



ASSIGNMENT :

Jan 20-  
Apr 29

# \_ LIBRARY FOR THE ILLITERATE

*Architecture and Illiteracy.*  
*Architecturaliteracy -*

*The Library for the Illiterate probes the fusion between [the current state of] evolution and literacy, to suggest a new role for architecture. The Library for the illiterate serves to reassess our collective, communicative, ecological and technological illiteracy by placing a priority on learning from literacy and transforming buildings and communities with architecture as a visual, experiential and virtual stimuli.*

**FOCUS  
and GOAL**

The Library for the Illiterate is a space for books without words, where Architecture becomes the content without the story being about icons.  
> The plot for each member of this section is the investigation and research of 1 out of the following types of illiteracy:

- + Aspirational Illiteracy
- + Cultural Illiteracy
- + Digital Illiteracy
- + Emotional Illiteracy
- + Environmental Illiteracy
- + Financial Illiteracy
- + Health Illiteracy
- + Moral Illiteracy
- + Sexual Illiteracy
- + Spatial Illiteracy
- + Spiritual Illiteracy
- + Technological Illiteracy

Libraries are generally for the literate—they focus on improving the literacy of users, rather than providing information in ways that are appropriate to users with low literacy.<sup>1</sup>

**CONTEXT**

Back in the fifteenth century, Leonardo da Vinci made the following remark about visual storytelling:

And you who wish to represent by words the form of man and all the aspects of his membrification, relinquish that idea. For the more minutely you describe the more you will confine the mind of the reader, and the more you will keep him from the knowledge of the thing described. And so it is necessary to draw and to describe.<sup>2</sup>

Functional illiteracy is reading and writing skills that are inadequate “to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level.”<sup>3</sup>

**il·lit·er·a·cy**  
**i(I)ˈlɪdərəsē/**

*noun*

**noun: illiteracy; plural noun: illiteracies**

1. the inability to read or write.  
“the ineffective educational system meant that illiteracy was widespread”

+ lack of knowledge in a particular subject; ignorance.  
“his economic illiteracy”

**Objective:**

- > Investigate and research a type of illiteracy as a means to develop an architectural language of anti-illiteracy.

<sup>1</sup> Deo, S. and D. M. Nichols and S. J. Cunningham and I. H. Witten and M. F. Trujillo, “Digital Library Access For Illiterate Users.” In Proceedings of 2004 International Research Conference on Innovations in Information Technology, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Popova, Maria. “A Brief History of Children’s Picture Books and the Art of Visual Storytelling.” The Atlantic. February 24, 2012. Accessed January 7, 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2012/02/a-brief-history-of-childrens-picture-books-and-the-art-of-visual-storytelling/253570/>.

<sup>3</sup> Schlechty, Phillip C. Shaking up the Schoolhouse: How to Support and Sustain Educational Innovation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.



**CONTEXT** Functional illiteracy is contrasted with illiteracy in the strict sense, meaning  
**cont.** the inability to read or write simple sentences in any language.  
> Foreigners who cannot read and write in the native language of the place  
where they live may also be considered functionally illiterate.

In developed countries, the level of functional literacy of an individual is proportional to income level and inversely proportional to the risk of committing crime. For example, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics in the United States:

- + Over 60% of adults in the US prison system read at or below the fourth grade level
- + 85% of US juvenile inmates are functionally illiterate
- + 43% of adults at the lowest level of literacy lived below the poverty line, as opposed to 4% of those with the highest levels of literacy.<sup>4</sup>
- + Two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the fourth grade will end up in jail or on welfare.
- + Three out of four individuals who receive food stamps read on the two lowest levels of literacy.
- + 16-to-19-year-old girls at the poverty line and below with below-average reading skills are 6 times more likely to have out-of-wedlock children than their more literate counterparts.<sup>5</sup>



A *The Triumph of Illusion and Spectacle: the Rise of Illiteracy in America*

Excerpt Victor Marie Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris*:

Our fair readers must forgive us if we halt a moment here and endeavour to unearth the idea hidden under the Archdeacon's enigmatical words:

"This will destroy That. The Book will destroy the Edifice."

