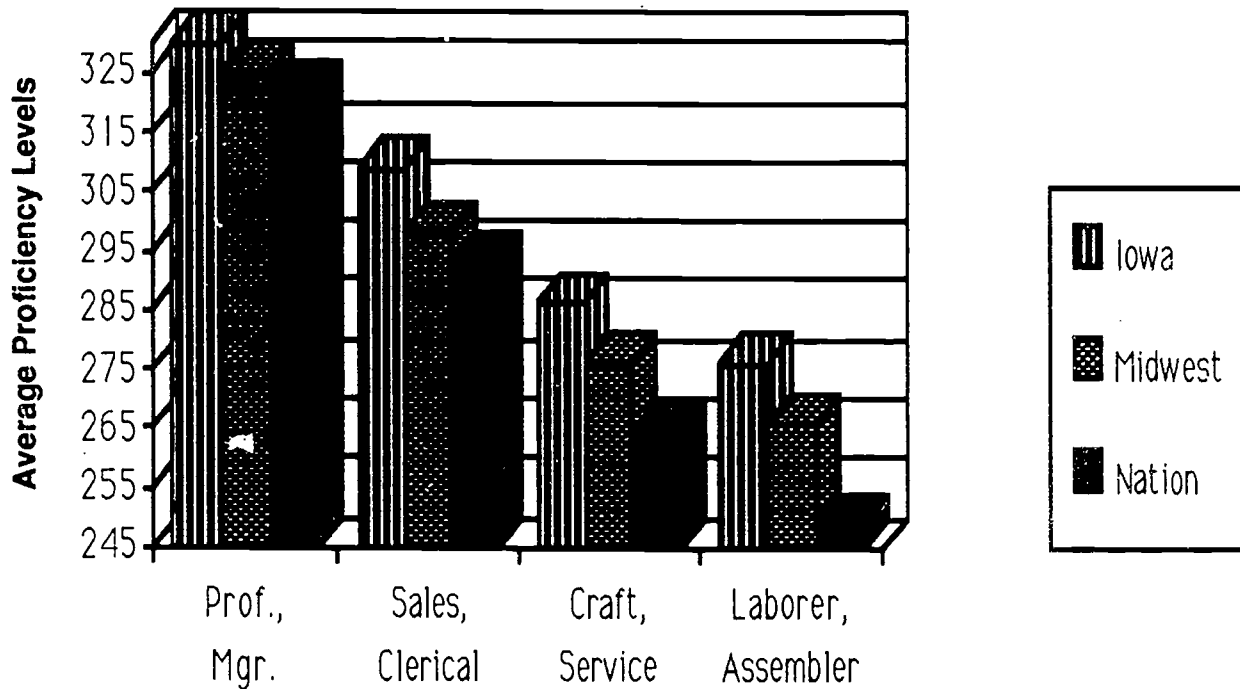


Employed adults reach higher proficiency levels than those who are unemployed or out of the labor force.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.1Q)

### Graph 5.4

## Prose Average Proficiencies by Occupational Category: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation

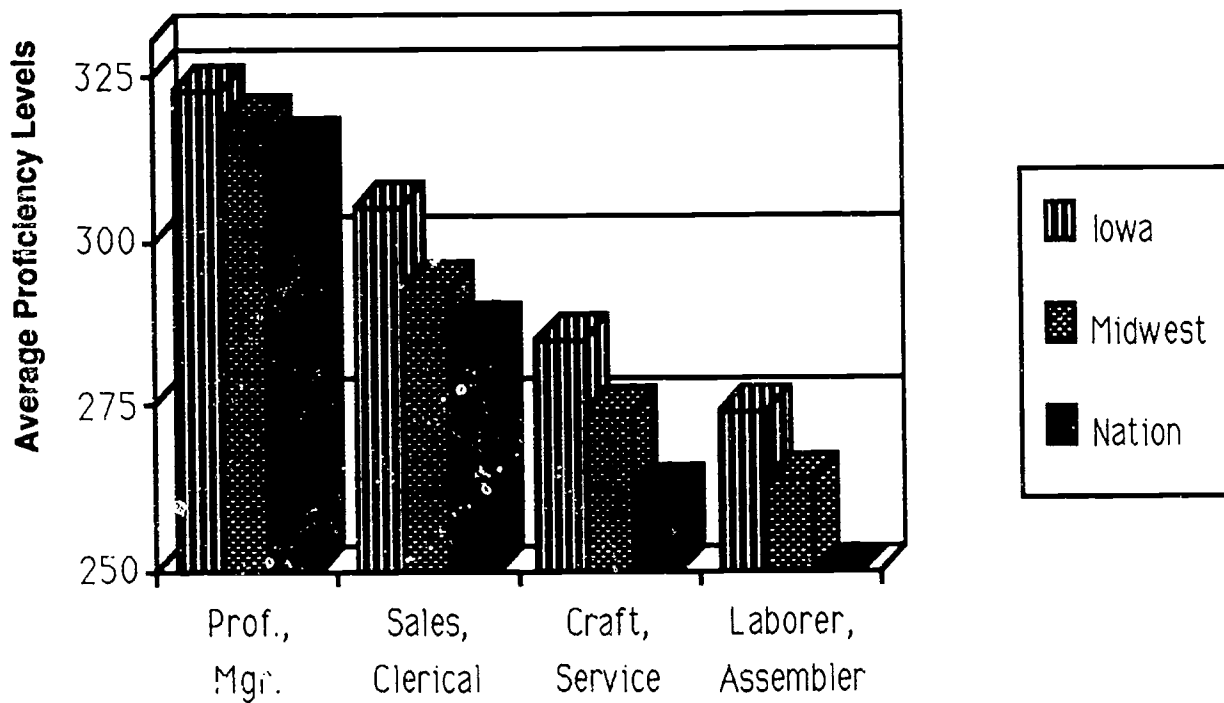


Adults with professional, managerial, or technical positions have higher average literacy proficiencies than adults working in other types of jobs.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.2P)

**Graph 5.5**

**Document Average Proficiencies  
by Occupational Category:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**

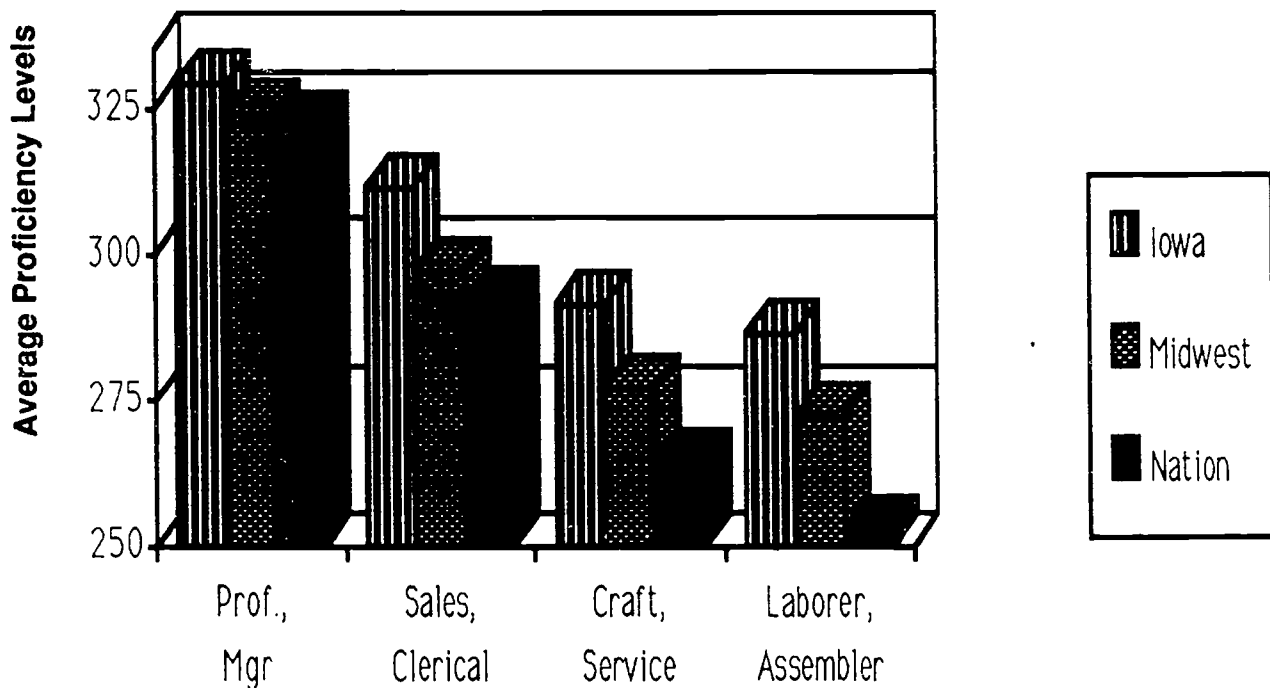


Adults with professional, managerial, or technical positions have higher average literacy proficiencies than adults working in other types of jobs.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.2D)

