



GfK Custom Research  
North America

# **WHAT DO COLLEGE GRADUATES KNOW?**

## American History Literacy Survey

A survey based on interviews with 300 college graduates

Conducted for the  
American Council of Trustees and Alumni

# **OmniTel**

American History Literacy survey 2012

August 10 – 12, 2012

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Omnitel-GfK Custom Research North America, August 10-12, 2012

Final weighted results

- Q1. Who is the chief justice of the Supreme Court?
- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| a. Sandra Day O'Connor    | 8%         |
| b. John Boehner (Bay-Ner) | 9%         |
| <b>c. John Roberts</b>    | <b>57%</b> |
| d. Sonia Sotomayor        | 9%         |
| DK                        | 17%        |
- Q2. How long are terms for members of Congress?
- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| a. 4 years for senators, 4 years for representatives        | 10%        |
| <b>b. 6 years for senators, 2 years for representatives</b> | <b>38%</b> |
| c. 4 years for senators, 2 years for representatives        | 23%        |
| d. 4 years for senators, 6 years for representatives        | 13%        |
| DK  | 15%        |
- Q3. Which of the following freedoms is NOT protected in the First Amendment?
- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| a. Freedom of speech  | 8%         |
| b. Right to petition the government<br>for redress of grievances      | 30%        |
| c. Right to assembly  | 3%         |
| <b>d. Right to a speedy and public trial<br/>by an impartial jury</b> | <b>53%</b> |
| DK  | 6%         |
- Q4. Who is Lady Gaga?
- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>a. A musical performer</b>           | <b>96%</b> |
| b. A scientist                          | *%         |
| c. A European novelist                  | 1%         |
| d. A member of the British royal family | - %        |
| DK                                      | 3%         |

\*= less than 0.5%

- Q5. The Emancipation Proclamation issued by Lincoln stated that:
- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| a. <b>Slaves were free in areas of the Confederate states not held by the Union</b>    | <b>17%</b> |
| b. Slaves were free in both the Union and Confederate states.                          | 32%        |
| c. Slavery was abolished in the Union  | 41%        |
| d. Slavery could continue nationwide, but buying or selling slaves was no longer legal | 5%         |
| DK   | 5%         |
- Q6. Which document established the division of powers between the states and the federal government?
- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| a. The Marshall Plan                     | 3%         |
| b. The Articles of Confederation         | 25%        |
| c. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions | 7%         |
| <b>d. The Constitution</b>               | <b>58%</b> |
| DK                                       | 7%         |
- Q7. Who was the American general at Yorktown?
- |                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| a. William T. Sherman       | 7%         |
| b. Ulysses S. Grant         | 20%        |
| <b>c. George Washington</b> | <b>48%</b> |
| d. Robert E. Lee            | 12%        |
| DK                          | 13%        |
- Q8. Who was the "Father of the Constitution"?
- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| a. John Adams           | 12%        |
| b. Thomas Jefferson     | 50%        |
| <b>c. James Madison</b> | <b>20%</b> |
| d. Benjamin Franklin    | 14%        |
| DK                      | 4%         |

Q9. What was the source of the following phrase: "Government of the people, by the people, for the people"?

- a. George Washington's Farewell Address 4%
- b. Declaration of Independence 54%
- c. U.S. Constitution 22%
- d. Gettysburg Address 17%**
- DK 3%

Q10. The Battle of the Bulge occurred during:

- a. World War II 42%**
- b. Revolutionary War 18%
- c. World War I 18%
- d. The Civil War 14%
- DK 9%

Q11. Who said the phrase: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need"?

- a. Barack Obama 6%
- b. George Washington 12%
- c. Karl Marx 53%**
- d. Adam Smith 14%
- DK 17%

Q12. In times of inflation...

- a. Money loses value 85%**
- b. Money gains value 6%
- c. The value of money stays the same 2%
- d. Prices go down 4%
- DK 3%

Q13. How does the payment of interest on a loan affect the total?

- a. It increases the total due. 63%**
- b. It reduces the total due. 8%
- c. It has no impact on the total 13%
- d. It may increase or decrease the total due depending on the interest rate 14%
- DK 2%

Q14. Profit is...

- |                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| a. Cost minus revenue            | 14%        |
| b. Assets minus liabilities      | 5%         |
| <b>c. Revenue minus expenses</b> | <b>73%</b> |
| d. Earnings minus assets         | 2%         |
| DK                               | 6%         |

Q15. What does GDP stand for?

- |                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| a. General Debt and Payables     | 1%         |
| <b>b. Gross Domestic Product</b> | <b>85%</b> |
| c. General Domestic Production   | 4%         |
| d. Gross Debt Payable            | 5%         |
| DK                               | 5%         |

Just for curiosity sake....

Q16. What type of college did you attend?

- |               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| a. Public     | 62% |
| b. Private    | 36% |
| c. Ivy League | 1%  |
| Ref           | 1%  |

Q17. What type of degree did you receive?

- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| a. B.A. (Bachelor of Arts)         | 27% |
| b. B.S. (Bachelor of Science)      | 33% |
| c. Bachelor's degree (unspecified) | 16% |
| d. Masters                         | 19% |
| e. PhD (Doctorate)                 | 4%  |
| Ref                                | 1%  |

## **ABOUT THE SURVEY**

OMNITEL is a weekly national telephone omnibus service from GfK Roper, a division of GfK Custom Research North America.

The sample for each week's OMNITEL wave consists of 1,000 completed interviews, made up of male and female adults (in approximately equal number), all 18 years of age and over.

All interviews are conducted by telephone from three GfK phone centers: Twin Falls & Rexburg, ID and Cebu, Philippines. Together, the three sites have a full-time capacity of 300 lines, and utilize an interviewing procedure known as CATI - Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing. Interviewers have been professionally trained and are continuously monitored and supervised.

Each OMNITEL study is based on a random digit dialing (ROD) probability sample of all telephone households in the continental United States. The ROD sampling system is totally computer based and provides an equal probability of selection for each and every telephone household. Thus, the sample represents telephone households with both listed and unlisted phones in their proper proportions. All sample numbers selected by this procedure are subject to an original and at least four follow-up attempts to complete an interview.

All data are entered and cleaned through the CATI system during the interviewing process. Thus, this process eliminates the editing and keypunch operations. All completed interviews are weighted to ensure accurate and reliable representation of the total population, 18 years and older.

The raw data are weighted by a custom designed computer program, which automatically develops a weighting factor for each respondent. This procedure employs five variables: age, sex, education, race and geographic region. Each interview is assigned a single weight derived from the relationship between the actual proportion of the population with its specific combination of age, sex, education, race and geographic characteristics and the proportion in our sample that week. Tabular results show both weighted and unweighted bases for these demographic variables.

Because of the use of rigid and replicable sampling, field, and weighting procedures, all OMNITEL studies are parallel to one another. This affords the opportunity to draw trend comparisons, as well as point-in-time analysis.

The results contained in this report are based on interviews conducted from August 10- 12, 2012. A total of 300 interviews were completed, with 150 female and 150 male college graduates or post graduates who were between the ages of 21 to 34. The margin of error for this study is +/- 4.9 percentage points and is higher for subgroups. The full data tables are available upon request.