

Literacy is “an individual’s ability to read, write, speak English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family..., and in society” (Workforce Investment Act of 1998).

There are no direct measures of adult literacy in Cuyahoga County. Instead, this report uses estimates based on a statistical model derived from the National Survey of Adult Literacy.<sup>1</sup>

Adult literacy levels range from Level 1 (the most basic) to Level 5 (the most complex). People with Level 1 literacy are at a severe disadvantage in the sense that they are likely to be excluded from all but minimum-wage work, although most can read to a minimal extent. Individuals with Level 2 literacy have

somewhat higher skills, but are also at a disadvantage in terms of being able to meet the demands of 21st century life. Level 3 literacy is the minimum standard necessary according to the National Educational Goals Panel. The skills associated with Level 3 are required for most post-secondary education and training programs. Levels 4 and 5 are necessary for more advanced work.

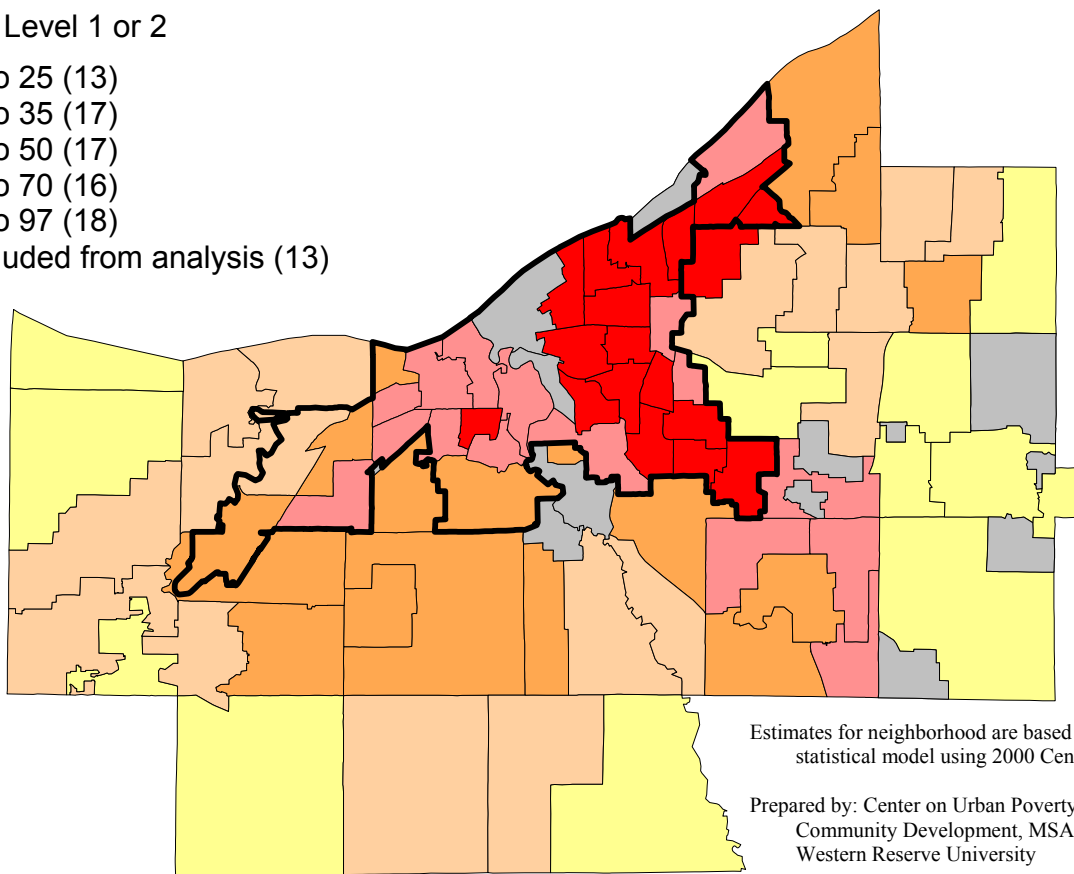
In Cleveland, 29 % of the population is estimated to be at Level 1 and 37% at Level 2. For Cuyahoga County as a whole, the percentages are 14 % and 30% at Levels 1 and 2 respectively. There were no statistically significant differences in these estimates compared to 2000. The population with less than Level 3 literacy tends to be geographically concentrated according to the map below.

<sup>1</sup>For more information on estimates see: <http://literacycooperative.org/documents/literacyupdate2009.pdf>

## Estimates for the Percent at Level 1 or Level 2 Literacy

Percent at Level 1 or 2

- 8 to 25 (13)
- 26 to 35 (17)
- 36 to 50 (17)
- 51 to 70 (16)
- 71 to 97 (18)
- Excluded from analysis (13)



# Adult Literacy

Estimated literacy levels<sup>1</sup>, Population 16 and over

	Cuyahoga County			
	2000	2000 MOE <sup>2</sup>	2005-2007	2005-2007 MOE <sup>2</sup>
Percent at Level 1 Literacy	14.7	+/-1.6%	13.5	+/-1.6%
Percent at Level 1 or Level 2 Literacy	46.7	+/-2.2%	43.8	+/-2.2%

	Cleveland			
	2000	2000 MOE <sup>2</sup>	2005-2007	2005-2007 MOE <sup>2</sup>
Percent at Level 1 Literacy	31.0	+/-3.0%	28.9	+/-3.1%
Percent at Level 1 or Level 2 Literacy	69.0	+/-3.2%	65.5	+/-3.0%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3 and 2005-2007 American Community Survey

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<sup>1</sup>The literacy estimates are based on a statistical model. 2005-2007 ACS data are the most recent data that contain all the model predictors to estimate literacy proficiency.

<sup>2</sup>Margins of error (MOE) are based on a 95% confidence level.