**Graph 5.6**

**Quantitative Average Proficiencies  
by Occupational Category:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**



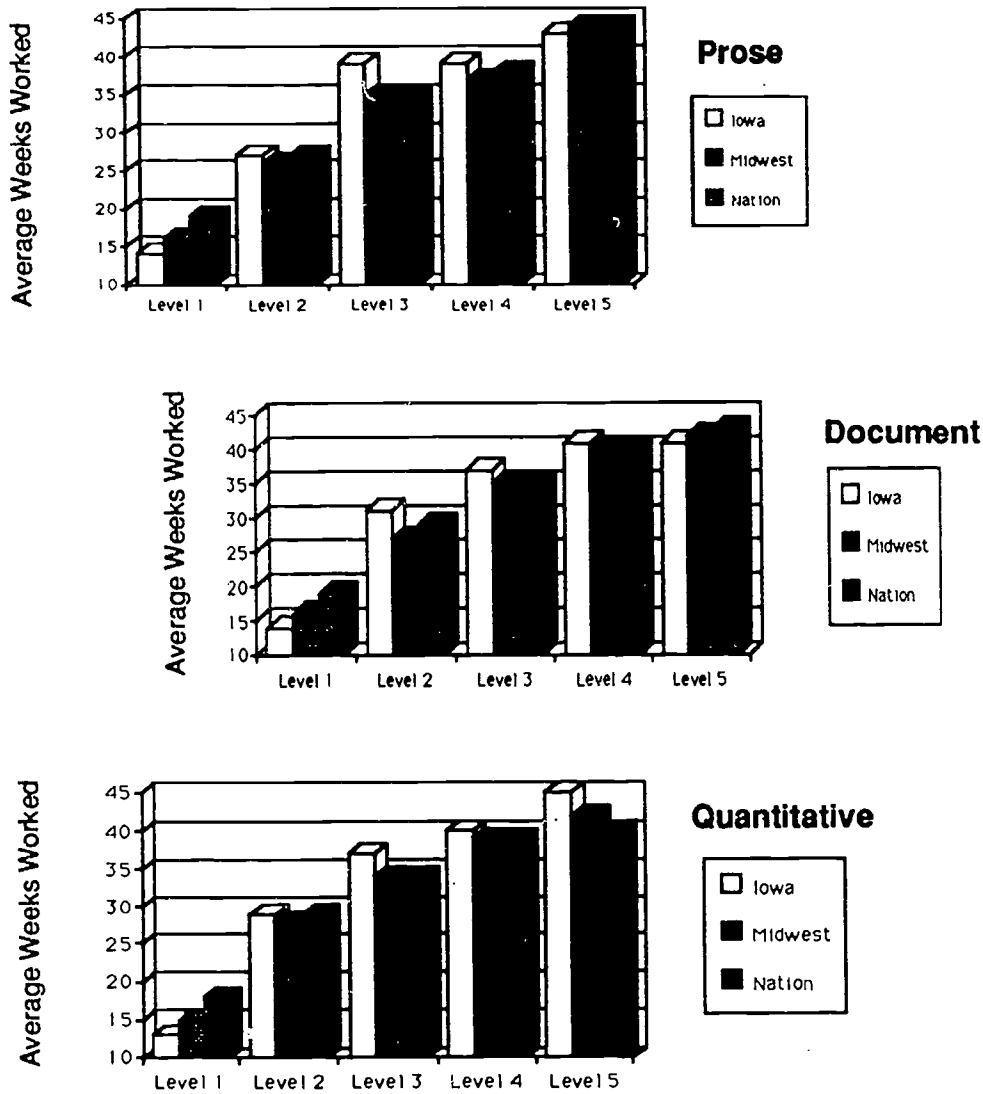
Adults with professional, managerial, or technical positions have higher average literacy proficiencies than adults working in other types of jobs.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.2Q)



# Graph 5.7

## Average Number of Weeks Worked in the Past 12 Months, by Literacy Level: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation

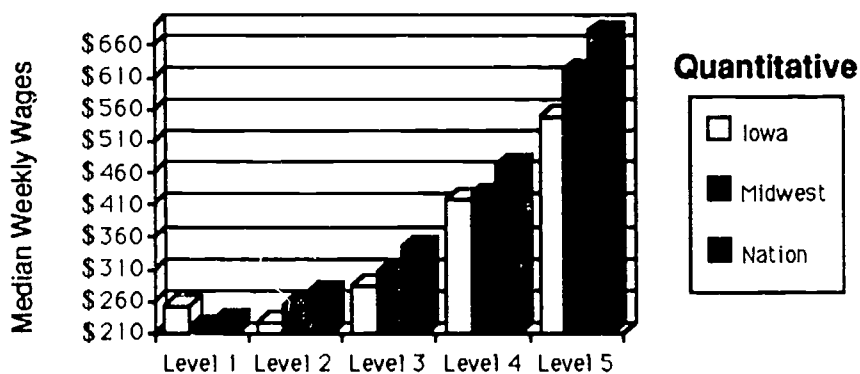
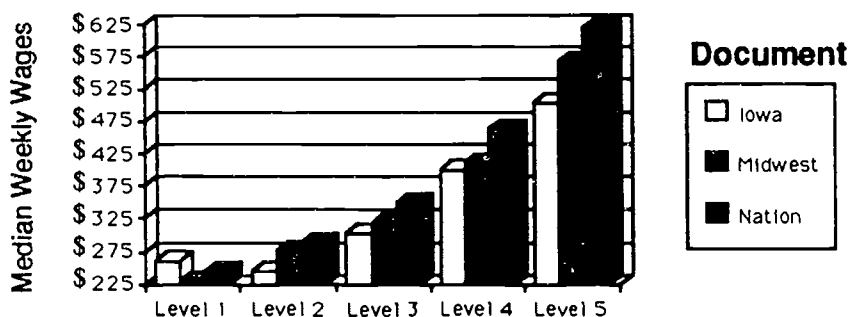
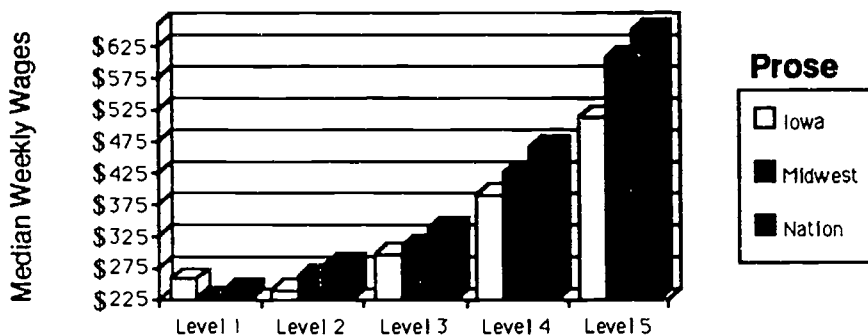


Adults performing in the highest literacy level worked, on average, roughly three times as many weeks as the lowest levels.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.3)

## Graph 5.8

### Median Weekly Wages by Literacy Level: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation

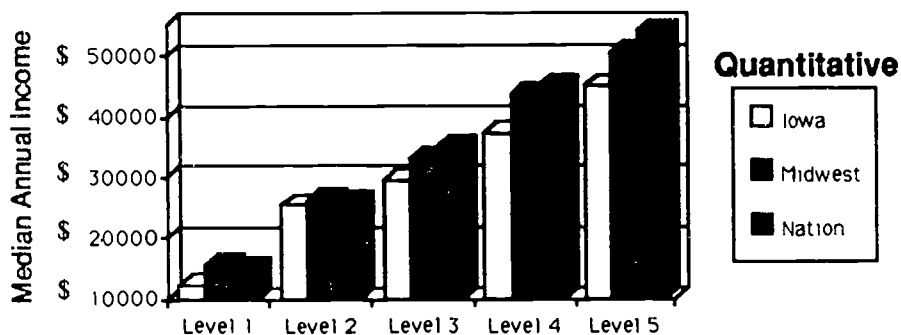
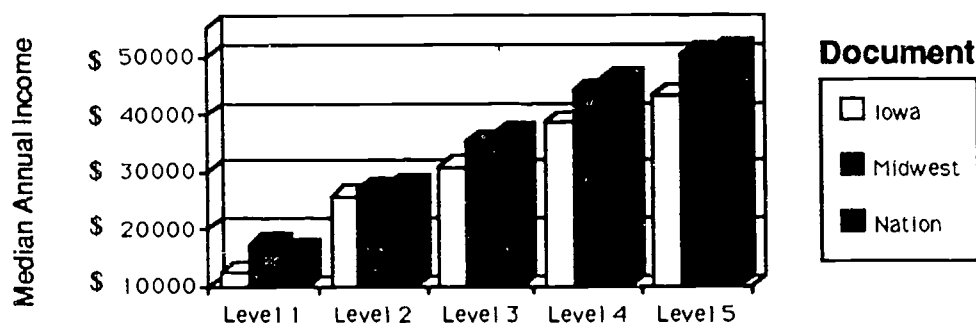
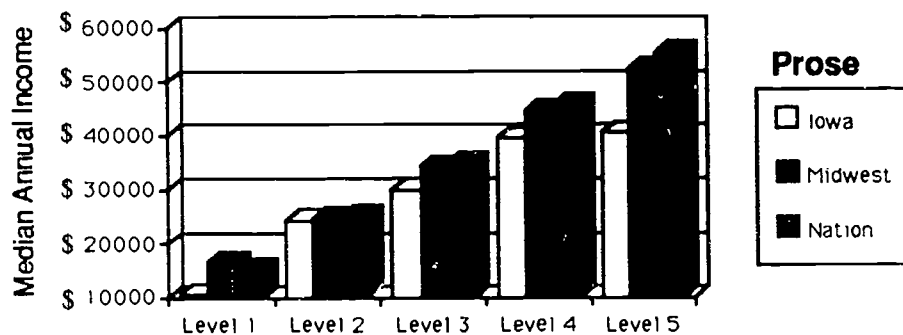


Median weekly wages are higher for adults with greater literacy proficiencies.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.4)

