

# The Humanities in Our Lives



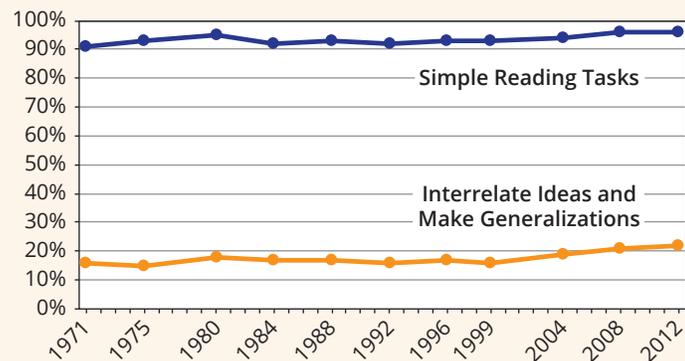
## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL READERS

Reading is highly correlated with academic achievement, so much so that students who struggle to read in elementary school face tremendous barriers later in their education. Those who fail to develop proficiency in reading by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers.

### KEY FACTS

- In national studies of students' reading ability, nine-year-old readers improved from 1971 to 2012.
- 96% of these young readers have mastered the basic tasks of reading simple, discrete statements, while 22% can connect ideas and draw general conclusions from their reading.

Share of 9-Year Olds at or above Proficient



## THE VALUE OF READING

Recent research demonstrates that children who develop strong reading skills early in life tend to have greater success at every level of education. Studies show that independent reading can be especially beneficial. When kids choose their own books, their engagement increases. Children who read on their own expand their vocabularies, acquire key knowledge, and improve their overall reading ability. They even strengthen skills in areas that might seem farther afield, such as math.

## INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

In Washington, D.C., the nonprofit group **Everybody Wins** works to bolster elementary school readers with a creative program that brings adults and children together in a positive and supportive setting.

Volunteers meet weekly with students for “power lunches”—an hour of reading together at midday. Students come from 12 local public schools, and mentors come from the U.S. Congress, law firms, industry, non-profits, and many other walks of life.

*“When I read, I learn and grow—you know, like Jack and the Beanstalk kind of growing, and that’s really big!”*

*—Noah, first grader*

Everybody Wins also hosts StoryTime in schools and at the Library of Congress to introduce students to the authors and illustrators behind their favorite books, and help reinforce those connections.

The Humanities in Our Lives series (#HumInOurLives) highlights the many and diverse forms of humanities activities in the nation, and key facts about the health of the field.

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For more on the broad trends that mark American engagement with various forms of the humanities, visit [humanitiesindicators.org](http://humanitiesindicators.org) or email [humanitiesindicators@amacad.org](mailto:humanitiesindicators@amacad.org).

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