

Diversity: Languages at Home

Topic(s):

Data tables, surveys, text features, comparing data

Grade Level:

K-2

Approx. Time Required:

30 minutes

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Recognize and count numbers up to 100.
- Understand the concept of a survey.
- Compare quantities using the terms “more than,” “less than,” and “equal to.”
- Understand why it’s important that they are counted in the decennial census.

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 to make sure the government can provide money to each community for things like roads and parks.
- Make sure an adult in your home counts you in the 2020 Census.





Materials Required

- An interactive whiteboard or a projector to display **Activity Item: Languages Spoken at Home**
 - Option to print out the data chart if technology is not available in the classroom
- Printed student worksheets
- Chart paper and a writing utensil
- A world map

Worksheet Description

Students will learn about the differences among students in a classroom, focusing on students' homes and the languages spoken in their homes. To help students understand how communities thrive with a broad diversity of residents, this worksheet focuses on simple data points that show the different languages spoken at home across the country.

Before the Activity—5 Minutes

1. Explain to students that the word “diversity” means we are all different. Tell students, “Sometimes we can see diversity on the outside, and sometimes we can’t.” Then ask, “What are some things that make people different from each other?” If needed, prompt students with examples: tall vs. short, curly hair vs. straight hair, old vs. young, or what languages people speak.
2. Explain that the U.S. Census Bureau collects information on everyone in the United States and that this information lets us see how many different kinds of people live in our country.
3. Mention that the 2020 Census is coming up and that everyone in the United States will be counted. Tell students some of the things the Census Bureau asks, including:
 - How many people live in your home?
 - What are their ages?
 - Are they boys or girls?



4. Lead a discussion with students, ensuring they understand the following key points about diversity:
- The answers to these questions show how the United States contains all sorts of different people.
 - Diversity shows us how we are different in the way we look, the languages we speak, and the people in our family.
 - Diversity is important because it gives us new ideas, different ways of looking at things, and a greater understanding of people who are different from us.
 - It is important to gather this information because it lets us learn how many different cultures and kinds of people make up our country.

During the Activity—20 Minutes

1. Tell students, “We’re going to take an in-class survey.” Explain that a survey is a set of questions given to a group of people to learn about them or what they think. A census is a process of counting all the people in a country, city, or town and collecting information about them.

Tell the students that you are going to ask some questions and that any students who can answer “yes” to a question should stand when prompted. (If some students in your class cannot stand, modify to have students raise their hands.) Tell the class that students who stand after a question should remain standing until they’re told to sit again so that the number of “yes” answers can be counted. While you are explaining this, hand out the student worksheets.

Then ask the following questions.

- Do you have an older brother or sister?
- Do you have a younger brother or sister?
- Do you speak a language other than English at home?
- Were you born in a different state?
- Do you have a pet at home?

For each question, count the “yes” answers and record the number on the chart paper. Have students copy the answers onto their student worksheets.

2. Tell students that, just as the in-class survey collected information about the class, the census collects information about all people who live in the country. Tell the class that they are going to look at the difference in languages spoken at home.



3. Display the bar graph in **Activity Item: Languages Spoken at Home** on the board or pass out printed graphs so every student can view. Explain that this graph shows how many people out of 100 speak a specific language at home in the United States.
 - English is the primary language spoken at home in the United States. It's the language we're speaking now. Other countries that speak English include the United Kingdom and Australia.
 - Spanish is considered the second most spoken language in the world! Many people speak Spanish in the United States, but it's the primary language of Mexico, Central America, and South America.
4. Guide students in answering the questions on their student worksheet.

For kindergarten and first grade: Teachers can modify the questions if needed to require less writing. Have students **circle** the answer to Question #2, **underline** the answer to Question #3, and **put a star** next to the language(s) they or people in their home speak. Students can draw directly on the printed bar graph.

Question #2: What language do most people speak in our country?

Answer: English

Question #3: What is the second most spoken language in our country?

Answer: Spanish

Question #4: Write what languages you or people in your home can speak.

Answers will vary.

5. Explain to students that this is one piece of information that the Census Bureau collects, which shows one way in which people are different from each other.



After the Activity—5 Minutes

1. Review with students the term “diversity” and why diversity is beneficial.

Example: Diversity shows us how we are different in the way we look, the languages we speak, and the people in our family. Diversity is important because it gives us new ideas, different perspectives, and a greater understanding of people who are different from us.

2. Remind students that the census is an important way to gather information that helps us to learn about our community, state, and country. Tell students, “The 2020 Census—when we count everyone in the entire country—is coming soon, so make sure you’re counted.”

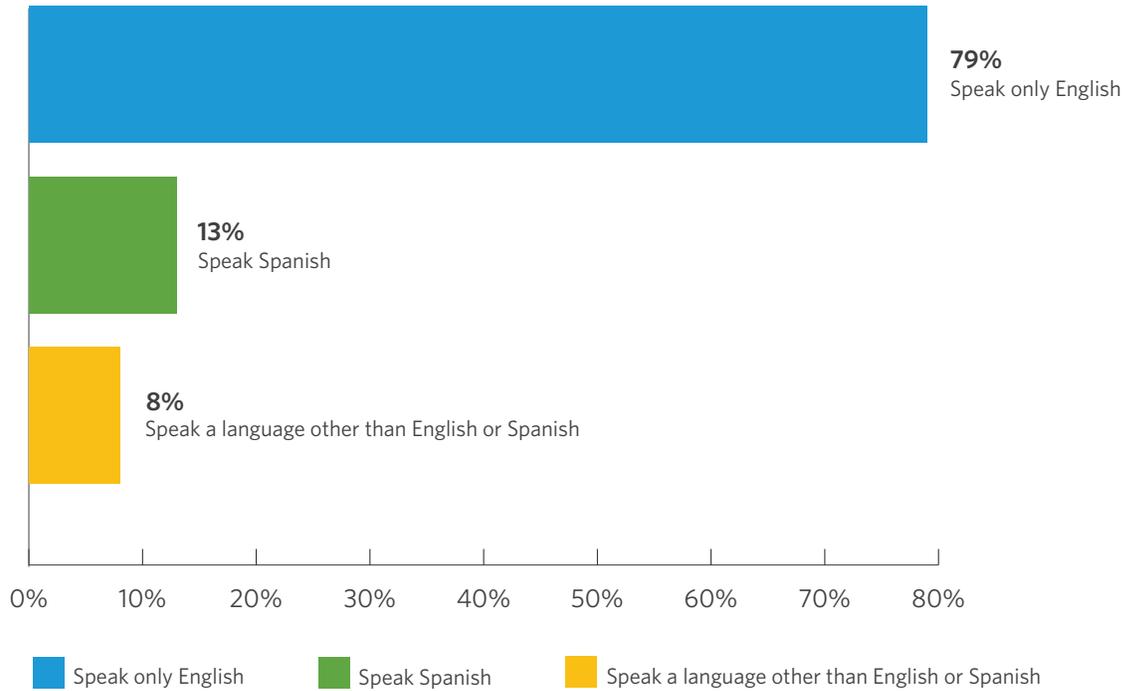
Home Extension

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. Share your ideas about what makes your class diverse and some of the results you learned from the in-class survey. Tell that same adult how important it is that everyone is counted in the 2020 Census and tell them to be sure everyone in your home is counted!



Activity Item: Languages Spoken at Home



Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S1601%3A%20LANGUAGE%20SPOKEN%20AT%20HOME&hidePreview=true&tid=ACST5Y2017.S1601>