### Graph 5.9

## Median Annual Household Income, by Literacy Level: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation

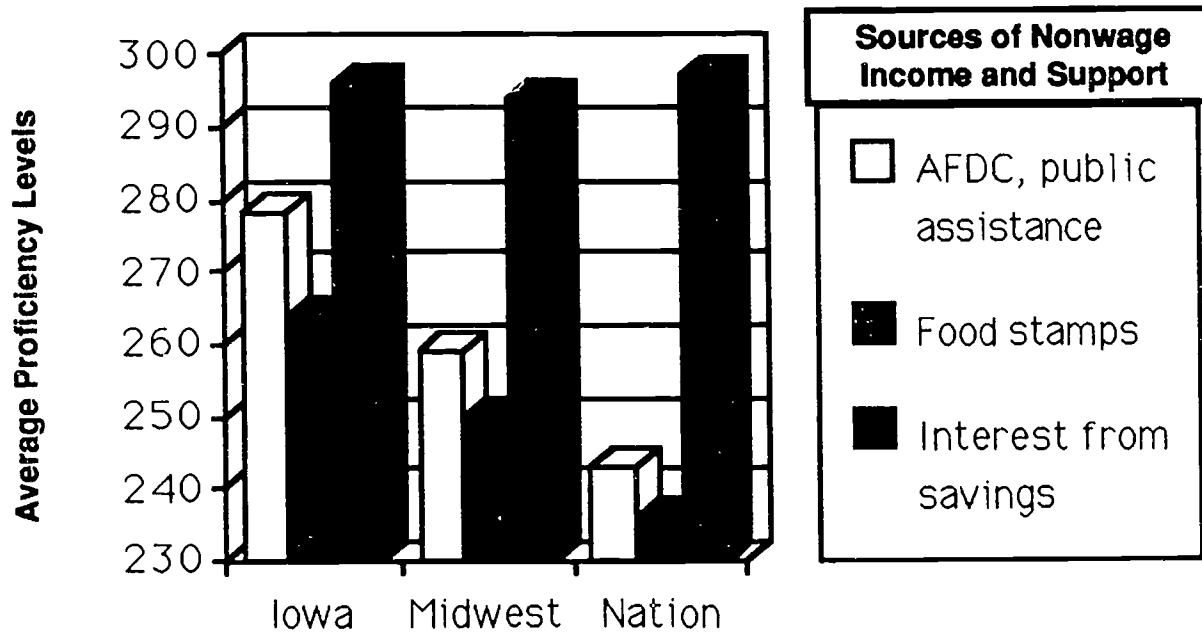


Adults who perform in the highest literacy levels reported larger annual incomes than adults in the lowest literacy levels.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.5)

Graph 5.10

**Prose Average Proficiencies  
by Sources of Nonwage Income and Support:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**

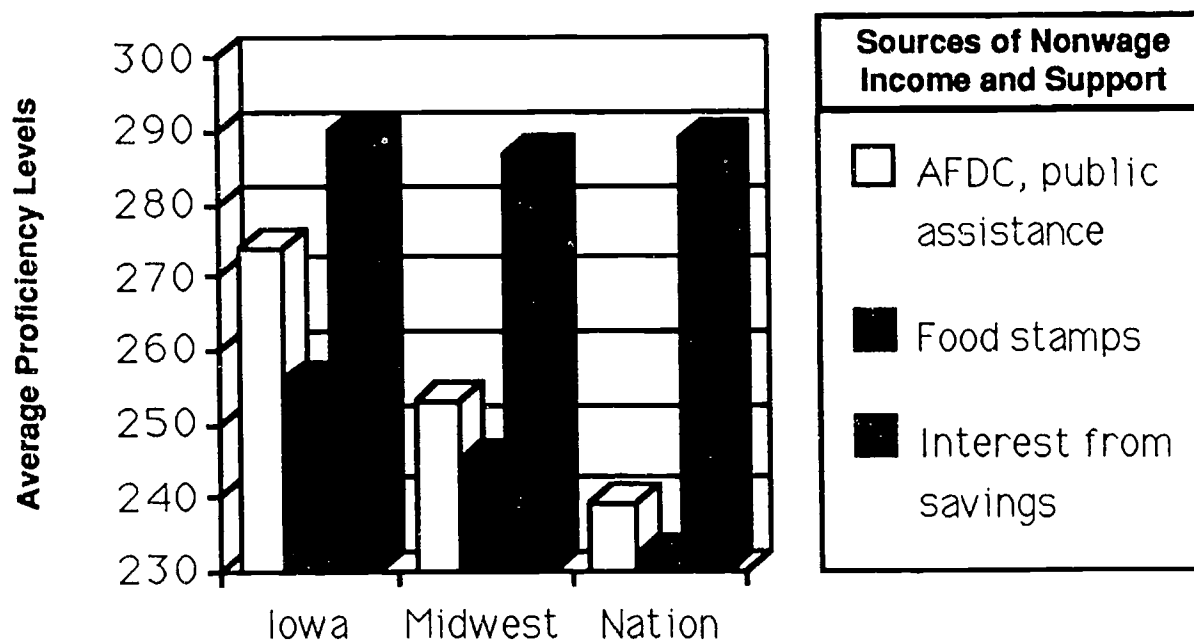


Prose average proficiencies were higher for those adults who received interest from savings than those who received food stamps, or AFDC, public assistance.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.6P)

Graph 5.11

**Document Average Proficiencies  
by Sources of Nonwage Income and Support:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**

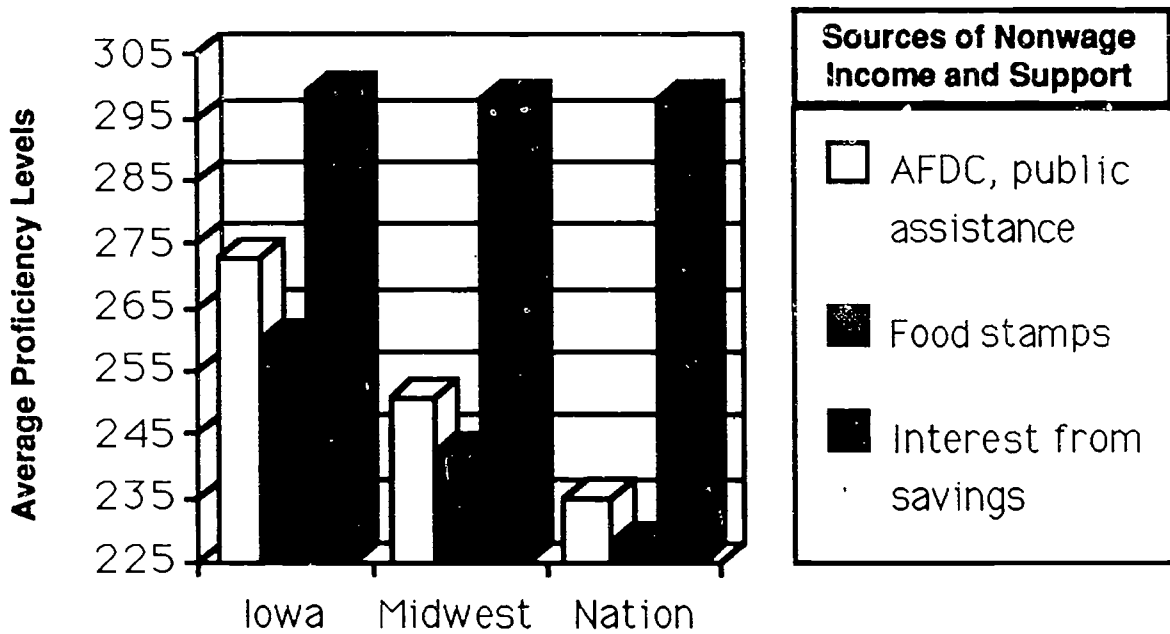


Document average proficiencies were higher for those adults who received interest from savings than those who received food stamps, or AFDC, public assistance.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.6D)

**Graph 5.12**

**Quantitative Average Proficiencies  
by Sources of Nonwage Income and Support:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**

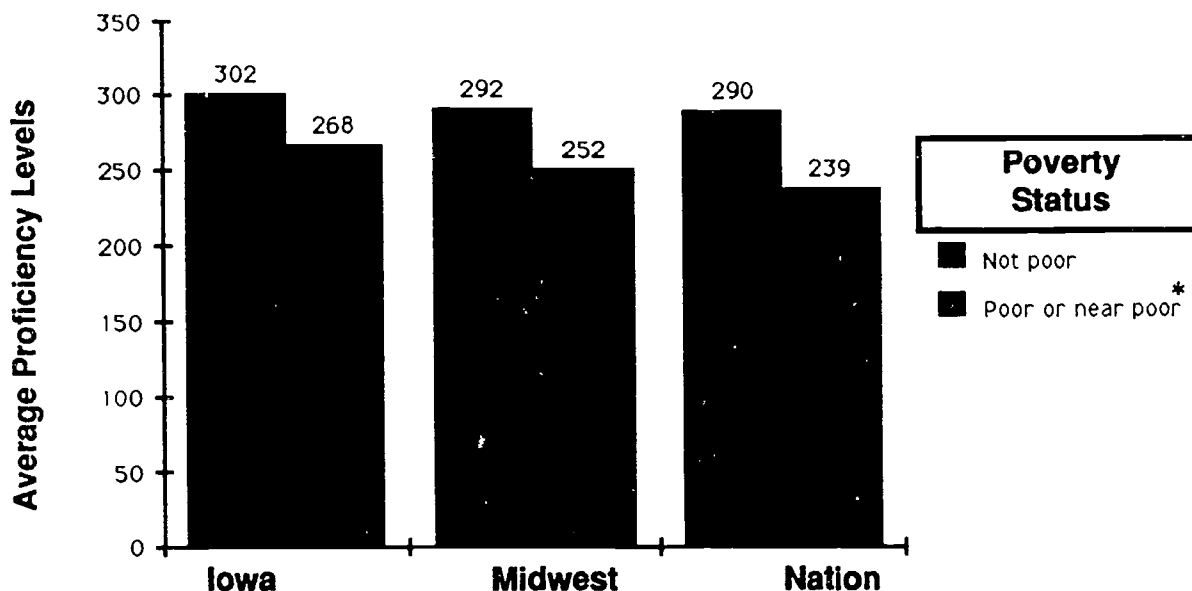


Quantitative average proficiencies were higher for those adults who received interest from savings than those who received food stamps, or AFDC, public assistance.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.6Q)

