



2021 CENSUS

Teacher's Kit

(2023 Reissue)

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Dear Educator:

The **2021 Census Teacher’s Kit (2023 Reissue)** has been developed for use in elementary, intermediate and secondary classes across the country. The kit includes four activities that are appropriate for many subjects, including mathematics, social studies, and English or French language studies. These activities also include “next steps” ideas to help connect the subjects with concepts in the sciences and creative arts.

All activities are classroom-ready and have been reviewed to meet curriculum requirements. Through these exercises, students will gain an understanding of what the census is used for, how it is conducted, and the role it has played in shaping present-day Canada. For younger children, the kit includes a fun colouring activity that will allow them to practise counting and exercise their fine motor skills.

The 2021 Teacher’s Kit was originally launched in advance of the 2021 Census. This newly updated version, released in 2023, includes recent data from the 2021 Census.

If you have questions or comments about the 2021 Census Teacher’s Kit, please contact [Census Communications](#).

A digital download of the 2021 Census Teacher’s Kit is available on the [Census Engagement webpage](#).

Teacher's Guide



Introduction

This guide contains useful information for educators who are teaching their classes about the census or who are incorporating activities from the 2021 Census Teacher's Kit into their programs. It contains an overview of the activities included in the kit and background information on the Census of Population and the Census of Agriculture.

Additional information about the 2021 Census of Population can be found on the [Census Engagement webpage](#), and on the [Census Program page](#) of the Statistics Canada website.

Additional information about the 2021 Census of Agriculture can be found on the [Agriculture and food statistics page](#) of the Statistics Canada website.

This kit is designed to

- provide you with ready-to-use activities that make subjects like mathematics and social studies come to life in a fun and dynamic way
- give you and your students access to valuable census data tools for your research projects
- help your students relate to an important part of our Canadian heritage and gain a new perspective on their community.

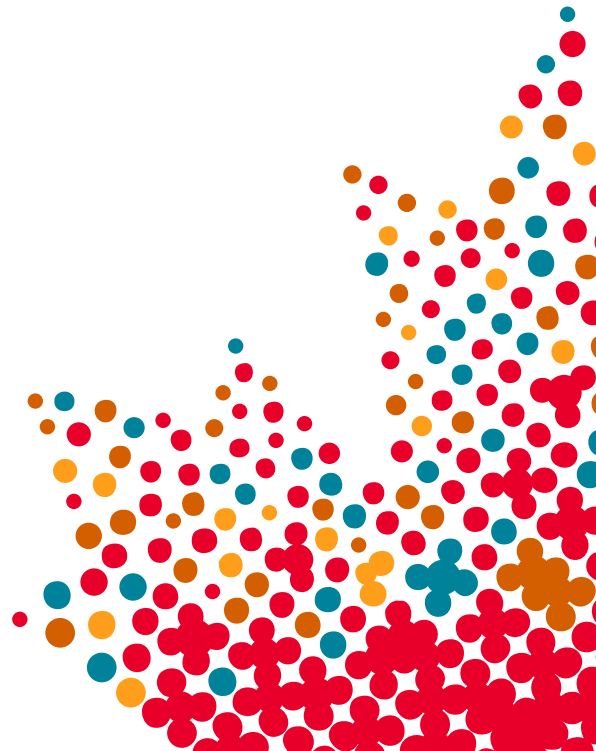
Planning

This Toolkit reflects data and concepts from the 2021 Census. Teachers are also encouraged to use these activities and concepts, and statistics obtained through the census, throughout the school year.

Teacher-ready activities target five suggested grade levels, and an overview of these activities is provided below for planning purposes. Suggestions are provided, but educators should feel free to adapt activities to their program and student needs.

Each activity plan includes the following:

- **Overview:** A short paragraph outlining what the students will be doing in the activity.
- **Suggested grade level:** A recommended grade range for the activity.
- **Estimated completion time:** An estimate of how long the three-part activity should take to complete with a group of students. Activities range from 75 to 120 minutes of total in-class time, with suggestions for “next steps” to follow. Teachers are encouraged to add or omit sections to meet their classroom needs.
- **Objectives:** A set of census-specific learning goals for each activity.
- **Subject-specific learning objectives:** A set of cross-curricular learning goals for each activity.
- **Materials:** A list of general classroom supplies, online resources and handouts to support each activity. Handouts may include reference material, worksheets or visual aids.
- **Vocabulary:** A list of key terms and definitions related to census concepts.
- **Three-part activity plan:**
 - **Part 1: Getting started**—a brief suggestion for a warm-up activity to help students begin to think about the topics that will be explored in later parts of the activity.
 - **Part 2: Activity**—a set of step-by-step instructions for teachers.
 - **Part 3: Consolidation of learning**—a task for students to complete to demonstrate their learning.
- **Modifications:** A short list of organizational, instructional and enrichment strategies to help teachers accommodate a range of student needs and interests.
- **Next steps:** A short list of extension activities to further investigate or apply census concepts in the classroom after the main activity has been completed.



Overview of activities



Stand-alone activity: Colour and count

Suggested grade level: Kindergarten and Grade 1

Kindergarteners and primary-level students will practise their counting skills while colouring. They will learn that they can count objects in a picture, just as the census counts people. There are three colouring themes to choose from: Enumerating communities, The North and Counting Canada.

Activity 1: Counting classmates

Suggested grade level: Grades 2 to 4

Primary and junior-level students will learn about collecting data to better understand a group of people. They will gather information and compare their findings with simplified statistics derived from the 2021 Census.

Activity 2: Our class, our community

Suggested grade level: Grades 5 and 6

Junior-level students will think about their class as a community and will consider how they are similar to other small groups of people who live in Canada. They will learn how data can be used to make sure people in communities have services to support their needs. They will make decisions for their class community, using survey data to inform those decisions.

Activity 3: Food, feed and function

**Suggested grade level: Grades 7 to 9
(Secondary 1 to 3)**

Intermediate-level students will learn about the Census of Agriculture and the difference between food, feed and function. They will investigate current data from the Census of Agriculture and become familiar with some of the agricultural products from their region. They will consider geographic factors that contribute to the success of these products and compare their region's production with that of other regions in Canada.

Activity 4: 92 years from now

**Suggested grade level: Grades 10 to 12
(Secondary 3 to 5)**

Senior-level students will investigate some of the questions asked in the census, using the 2021 Census as a tool. They will think critically about the census questionnaire and consider how information gathered from the census would be useful to past and future generations. They will also be asked to create their own census questions.

Resources



A variety of resources are available to inform students, their families and educators about the Census of Population.

Included in this kit

- **Quick census facts** that can be reproduced and sent home with students to help spread the census message.
- **The Census of Population fact sheet**, which is primarily for the teacher's reference and provides a more detailed description of the census and its history.
- **Census vocabulary** that can be reproduced or used as a central reference for basic definitions of census terminology.

Additional resources

- [Library and Archives Canada collections databases](#) contain information provided by Library and Archives Canada. Educators can search and access images, videos, articles, statistics and other featured resources about Canada and its history.
- [Statistics Canada's data repository](#) is an online socioeconomic database of statistics obtained through various Canadian surveys and census questionnaires. Statistics Canada encourages people to download and reuse its data.
- [The Census of Agriculture survey page](#) is an online resource for both general and specific information about the Census of Agriculture, including archived versions of census questionnaires and data from previous years.
- [The Census of Population survey page](#) is an online resource for both general and specific information about the Census of Population, including data sources, methods used by the census and archived versions of census questionnaires.
- [The Indigenous Liaison Program](#) serves as a bridge between Statistics Canada and First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, and Indigenous organizations. Program objectives include increasing understanding of and access to Statistics Canada's data, products and services, and helping to build the statistical capacity of Indigenous peoples and organizations.

Quick census facts



What is the census?

The Census of Population provides a statistical picture of Canada and its people. Almost every country in the world conducts a census on a regular basis.

The Census of Population collects information, in five-year intervals, on every person living in Canada, with some exceptions. For more details, refer to the section “Who will be included in the census?”

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years, at the same time as the Census of Population. The Census of Agriculture collects information on every agricultural operation in Canada.

When will the next census be held?

The next census will take place in May 2026 throughout the country.

Why conduct the census?

The census collects important information that is used for making decisions.

It is the primary source of sociodemographic data for specific population groups, such as lone-parent families, Indigenous peoples, immigrants, seniors and language groups.

According to the *Statistics Act*, a census must be conducted **every five years**, and **every household** in Canada must participate.

Privacy and confidentiality

In Canada, great care is taken to ensure that information collected in the census is clearly in the public interest and cannot be obtained effectively from other sources.

Statistics Canada places the highest priority on maintaining the confidentiality of individual questionnaires. Stringent instructions and procedures have been implemented to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times. For instance, census data are processed and stored on a highly restricted internal network and cannot be accessed by anyone who has not taken an oath of secrecy.

Who will be included in the census?

Included in the census are Canadian citizens, landed immigrants (permanent residents), people who have claimed refugee status (asylum seekers), and people from another country with a work or study permit and family members living here with them.

