



**Middle  
School**

# Parent/Caregiver Toolkit

Easy At-Home Learning With Statistics in Schools

*Free. Engaging. Easy to access.  
No teaching experience required.*

United States<sup>®</sup>  
**Census**  
Bureau



**STATISTICS  
IN SCHOOLS**



## Table of Contents

Statistics in Schools - For Use at Home .....	3
Learning Benefits .....	3
How To Use SIS Activities and Resources.....	4
Best Practices To Support At-Home Learning .....	4
Find More! .....	5
Quick and Easy Resources .....	6
Activities .....	10
Next Steps .....	13

**As parents and caregivers, we're all doing our best to juggle responsibilities like running a household, working, caring for and teaching our children, and taking care of other loved ones. Each of us is working hard to ensure that the children we care for get the academic support they need.**

**The U.S. Census Bureau's Statistics in Schools (SIS) program can help.**

## **Statistics in Schools – For Use at Home**

Statistics in Schools offers more than 200 free learning activities and resources for children in **K through 12th grade**, using data provided by the Census Bureau. Although originally created for teachers to use in classrooms, these resources are easily adapted for use at home to keep kids entertained and learning. Here's why:

- All the resources are free.
- All resources are easy to access and download.
- Teachers created the resources to ensure that each one is educational and age-appropriate.
- You don't need teaching experience to use them.
- Easy-to-follow instructions are provided for every activity along with ways to adapt the resources for at-home use.
- Many activities are interesting for both children and adults. (You'll learn something new too!)
- Engaging videos are available for all ages.
- The activities provide opportunities for you and your children to learn together and for children to work independently.
- Interactive data tools enable children to explore on their own.
- Preschool activities are available in both English and Spanish.

## **Learning Benefits**

You can use these SIS activities and resources with the children in your home to:

- Help them learn how to find, understand, and use data.
- Deepen their knowledge of math, English, geography, history, and other subjects.
- Learn about the census and the importance of counting everyone.

## How To Use SIS Activities and Resources

This toolkit describes two types of materials: **Quick and Easy Resources** and **Activities**. The entry for each resource and activity includes tips to help you easily adapt it for use at home.

- **Quick and easy resources** include videos, maps, and other fun materials that can be used alone or to enhance the activities.
- **Activities** are lessons that you can teach your children. Each activity includes a teacher version or teaching guide and a student worksheet. The teaching guide provides all the information you need to do the lesson, including a list of materials and an estimate of how long the lesson will take.

Find more resources at [census.gov/schools](https://www.census.gov/schools).

## Best Practices To Support At-Home Learning

Whether you're a seasoned pro or brand new to teaching children at home, the following strategies can help set up you and the children in your home for success. These tips are provided by educators and parents who home-school their children. The information can be helpful for you to consider prior to getting started with SIS resources.

## 1 Find a Good Learning Spot

Just as you may have a specific area of the home in which you work, it's important to create a similar space for your child. Find a quiet, comfortable, and dedicated space that is strictly for learning. If possible, this space should be different from where your child normally hangs out and should be free of distractions like television. If a dedicated space is not possible, consider ways to help children focus like clearing away toys and turning off the television to prevent distractions.

## 2 Make a Schedule

Most kids thrive on routine. A schedule helps children know what to expect. Talking with the child in your home about the schedule each day can be especially helpful. The great thing about SIS resources is that they can support a variety of subjects and be incorporated into the schedule you have already established. For example, if you already have reading time in your schedule, you can use our resource that has students reading questions from old census questionnaires.

## 3 Prepare Your Materials in Advance

Getting kids to stay focused can be challenging. To maximize the time you spend with your child, have all the materials for each activity ready to

go before you start. Read through the teaching guide to see what websites you may need to visit and have them open in your browser. In most cases, you can have a child read the activity on the screen and write down answers, but feel free to print the worksheet if preferred. Gather any other materials that are listed in the teaching guide. The great thing is that all the materials are common items that most of us have at home.

## 4 Be Part of the Fun

Model what it looks like to get excited about learning new things. Your excitement for learning will boost children's enthusiasm for learning and for using SIS resources by making connections to your life.

