

Educator Update

Census In Schools



October 2009

Census in Schools Week

With Census Day — April 1, 2010 — less than six months away, many teachers are actively involved in teaching the Census in Schools lessons and planning projects to inform their students about the census. Many schools and individual teachers also have begun to designate their own "Census in Schools" week to take place sometime between the end of January 2010 through the end of March 2010. This week will be dedicated to 2010 census lessons and related activities to teach the entire school body and/or individual classes about the census.

To support this week, in mid-January 2010, the Census Bureau will send to every K-8 school principal in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas student-take-home materials in English and Spanish and will post on < www.census.gov/schools > five mini lessons that highlight the census.

Partnership staff in the Census Bureau's regional census centers stand ready to make presentations and to assist in these events at schools and in classrooms. You can locate the address of the center that serves your area by going to < <http://www.census.gov/field/www/> >. Contact your regional census center today to arrange for a speaker for your 2010 "Census in Schools" week.

2010 Census Lesson Plans – Map Literacy Strand

Map literacy is an important life survival skill and an objective that national, state and local standards address on all grade levels. Thus, the "Map Literacy" strand for "It's About Us" K-8 teaching guides contains lessons that include map skills and activities across the curriculum that teach real-life problem-solving skills.

The following summary captures highlights of the lessons, providing educators with a brief look at the activities.

Grades K-2

The title "Then and Now" and the vocabulary words "change" and "population" provide direct insight into the direction of this lesson. After a brief discussion about the topic of change, students participate in a concrete representation of the reasons for change in a community.



Use of wall maps is differentiated for kindergarten and grades 1-2. All grades use grade-level appropriate activities for students to examine the concept of change in geographical borders, and grades 1 and 2 make comparisons and contrasts, examining the growth of the U.S. population.

Two student worksheets provide an opportunity for math skill development, civic understanding,

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and students' personal creative participation. A bonus question provides a journal-writing opportunity for older students, and worksheet space for a self-portrait promotes direct student involvement.

Grades 3-4

The "Then and Now" lesson for grades 3-4 refreshes students' map-reading skills and directs students to examine and compare population growth and median ages in their state and the U.S. Students work in pairs to answer student worksheet questions and, as a class, discuss what the data tells them about population growth and the importance of the census.

A second student worksheet provides an opportunity for research as pairs of students work online to compare census data from two time periods and from two different states in the same time period. Application of knowledge is in the form of a diorama, mobile, or showing the information.

The wrap-up includes a third student worksheet so that students can interview an adult at home to learn about his/her experiences with past censuses.

Grades 5-6

"Map Data and the Census" leads students to study change in the spatial organization of U.S. society and examines the historical connection between the nation's change and the census questions. Students read an article and answer reading comprehension questions. Also, they outline and discuss the country's historical changes since the first census was taken in 1790.

Students use a wall map to identify local data about population change and look at issues such as population density. Student worksheets provide

an opportunity for students to interview adults about their past census participation and include an action extension challenging students to accompany an adult to a civic meeting to encourage community participation in the 2010 Census.

Grades 7-8

"Map Data and the Census" offers cross-curricular opportunities in geography and economics as students examine a variety of factors that influence population density and growth. The lesson opens with a brief discussion about representation and the relationship between a correct population count by the 2010 Census and states' representation in the House of Representatives.

Worksheet activities include the use of a U.S. demographic map to examine such topics as median age, median family income, and average family size. Students work in small groups to compare state and county data and to answer questions about county data related to age, household, race, and gender. An action extension challenging student participation in the 2010 Census completes the lesson.

Grades 9-12

"Mapping the Census" directs students to explore a map as a tool for the visual representation of data. After listing the similarities and differences between several maps, students use a worksheet and visit the American FactFinder site to gather data, generate a data set for each state, and arrange the data by ranges to generate data tables and a map.

"Reshaping the Nation" teaches students new ways to represent data with emphasis on the cartogram. Students discuss the value of a cartogram compared to a conventional map and

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examine possible uses by government and political candidates for this creative, efficient representation of data. The student worksheet includes a cartogram representation of the U.S. median income by state with related questions. In upcoming issues, we will highlight another strand of the Kindergarten through Grade 8 2010 Census in Schools lesson plans.

High School Teachers ONLY!!

We've got your Community Participation strand covered! Grades 9-12 "It's About Us" lesson plans are now on the Internet; henceforward we'll include grades 9-12 in our thumbnail sketches of each strand's lessons. Meanwhile, the following summary provides an overview of high school lessons 9 and 10 that address the Community Participation strand discussed for grades K-8 in last month's teacher newsletter.

Lesson 9, "The Role of Individuals and Groups in the Census," assists students to explore the roles of individuals, government agencies, and partner groups in the success of the 2010 Census. After using provided Web sites to research the ways that individuals and groups participate in the census, students complete a worksheet chart and discuss their findings in the class.

In lesson 10, "Getting Active in the Census," students learn that undercounts can affect the distribution of federal funds and possibly result in political misrepresentation. Therefore, students explore various ways they can personally and actively participate in the 2010 Census. The student worksheet directs students to work in groups to answer questions and develop a chart with specific tasks and dates to develop an action plan that encourages community participation in the census.

Contact Census in Schools

If you would like to share any thoughts or ideas about ways to introduce the 2010 Census to your students, please call 1-800-396-1167 or e-mail us at: <Census.in.Schools@census.gov>.

Additional information about Census in Schools can be found at our Web site: <<http://www.census.gov/schools>>.

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