To our mind, this thought has two aspects. In the first place it was a view pertaining to the priest—it was the terror of the ecclesiastic before a new force—printing. It was the servant of the dim sanctuary scared and dazzled by the light that streamed from Gutenberg's press. It was the pulpit and the manuscript, the spoken and the written word quailing before the printed word—something of the stupefaction of the sparrow at beholding the Heavenly Host spread their six million wings. It was the cry of the prophet who already hears the far-off roar and tumult of emancipated humanity; who, gazing into the future, sees intelligence sapping the foundations of faith, opinion dethroning belief, the world shaking off the yoke of Rome; the prognostication of the philosopher who sees human thought volatilized by the press, evaporating out to the theocratic receiver; the terror of the besieged soldier gazing at the steel battering-ram and saying to himself, "The citadel must fall." It signified that one great power was to supplant another great power. It meant, The Printing-Press will destroy the Church.



B *Lascaux Cave Paintings, estimated 17,300 years old*

<sup>4</sup> "The Health Literacy of America's Adults" (PDF). United States Department of Education. 2006. Retrieved 23 February 2010.

<sup>5</sup> "Literacy Statistics". BegintoRead.com.



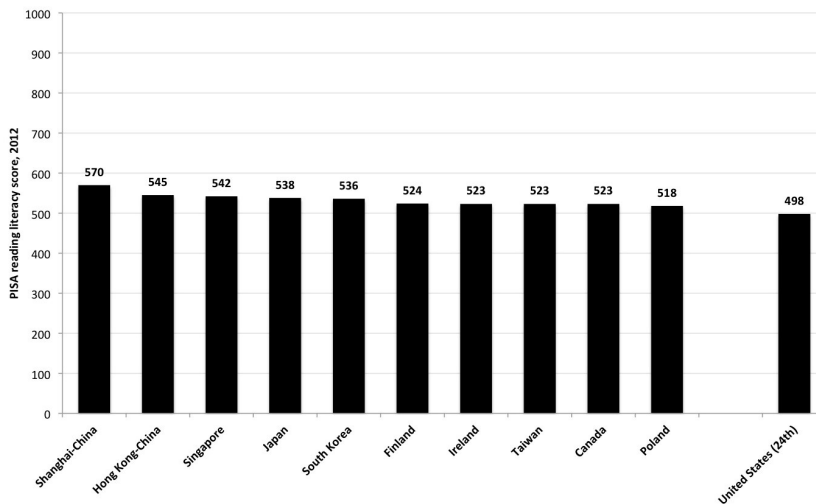
**CONTEXT**  
**cont.**



But underlying this thought—the first and no doubt the less complex of the two—there was, in our opinion, a second, a more modern—a corollary to the former idea, less on the surface and more likely to be contested; a view fully as philosophic, but pertaining no longer exclusively to the priest, but to the scholar and the artist likewise. It was a premonition that human thought, in changing its outward form, was also about to change its outward mode of expression; that the dominant idea of each generation would, in future, be embodied in a new material, a new fashion; that the book of stone, so solid and so enduring, was to give way to the book of paper, more solid and more enduring still. In this respect the vague formula of the Archdeacon had a second meaning—that one Art would dethrone another Art: Printing will destroy Architecture.<sup>6</sup>

Though pictorial storytelling dates back to the earliest cave wall paintings, the true picturebook harks back to a mere 130 years ago, when artist and illustrator Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886) first began to elevate the image into a storytelling vehicle rather than mere decoration for text.

**Top Ten Countries by High School Literacy, 2012**  
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[http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights\\_5a.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights_5a.asp)

<sup>6</sup> Hugo, Victor Marie. Notre Dame de Paris. Vol. XII. Harvard Classics Shelf of Fiction. New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1917.



**FIELD TRIP**

Illuminated manuscript collection:

> **Pierpont Morgan Library**  
225 Madison Ave  
New York, NY 10016, US

The Morgan Crusader Bible was originally a Picture Bible without text created for and likely commissioned by Louis IX, the crusader king of France (1226-1270). It presented Old Testament history with an emphasis on holy war and kingship. Sometime after the death of Louis IX, unknown scribes added Latin texts to the margins of the manuscript. There are also more modern inscriptions added including Persian and Judeo-Persian.

