



CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER

The 2010 Census: You Count!

LESSON PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

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The 2010 Census: You Count! Lesson Plan and Activities

Grade Level: 4, 5, 6

Subject(s):

- Social Studies: United States Government, Local Government.

Duration: 1 class session and 1 homework assignment

Description: This lesson provides an overview of the U.S. Census, explains its relevance, and emphasizes the importance of each household's completion of census forms.

Goals:

Illinois Learning Standards

A. Social Science: 14A, 14B, 14C, 14D.

Objectives:

1. Learn about the census and why participation is important.
2. Understand how census data affects communities.

Materials:

1. Handout: "Census 2010 Activity Sheet"
2. Pencils
3. Blackboard with chalk or whiteboard with marker

Instruction and Activities:

What is a "census"?

- Instruct students to write down their understanding of a "census."
- Have students share their definitions.
- Now read the definition and explain the lecture points, writing the points on the board as you go along.

Lecture Points

- A "census" is an official count of a population.
- A census must be taken in the United States every ten years. It is required under the U.S. Constitution and is a count of everyone residing in the United States, including all fifty states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas.
- All residents must be counted: all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens and non-citizens.
- The census plays a major role in shaping the future of schools and communities.
- The census also plays a role in shaping Congress and affects taxes.

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In-Class Activity

- Divide the class into groups and pass out the Activity Sheet.
- Instruct the groups to review the questions on the Activity Sheet.
- Have each group select one member to record answers on the Activity Sheet and one member to read the completed answers out loud when the class regroups.
- Allow fifteen minutes for the groups to discuss the questions and complete the Activity Sheet.
- Instruct the class that you will be asking each group for their answer to each question and rotate around the room.
- After each group has given their answers, read and explain the correct answer.

Assignment

Have the students bring the Activity Sheet home and have their parents read and sign the sheet. The students should then return the sheet in the next class period for credit. In actual census years, bringing the sheet to parents' attention will increase awareness of the census and its importance; this activity should be conducted shortly before Census Day in actual census years.

Sources Consulted

Census Bureau website: www.census.gov

U.S. Constitution.

Census 2010 Activity Sheet
ANSWERS

1. Are you counted in the Census?

Yes. The Census is required to count EVERYONE residing in the United States.

2. What is Census data used for?

Census data guides planning for essential community resources, such as new hospitals and roads, the construction of new schools, etc.

3. Can anyone access Census information?

No. There are specific laws preventing census answers from being released. Census workers take an *oath for life* to protect confidentiality of census responses.

4. How does the Census make sure everyone is counted?

The Census Bureau mails or delivers questionnaires to every home in March of the census year. The questions ask each household to provide information that is accurate on the date of April 1 of the census year.

The person in charge of the household should complete the questionnaire on behalf of every person residing there; only one questionnaire is completed per household.

If a household does not respond to the first questionnaire, the Census Bureau mails a second form to the home

If a household does not respond to census mailings, then a census worker will call or visit the home. Census workers wear census badges to identify themselves.

5. What is Census Day? When is the next Census Day?

Census Day is the day on which census questionnaires should be filled out. The last Census Day was April 1, 2010; the next Census Day will be in the year 2020.