



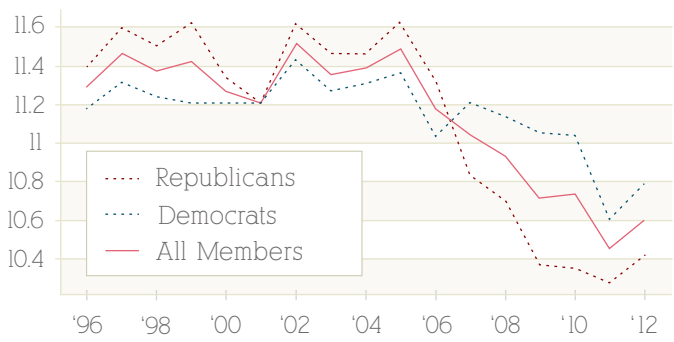
THE DUMBING DOWN OF CONGRESS?

Congress now speaks at nearly a full grade level lower than it did seven years ago. Are our legislators communicating more effectively or dumbing themselves down?

Grade Level Comparisons

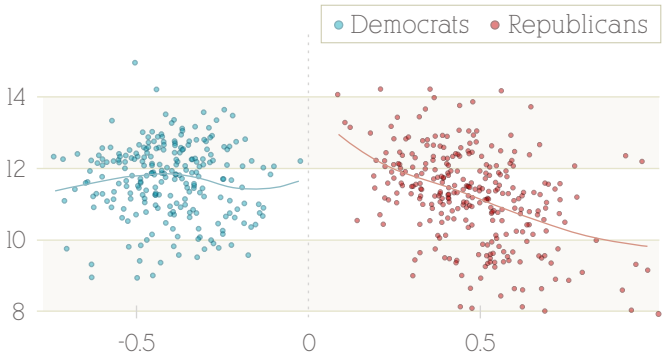
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|---------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Congress 2005 | Congress 2012 | Average American | Gettysburg Address | Major Newspapers | Federalist Papers |
| 11.5 | 10.6 | 8-9 | 11.2 | 11-14 | 17.1 |

Grade Level of Member Speeches by Year



| | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| | The Decline Since 2005 | Democrats | Republicans |
| | | - 0.8 | - 1.3 |

Ideology and Grade Level of Congressional Record Speeches, Current Members



Liberal-Conservative Voting Score, 112th Congress
-1 (most liberal) to 1 (most conservative)

Top and Bottom 10 Speakers by Grade Level