**Graph 5.13**

**Prose Average Proficiencies  
by Poverty Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**



\*Based on the 1991 poverty income thresholds of the federal government, the following criteria were used to identify respondents who were "poor or near poor":

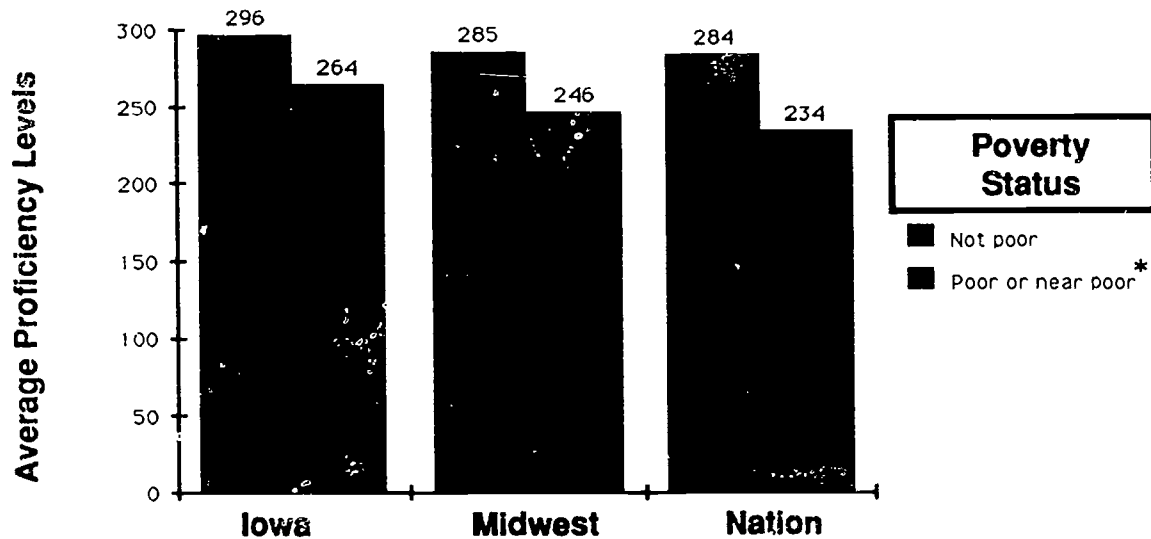
Respondents whose family size was:	And Whose annual household income was at or below:
1	\$ 8,665
2	\$11,081
3	\$13,575
4	\$17,405
5	\$20,570
6	\$23,234
7	\$26,322
8	\$29,506
9	\$34,927

Prose average proficiency levels are higher for "not poor" as opposed to "poor or near poor".

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.7P)

Graph 5.14

**Document Average Proficiencies  
by Poverty Status:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation**



\*Based on the 1991 poverty income thresholds of the federal government, the following criteria were used to identify respondents who were "poor or near poor":

Respondents whose family size was:	And Whose annual household income was at or below:
1	\$ 8,665
2	\$11,081
3	\$13,575
4	\$17,405
5	\$20,570
6	\$23,234
7	\$26,322
8	\$29,506
9	\$34,927

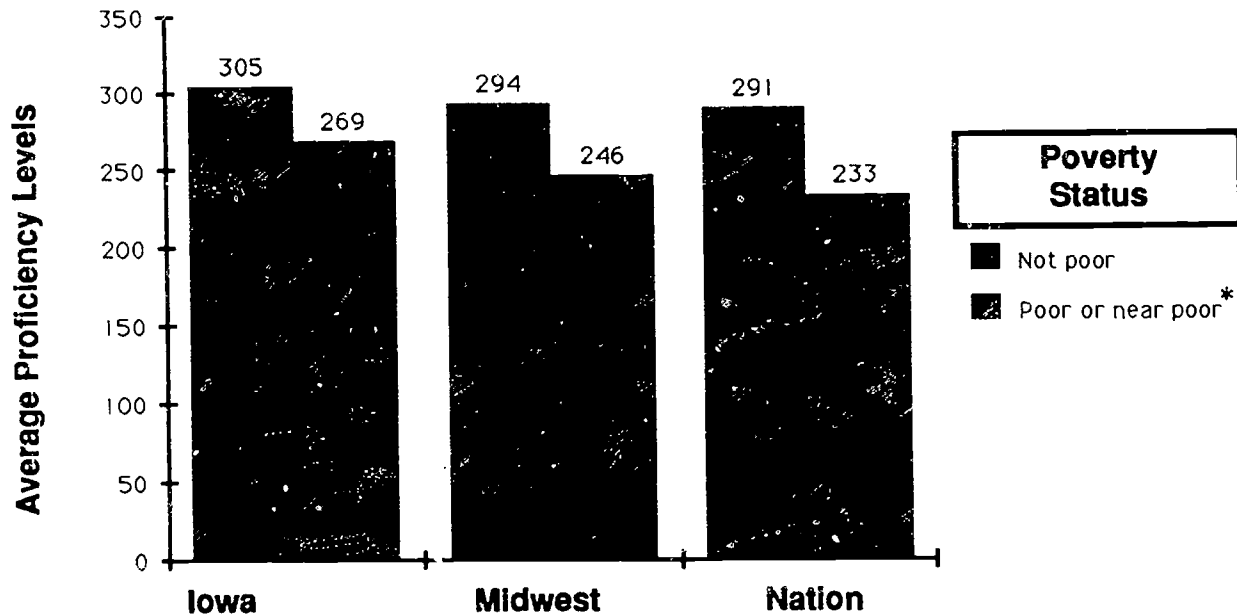
Document proficiencies are higher for "not poor" as opposed to "poor or near poor".

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.7D)



## Graph 5.15

### Quantitative Average Proficiencies by Poverty Status: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation



\*Based on the 1991 poverty income thresholds of the federal government, the following criteria were used to identify respondents who were "poor or near poor":

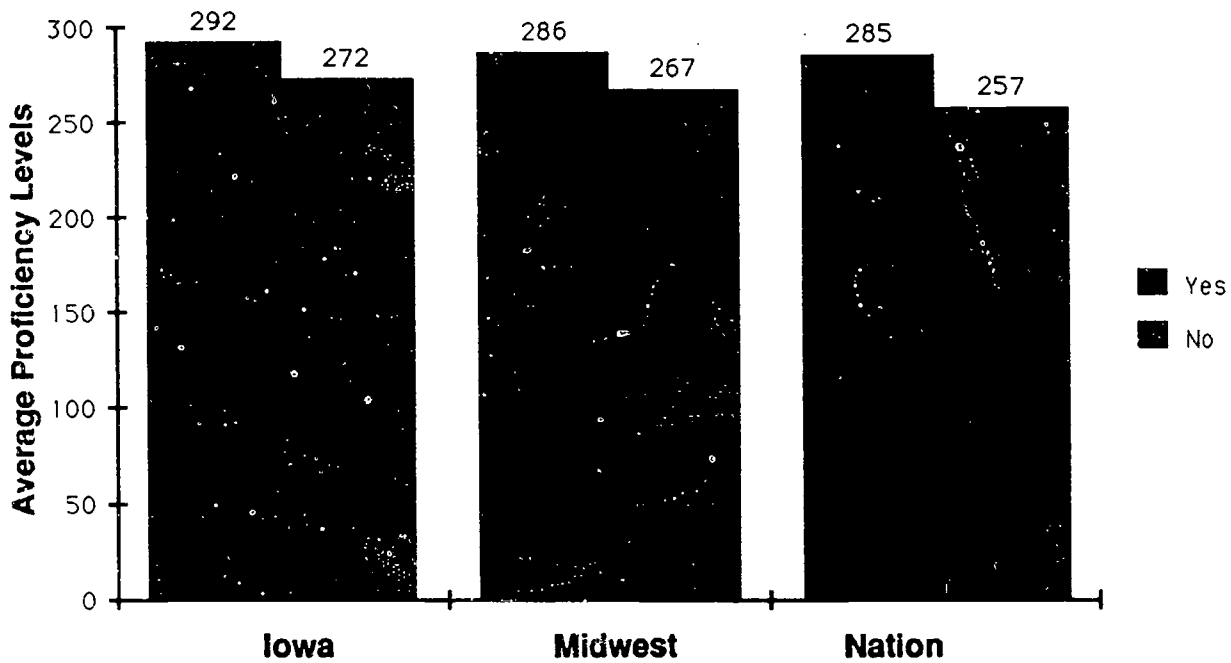
Respondents whose family size was:	And Whose annual household income was at or below:
1	\$ 8,665
2	\$11,081
3	\$13,575
4	\$17,405
5	\$20,570
6	\$23,234
7	\$26,322
8	\$29,506
9	\$34,927

Document proficiencies are higher for "not poor" as opposed to "poor or near poor".

