

Thirty years of US libraries, literacy & Reading Rainbow

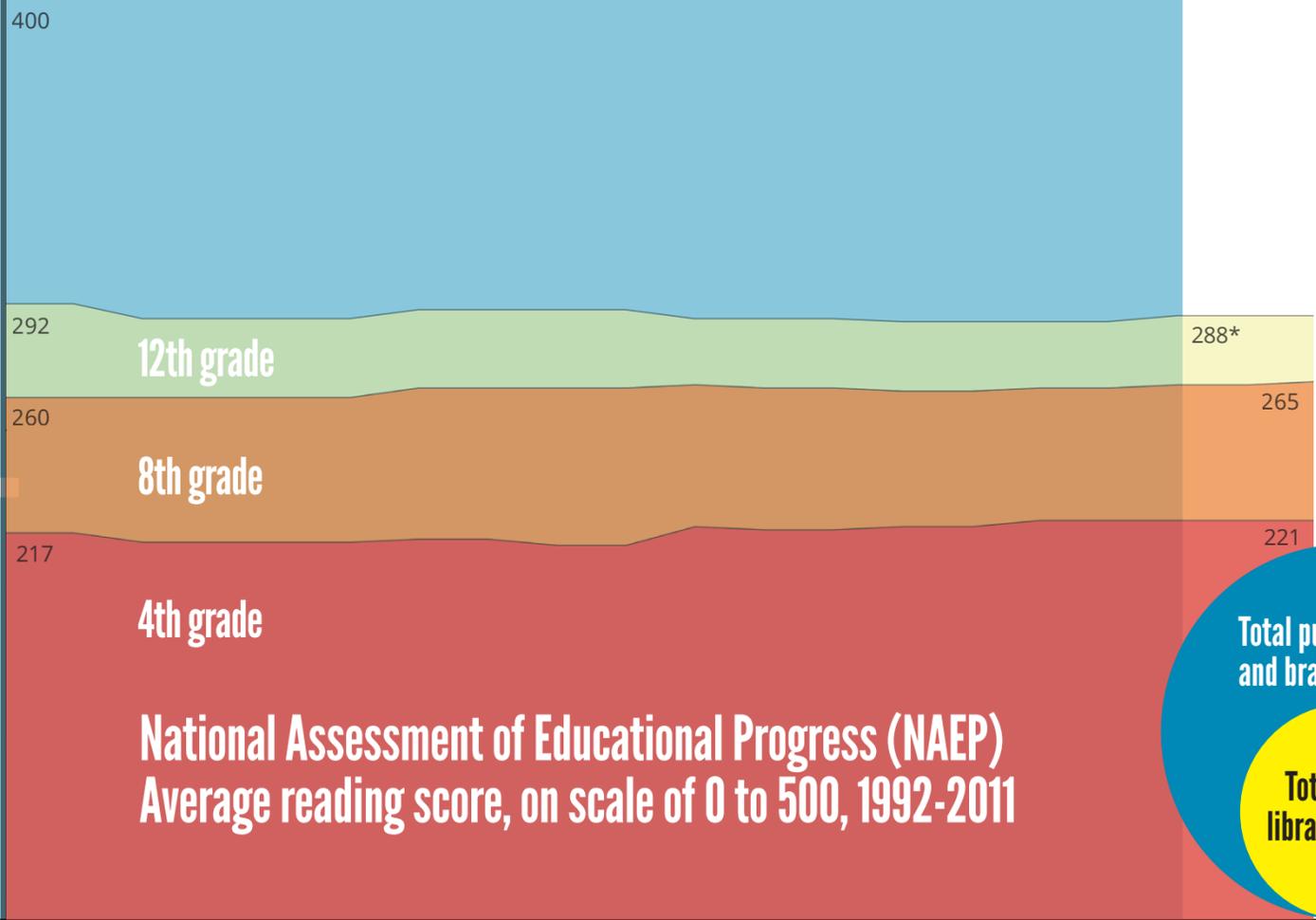
In the three decades since Reading Rainbow's first episode, the number of public libraries has increased by 14 per cent, but child reading scores are stagnant and millions of Americans lack basic prose literacy skills.

How have Reading Rainbow, technology and major legislation shaped literacy and libraries?

Total public libraries and branches: 14,824

Total public libraries: 8,768

Rainbow 155 episodes



Total public libraries and branches: 16,912

Total public libraries: 9,709



Sources

1. Number of libraries in 1983 and 2012: courtesy American Library Association, derived from 1983 Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information (p337) using counts from the American Library Directory, and similarly 2013 Library and Book Trade Almanac (p359).
2. Map: "Indirect estimate of per cent lacking basic prose literacy skills and corresponding credible intervals" by state in 2003, from US National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) [http://nces.ed.gov/nael/estimates/StateEstimates.aspx].
3. School reading scores: NCES "fast facts" statistics answering, "How are American students performing at reading?" for intermittent years between 1992 and 2011. *2010 figure; no 2011 figure available. [http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=147].

Reading 1983-2009

