

# The Cost of Illiteracy

Nearly 800 million people lack basic reading and writing skills.<sup>1</sup> The cost of illiteracy doesn't just impact these individuals—it also impacts their families and the societies in which they live.

## Global Cost of Illiteracy: \$1.19 Trillion

Social and Economic Terms: health, crime, welfare, lost earnings, lost business productivity and other societal problems.<sup>2</sup>

U.S.	China	India	Brazil	Australia
\$300.8 billion	\$135.6 billion	\$53.6 billion	\$27.4 billion	\$18.4 billion

## Personal Cost of Illiteracy:

People with poor literacy skills are more than **2x** as likely to be unemployed.<sup>3</sup>

Illiterate workers earn **30–42% less** than their literate counterparts.<sup>4</sup>

**43%** of Americans with low literacy skills live in poverty.<sup>5</sup>

Individuals with **lower proficiency in literacy** are more likely than those with better literacy skills to report **poor health**.<sup>6</sup>

**60–80%** of prisoners in various nations read and write below basic levels.<sup>7</sup>

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