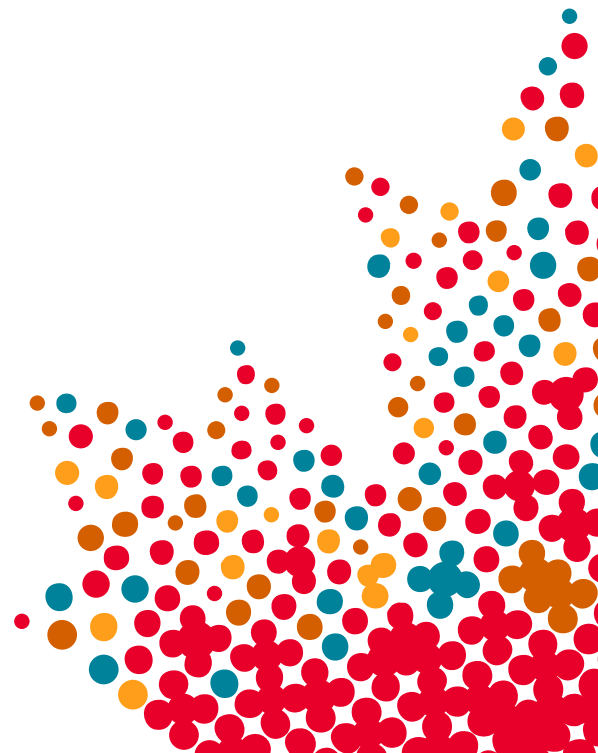
How can I complete the questionnaire?

Most households will receive a letter, delivered by Canada Post or hand-delivered by a census employee, that invites them to complete the census questionnaire online.

Completing the questionnaire online helps to improve data quality, saves time for respondents and reduces paper waste.

Who uses census data?

All levels of government, Indigenous communities, the private sector, social services sectors and other organizations use census data to make informed decisions that affect the lives of everyone in Canada.



Census of Population fact sheet



Census of Population

Statistics Canada conducts the Census of Population every five years. The last census was conducted in May 2021. The next census will be conducted in May 2026.

Census history

Census taking is not a new concept. During the third and fourth centuries BCE, the Babylonians, Chinese and Egyptians enumerated their populations to collect taxes and to fight foreign wars. The Romans were avid census takers and regularly held censuses to learn about areas in their far-reaching empire.

In contrast to early censuses, later censuses became more than just a way to levy taxes or to muster men for fighting. They were seen as an inquiry into the social and economic state of the nation.

The first “Canadian” census was taken in 1666, in New France, by Intendant Jean Talon. Sent by Louis XIV to administer the colony of New France, Talon recognized the importance of having reliable information with which to organize the colony and further its development.

The recorded population (excluding Indigenous people and royal troops) was 3,215. Information was obtained on age, sex, marital status and locality. In addition, the census identified professions and trades for 763 people.

No fewer than 36 censuses were conducted in New France. Each one introduced new questions on topics such as the production of various crops; the number of public buildings, churches, gristmills and sawmills; and the number of firearms and swords.

The first census under the British regime was taken in 1765 and asked many of the same questions as the censuses in the latter part of the French regime. As time passed, new topics appeared on the census, such as race, ethnicity, religion and place of birth.

During the 1800s, separate censuses were held at various times in the Atlantic colonies, in Upper and Lower Canada, and in Manitoba. In 1867, the *British North America Act* (now called the *Constitution Act*) brought about Confederation and called for a Census of Canada to be taken every 10 years, starting in 1871. Census results would be used to determine the number of members in the House of Commons.

A mid-decade agricultural census was first held in Manitoba in 1896.

When the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta were created in 1905, the increasingly rapid settlement of the west made the quinquennial (every five years) census a constitutional requirement. A new *Census and Statistics Act* called for additional censuses of population and agriculture to be taken in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1906 and every 10 years after that until the population of each of the three provinces reached 1.25 million. These censuses continued until 1956, when Canada began taking national censuses of population and agriculture every five years.

A census every five years

In 1956, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics began taking national censuses every five years to provide up-to-date information on the nation's rapidly changing population. The mid-decade census was made mandatory in the *Statistics Act* of 1971.

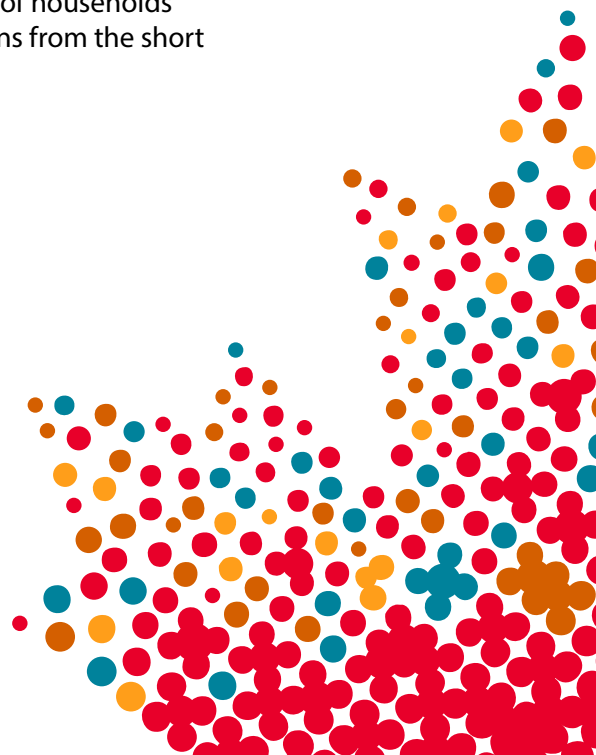
How is the census taken?

In May 2021, every household in Canada was asked to complete a census questionnaire, either online or on paper. Just under 15 million households participated.

Questionnaires

In 2021, Statistics Canada encouraged households to complete their census questionnaire online. The benefits of completing a questionnaire online include improved data quality, time savings for respondents and less paper use. Paper questionnaires and alternative format questionnaires (e.g., large print or braille) were available upon request. In 2021, the census form was submitted online by 84.1% of private dwellings, compared to 68.3% in 2016.

Every household in Canada is required to complete a census questionnaire. Most households received the short-form questionnaire. However, a sample of households received the long-form questionnaire, which also included the questions from the short form.



Short-form census questionnaire

The short-form census questionnaire collects basic information on every person living in Canada, with some exceptions.

Long-form census questionnaire

The long-form census questionnaire collects detailed social and economic information about our communities, and provides data for small geographic areas and small population groups. This information is needed to help plan public services such as schools, daycares, family services, public transportation and skills training for employment.

How are the census questions determined?

Determining census content is an ongoing process that involves user consultations, content testing and content approval for the short-form and long-form questionnaires.

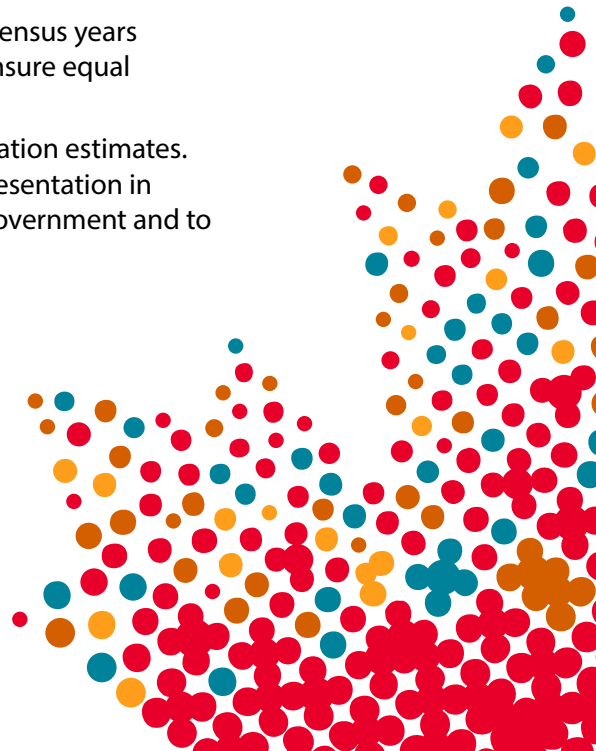
Before each census, Statistics Canada conducts user consultations and testing to determine the census questions, taking emerging social and economic issues into account. Results from the user consultation feed into the content testing process. This is followed by the development of recommendations on final questionnaire content and the subsequent approval process.

The final questions are presented to and approved by Cabinet and are then published in the *Canada Gazette*.

Who uses census data?

Governments, Indigenous leadership, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others use census data. The following are some examples:

- The federal government uses population counts from certain census years to realign the boundaries of federal electoral districts and to ensure equal representation of the population in the House of Commons.
- Demographic data from the census are used to produce population estimates. In turn, these population estimates are used to determine representation in Parliament, to calculate transfer payments between levels of government and to support various government programs across the country.



- Government departments use census data to determine population age trends to estimate future demand for child tax benefits and Old Age Security pensions.
- Indigenous leadership uses census information on Indigenous languages to assess the need for services in traditional languages and to create programs to support the learning and growth of these languages in their community.
- Communities use census information on population growth and movement to plan services such as schools, daycares, police services and fire protection services.
- Town planners, social welfare workers and other government agencies use census information on families.
- Life insurance companies base their premium tables on census age data.
- Businesses determine new factory, store and office locations based largely on the size and distribution of the population in different areas, which are determined through census data.
- Manufacturers of household and farm equipment use census data in determining the best market locations for their products. They can also assess the benefits of developing specific products by knowing the characteristics of the population in particular areas.

More than a civic responsibility?

It is vital that decision makers have accurate information when making policies that will shape our country's future. For this reason, answering census questions is more than a civic responsibility—it is required by law. The *Statistics Act* states the legal obligation of every household to participate in the census. Under the same law, Statistics Canada must protect the confidentiality of the personal information provided by respondents.

