

Our school is celebrating **Census in Schools Week** on _____, 2010

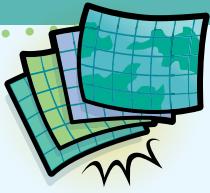


Get ready to stand up and be counted!

Every 10 years the Census Bureau counts the entire population. Being counted in the census is important for every community, no matter where you live. The 2010 Census is coming to our neighborhood. **Census in Schools Week** will celebrate the census and make sure our school is ready!

Census in Schools Week will feature these great activities and events at our school:

Census in Schools Week: 15-minute activities



Get your students thinking about the **2010 Census** with these fun, quick classroom activities.

Each one can be done in as little as 15 minutes. As you review, please note that each activity is intended for use by specific grade levels. However, we invite you to adjust the activity to best fit your students' needs.

Grades
K-4

Census Role-Play

1. Divide students into pairs and hold a census role-play. Begin by giving them some basic information about the census. Explain that the Census Bureau is a part of the government that has the job of counting every person who lives in the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas. A correct count of the population is important to understand what each place needs. Leaders use the information to decide where to provide services such as new schools and roads.
2. Remind students that the census works by having people fill out a form or speak to a census worker. Sometimes census workers go door-to-door and gather information by asking questions. These questions call for basic facts about the people living in each household.
3. Tell students that they will perform a role-play where one character plays a census worker and the other plays a resident who answers the door. Have students work with a few simple questions based on the real census form. (For example: **How many people live in your house?**) Students can conduct the role-play one pair at a time in front of the class or simultaneously at their desks.

Grades
5-8

How Do We Use the Census?

1. Remind students that the census is very important to their community. The results of the **2010 Census** will help leaders decide where money and resources are sent.
2. Remind them that one of the most important uses of census data is to determine how federal funds are distributed to communities. Tell students that basic data include the number of people living in an area, their ages, and the kinds of housing they live in.
3. Divide students into groups of four to five. Have students brainstorm five kinds of decisions businesses or the government can make based on having information about population in a community.
4. Bring students back together and ask volunteers from each group to read their collected ideas.

All
Grades

Write a Letter

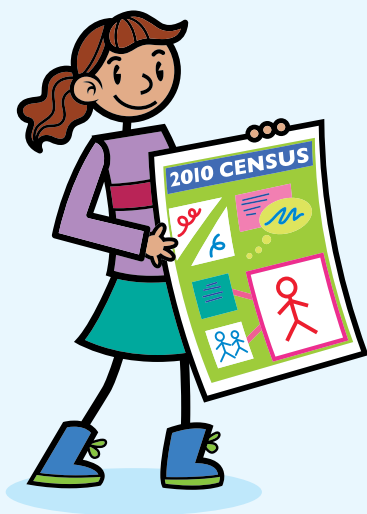
1. Have students write a letter home to their families or to a local newspaper. The letter should discuss what the students have learned about the census and why an accurate count of the population is so important to their school and the community.
2. Distribute the **STUDENT WORKSHEET** from this brochure to help students to learn about the parts of a letter. Remind students that their letters should be clear, polite, and persuasive. They should also use proper spelling and grammar.
3. To help students decide what to write, ask them to summarize what they have learned about the census and why it is important. Suggest that students select their audience (family or newspaper) before they start writing so they can make sure that their language is appropriate.
4. When they are finished, ask volunteers to read their letters to the class before the letters are sent.

Census in Schools Week: 15-minute activities

Grades
K-4

Make a Poster

1. Invite your students to make colorful posters celebrating **Census in Schools Week**. Briefly explain how your school is celebrating **Census in Schools Week** and list the different schoolwide events on the board. Tell students to make a poster about one of these events.
2. Review the following facts about the **2010 Census** to help students decide what to include on their posters:
 - The census happens every 10 years.
 - The census counts everyone living in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas.
 - Every home will receive a census form.
 - Census Day is April 1, 2010.
3. Distribute blank poster board to students to decorate. Instruct them to include the words “Census in Schools Week” and the date of your school’s event on the poster in addition to any images or messages they want to use. Encourage students to make the posters colorful.
4. Display the posters throughout your school. You can even have a competition to see who made the best poster!



Grades
5-8

Create a Census Cartoon

1. Have students draw a cartoon celebrating the census. The cartoon can be in the form of a single panel, a comic strip, or a page from a comic book. If possible, show the class examples of cartoons that communicate an idea, such as editorial cartoons.
2. Ask students why they think cartoons can be effective at communicating ideas. Discuss how the art and the text work together to make a point or provide information.
3. Instruct students to use their knowledge of the census to create their cartoon. If students need help getting started, suggest that the main character be a census worker or a resident opening a door for a census worker. Tell them that the quality of the drawing is not as important as the idea being communicated. Display the finished cartoons around the classroom.

All
Grades

State Facts Quiz!

1. Create a quiz about one of the 50 states using the facts available at www.census.gov/schools/facts. Have students choose a state that they want to learn about or visit!
2. Write a multiple-choice quiz using facts from the three categories of information: population, geography, and business. Available information includes state population, state rank, median age, largest city, population density, and the number of different types of businesses, such as toy stores or amusement parks. Choose topics/questions that best fit your students’ learning level.
3. Divide the class into three equal rows. Have one student from each row come up to answer a question. Whichever group gets the question right earns a point. Once a question has been answered correctly, have a new set of three students come up. After each student has gone twice, add up the total points for each row. The row with the highest score wins!

Census in Schools Week: Ideas for your school

Building awareness about the **2010 Census** should go beyond individual classrooms.

