

Reading

According to a 2022 Department of Education assessment, 67 percent of American fourth graders are not proficient readers.

"The problem is even worse when you look beyond the average and focus on specific groups of children," [Emily] Hanford [creator of the "Sold a Story" podcast] says.

"The most alarming statistic: 82 percent of Black fourth graders are not proficient readers." Some of these children will never get the help they need. ProPublica recently reported that one fifth of adults in the United States struggle with reading — a "silent literacy crisis."

**Christine Smallwood,
New York Review of Books, February 9, 2023**