Privacy and confidentiality

In Canada, great care is taken to ensure that information collected in the census is clearly in the public interest and cannot be obtained effectively from other sources.

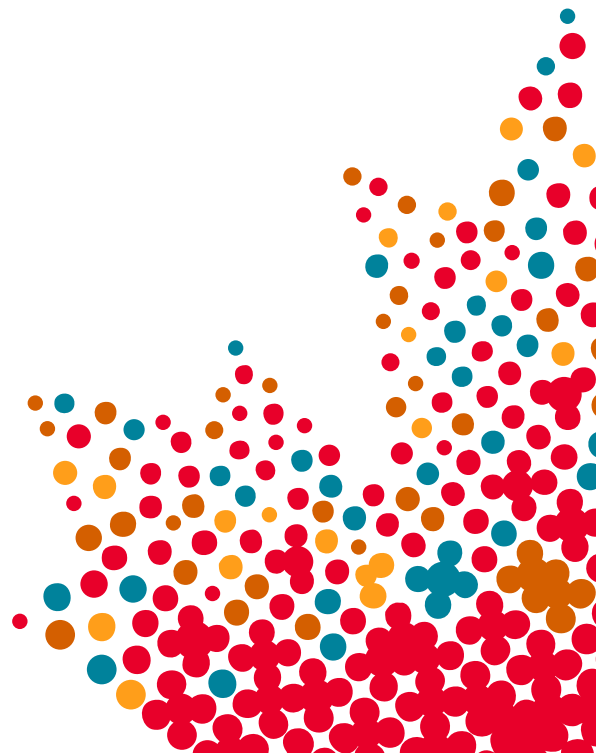
Statistics Canada places the highest priority on maintaining the confidentiality of individual questionnaires. Stringent instructions and procedures have been implemented to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times. For instance, census data are processed and stored on a highly restricted internal network and cannot be accessed by anyone who has not taken an oath of secrecy.



Resources for census material

Census information can be obtained free of charge in many libraries. Academic and large city libraries have a full range of Statistics Canada products in a variety of media formats, while others carry a selection of publications.

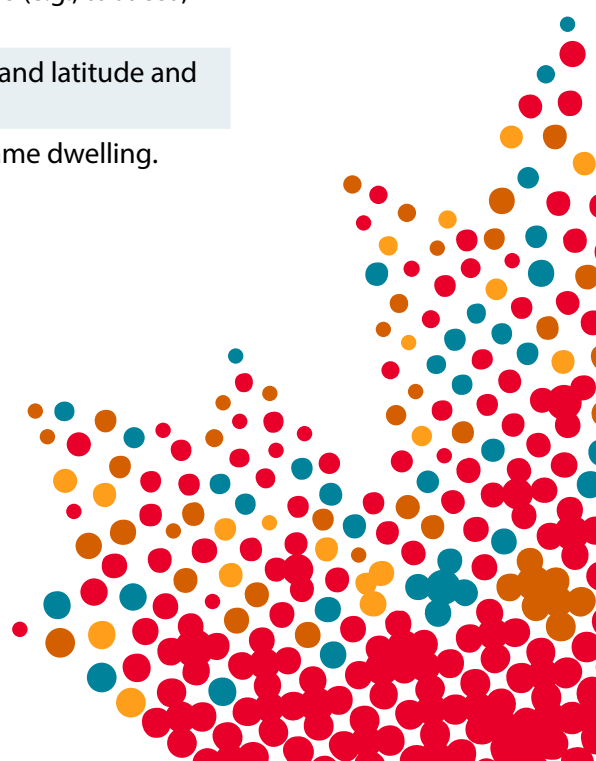
To find specific information about your city, town or community, go to the Statistics Canada website (www.statcan.gc.ca), select the **Census** tab, select **Census of Population**, and then select **2021 Census Profile**.



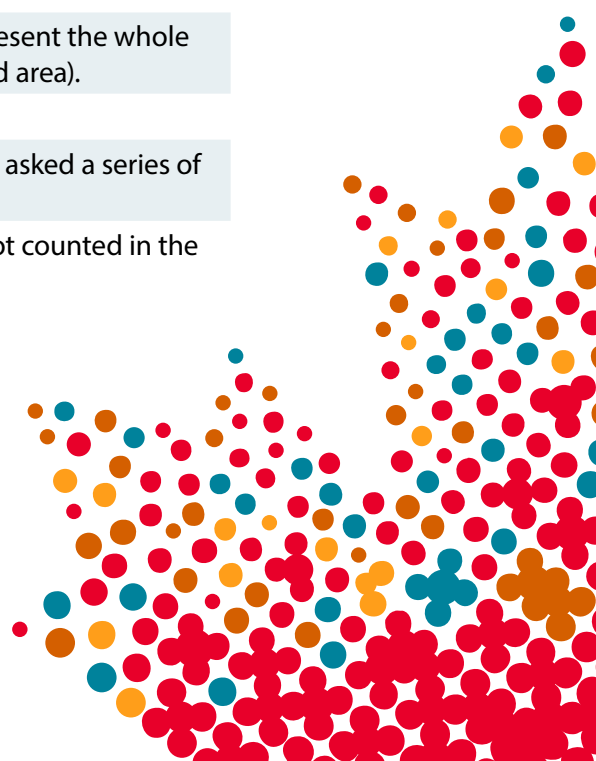
Census Vocabulary

Agriculture	see Census of Agriculture.
Census	A collection of information from every household in a country, on topics that are important to that country, that is used to help all levels of government, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others make decisions
Census agglomeration (CA)	An area that includes one or more municipalities that are centred on a major urban core of at least 10,000 people (e.g., Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island).
Census data	information that comes from the census.
Census division (CD)	A group of municipalities that are next to each other and that work together for regional planning and to manage shared services, such as police or ambulance services. These divisions are smaller than a province, but larger than a census subdivision.
Census farm	A farm, ranch or other operation that that produces at least one agricultural product and will report revenue and/or expenses for that agricultural production to the Canada Revenue Agency.
Census metropolitan area (CMA)	An area that includes one or more municipalities centred on a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core (e.g., Winnipeg, Manitoba).
Census of Agriculture	A census that takes place every five years and asks questions about every farm, ranch or other agricultural operation in Canada, including questions about land use, crops, livestock, agricultural labour, farm income and land management.
Census of Population	An enumeration of every household and person in Canada, conducted once every five years. Topics include age, marital status, household members and languages spoken.
Census questionnaire	A written series of questions intended to gather specific information about all household members.
Census reference day	The point in time relative to which census information is recorded. The reference day for the 2021 Census is May 11, 2021.
Census subdivision (CSD)	Municipalities or areas treated as municipal equivalents (e.g., First Nations reserves or Indian settlements) for statistical purposes within a census division.

Collection unit (CU)	A geographic area outlined to make census data collection more manageable. In remote areas, an enumerator is responsible for this area.
Complete count	An important goal of the census—to collect information about everyone who is living in Canada, including Canadians working overseas (for federal or provincial governments, Canadian embassies, and the Canadian Armed Forces) and their families.
Confidentiality	All personal information collected in the census is protected by law. Statistics Canada does not release any information that could identify individuals or households without their consent.
Data	Facts that can be studied and considered to form ideas or make decisions.
Dwelling	A place where a person or group of people live or could live. The dwelling’s entrance must be accessible without passing through the living quarters of some other person or group of people.
Enumeration	The completion of a census questionnaire at home, online, on paper, by telephone, or with the help of an enumerator.
Enumerator	A person whose job is to collect census data directly from the population. Enumerators also contact households that have not returned their census questionnaire online or by mail.
Farm operator	A person who is at least 15 years old and who is responsible for the day-to-day management decisions made in operating a census farm.
Farm population	All people who are members of a farm operator’s household who are living on a farm.
Field crop	A crop that does not include fruits or vegetables, such as hay, grains (e.g., wheat and corn), oilseeds (e.g., flaxseed, canola, soybeans and sunflower), pulses (e.g., dry beans and peas, lentils and chickpeas), potatoes and other crops (e.g., tobacco, ginseng, sugar beets and other spices).
Grid	A system of survey lines that follow longitude and latitude and divide an area into counties, sections, lots, etc.
Household	A person or group of people who live in the same dwelling.



Indigenous identity	Refers to whether a person identifies with the Indigenous peoples of Canada on the census questionnaire. This includes those who are First Nations, Métis or Inuit, and/or those who are Registered or Treaty Indians (i.e., registered under the Indian Act), and/or those who have membership in a First Nation or Indian band.
Indigenous peoples of Canada	First Nations, Métis and Inuit, as defined in the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> , section 35 (2). A person may be in more than one of these three specific groups.
Mother tongue	The first language(s) learned by an individual at home, in childhood, that they still understand.
Net farm income	A measurement of a farm operation's profit or loss, calculated by subtracting the total farm operating expenses from the total farm operating revenues.
Non-permanent residents	People from another country who are living or staying in Canada for a limited time (not permanently) on Census Day, including people with work or study permits, refugee claimants, and visiting family members.
Overcount	The estimated number of people counted more than once in the Census of Population.
Population	The total number of people living in a given area.
Population centre	An area with a population of at least 1,000 and a density of 400 or more people per square kilometre. This includes small population centres (population between 1,000 and 29,999), medium population centres (population between 30,000 and 99,999) and large urban population centres (population of 100,000 or more).
Reserve	A tract of land, for which the legal title is held by the Crown, which has been set apart for the use and benefit of a First Nation. Some First Nations have more than one reserve.
Rural areas	Areas outside population centres.
Sample	Part of a larger group that can be used to represent the whole (e.g., one out of five households in a populated area).
Statistics	Numerical facts.
Survey	An activity where a specific group of people is asked a series of questions to find out information.
Undercount	The estimated number of people who were not counted in the Census of Population.



