

Humanities in the United States: A Report Card

(Excerpted from "Humanities Indicators" from the American Academy of Arts & Sciences;

See: https://www.amacad.org/binaries/hum_report_card.pdf)

The humanities—including the study of languages, literature, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, comparative religion, and ethics—are disciplines of memory and imagination, telling us where we have been and helping us envision where we are going. They provide the knowledge, skills, and understanding we need to thrive in a twenty-first-century democracy. They equip us for leadership in an interconnected world and help foster a society that is innovative, competitive, and strong.

How are they faring? This report card provides a snapshot of where the humanities are today—their value to American society, their continuing vitality, and at the same time, the many challenges they currently face.

THE VALUE OF THE HUMANITIES



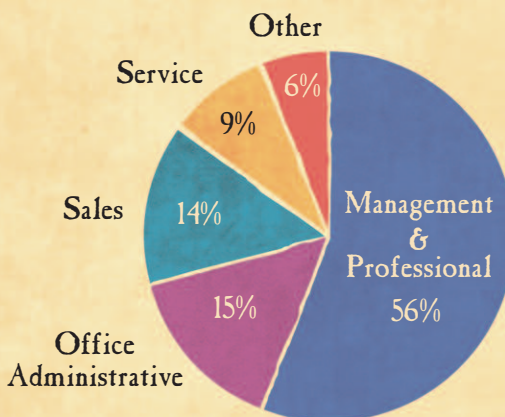
Three out of four employers want new hires with precisely the sorts of skills that the humanities teach: critical thinking, complex problem-solving, as well as written and oral communication.

Source: It Takes More Than a Major (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2013)

84%



Percentage of humanities majors who, a year after college graduation, are satisfied with their choice of major.



Humanities graduates are more widely distributed throughout different economic sectors than degree holders in most other fields.

SIGNS OF HEALTH



The percentage of high school students taking world history courses increased by

43%

over the past 20 years.



Between 2000 and 2009, humanities majors scored

9%

higher on the Graduate Management Admission Test than business majors.



The number of adults and children participating in programs sponsored by public libraries increased

12%

from 2006 to 2010.

CHALLENGES

- 1 Shanghai, China
- 2 Republic of Korea
- 3 Finland
- 4 Hong Kong, China
- 5 Singapore
- 6 Canada
- 7 New Zealand
- 8 Japan
- 9 Australia
- 10 United States**
- 11 Portugal
- 12 Macao, China
- 13 Italy
- 14 Latvia
- 15 Slovenia
- 16 Greece
- 17 Spain
- 18 Czech Republic
- 19 Slovak Republic
- 20 Croatia

On a recent international assessment, the United States ranked 10th in high school students' reading proficiency.

Under 30%

Percentage of 12th grade students proficient in writing, history, and civics. Also the percentage of public high school students who took history courses with a teacher certified in the subject area and with a degree in the field.

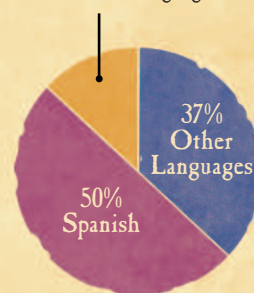
8%

Decline in the proportion of young children read to regularly by a family member.

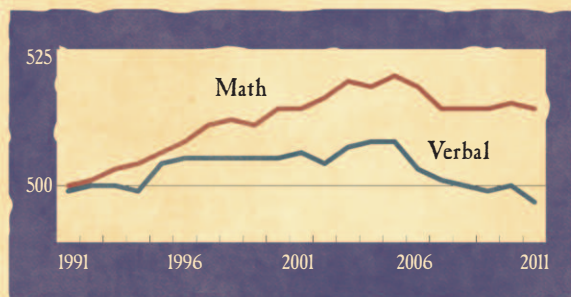


13%

"Critical Need" Languages



Only a tiny fraction of college students learn languages critically needed for international security and global competitiveness.



The gap between average math and verbal scores on the SAT is growing.

MORE THAN DATA POINTS:

Personal Testimonials on the Impact of the LEH's Programs and Initiatives

PRIME TIME Family Reading Time®

When it comes to the education of her grandchildren, Abbie and Gabriel, Ms. Andrea Bodiford of West Baton Rouge Parish is a force to be reckoned with. "I stay on their case about homework, school, and education" she states. Abbie, now ten years old, is the youngest; her older brother Gabriel is fourteen. Both are doing well in school; their futures look bright. However, this positive scenario may not have come to pass, had it not been for the dedication of their grandmother and the pivotal role that the LEH's PRIME TIME Family Reading Time program had on their family. As Andrea recently related:

"Eight years ago, as Gabriel entered first grade at Chamberlain Elementary School, his reading skills were not up to par...something about an insufficient number of words per minute on a DIBELS test. I understood that he needed additional assistance, and made inquiries at the local school. So we were indeed fortunate that the school was hosting a PRIME TIME program afterschool. PRIME TIME worked for Gabriel by bringing him out of his shell. At first, he was more of an interested listener than an active reader. The combination of outstanding storytelling from Mr. Oneal Issac and the questioning techniques of the scholar gradually pulled Gabriel into reading.

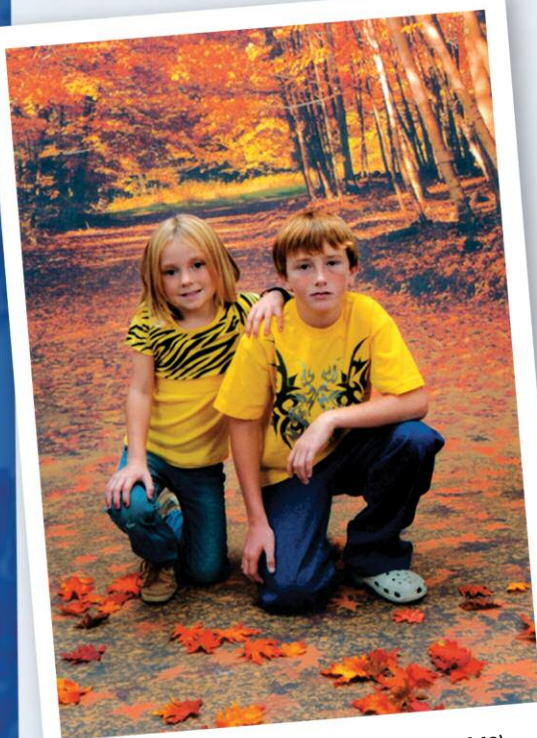
What PRIME TIME does so well is to help children grasp the

concept of understanding what is being read – storytelling and discussion opened his eyes to the value and fun of reading. The stories...like *Stellaluna* [by Janell Cannon] really hit home. In fact, Gabriel liked *Stellaluna* so well that I had to buy him a copy of his own – the first book in what would become a pretty big personal library. Now finishing the eighth grade, Gabriel reads at an advanced level. I was never more proud then when he earned a prize for his advanced reading scores on the fourth grade LEAP test. What a turnaround!

As for my granddaughter Abbie, she has also benefitted from more recent PRIME TIME programs she and I have attended at Chamberlain. In addition to reading better, what I have noticed with her is an improvement in her homework. She is better at writing about what she has read – again, because of how PRIME TIME helped her understand what is being read through storytelling, questioning, and taking books home to read with me. She is now finishing fourth grade and this very week taking her LEAP test. My fingers are crossed that she will follow the example of her older brother, in terms of success in school. I deeply appreciate what the PRIME TIME program has done for our family."



Ms. Andrea Bodiford



Abbie and Gabriel Bodiford (ages 8 and 12)