Six painters participated in the illumination of the Gothic Crusader Bible. Their miniatures are not only different in style but also in terms of colouring. A very clear difference is discernible in the rich use of gold. The original binding was lost during the centuries. However, the Bodleian Library in Oxford still possesses a manuscript which King Louis IX commissioned around the same time as the Crusader Bible and which still is in its original Gothic de luxe leather binding. That binding was used as a model for this fine art facsimile edition.<sup>7</sup>



**D** *The Crusader Bible, The picture book, which was likely made in Paris about 1250, has long been associated with the court of Louis IX, the pious crusader king of France and builder of the Sainte-Chapelle.*

*Pierpont Morgan Library. Manuscript. M.638.  
[facsimile] Die Kreuzritterbibel = The Morgan Crusader Bible = La Bible des croisades. Luzern : Faksimile Verlag ; New York : Pierpont Morgan Library, c1998-c1999.*

*BS 715.5 C7 1998 Special Collections Vault*

<sup>7</sup> "13th Century: The Morgan Crusader Bible." Facsimiles of Illuminated Manuscripts in Special Collections. Accessed January 7, 2016. [http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/illuman/13\\_03.html](http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/illuman/13_03.html).



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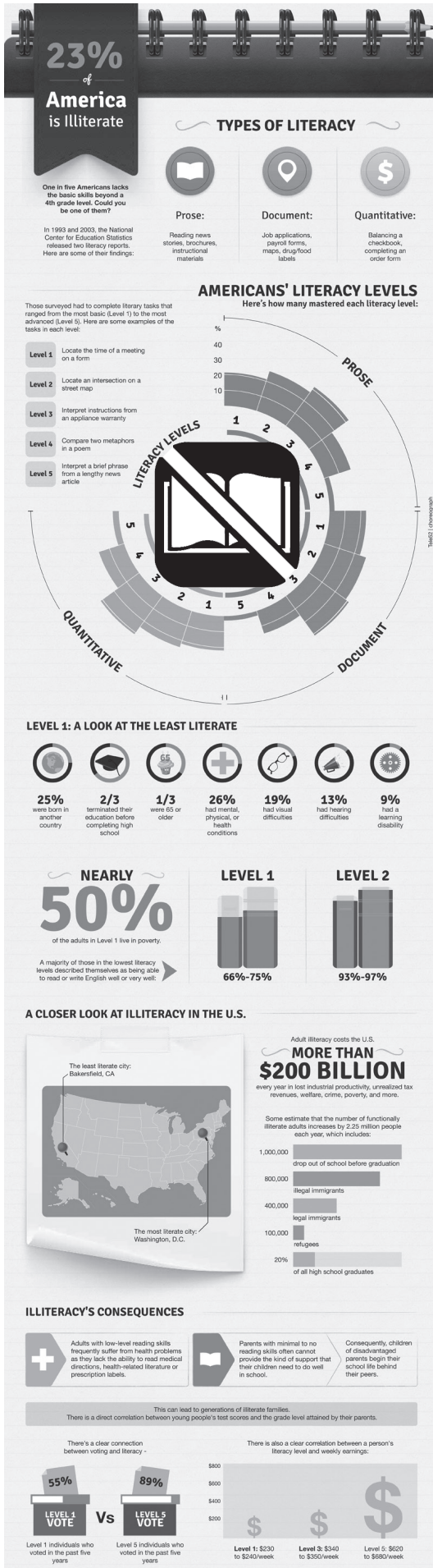


..... 1 IN 7 U.S. ADULTS ARE .....  
**functionally illiterate**

E @ left, Image from Annie Holmquist. "Illiteracy Is Costing America Billions." *Intellectual Takeout*. August 26, 2015. <http://www.intellectualtakeout.org/blog/illiteracy-costing-america-billions>.



Core II Critic : Christoph a. Kumpusch



F @ left, *One in Five Americans Is Illiterate: Surprising Infographic* from: <http://www.technapex.com/2013/02/one-in-five-americans-is-illiterate-surprising-infographic/>