Stand-alone activity: Colour and count

Overview

Kindergarteners and Grade 1 students will practise their counting skills while colouring. Just as the census counts people, they will count objects in a picture. They will also be introduced to concepts specific to First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. Three themes are available: **Enumerating communities**, **The North** and **Counting Canada**.

Estimated completion time:



Can be broken up into four shorter sessions.

Suggested grade level:



Objectives

- Gain a basic understanding of the census.
- Gain a basic understanding of Canadian geography.
- Be introduced to concepts specific to First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.

Subject-specific learning objectives

Mathematics

- Demonstrate an understanding of basic numbers.

Arts

- Develop fine motor skills and consolidate understanding of colours.
- Explore images from different cultures.
- Identify basic forms.

Geography

- Identify Canada and its basic provincial and territorial boundaries.
- Identify differences within Canadian landscapes and agriculture.

Materials

Supplies

- Coloured pencils, markers or crayons

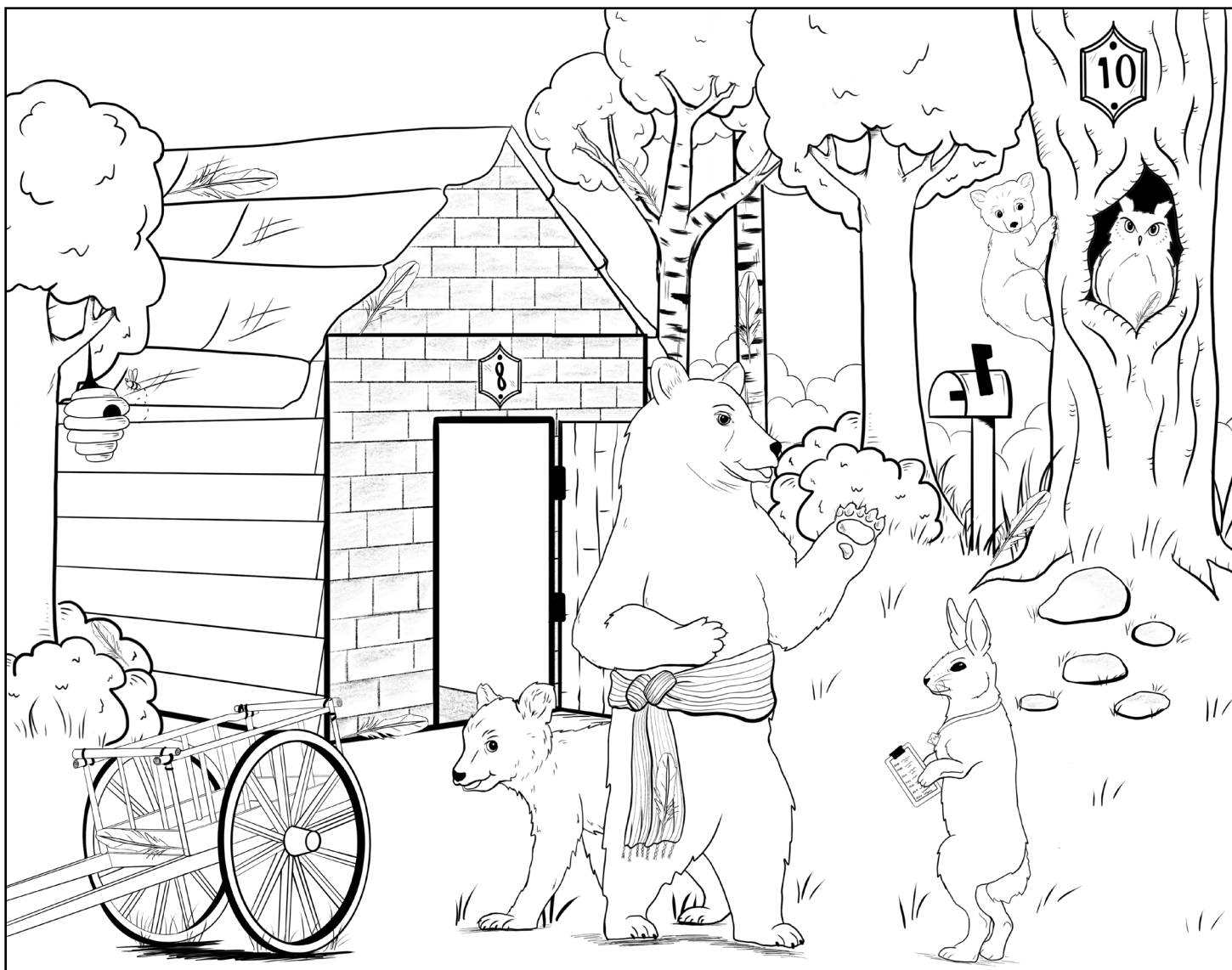
Handouts

- Enumerating communities colouring sheet
- The North colouring sheet
- Counting Canada colouring sheet
- Everybody counts activity sheet

Enumerating communities

The census counts every person in Canada.

Can you count all the eagle feathers hidden in this picture?



Answers: There are 10 feathers hidden in the picture — 3 on the bear house, 1 on the cub, 1 in the bush beside the house, 1 on the Métis sash, 1 on the owl, 1 beside the owl's tree, 2 on trees in the background.

DID YOU KNOW?

For many First Nations in Canada, eagle feathers are a sign of wisdom, respect, truth and freedom.

The belt worn by the bear in the colouring picture is called the Métis sash.

Not so long ago Métis used it as a backpack, as a rope, to carry their things in, and even used its strings for sewing!

The North

The census counts every person in Canada.
Can you count all the animals in this picture?



Answers: There are 19 animals in the picture: 3 dogs, 2 narwhals, 1 owl, 1 bear, 1 caribou, 2 rabbits, 1 fox, 5 fish, 2 birds in the sky.

DID YOU KNOW?

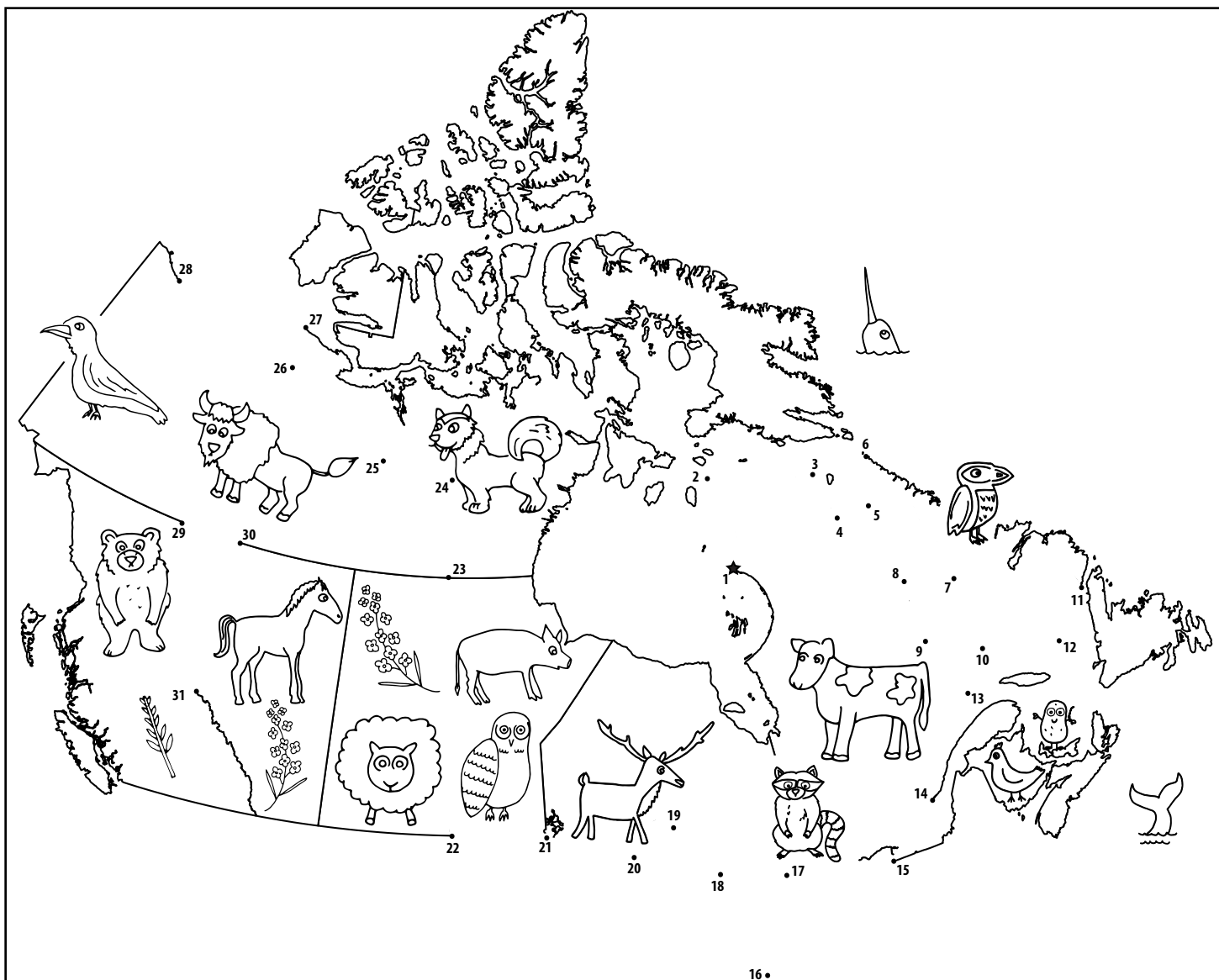
The drum the hares are playing is called a qilaut.

