

Diversity: Census Questions Over Time

Topic(s):

Diversity, race,
decennial census

Grade Level:

7-8

Approx. Time Required:

45 minutes

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Draw conclusions based on analysis of a primary source.
- Analyze and cite recurring themes using text evidence.
- Calculate the percentage of a given data set.
- Apply mathematical processes to represent and solve problems involving proportional relationships.
- Identify the importance of the decennial census and how it benefits their community.
- Understand how the census has reflected the diversity of the United States.

Introduction

The 2020 Census Statistics in Schools (SIS) program is designed to educate students about the decennial census and to teach them educational concepts and skills, such as data literacy, through use of census data in the classroom. Responding to the census helps your community get its fair share of funding. Census data guides how more than \$675 billion in federal funding is distributed to states and communities each year. These funds support vital community programs that help children, such as schools, hospitals, housing, and food assistance. By educating students about the 2020 Census, you can help encourage a complete count.

The 2020 Census SIS program can be used with educational standards across the United States. You can use the topics and learning objectives above to determine which subject and unit plan or theme this activity will best fit into.

About the 2020 Census

In addition to the information that is built into instructions for this activity, the following points provide an easy, grade-appropriate way to explain the census to your students.

- The decennial census is a count of every person living in the United States that occurs every 10 years.
- It is important that every person be counted so that the government can properly distribute \$675 billion to communities.
- The population of every state as counted in the census also determines how many representatives each state is given in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- You can do your part by making sure an adult in your home counts you—and every person living in your home—in the 2020 Census.





Materials Required

- Printed student worksheets
- Chart paper or a board to write on
- A writing utensil
- Calculators for each student

Worksheet Description

Students will analyze historical data on race and ethnicity in the United States over time. Students will note trends around race and ethnicity by looking at data from 2000 and 2010, highlighting the broad diversity of people who live in the United States today. Students will learn why it is important that the U.S. Census Bureau collect this data.

Before the Activity—5 Minutes

1. Before introducing the activity, break students into groups of three. Hand out one student worksheet to each student.
2. Explain to students that they will be looking at how diversity has changed in the United States over time by looking at the questions asked by the Census Bureau on the decennial census, as well as census data from 2000 and 2010. Tell the class that they'll be focusing specifically on the racial and ethnic makeup of the United States. Explain that the Census Bureau conducts the decennial census every 10 years to get an accurate count of the entire population of the United States. The next census will take place in spring 2020.
3. Explain to students the difference between race and ethnicity.
 - **Race:** A person's self-identification with one or more social groups — as defined by the U.S. government. An individual can report as White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, or some other race. Survey respondents may report multiple races. The Census Bureau collects racial data in accordance with guidelines provided by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
 - **Ethnicity:** A person's self-identification as Hispanic/Latino or not Hispanic/Latino — as defined by the U.S. government. The Census Bureau collects racial data in accordance with guidelines provided by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).



During the Activity—30 Minutes

1. Direct students' attention to their worksheets. In their small groups, students should look at how the question of race and ethnicity on the census questionnaire has changed over time, referencing **Activity Item: Race and Ethnicity Questions on the Census**. Students will complete the table in their worksheet, recording their observations about the census questions. Give students 10 minutes to do this activity as a group, encouraging them to discuss the differences they see with the other members of their group.

Student answers will vary in their charts but should note the differences in how the questions of race and ethnicity were asked on the various census questionnaires, and the options available to self-identify.

2. Have students record their answers to Question #2: Explain what changes you noticed in how the answer options have changed over time. Why do you think these changed?

Student answers should note that the questions show how the country has become more diverse over time. Teachers may want to note that the Census Bureau uses race categories that are determined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which is the business division of the Executive Office of the President of the United States. OMB standards — which include race categories — were updated in 1977 and 1997. The race categories were updated based on the 1997 OMB categories in 2000, allowing for 5 race selections (plus “Some Other Race”) and combinations. In 1990, they were still following the 1977 OMB standards which meant responses had to pick one from White, Black, American Indian/ Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander.

3. Explain to students that now that they've reviewed what questions were asked, they are going to look at the data that these types of questions have produced in recent years. Turn students' attention to the data tables showing the results of the census in 2000 and 2010.

Give the class 15 minutes to complete the data tables in Question #3 and answer Questions #4 and #5 on their student worksheet. (An answer key for data tables appears below.)

Question #4: Which races increased in percentage of population from 2000 to 2010? Which races decreased in percentage of population from 2000 to 2010?

Students will notice that most races increased in percentage from 2000 to 2010 — except for White, which decreased. More people are also classifying themselves as “Some Other Race” and “Two or More Races.” The Hispanic and Latino ethnicity percentages also increased from 2000 to 2010.



Question #5: Predict the racial makeup of the country in 2020, 2030, and 2040 by percentage of the population, based on the changes you noticed from 2000 to 2010.

