

Literacy Definitions

- **Literacy:** Literacy is the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

- **There are three types of literacy:**

Prose literacy - The knowledge and skills needed to perform prose tasks, (i.e., to search, comprehend and use continuous texts). Examples include editorials, news stories, brochures and instructional materials.

Document literacy - The knowledge and skills needed to perform document tasks, (i.e., to search, comprehend and use non-continuous texts in various formats). Examples include job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables and drug or food labels.

Quantitative literacy - The knowledge and skills required to perform quantitative tasks, (i.e., to identify and perform computations, either alone or sequentially, using numbers embedded in printed materials). Examples include balancing a checkbook, figuring out a tip, completing an order form or determining the amount.

National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL)

- **Levels of Literacy:**

Below Basic indicates no more than the most simple and concrete literacy skills.

Basic indicates skills necessary to perform simple and everyday literacy activities.

Intermediate indicates skills necessary to perform moderately challenging literacy activities.

Proficient indicates skills necessary to perform more complex and challenging literacy activities.