To play the qilaut, the hares hit the edge of the rim with a qatuk — a wooden stick or wand.

Counting Canada

The census counts every person in Canada.

Practice counting by connecting all the dots, then colour Canada!



DID YOU KNOW?

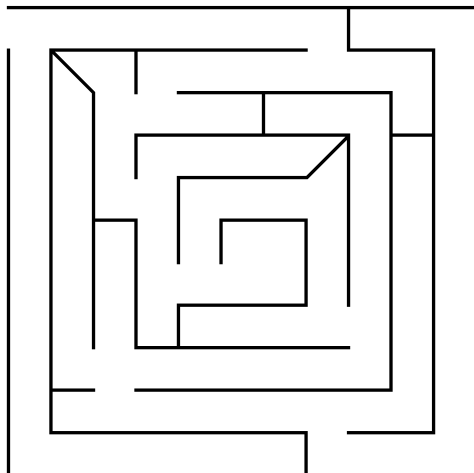
The flowers in the colouring picture are called canola. Canola is the most grown crop in Canada.

More than 1 in 5 acres of potatoes in Canada are in Prince Edward Island

Everybody counts

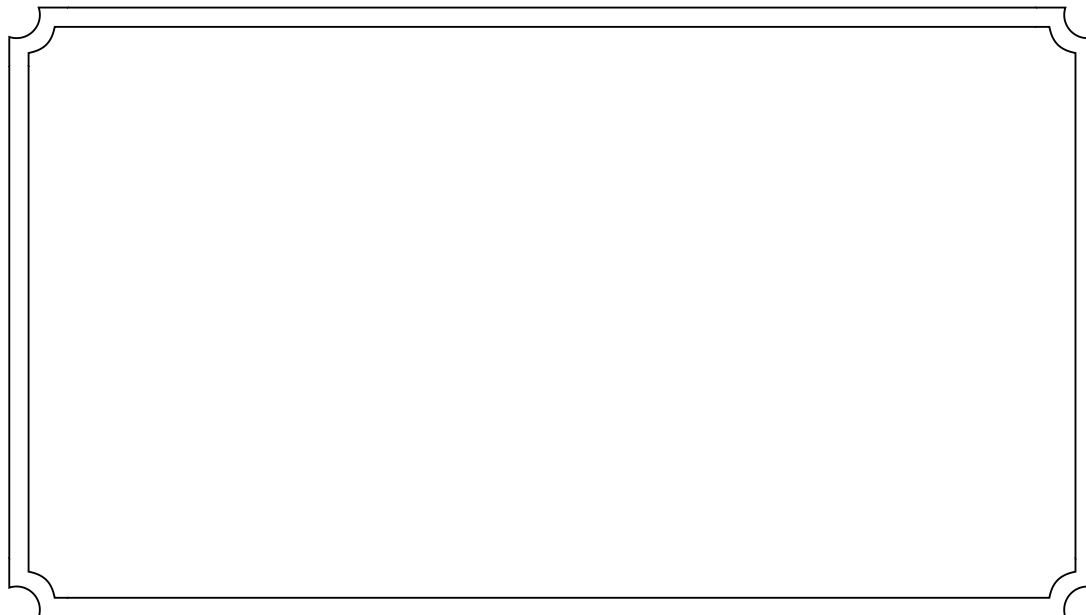
Every 5 years, everyone living in Canada is counted and asked some important questions. This is called the census. Some people answer census questions online, and others answer with the help of the enumerator.

Help the rabbit census worker to find the next house on his list.



Kids are counted in the census too!

Draw yourself in the frame below.

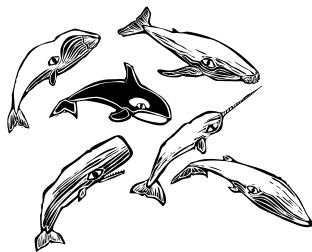


Find and circle all these words.

D J E Q J W M N K M Q O O C S
 H Q A L T N T P S A V U U H S
 D I F F E R E N T P G D J Q L
 I Q P A P H T E R R I T O R Y
 C N U R T C M E Y B J P V H C
 J I T E O Y A F A M I L Y O O
 O A T E S V A N O D Q S G M U
 B I W Y R T I D A T M A D E N
 A P B G J N I N D D R M X H T
 S C H O O L E O C R A E R E Y
 Z F L Y I J T T N E E E E L O
 T E A M W O R K D X W S K P C
 D Q N E Y F R B K S R Z S F G
 P B I A I E J B N X K Y S U B
 Y Q A D B Q J A N W Q F J L D

ADDRESS
 ANSWER
 CANADA
 CITY
 COUNT
 DIFFERENT
 FAMILY
 HELPFUL
 HOME
 INTERNET
 JOB
 MAP
 PROVINCE
 QUESTION
 SAME
 SCHOOL
 TEAMWORK
 TERRITORY

Draw a line to match the animals to the correct number.



1

3

6

2

Activity 1: Counting classmates

Overview

Primary and junior-level students will learn about collecting data to better understand a group of people. They will gather information and compare their findings with simplified statistics derived from the 2021 Census.

Estimated completion time:



Suggested grade level:



Objectives

- Gain a basic understanding of the census and the kind of data that it collects.
- Create a statistical portrait of their class.

Subject-specific learning objectives

Mathematics

- Collect primary data.
- Create basic representations of simple data collected during a survey.
- Read and describe primary data presented in charts, tables and graphs.

Social studies

- Gain a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local governments.
- Begin to discuss how needs are met in communities

Materials

Supplies

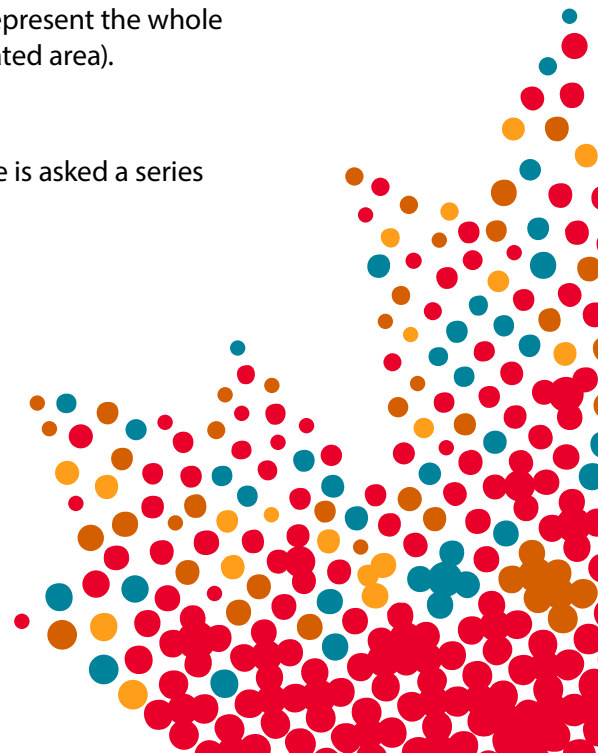
- Board or poster paper
- Chalk or marker
- Various tokens and stickers
- Timer or noisemaker to signal when time is up

Handouts

- Simplified census questions for centres
- Simplified 2021 Census data (*optional*)
- Take-home activity: New student (*optional*)

Vocabulary

- Census:** A collection of information from every household in a country, on topics that are important to that country, that is used to help all levels of government, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others make decisions.
- Census of Population:** An enumeration of every household and person in Canada, conducted once every five years. Topics include age, marital status, household members and languages spoken.
- Data:** Facts that can be studied and considered to form ideas or make decisions.
- Dwelling:** A place where a person or group of people live or could live. The dwelling's entrance must be accessible without passing through the living quarters of some other person or group of people.
- Household:** A person or group of people who live in the same dwelling.
- Population:** The total number of people living in a given area.
- Sample:** Part of a larger group that can be used to represent the whole (e.g., one out of five households in a populated area).
- Statistics:** Numerical facts.
- Survey:** An activity where a specific group of people is asked a series of questions to find out information.



Part 1: Getting started (15 to 30 minutes)

- 1 Ask students to think about three things they would like to know about their classmates, such as their ages or birthdays. Come up with three questions and write them where all students can see them.
- 2 For each question, ask the class to stand up or sit down to answer (e.g., “Stand up if...”, “Sit down if...”). Note the results for these responses on the board or on poster paper.

Sample questions

- Do you have a birthday in the summer, fall, winter or spring?
- Do you write with your right hand or left hand?

- 3 Introduce the concepts of a survey and the Census of Population to students. Ask them to think about a survey that they or their family has completed in the past, such as a customer service survey at a store.

What is the Census of Population?

- The Census of Population is a survey that takes place every five years and asks questions about every person who lives in Canada, not just a small group of people. A sample of the population (one in four households, or 25%, in 2021) also receives additional questions as part of the long-form questionnaire.
- The census gathers facts about people who live in Canada, including facts about how old they are, whether they are legally married, whom they live with and what languages they speak.
- The information gathered from the census is used to learn about the people who live in Canada. This helps governments, Indigenous leadership, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others make decisions about the programs and services they provide.