Answers will vary, but students will likely predict a continued rise in most races except for White, as well as an increase in “Hispanic or Latino” ethnicity. Students could also note that those who identify as “Two or More Races” will also increase.

After the Activity—10 Minutes

1. Have students discuss their answers to Question #5 in their small groups. Bring the class back together and ask a few students to share what their group discussed.

Home Extension

Teachers, please read the instructions for the students’ homework assignment out loud to the class:

Take your student worksheet home and share it with an adult in your home. Ask them which boxes they would have checked had they participated in the censuses in 1970, 1990, and 2010. Share your predictions of the population in 2020, 2030, and 2040.



Race and Ethnicity Data Over Time - ANSWER KEY

2000 Census: Number of People per Race

Subject	Number	Percentage
Total Population	281,421,906	100.0%
One Race	274,595,678	97.6%
White	211,460,626	75.1%
Black or African American	34,658,190	12.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,475,956	0.9%
Asian	10,242,998	3.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	398,835	0.1%
Some Other Race	15,359,073	5.5%
Two or More Races	6,826,228	2.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Population by Hispanic or Latino Origin and by Race for the United States: 2000 and 2010* <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2011/dec/c2010br-02.pdf>

2000 Census: Number of People per Ethnicity

Subject	Number	Percentage
Total Population	281,421,906	100.0%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	35,305,818	12.5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	246,116,088	87.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Population by Hispanic or Latino Origin and by Race for the United States: 2000 and 2010* <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2011/dec/c2010br-02.pdf>



2010 Census: Number of People per Race

Subject	Number	Percentage
Total Population	308,745,538	100.0%
One Race	299,736,465	97.1%
White	223,553,265	72.4%
Black or African American	38,929,319	12.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,932,248	0.9%
Asian	14,674,252	4.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	540,013	0.2%
Some Other Race	19,107,368	6.2%
Two or More Races	9,009,073	2.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population by Hispanic or Latino Origin and by Race for the United States: 2000 and 2010 <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2011/dec/c2010br-02.pdf>

2010 Census: Number of People per Ethnicity

Subject	Number	Percentage
Total Population	308,745,538	100.0%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	50,477,594	16.3%
Not Hispanic or Latino	258,267,944	83.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population by Hispanic or Latino Origin and by Race for the United States: 2000 and 2010 <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2011/dec/c2010br-02.pdf>



Activity Item: Race and Ethnicity Questions on the Census

1970

Note: Ethnicity was not a question on the 1970 Census.

4. COLOR OR RACE

Fill one circle.

If "Indian (American)," also give tribe.

If "Other," also give race.

<input type="radio"/> White	<input type="radio"/> Japanese	<input type="radio"/> Hawaiian
<input type="radio"/> Negro or Black	<input type="radio"/> Chinese	<input type="radio"/> Korean
<input type="radio"/> Indian (Amer.)	<input type="radio"/> Filipino	<input type="radio"/> Other— <i>Print race</i>

Print tribe →

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970 Census

https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/questionnaires/1970_1.html

1990

4. Race

Fill ONE circle for the race that the person considers himself/herself to be.

If **Indian (Amer.)**, print the name of the enrolled or principal tribe. →

If **Other Asian or Pacific Islander (API)**, print one group, for example: Hmong, Fijian, Laotian, Thai, Tongan, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. →

If **Other race**, print race. →

<input type="radio"/> White	<input type="radio"/> Japanese
<input type="radio"/> Black or Negro	<input type="radio"/> Asian Indian
<input type="radio"/> Indian (Amer.) (Print the name of the enrolled or principal tribe.)	<input type="radio"/> Samoan
<input type="radio"/> Eskimo	<input type="radio"/> Guamanian
<input type="radio"/> Aleut	<input type="radio"/> Other API
<u>Asian or Pacific Islander (API)</u>	
<input type="radio"/> Chinese	<input type="radio"/> Filipino
<input type="radio"/> Hawaiian	<input type="radio"/> Korean
<input type="radio"/> Vietnamese	<input type="radio"/> Other race (Print race)



7. Is this person of Spanish/Hispanic origin?
 Fill ONE circle for each person.

No (not Spanish/Hispanic)
 Yes, Mexican, Mexican-Am., Chicano
 Yes, Puerto Rican
 Yes, Cuban
 Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic
 (Print one group, for example: Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.) ↴

If Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic, print one group. _____ ↴

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census](https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/questionnaires/1990_1.html)
https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/questionnaires/1990_1.html

2010

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
 Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
 Yes, Puerto Rican
 Yes, Cuban
 Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on. ↴

9. What is Person 1's race? Mark one or more boxes.

White
 Black, African Am., or Negro
 American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe. ↴

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian — Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. ↴	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on. ↴	

Some other race — Print race. ↴

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census](https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/questionnaires/2010_overview.html)
https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/questionnaires/2010_overview.html