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"Black Literature is for Everyone"

The Shame of Black America Isn't that Our Boys Can't Read; The Shame Is that We Do Little To Help Them Learn To Read!

By **Phillip Jackson**, **The Black Star Project**

2011 Reading Levels of 8th-Grade Black Males from the **Lowest**-Performing Large American School Districts (City\Percentage of 8th-Grade Black Males Proficient in Reading)¹.

- Milwaukee - 3%
- Cleveland - 3%
- Detroit - 5%
- Washington (D.C.) - 6%
- San Diego - 7%
- Dallas - 7%
- Baltimore City - 7%
- Chicago - 9%
- Jefferson County, (KY) - 9%
- Atlanta - 9%
- Los Angeles - 9%
- Philadelphia - 9%
- Austin - 9%
- Houston - 9%
- Hillsborough County (FL) - 9%
- Boston - 10%
- Miami-Dade - 11%
- Charlotte - 12%
- New York City - 13%



About 10% of 8th-grade Black males in the United States read at or above a proficient level. In other words; on average, if you count any 100 young Black men, only 10 of them read at a proficient level

In Milwaukee and Cleveland, only 3 out of 100 young Black men read at or above a proficient level. I (Phillip Jackson) have challenged Black people to tell me that these statistics are not accurate, but

so far, no challenges. In fact, only silence!

How did we, Black people, allow this to occur on our watch? And what will we do about it?

Break the Cycle: Teach Black Boys to Read Well by the 4th Grade. Here's How?

1. Read to Black boys between birth and 10 years old.
2. Emphasize the value of education--not sports, not entertainment, not games--when Black boys are 2 to 12 years old.
3. Give Black boys books for their birthdays, holidays, and to reward them for jobs well done.
4. Enroll Black boys in a Saturday University Reading Academy at your church, park district, library or school. (Call The Black Star Project at 773.285.9600 for assistance setting up your Saturday University)
5. Have Black boys between the ages of 5 and 15 years old read aloud to you for at least 30 minutes a week.
6. Monitor and regulate the content of media your Black boys consume.
7. Immerse Black boys in positive, education-based peer groups.
8. Find a mentor or a mentoring group for your young Black men.
9. Include culture, spirituality, history, economics, languages and critical thinking in the education of Black boys.
10. Ask the White House to support The Black Star Plan to teach Black boys to read well by 4th grade.

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- [Click Here to Ask The White House to Support The Black Star Plan to Teach Black Boys to Read Well by 4th Grade.](#)
 - [Click Here to learn about the Institute for Black Male Achievement's Life Outcomes for Black Men and Boys Across America.](#)
 - Please call 773.285.9600 to participate in The Black Star Project's Saturday University Reading Academies for Black boys.

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¹Source: [Minority Students and Public Education by Dr. Michael Holzman](#)

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