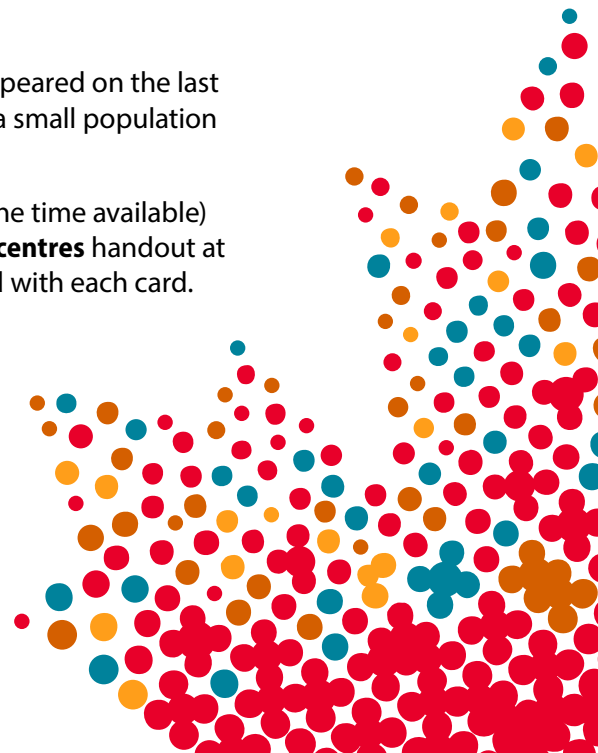
What is a survey?

A survey is an activity where a specific group of people is asked a series of questions to find out information.

Part 2: Activity (30 to 45 minutes)

- 4 Tell the students that they are going to answer some questions that appeared on the last Census of Population to gather information about their class (which is a small population within the larger population of Canada).

Set up three to five learning centres around the room (depending on the time available) and place one question card from the **Simplified census questions for centres** handout at each centre. Data collection suggestions and tools have been provided with each card.



Alternatively, set up a “survey centre” in one part of the room and have students answer a new question each day, using a different data collection tool for each day of the week.

- 5** Use a timer or signal to help groups rotate quickly through the different centres. Encourage students to take turns reading instructions to their classmates.

Part 3: Consolidation of learning (30 to 45 minutes)

- 6** After the groups have completed one full rotation, review the findings from each centre. Ask students questions about the data and have them choose the most interesting fact from their class survey. Record this fact and encourage students to think about why it might be useful for their teacher or principal.

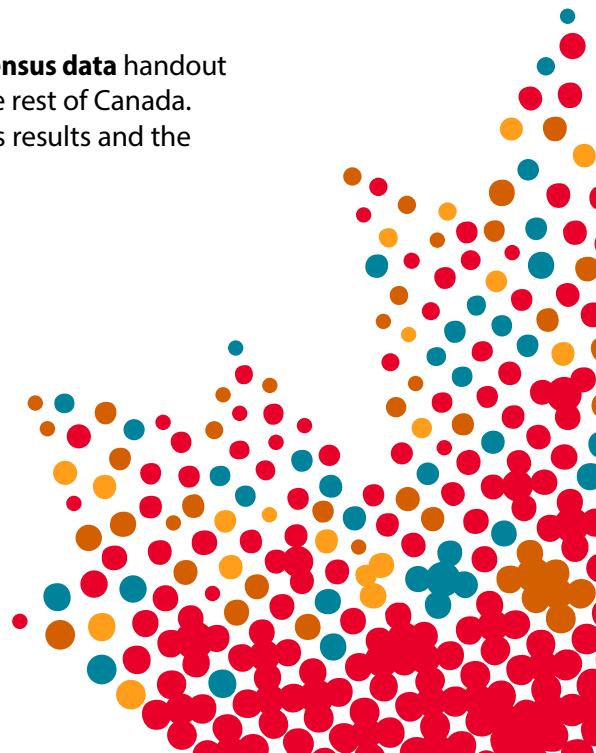
General questions

- Are any of the data surprising?
- How is this information helpful to you? Your teacher? Your principal?
- If someone asked your class the same questions in five years, would the data be different? How?
- What if we knew the answers to these questions for everyone in Canada? How would this be helpful?

Specific questions to ask about the data

- Do more or less than half of the students in this class speak French at home?
- Do more or less than half of the students in this class speak a language that is not French or English at home?
- How old are most of the students in this class?
- In which month do most students have birthdays?
- There are 25 households in this classroom (one for each student). How many households have children who are 0 to 4 years old? How many have children who are 13 to 16 years old?

- 7** Compare the class results with the statistics from the **Simplified 2021 Census data** handout so students can compare with larger segments of the population in the rest of Canada. Ask them to identify the similarities and differences between the class’s results and the results for all of Canada.



Modifications

If students require additional support, try the following:

- Review the vocabulary list before starting the exercise. Write the words and definitions on the board, or write them on chart paper and post them around the classroom.
- Complete fewer centres (questions), or allow more time for groups to complete each centre. Explain the task for each centre before beginning.

If students require an additional challenge, try the following:

- Display the appropriate simplified census data card at each corresponding centre so students can compare the statistics from their class with larger segments of the population in the rest of Canada during the activity.
- Have students create different graphic representations (e.g., pictographs, bar graphs) of the data they collect about their class.

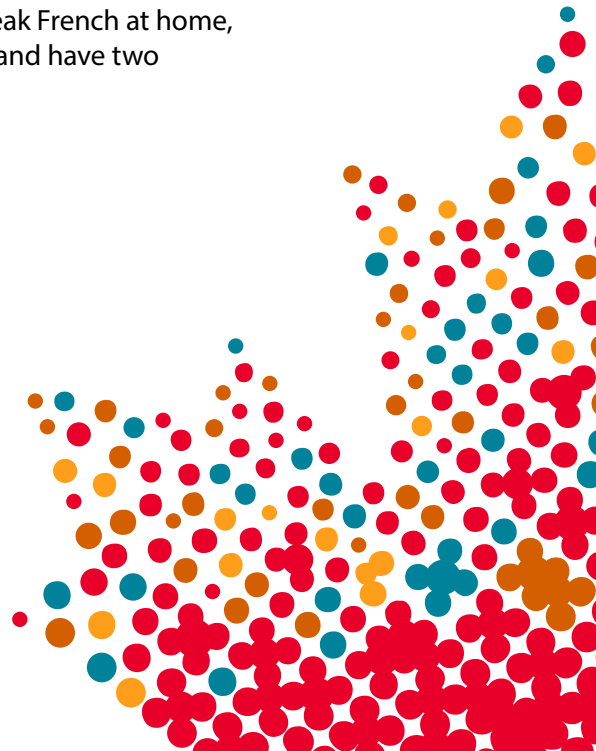
Next steps

To continue this activity, try the following:

- Ask other classes in the same cohort or grade level to complete the same activity, and then compare the data between classes.
- Have students create original survey questions or data collection methods, and ask them to gather more information about their classmates. Have each student write and present a brief “news report” about their most fascinating findings.

Optional take home activity: New student

Use the information students have gathered about their class to create a profile of an “average student” by selecting some of the most common responses from the class statistics. Encourage students to draw a picture of a fictional new student in their class who matches this description. For example, the “new student” may speak French at home, but English at school. They may celebrate their birthday in September and have two siblings who are 6 and 8 years old.



Simplified census questions for centres

Centre 1: Month of birth

Question: In what month were you born? Add a tally mark to the month you were born.

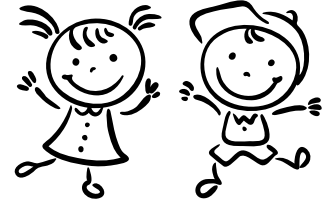
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	

Simplified census questions for centres

Centre 2: Age

Question: How old are the children in your household?

Add one token to the container or box that shows how old you are. Add one token for each of your brothers or sisters who live with you



0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 years old	5, 6, 7 or 8 years old	9, 10, 11 or 12 years old
13, 14, 15 or 16 years old	17, 18, 19 or 20 years old	21 years old and older

Simplified census questions for centres

Centre 3: Language spoken at home

Question: What language or languages do you speak at home?

Add one sticker to the boxes that show the languages you speak at home.



English	French	Add a language: _____ _____
Add a language: _____ _____	Add a language: _____ _____	Add a language: _____ _____
Add a language: _____ _____	Add a language: _____ _____	Add a language: _____ _____

Simplified census questions for centres

Centre 4: Number of people in a household

Question: How many people live in your household?

Draw a tiny house in the box that shows how many people live in your home.



<p>Two</p>	<p>Three</p>	<p>Four</p>
<p>Five</p>	<p>Six</p>	<p>Seven or more</p>

Simplified census questions for centres

Centre 5: Official languages

Question: Which of Canada's official languages do you speak well enough to conduct a conversation? Colour one circle with the best answer for you



I speak English.

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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I speak French.

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I speak English and French.

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
























































































I do not speak English or French.

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Simplified 2021 Census data

Centre 1: Month of birth

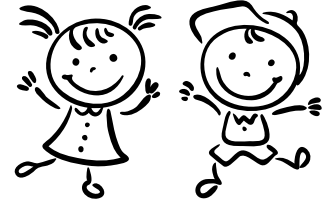
This symbol () means **1 person** from a **group of 100 people** in Canada has a birthday in that month.