## 5 Connect With Others

Be creative about connecting with other parents and caregivers and helping your child connect with other children. For example, host a video chat with a group of parents who are also using SIS resources and talk through how you have used them at home and what has worked for you. Set up a video call for a group of children who are doing the same activities to talk through their answers on the student worksheet. Have your child use the phone, email, or video chat to do the Home Extension assignment at the end of each activity with extended family members.

## Find More!

The following activities are adapted for at-home use, but feel free to explore more great home and distance learning activities on the SIS [website](#).

# Quick and Easy Resources

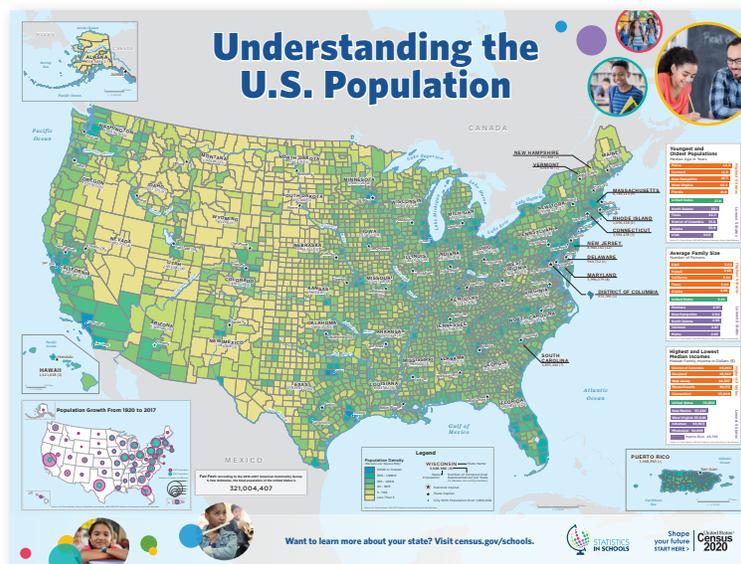
## The 2020 Census Challenge

- **URL:** [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/videos/census-challenge.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/videos/census-challenge.html)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 15 minutes
- **Description:** This video has the children in your home play a trivia game with questions about census facts. Now that the 2020 Census response period is over, the next phase is the release of the data.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - Pause the video after each question and have your child write their answer. Even better, play along with them and write down your answers as well.
- **Extension:**
  - After your child has played the trivia game alone or with an adult in your home, have them call a friend or family member to quiz them about the census trivia they just learned.
  - Have your child use one of the **Fun Facts** activities to write their own trivia questions. Then have them quiz someone else about their knowledge of the topic.



## SIS Middle School Map: Understanding the U.S. Population

- **URL:** [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/2020-maps/understanding-us-pop-middle.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/2020-maps/understanding-us-pop-middle.html)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 25 minutes
- **Description:** This map shows your child data on all states, including information on the states with the youngest and oldest populations, the largest and smallest average family size, and the highest and lowest median income.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - Have your child find the state and county where they live. Have them talk about the density of the place where you live and how they see that in their community.
- **Extension:**
  - Using the map as a reference, have your child name as many of the state capitals as they can. Have your child then look for the names of the remaining state capitals on the map.
  - Have your child use data from the map to choose a state or area of the nation where they would like to live as an adult. Ask them to explain the reasons for their choice. For example, did they prefer more heavily populated areas? Areas with higher incomes? Areas with a smaller average family size?



## The Amazing Apportionment Machine Warm-Up Activity

- **URL:** [www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/apportionment-machine-warm-up.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/apportionment-machine-warm-up.pdf)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 5-10 minutes
- **Description:** The animated video and worksheet teach your children that apportionment is the process of dividing the seats in the House of Representatives among the 50 states based on the population data collected during the decennial census.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - No at-home adaptation is needed. The child should watch the video and answer the questions.
- **Extension:**
  - After your child completes the warm-up activity, have them find out how many representatives there are for your state. Or if you live in a territory, discuss with your child how your territory is governed.
  - Have your child look at the **SIS middle school map (Understanding the U.S. Population)** and ask them to predict what changes will occur to congressional apportionments based on results of the 2020 Census. Ask your child to list the states that will most likely lose representatives and the states that will most likely gain representatives. Have them explain what they based their predictions on.



