



Guide for Teachers

Campaign for an Accurate 2020 Census

Teachers: A Valuable Role

The goal of the 2020 Census is to count every person living in the United States and five U.S. territories—once, only once, and in the right place.

The census is conducted every 10 years by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency.

The results of the census determine congressional representation as well as **federal funding** for states and communities. More than \$675 billion goes toward hospitals, fire departments, **schools**, roads, etc. every year based on census statistics.¹

Due to a variety of factors, the families of your students may not feel comfortable filling out the census. This misconception is detrimental to communities, as the census determines government representation, funding, and federal grants.

- Speakers of languages other than English are among the most likely to be excluded from census figures²
- Their exclusion not only undermines the democracy of the U.S., it also results in the misallocation of millions of dollars of federal and other aid.
- Federal law (92 Stat. 915; Public Law 95-416; October 5, 1978) prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing an individual's census responses with other government agencies, including immigration authorities and other law enforcement, until **72 years after the information is collected.**³
- Educators are trusted by limited-English-speaking minorities, making them the ideal messengers.
- Bilingual and world language teachers can convince limited-English speakers that completing the census **WILL NOT JEOPARDIZE** their status.
- **Educators can help** respondents access the web pages for census completion in the 11 languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Tagalog,

and Vietnamese) for which the paper option is not available.

- The U.S. Constitution empowers the Congress to carry out the census in “such manner as they shall by Law direct” (Article I, Section 2). The founders of our nation had an ambitious plan to count every person living in the newly created United States of America, and to use that count to determine representation in the Congress.⁴
- **Children suffer the most through undercounting:** The Census Bureau admits that as many as 5% of children under age five were missed in 2010.⁵ This not only decreases the money allocated to a state through various federal grants, but also reduces some services, including Head Start, which provides early childhood education to low-income families. The impact is multiplied when an undercount fails to provide enough money, resulting in fewer places in the program, and the **underfunding lasts for 10 YEARS!**

Census in the Classroom

The following guide can be explained or handed out to your classroom to inform students and their parents and guardians about the importance of participating in the 2020 census.

The topic can be tied into many classrooms, such as language and linguistic courses, history, and civics.

References

1. <https://2020census.gov/en>
2. <ftp://ftp.census.gov/cac/nac/meetings/2016-11/2016-04-latino-children.pdf>
3. https://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/decennial_census_records/the_72_year_rule_1.html
4. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/census-constitution.html>
5. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/one-million-missing-undercount-of-young-kids-in-2020-census-threatens-gains/>

Provided by Language Magazine,
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