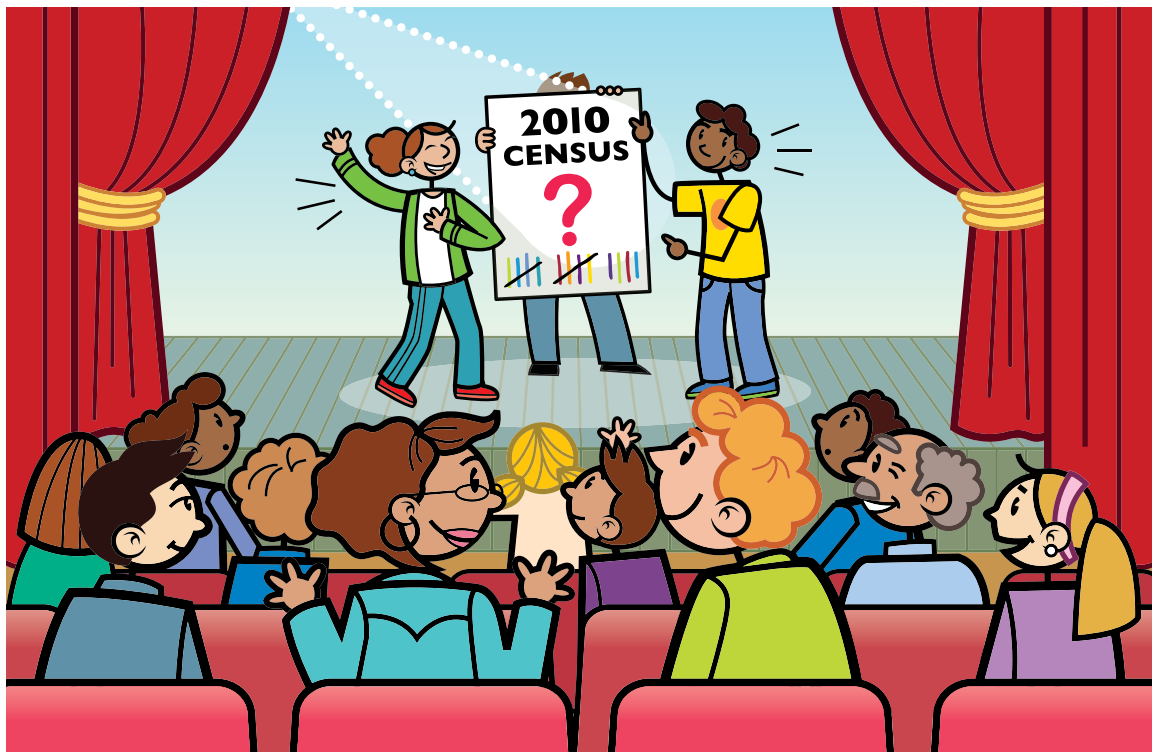
Consider the following activities for schoolwide events that can help you celebrate **Census in Schools Week**:

1. Hold a School Assembly

Generate enthusiasm for the **2010 Census** by holding a school assembly for all students and teachers. Invite different classrooms, grade levels, or student groups to give presentations on the following census topics: history of the census, procedures of the Census Bureau, and the significance of the census to the community. All of the resources for these presentations are available at www.census.gov/schools. Presentations may include performing skits demonstrating how (or how not) to fill out a census questionnaire. Students could also have a contest for the best census “cheer.” Close the assembly by discussing the importance of counting everyone in the community during the **2010 Census**.

2. Hold a Parent/Teacher Night

Your students' families are key to the successful completion of the **2010 Census**. Build awareness of the **2010 Census** with a parent census night. Discuss the importance of full participation in the census to the community. Point out that the distribution of federal funds can be affected by the census count. Without an accurate count of every member of the community it is possible that a town would not receive its fair share of federal funding. Bring sample census questionnaires to the meeting and walk parents through completion of the form. Assure parents that census data are confidential and carefully protected by the Census Bureau. Remind families about the census all year long by linking to www.census.gov/schools from your school Web site.



Census in Schools Week: Ideas for your school

3. Invite a Census Speaker

Learn about the census directly from the source! Invite a census representative to visit your school and talk to your students and/or their parents. The representative will be prepared to discuss how the census affects your specific community and how important it is for families to complete the form. The representative can also discuss details about the questionnaire, privacy, statistical methods, and the many types of data the Census Bureau collects. Feel free to ask the representative about his or her background, interests, stories of census work, and why he or she cares about the census. If anyone is interested, they can ask about careers at the Census Bureau or in the government. Have students prepare questions in advance. To arrange a speaker visit, please call the Census Bureau at 1-800-923-8282.



4. Take a Schoolwide Census

Give students a chance to get firsthand experience with a census. Create a one-page census questionnaire of some simple and fun questions about everyday topics. Select a particular grade, class, or group of students to serve as the “Census Bureau” and write the questionnaire, distribute it, and collect the forms afterward. Keep in mind that the census questions can be both multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions. Possible questions include: favorite kind of ice cream, favorite musical group, color of shoes, height, etc. After collecting the questionnaires and tabulating the responses, gather all students together for the announcement of the results. If possible, have the “Census Bureau” input the data into a spreadsheet so the results can be graphed and sorted more easily.

5. Invite Local Media

To draw attention to the census and your school’s efforts, invite local media to cover the various events at your school. Whether the event is a school assembly, a parent/teacher night, or a visit from a census representative, your local media will be interested in your school’s efforts and civic responsibility. Fill out the press release template included in this packet and send it out to your local community television, radio, and newspaper outlets. Be sure to include the details like date, time, location, and the event that will be covered. When the media representatives arrive at your school, make sure a few teachers or students are available for interviews.