**5<sup>th</sup> Minute Challenge:**  
The Amazing Apportionment Machine  
Warm-Up Activity

While watching "The Amazing Apportionment Machine Animated Video," [www.census.gov/schools/resources/videos/apportionment-machine.html](http://www.census.gov/schools/resources/videos/apportionment-machine.html), answer the following questions:

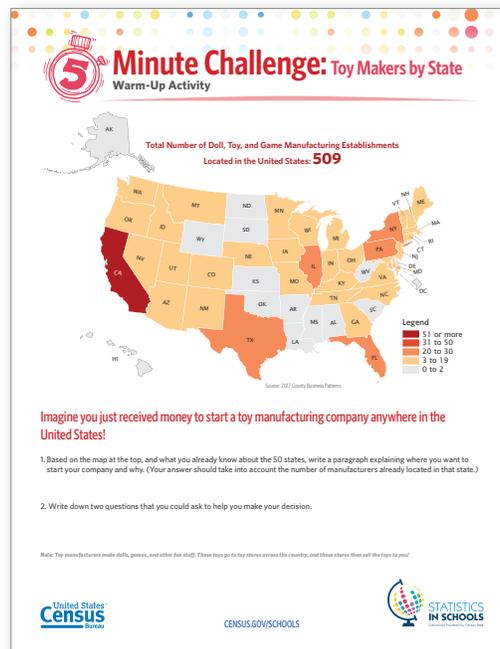
1. What is apportionment?
2. Since the \_\_\_\_\_ Census, Congress has used the Method of Equal Proportions.
3. According to the Constitution, each state should have at least \_\_\_\_\_ representative(s) or seat(s)?
4. How many total seats are in the House of Representatives?
5. Why is the apportionment formula used?
6. How many people did each House member represent in 1790 and 2000?
7. What is the purpose of apportionment?

Bonus Question: When will the next apportionment take place?

United States Census Bureau  
CENSUS.GOV/SCHOOLS  
STATISTICS IN SCHOOLS

## Toy Makers by State Warm-Up Activity

- **URL:** [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/warm-up-activities/toy\\_makers.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/warm-up-activities/toy_makers.html)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 5-10 minutes
- **Description:** This quick activity teaches your child about the number of toy manufacturing establishments in the United States. Your child will be asked to imagine starting their own toy manufacturing company and to decide where to start it and why.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - No at-home adaptation is needed.
- **Extension:**
  - Help your child use **State Facts for Students** to find the actual number of toy stores in your state.
  - Ask your child to find out whether the number of toy stores in your state grew from 2000 to 2010. Then have them look to see if the population for your state grew or decreased from 2000 to 2010. Ask them how they think population change could impact various businesses and in what ways.



# Activities

## Featured Activity: Exploring Questions for the 2020 Census (Grades 7-8)

- **URL:** [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/k-12/exploring-questions-2020-census.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/k-12/exploring-questions-2020-census.html)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 45 minutes
- **Description:** Use this activity to introduce your child to the census. It focuses on how the decennial census benefits students, their families, and their communities. It lists the questions asked in the 2020 Census and explains why each question is important.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - Instead of dividing students into groups to examine census questions, tell your child to choose a category (age, race, relationship, sex, or housing tenure) and create a drawing or collage that represents the importance of that category. Instead of brainstorming as a group, have your child jot down thoughts about the importance of the data that is derived from that category. Then have them share their findings and their answers to the discussion questions with an adult in your home or with a peer online or by phone.
- **Extension:**
  - Tell your child who completed the 2020 Census for everyone in your home. Then tell your child how that person completed it—online, by phone, or by mail. Explain to your child that this year, everyone has the option of responding to the census online. Ask your child why they think having the census available online is important. Then ask how they would choose to respond (online, by phone, or by mail) and why.
  - Have your child interview an older family member or family friend. They should start by asking that person what year they were born. Then they will create a timeline that starts with the year of the first census in which that person was counted and includes a dot for every decennial census year through the 2020 Census. Your child should ask the person they are interviewing for information about each census in which they were counted, such as where they lived and how many people lived with them. Have your child get creative about drawing pictures or using the computer to show each decennial census on the timeline.