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS), Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.7Q)

**Graph 5.16**

**Prose Average Proficiencies  
by Voting in Recent Elections:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation  
to the Question: "Voted in the Past Five Years".**

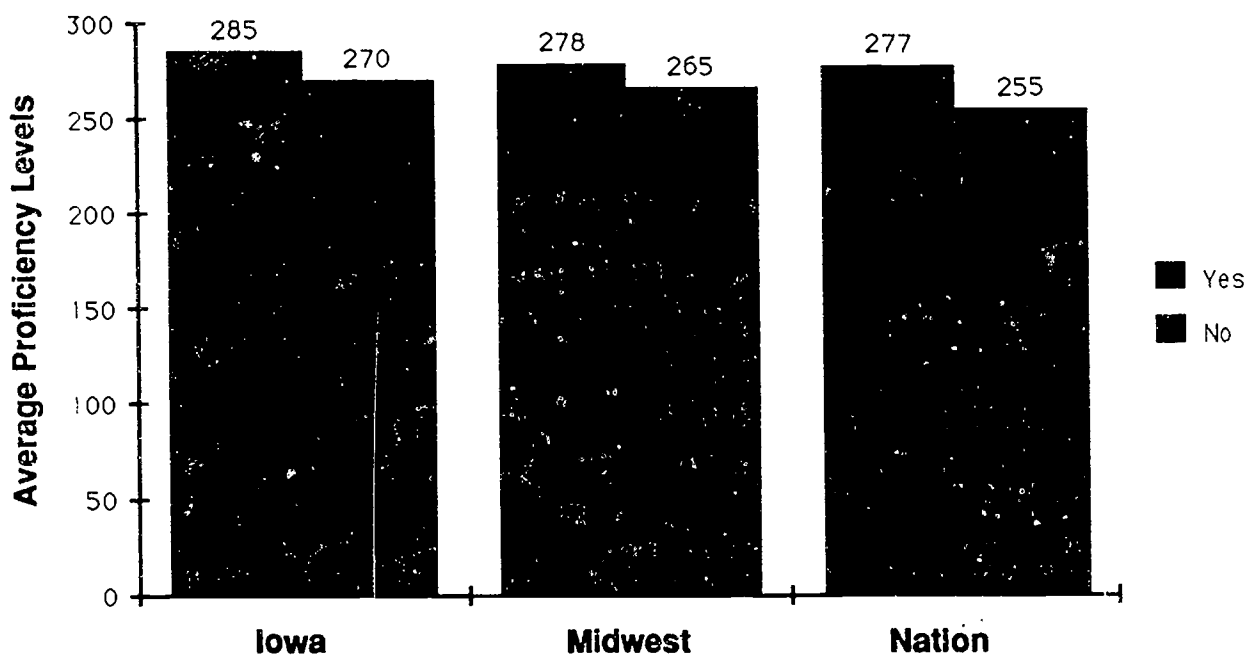


Prose average proficiency rates are higher for persons who voted in the past five years.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.8P)

## Graph 5.17

### Document Average Proficiencies by Voting in Recent Elections: Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation to the Question: "Voted in the Past Five Years".

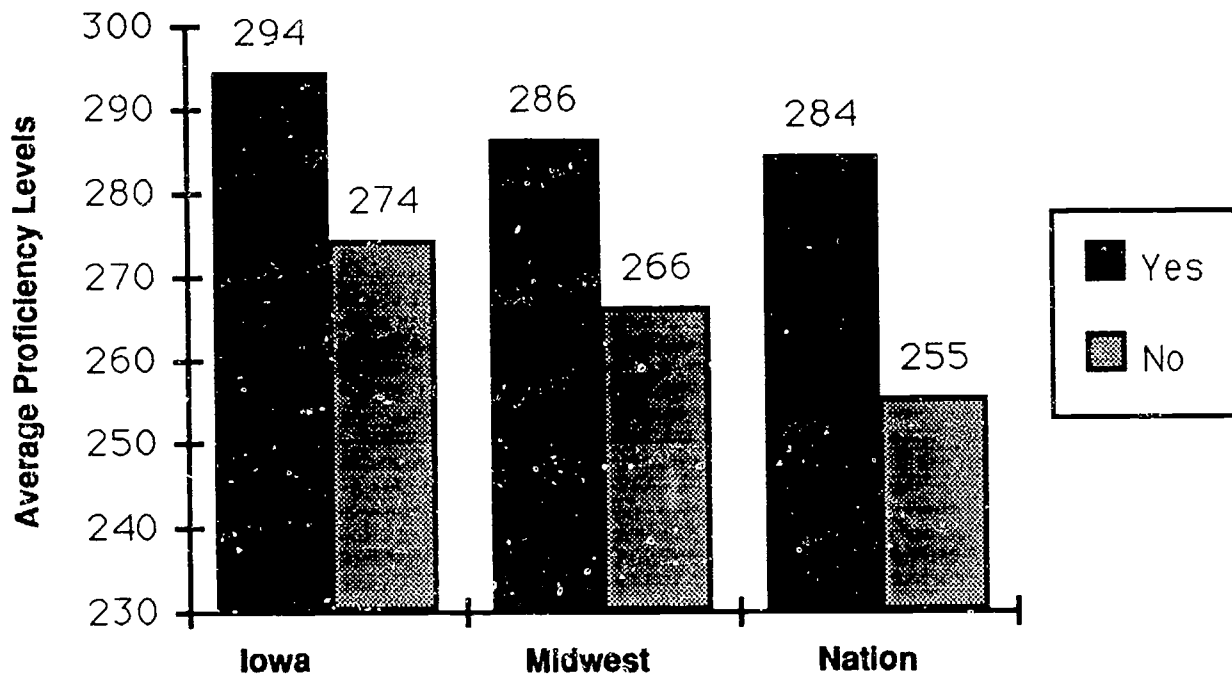


Document average proficiency rates are higher for persons who voted in the past five years.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.8D)

**Graph 5.18**

**Quantitative Average Proficiencies  
by Voting in Recent Elections:  
Results for Iowa, the Midwest, and the Nation  
to the Question: "Voted in the Past Five Years".**



Quantitative proficiency rates are higher for persons who voted in the past five years.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS),  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (TABLE 3.8Q)

## 6.0 Language Use and Literacy Practices

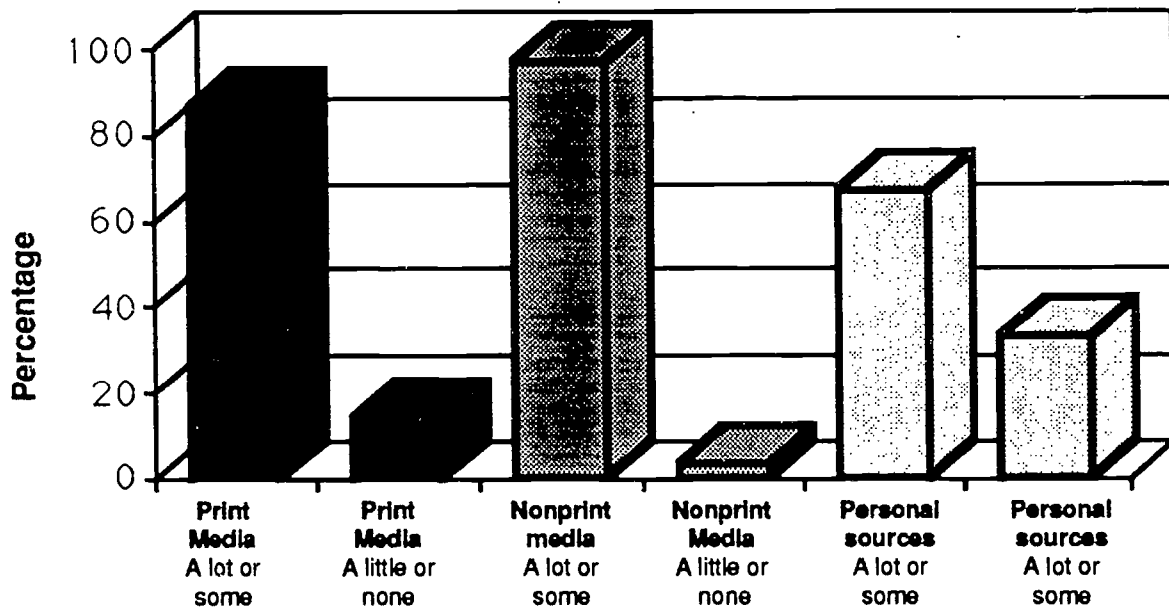
This section presents various aspects of language use and literacy practices such as:

- (1) current events,
- (2) reading habits,
- (3) television viewing habits.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

### Graph 6.1

## Reliance on Various Sources of Information About Current Events: Results for Iowa

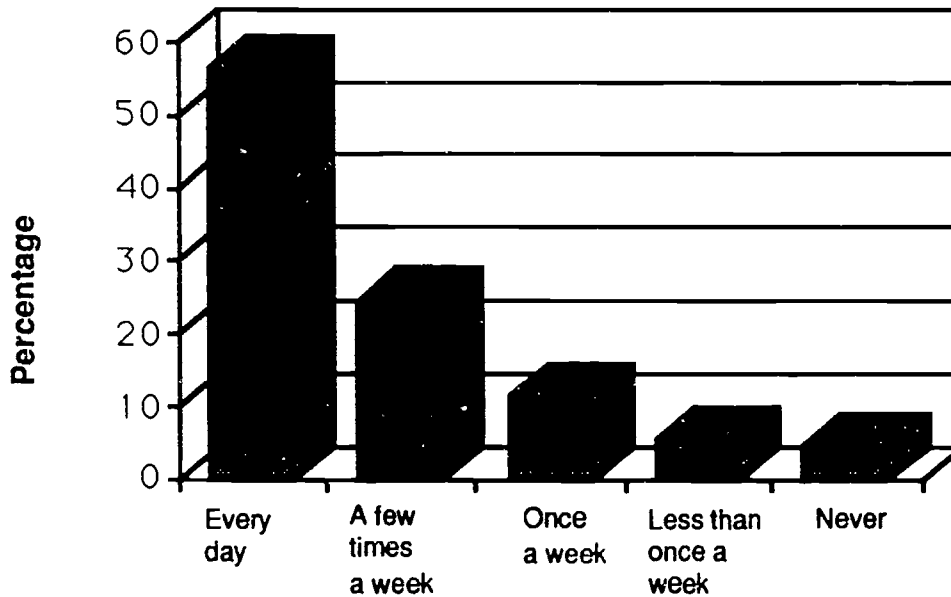


A majority of Iowans receive information from a combination of print and nonprint media.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS) Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 4.5)