January	       
February	       
March	        
April	       
May	        
June	       
July	        
August	       
September	        
October	       
November	       
December	       

Simplified 2021 Census data


Centre 2: Age

This symbol (👤) means **1 person** from a **group of 10 people** in Canada is in that age group.






Simplified 2021 Census data



Centre 3: Language spoken at home

This symbol () means **1 person** from a **group of 10 people** in Canada speaks English, French or another language at home.




Speaks English at home	Speaks French at home	Speaks another language at home
		

This symbol () means **1 person** from a **group of 10 people** in Canada **doesn't** speak English, French or another language at home.






Does not speak English at home	Does not speak French at home	Does not speak another language at home
		

Simplified 2021 Census data

Centre 4: Number of people in a household

This symbol () means **1 person** from a **group of 10 people** in Canada lives in a household that has that many people.



 One-person household	 Two-person household	 Three-person household
 Four-person household	 Five-or-more-person household	

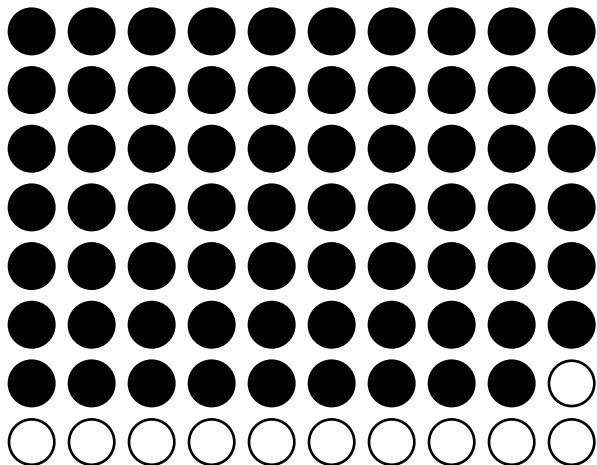
Simplified 2021 Census data

Centre 5: Official languages

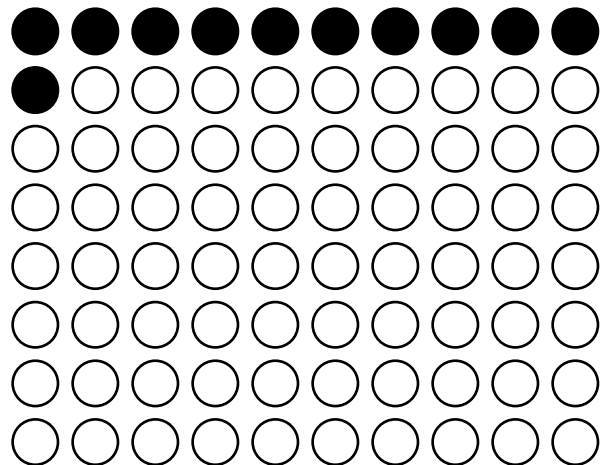
This symbol (●) means **1 person** from a **group of 100 people** in Canada speaks English or French well enough to conduct a conversation.



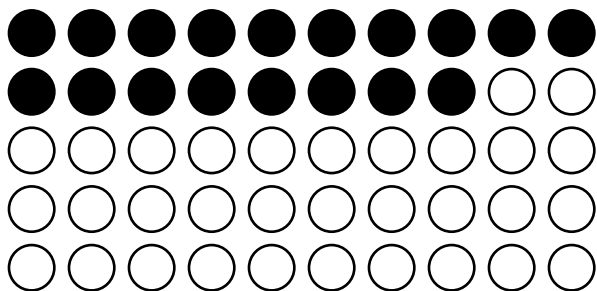
I speak English.



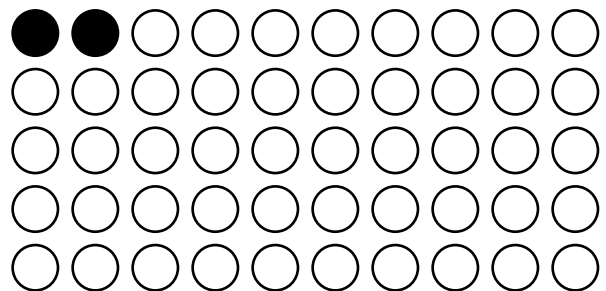
I speak French.



I speak English and French.



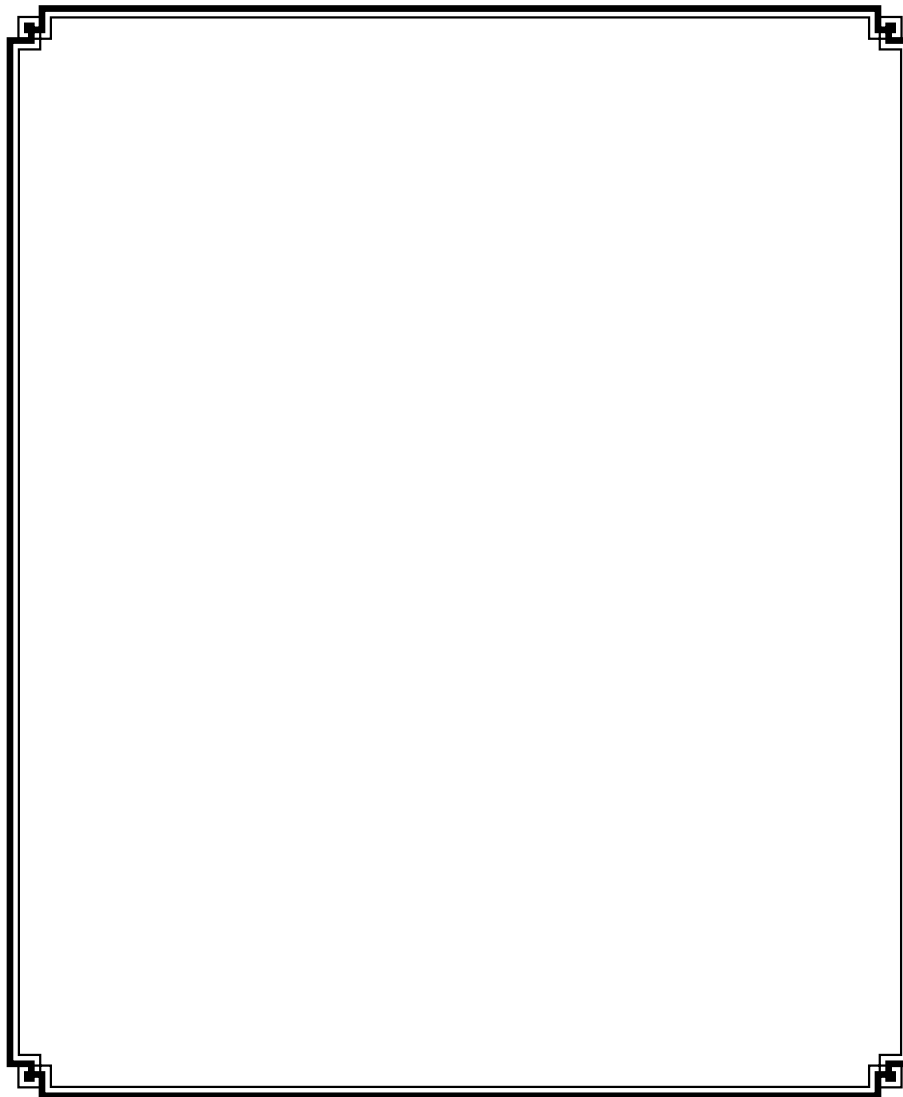
I do not speak English or French.



Optional take-home activity: New student (optional)

Draw a picture of a fictional new student at your school. Use pictures and words to give clues about this person, including

- age
- birth month
- languages spoken
- family (number of people in their household, age of people in their household).



Activity 2: Our class, our community

Overview

Junior-level students will think about their class as a community and will consider how they are similar to other small groups of people who live in Canada. They will learn how data can be used to make sure people in communities have services to support their needs. They will make decisions for their class community, using survey data to inform those decisions.

Estimated completion time:

up to
105
minutes

Suggested grade level:

Grades
5 to 6

Objectives

- Draw connections between the types of information gathered in a survey and how that information can be used to make decisions for the benefit of a community.
- Make decisions about allocating resources by using survey data to inform decisions.

Subject-specific learning objectives

Mathematics

- Collect data by conducting a survey about themselves or their community.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how datasets can be samples of larger populations.
- Read, interpret and draw conclusions from primary data.

Social studies

- Gain a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local governments.
- Begin to discuss how needs are met in communities.

Materials

Supplies

- Board or poster paper
- Chalk or marker

Handouts

- Classroom community questions
- Take-home activity: Our Canadian class (*optional*)

Vocabulary

- Census:** A collection of information from every household in a country, on topics that are important to that country, that is used to help all levels of government, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others make decisions.
- Census of Population:** An enumeration of every household and person in Canada, conducted once every five years. Topics include age, marital status, household members and languages spoken.
- Census reference day:** The point in time relative to which census information is recorded. The reference day for the 2021 Census was May 11, 2021.
- Data:** Facts that can be studied and considered to form ideas or make decisions.
- Population:** The total number of people living in a given area.
- Statistics:** Numerical facts.
- Survey:** An activity where a specific group of people is asked a series of questions to find out information.

Part 1: Getting started (15 to 30 minutes)

1

Write the following definition of “community” on the board or on a large piece of poster paper.

Community: A group of people who live in one particular area or who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, social group or nationality.



To explain the concept of community in a more visual way, you can also draw a simple diagram.