**2020 CENSUS STUDENT ACTIVITY**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Featured Activity: Exploring Questions for the 2020 Census

1. In **Activity Item: Questions Planned for the 2020 Census**, read the information on your group's category closely and identify the main ideas. As a group, determine why this information is important and draw conclusions based on the data for your category provided by your teacher. Record your answers in the table below.

Category	Data Collected	Why is that information important?
Age	Percentage (%) of the population in your age range (ask one for the group)	
Race	Percentage (%) of the population with no race listed	
Relationship	Percentage (%) of the population who are nonrelatives of the householder	
Sex	Percentage (%) of the population that is male and percentage (%) of the population that is female	
Housing Tenure	Percentage (%) of renter-occupied housing units	

Classrooms Powered by Census Data

## Diversity: Census Questions Over Time (Grades 7-8)

- **URL:** [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/k-12/exploring-questions-2020-census.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/k-12/exploring-questions-2020-census.html)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 45 minutes
- **Description:** Your child will analyze historical data on race and ethnicity in the United States. They will talk about why it is important for the U.S. Census Bureau to collect this data. Finally, they will identify trends by looking at data from 2000 and 2010.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - Instead of working with classmates to answer the questions on the worksheet, your child will work independently or with other children in your home. Instead of discussing the conclusion questions in groups, your child can write answers to those questions or discuss them with family members.
- **Extension:**
  - Have your child complete the Home Extension activity with you or another adult. Then ask your child what race and ethnicity they would fill in for themselves on the 2020 Census form and why.
  - Have your child answer the following questions: What questions would you add to the census? Why do you think your questions are important to include? What kinds of data would we learn about people and communities from your questions? Are there any questions on the 2020 Census form that you would remove? Why?

### 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.

**2020 CENSUS  
TEACHER'S  
GUIDE**

**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.



STATISTICS  
IN SCHOOLS

Classrooms Powered by Census Data



Shape  
your future  
START HERE



United States  
Census  
2020

## Apportionment (Grades 7-8)

- **URL:** [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/k-12/apportionment-grade-7-8.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources/k-12/apportionment-grade-7-8.html)
- **Approximate Time Required:** 35 minutes
- **Description:** Your child will learn what congressional apportionment is, how it works, why it's important, and how it relates to the decennial census.
- **At-Home Adaptation:**
  - Discuss with your child the differences between a popular vote and an electoral vote. (You'll be unable to complete the opening voting activity without multiple children.) Your child can watch the video and complete the corresponding worksheet on their own. Discuss closing questions together.
- **Extension:**
  - For the beginning of the lesson, help your child take a vote in your home on a hot topic: For example, should your child have a curfew? Should they get an allowance? Or you can help your child conduct a vote with a group of friends to re-create the opening classroom activity.
  - Have your child pick two other countries and learn how they elect their leaders. Do they use a representation system like the U.S. or a popular vote?

**2020 CENSUS  
STUDENT  
ACTIVITY**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Apportionment

Reference **Activity Item: Congressional Apportionment** to answer the questions below.

1. How many representatives are apportioned for your state, based on 2010 data?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Choose three other states. Record how many representatives each state was allotted in 2010.

State 1:	Number of representatives:
State 2:	Number of representatives:
State 3:	Number of representatives:

3. Look at the four states you selected and record the number of representatives allotted to each state in the years indicated on the table. Calculate the rate of change from 1950 to 2010.

State	1950	1970	1990	2010	Rate of change from 1950 to 2010



STATISTICS  
IN SCHOOLS

Classrooms Powered by Census Data

Shape  
your future  
START HERE >



## Next Steps

The fun isn't over yet! Check out the new Home and Distance Learning Activities page for more resources:

[www.census.gov/content/census/en/programs-surveys/sis/activities/distance-learning.html](https://www.census.gov/content/census/en/programs-surveys/sis/activities/distance-learning.html)

Then do your part by spreading the word about the importance of census data by:

- Telling your fellow parents and caregivers about this great toolkit and the resources SIS has to offer.
- Reaching out to your child's teachers and administrators to tell them all about the SIS program.