## Graph 6.2

### Frequency of Newspaper Reading: Results for Iowa

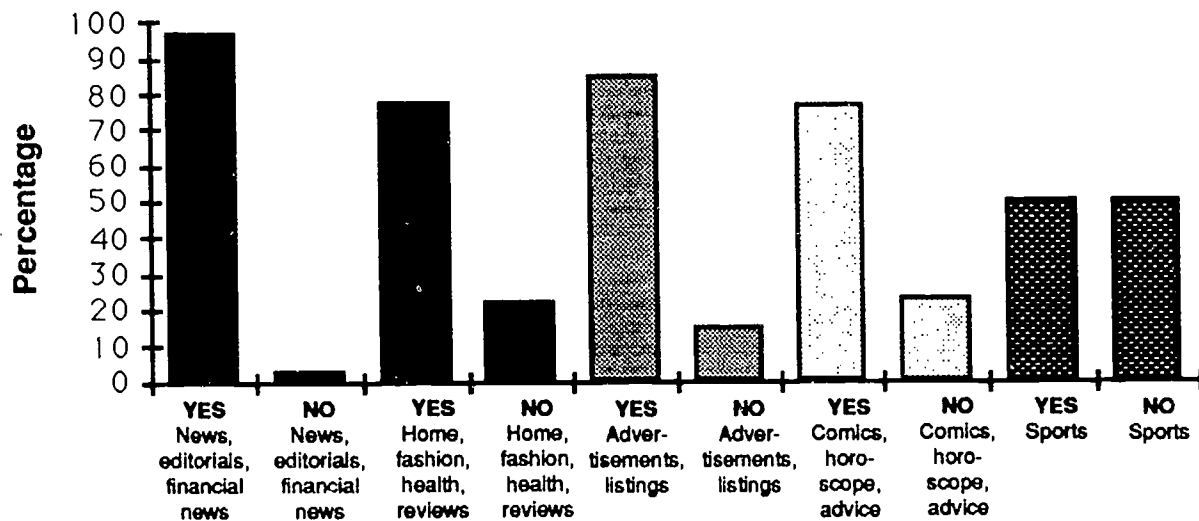


A majority of Iowans (91%) read the newspaper every day, a few times a week or once a week.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1993 (Table 4.6)

### Graph 6.3

## Adults Who Read the Newspaper Regularly, by Parts Read: Results for Iowa



### Parts of the Newspaper Generally Read

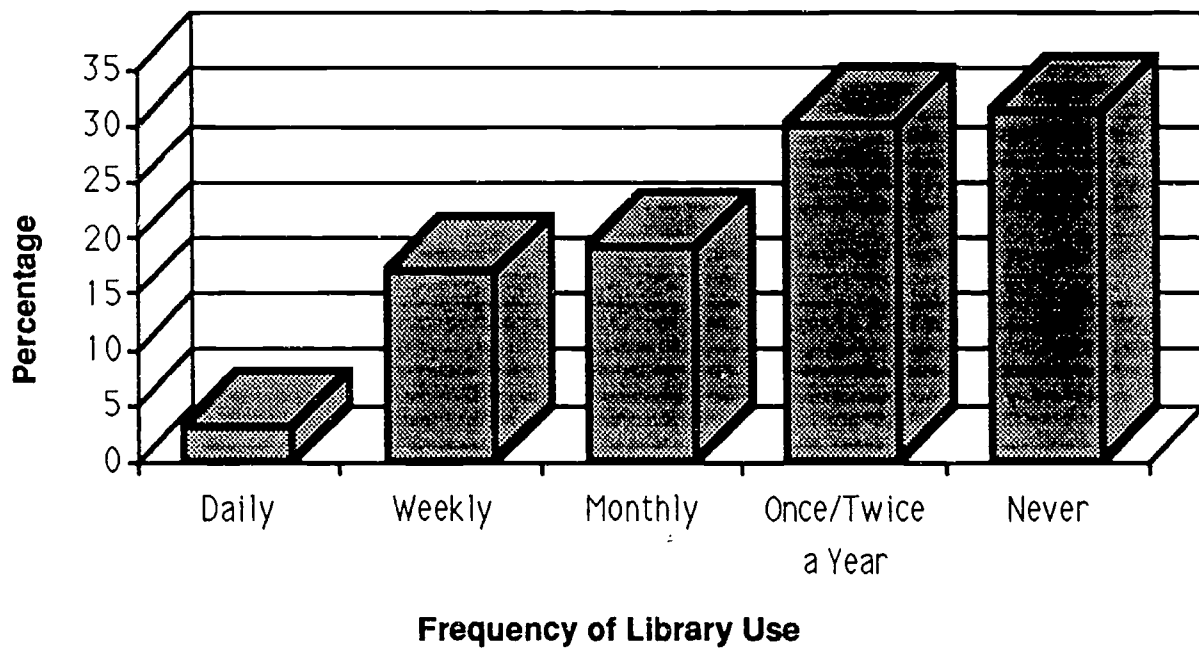
A majority of Iowans (97%) who read the newspaper frequently (at least once a week) read the news, editorials or financial sections of the newspapers.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 4.7)



## Graph 6.4

### Frequency of Library Use: Results for Iowa

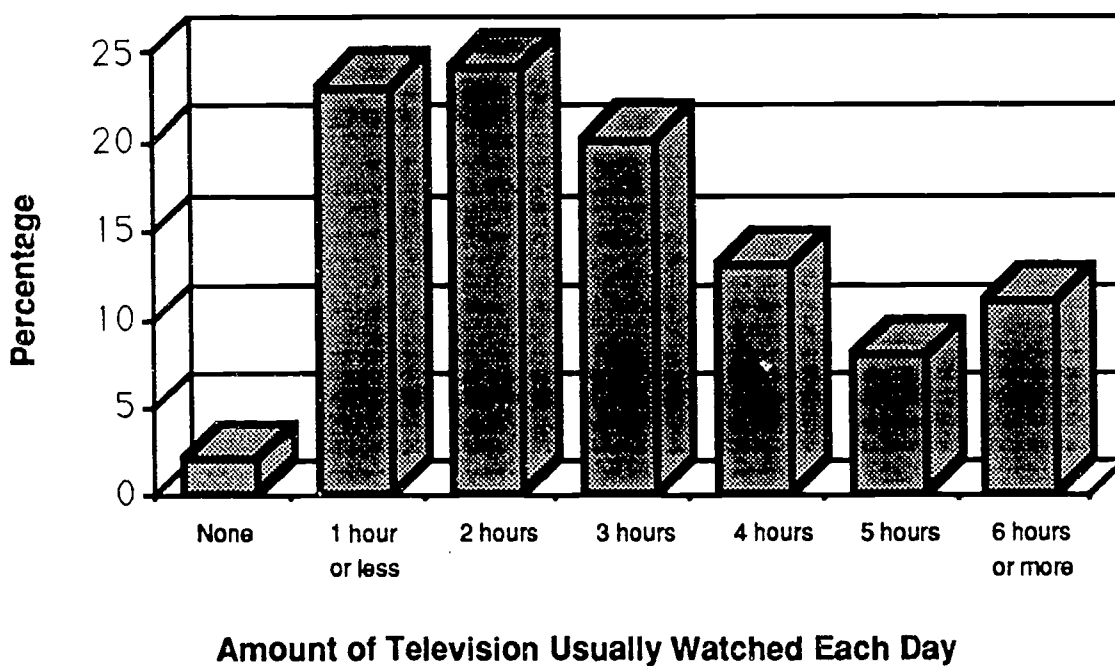


A majority of Iowans (69%) use the library on a daily, weekly, monthly, or once/twice a year.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1993 (Table 6.4)

## Graph 6.5

### Amount of Television Usually Watched Each Day: Results for Iowa

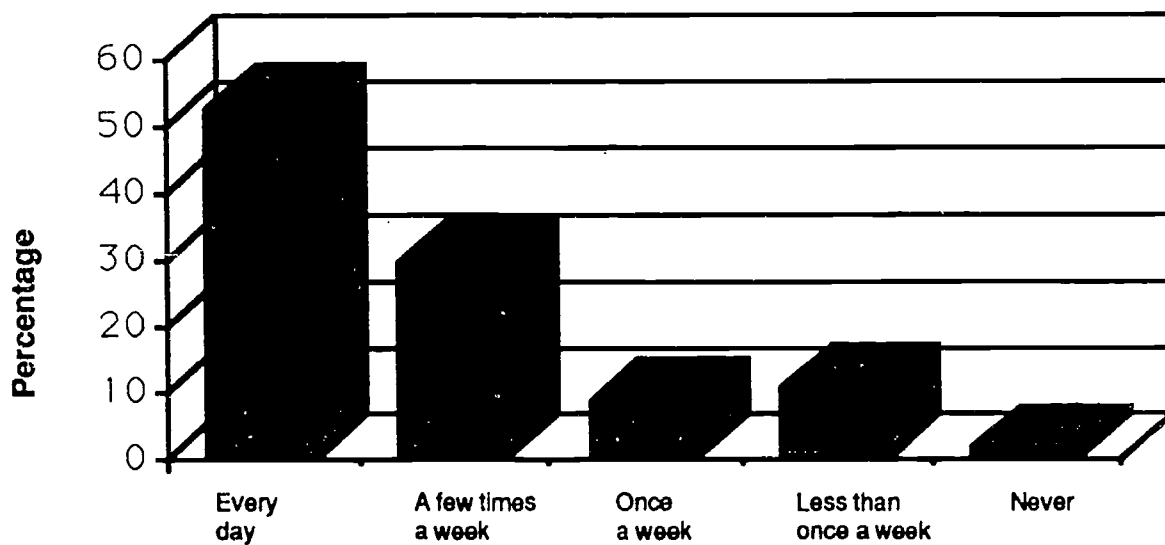


A majority of Iowans (98%) watch at least some television on a daily basis.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS); Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 4.10)

