

# Schooling and Literacy

by Sophia Tutorial



## WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial will cover the topics of schooling and literacy, through the definition and discussion of:

1. Forms of Schooling
2. Functional Literacy

## 1. FORMS OF SCHOOLING

There are several educational institutions in American society that exist in addition to conventional public schooling: parochial schooling, preparatory schooling, and home schooling.

- **Parochial Schooling:** Parochial schooling is schooling that provides religious instruction in addition to conventional education--e.g., math, reading, writing, etc. This might include a type of Catholic school, for example, or a different kind of religious parochial schooling. Parochial schooling is essentially meant to capture religious instruction paired with more conventional education.
- **Preparatory Schooling:** Prep schools, or preparatory schooling, is private schooling designed to prepare high school students between the ages of 14 and 18 for college. A prep school is a special private school that students will attend to engage in intensive college prep, often with the goal of gaining admittance to highly selective universities.

➦ **EXAMPLE** The old East Coast prep school model, designed to funnel the prestigious children of wealthy families into Yale, Princeton, Harvard, etc., provided the blueprint of the current prep school model, which has expanded beyond its origins.

- **Home Schooling:** Home schooling is schooling done in the home by family members or authorized instructors. Families choose to do this for various reasons, yet ideally, they are still required to meet the standards of the state. However, it is a gray area with respect to meeting standards, because there's little oversight with respect to administering tests and other benchmarks--it's all based on the honor system.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### Parochial Schooling

Schooling that provides religious instruction alongside regular academic coursework.

### Preparatory School Model

A form of private education designed to prepare students ages 14-18 for higher education.

### Home Schooling

A growing trend whereby students receive their formal schooling at home.

## 2. FUNCTIONAL LITERACY

**Functional literacy** is the knowledge of basic reading and writing skills such that a person can function successfully in life as an adult. Perhaps you passed the test, but can you apply the information? Can you read at a high enough level to, for example, read the newspaper and be informed as a citizen? Can you read and write at such a level that you are a functional adult?

Rates of literacy in the United States are often reported at near 100%, but functional literacy is a bit lower, because it's a slightly different scope of measurement. The rate of functional literacy in the United States is commonly 65% to 80%. Therefore, if functional literacy is reading and writing well enough for everyday life, it begets the question of how society defines 'everyday life' which is why you see this range from 65% to 80%.



### TERM TO KNOW

#### Functional Literacy

The knowledge of basic reading and writing so that a person can function in everyday life.



### SUMMARY

Today you learned about various institutions of education, or **forms of schooling**, that are distinct from conventional public school or conventional private school education. You also learned about **functional literacy**, which is the knowledge of basic reading and writing skills needed in order for a person to function successfully in life as an adult.

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia author Zach Lamb.



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