## Graph 6.6

### Frequency of Arithmetic or Mathematics Use: Results for Iowa



#### Frequency of Arithmetic or Mathematics Use

A majority of lowans (81%) use arithmetic or mathematics on a daily or weekly basis.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1993 (Table 4.15)

## 7.0 Socio-Demographic Trends

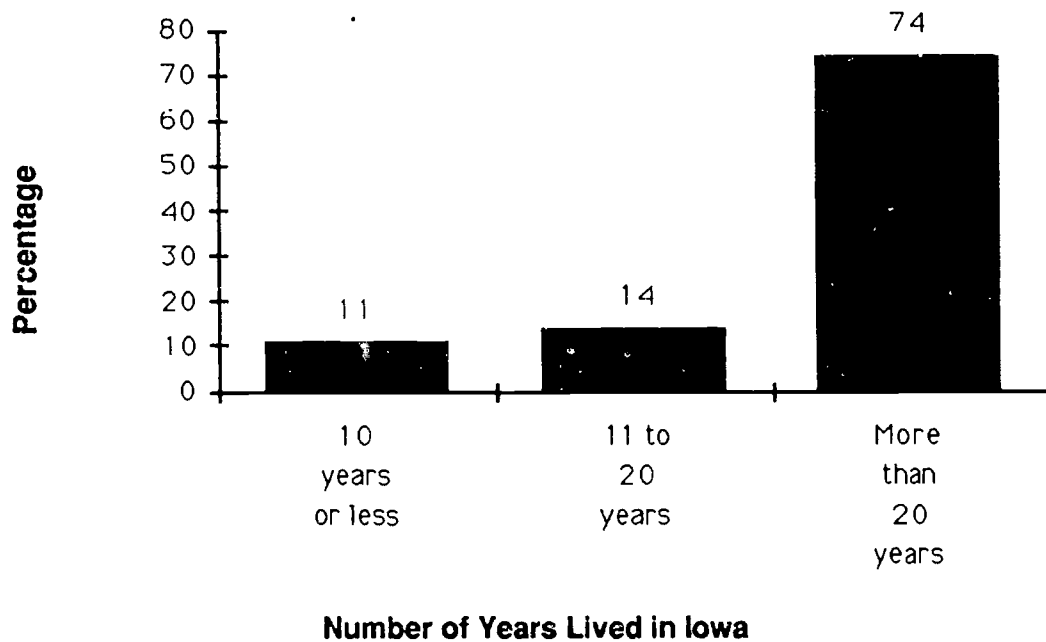
This section presents various socio-demographic trends such as:

- (1) number of years lived in Iowa,
- (2) employers' decision to locate in Iowa,
- (3) employers' decision to provide literacy education for employees.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Graph 7.1

### Number of Years Lived in Iowa by Year Cohorts

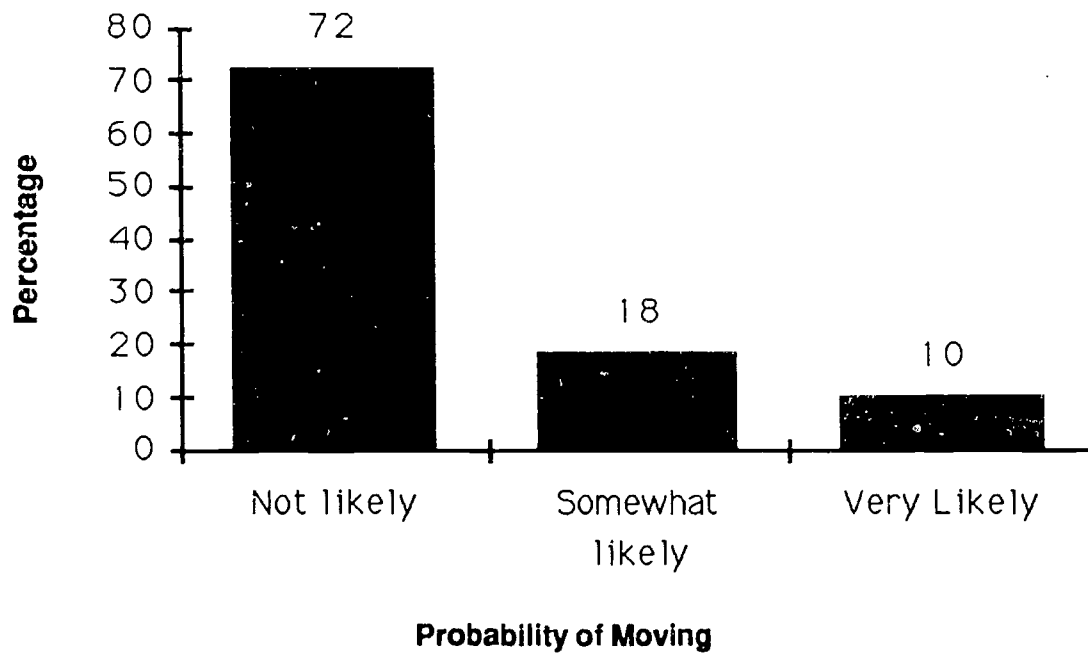


A majority of lowans (74%) have lived in Iowa more than 20 years.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.9)

## Graph 7.2

### Probability of Moving Out of Iowa in the Next Five Years

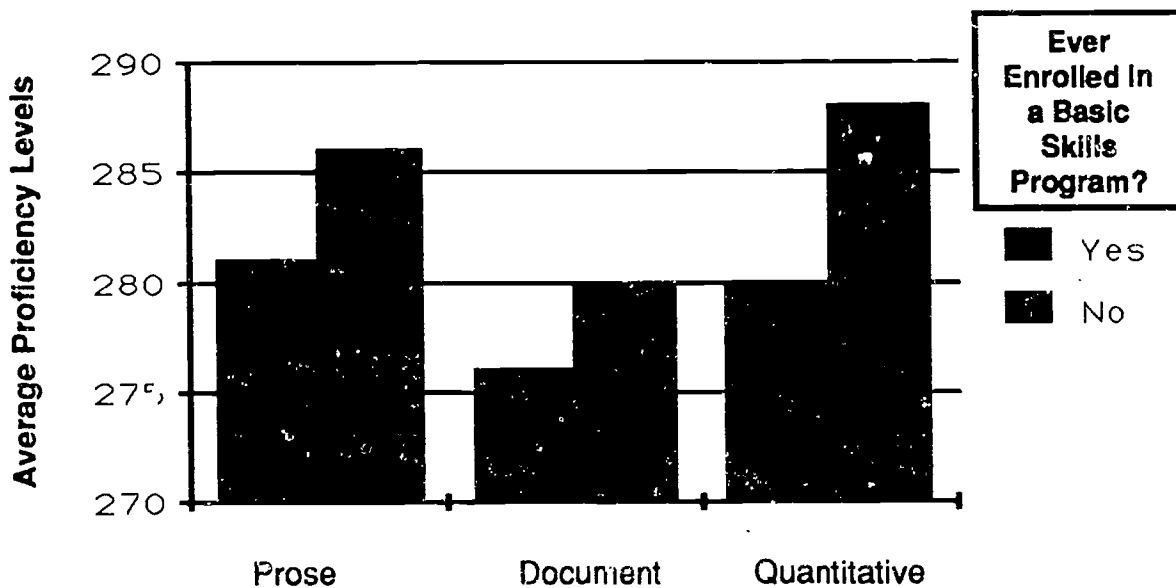


A majority of Iowans (72%) indicated they were not likely to move out of Iowa in the next five years.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 1.10)

**Graph 7.3**

**Average Literacy Proficiency Levels  
by Enrollment in a Basic Skills Program:  
Results for Iowa**

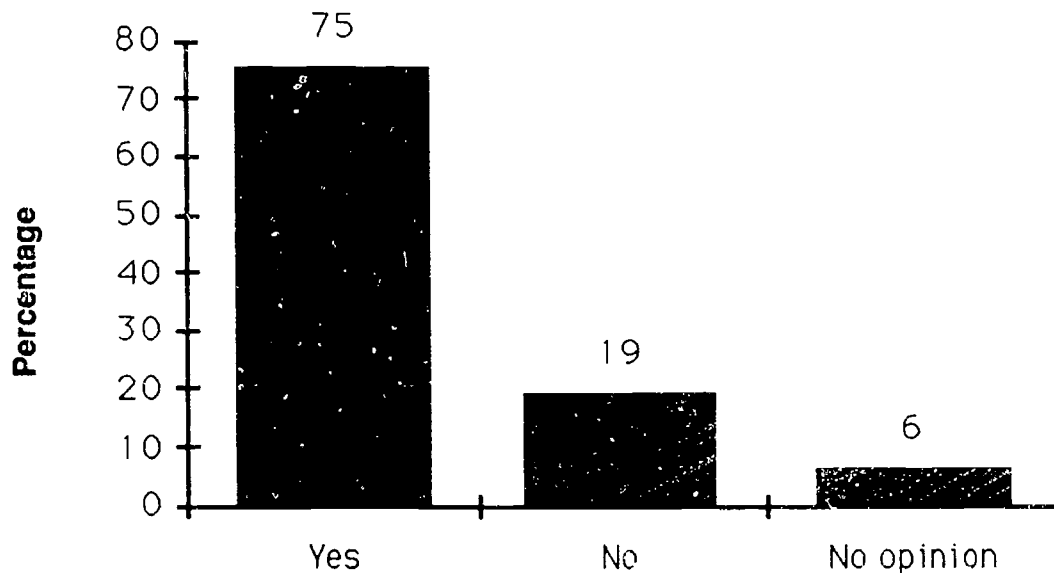


Those adults who indicated they have enrolled in a basic skills program have lower proficiency levels than those adults who indicated they have not enrolled in a basic skills program.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.8)

## Graph 7.4

### Percentage Opinion as to the Effect of a State's Literacy Rate on Employers' Location Decision: Results for Iowa



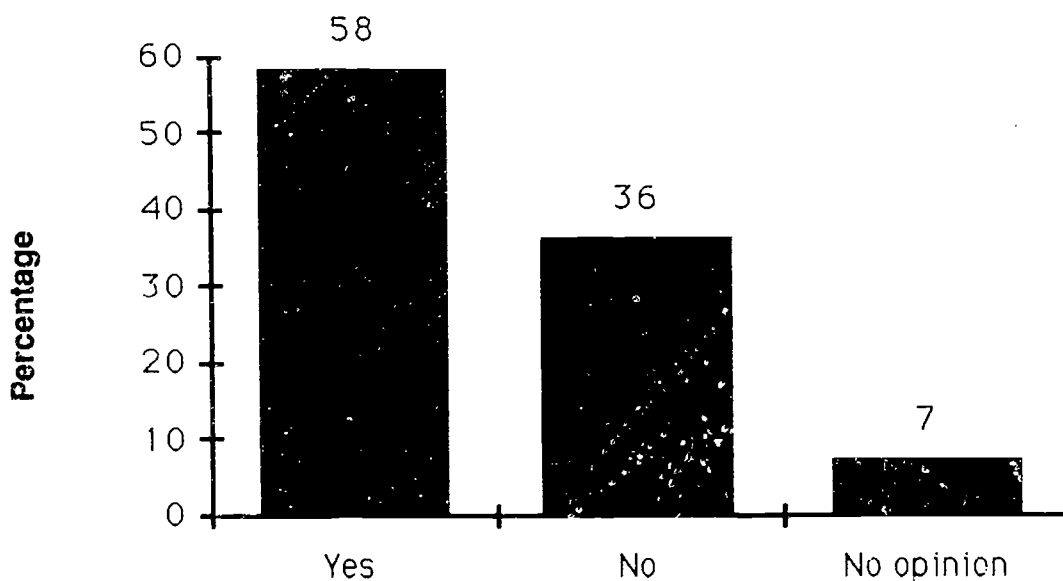
A majority of Iowans (75%) indicated that a state's literacy rate has an effect on an employer's decision to locate in Iowa.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.10)



## Graph 7.5

### Percentage Opinion as to Employers' Obligation to Provide Literacy Education for Employees: Results for Iowa



A majority of Iowans (58%) indicated that employers should provide literacy education opportunities for its employees.

Source: Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS): Iowa Department of Education, and the  
U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 1992 (Table 2.11)

**OBSERVATIONS**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Selected Observations Based on the Iowa State Adult Literacy (IASALS) Study

- The best single predictor of literacy proficiency rates is the level of education completed.
- GED graduates and high school graduates demonstrated comparable performance on the three literacy scales.
- The composition of the Level 1 population differs in some important respects from the state population as a whole. Half of the Iowa respondents in Level 1 were age 65 or older, and almost 40 percent had physical or mental conditions that kept them from participating fully in work, school, housework, or other activities.
- The average prose, document, and quantitative proficiencies of adults in Iowa were comparable to those of adults living in the Midwest region and were significantly (13 to 16 points) higher than those of adults nationwide. In all three populations--the state, region, and nation--average scores were either in the high end of the Level 2 range (226 to 275) or the low end of the Level 3 range (276 to 325).
- Older adults were more likely than middle-aged and younger adults to demonstrate limited literacy skills. On the prose scale, for example, average scores rise from 290 among Iowa's 16- to 18-year-olds to 303 among 35- 44-year-olds before declining across the older age groups (to 275 among 55- to 64-year-olds).
- The vast majority of Iowa residents were born in the United States or one of its territories. In the national population, native-born adults performed far better in the assessment, on average, than did individuals born outside the United States. Foreign-born adults who had lived in this country for more than a decade outperformed more recent immigrants.
- Approximately three-quarters of the adults in Iowa reported having lived in the state for more than 20 years. There are no significant differences in literacy skills, on average, among adults who had lived in Iowa for varying lengths of time. Nearly three-quarters of the state's adults said it was unlikely that they would move out of the state in the next five years, while 18 percent reported that it was somewhat likely and 10 percent said it was likely. Again, there are no significant differences in performance between adults who believed they would move out of the state and those who did not.
- Iowa residents who reported having physical or mental conditions that keep them from participating fully in work or other activities were more likely than adults in the population as a whole to perform in the lowest levels on each literacy scale and less likely to reach the highest levels.
- In the Iowa population, there were no significant differences in the average literacy scores of men and women. Nationwide, however, men displayed higher average document and quantitative proficiencies than women.
- Iowa residents with relatively few years of education demonstrated lower average proficiencies than those who completed high school or some postsecondary education. In fact, scores rise steadily across the entire range of education levels. The average prose proficiency of those who completed 9 to 12 years of schooling was 242, for example, compared to 283 for those who earned a high school diploma but went no further, and 333 for those who had completed a four-year degree.
- Roughly one-third of the school dropouts in Iowa reported having participated in a GED or high school equivalency program. On each literacy scale, the average scores of program participants were approximately 50 points higher than those of dropouts who had not taken part in a GED program. The vast majority of program participants in Iowa were between the ages of 25 and 54.

- Eleven percent of the adults in Iowa were enrolled in school or college at the time of the survey, and they had higher literacy proficiencies, on average, than adults who were not enrolled in an academic program. Thirty-eight percent of those enrolled in a program stated that their goal was a four-year college degree.
- Three-quarters of Iowa's survey participants agreed with the view that a state's literacy rate affects an out-of-state employer's decision to establish a location there. Their scores were, on average, higher than those of adults who disagreed. Fifty-eight percent of Iowa's adults believed that employers are obligated to provide literacy education to employees who need it. They performed similarly to adults who did not share this view.
- Employed adults were less likely than adults who were unemployed or out of the labor force to perform in the lowest levels on each literacy scale and more likely to attain the highest levels. Across the three scales, 25 to 33 percent of the employed adults in Iowa performed in Levels 1 and 2, compared with 45 percent of the unemployed adults and roughly two-thirds of respondents who were out of the labor force. Conversely, employed adults were more likely than unemployed adults and those not in the labor force to attain Levels 4 and 5.
- Iowa residents who reported being in professional, technical, or managerial positions in their current or most recent jobs had higher average literacy scores than those in other types of occupations. On the prose scale, for example, they had an average proficiency score of 330, compared with scores of 309 for those in sales or clerical positions, 286 for those in craft or service occupations, and 276 for those in labor, assembly, fishing, or farming positions.
- On each literacy scale, adults who performed in the higher levels had worked more weeks in the past year, on average, than individuals in the lower levels. Among Iowa residents, those in the three highest literacy levels reported working an average of 37 to 45 weeks in the past year, compared with only 13 to 14 weeks for individuals performing in Level 1, and 27 to 31 weeks for those in Level 2.
- Across the scales, Iowa adults with proficiencies in Levels 1 and 2 reported median weekly earnings of \$228 to \$261. In contrast, those in Level 4 earned about \$391 to \$419, while those in Level 5 earned between \$504 and \$550 each week. Similarly, the median annual household income reported by adults in the highest proficiency levels were far higher than that of adults in the lowest levels.
- Approximately half the Iowa residents who were classified as either poor or near poor demonstrated skills in the two lowest levels on each literacy scale; in contrast, 25 to 31 percent of those designated not poor performed in these levels. As a result, the average literacy scores of poor and near poor adults are considerably lower than the scores of adults who were not in poverty.
- Among Iowa residents, voting practices appear to be related to literacy proficiency. On all three scales, the average literacy proficiencies of state residents who said they had voted in a recent election are higher than those of nonvoters.
- Virtually all survey respondents in Iowa (98 to 99 percent) said they understand, speak, and read English well or very well; a slightly smaller proportion described themselves as writing (96 percent) well or very well. In each dimension of literacy, the average proficiencies of adults who said they do not write English well are approximately 60 points lower than those of individuals who said they write well or very well.
- Ninety-seven percent of the survey respondents in Iowa reported getting some or a lot of information about current events, public affairs, or government from nonprint media -- that is, from television or radio. A smaller percentage (86 percent) said they get much of their information from print media, such as newspapers or magazines. Those who get some or a lot of information from print media earned higher average scores in the assessment than those who do not.

- Slightly more than half (56 percent) of the adults in the state said they read a newspaper every day, while another 35 percent said they do so at least once a week. Four percent reported never reading a newspaper. There are no significant differences in literacy proficiency between newspaper readers and nonreaders in Iowa.
- Virtually all (98 percent) of the adults in Iowa reported watching some television every day, although 23 percent said they spend no more than an hour on this activity. Approximately one-third of the state's residents reported watching four or more hours of television each day. Individuals who watch the most television demonstrated lower average proficiencies than individuals who watch relatively little television.
- There are very large differences in prose proficiency between Iowa residents who read and write prose frequently, either for their personal use or for their jobs, and those who do not. Similarly, the average document proficiencies of individuals who use documents at least a few times a week are far higher than the scores of individuals who do not use these materials often. Finally, adults who said they frequently use mathematics tend to display better quantitative skills than those who rarely or never do so.

Source: Jenkins & I. Kirsch (January 1994). *Adult Literacy in Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey*. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service (ETS).