2 As a class, briefly discuss the definition.

If time allows, encourage students to add words or phrases to the definition. You can ask students to write their own words, phrases or definitions of community on the board, or provide them with sticky notes (Post its) if you are using poster paper.

Guiding questions:

- Do you think our definition and this definition are similar or different? How?
- What kinds of things bring people together into a community? Is community just about where you live, or do community members share other things?
- Who is part of your community? How far does it extend?
- Is our class a community? Is it also part of another community?
- What other communities do you know? For example, can you name any First Nations or Métis settlements?

Part 2: Activity (30 to 45 minutes)

3 Tell students that the Government of Canada conducts a Census of Population every five years. Most households receive the short-form questionnaire, but a sample of households receive the long-form questionnaire, which also includes the questions from the short form. The census is conducted to get an overall picture of who lives in Canada at one specific point in time. This information is used to make decisions about the types of services and support that communities need.

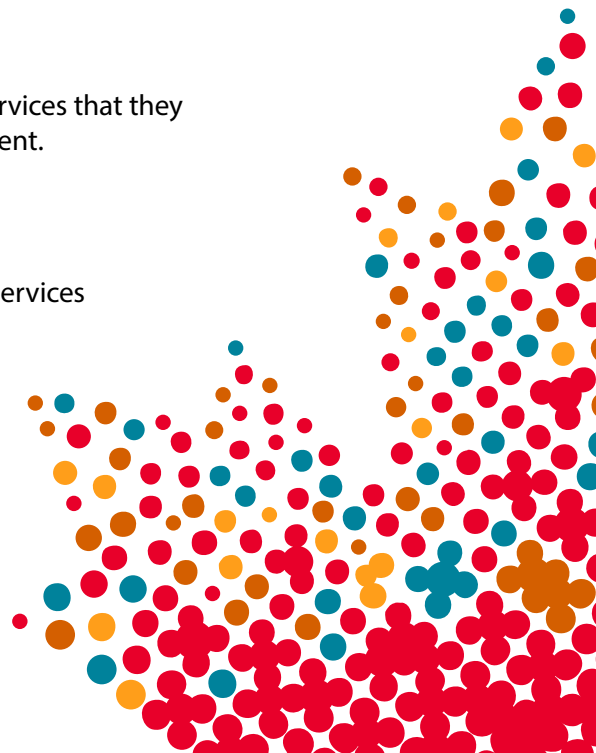
The census asks questions about all people living in Canada on a specific day (census reference day), and topics include

- people's age
- marital status and relationships of people living in a household
- number of people living in a household
- languages spoken

4 Ask students to work with a neighbour and think about some of the services that they have heard of or used and that are provided by the Canadian government.

Services may include

- schools and daycares
- emergency services, such as fire protection, police or medical services
- roads and public transit



- community services, such as health care, education or employment.

5 Ask students to think about their class as a small community within the larger community of their school. Tell students that they are going to answer a few questions inspired by the census. This will allow them to gather some information (statistics) about their class and class resources so that they can make decisions about services or resources that their class needs.

6 Distribute the **Classroom community questions** handout and read all of the questions aloud to the class before answering them. Ensure that students know that they should select only one answer for each question.

Alternatively, if time and classroom resources allow, you can input the questions from the **Classroom community questions** handout into a free online survey tool so that the survey can be completed on a computer or mobile device.

7 Read each question aloud and ask students to raise their hands when the answer applies to them. Count the number of raised hands, tally the student responses on the board and ask students to record the numbers on their handouts.

Alternatively, if time allows, divide students into groups to complete smaller tallies, and then add all the results together. Create class statistics or investigate small group survey results with the class as a whole.

Part 3: Consolidation of learning (15 to 30 minutes)

8 When the information has been collected and recorded, have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss and propose one service that their class needs.

Allow students to choose their own service, or provide groups with an assigned service category. (See below for survey category suggestions.)

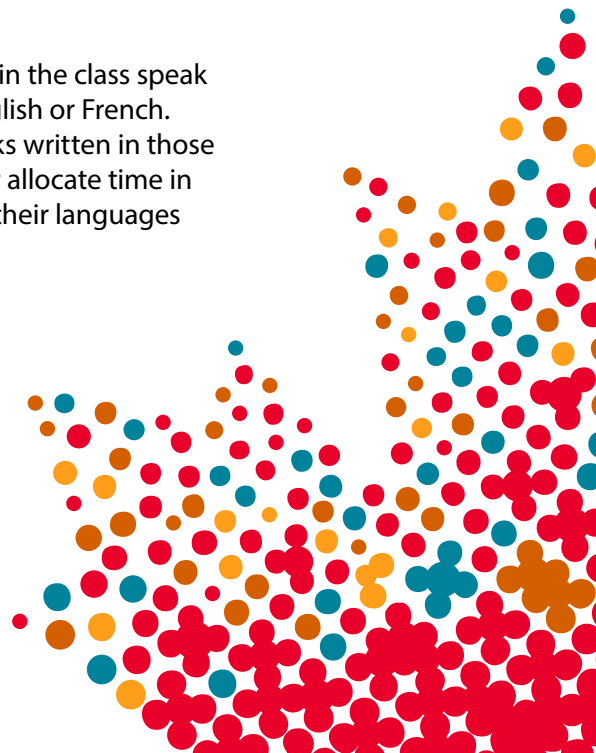
Possible categories and proposed services

Health

“Most students take the bus or are driven to school in a car. We should have a longer recess, more gym time, or do yoga in class so we can get more exercise.”

Education

“Seven out of 30 students in the class speak a language other than English or French. We should add some books written in those languages to the library or allocate time in class to learn more about their languages and cultures.”



Modifications

If students require additional support, try the following:

- Reduce the number of topics or questions in the survey, or focus on a different topic every day for several days.

If students require an additional challenge, try the following:

- Encourage students to represent the data in different ways by calculating percentages, or by creating graphs, diagrams or infographics using online illustration tools.
- Ask students to consider how these data might change if the same students were asked the same questions in five years—what information would stay the same (e.g., birthdays) and what information would likely change (e.g., fewer people preferring to use a pen as technology advances)?
- Encourage students to create their own questions to learn more about their class, and include these questions in the discussion

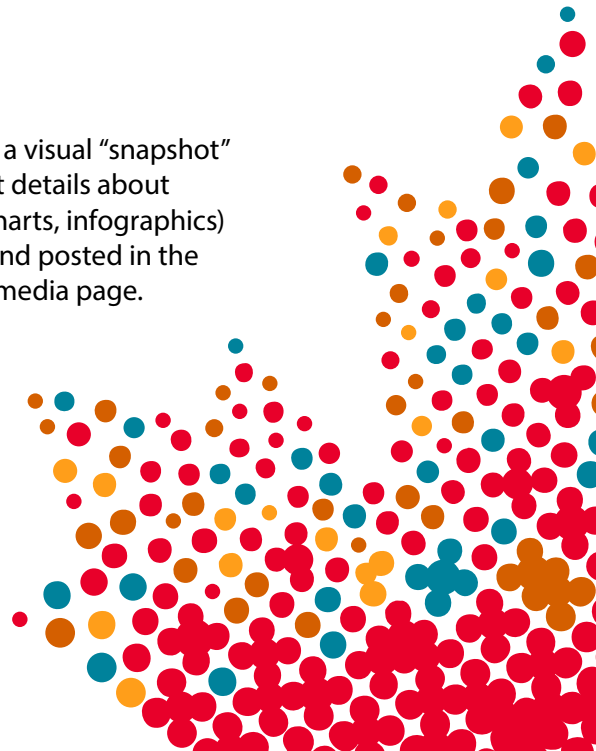
Next steps

To continue this activity, try the following:

- Ask another class (or several classes) in the school to complete the same activity, and compare the data.
- Have students read a book such as *If the World Were a Village* by David J. Smith and Shelagh Armstrong (ISBN-10: 1554535956, ISBN-13: 978-1554535958) or visit websites with a similar theme to further investigate how the characteristics and composition of a community (including a global one) may be represented numerically.
- Have students work together to select the top three proposals for services for the class; establish evaluation criteria, such as interest level in the class, long-term benefit, feasibility and cost to implement. When a single service has been selected, have students write a letter to the principal, school council or parent groups asking for support in implementing the service.

Optional take-home activity: Our Canadian class

Use the information students have gathered about their class to create a visual “snapshot” of their class as a Canadian classroom. Encourage students to represent details about their class in different ways (e.g., illustrations, written facts, graphs or charts, infographics) within a maple leaf outline. Once complete, the leaves can be cut out and posted in the school community, or scanned and shared on a class website or social media page.



Classroom community questions

Reference day (the day you are answering these questions)

How many students are present on this day?

Topics	Results
Transportation	
How many students take the bus to school?	
How many students walk to school?	
How many students are driven to school in a car?	
How many students use another mode of transportation to get to school? What mode of transportation?	
Family	
How many students have no siblings?	
How many students have siblings who attend this school?	
How many students have siblings who do not attend this school?	
Sociocultural information	
How many students were born in Canada?	
How many students were born outside Canada?	
How many students have Indigenous (First Nation, Métis or Inuit) origins?	

Languages	
How many students speak English?	
How many students speak French?	
How many students speak an Indigenous language (e.g., Atikamekw, Inuktitut, Montagnais, Ojibway)	
How many students speak at least one other language?	
Classroom organization	
How many students sit by themselves?	
How many students sit with one other person?	
How many students sit in a group with two or more other people?	
Classroom resources	
How many computers, laptops or tablets are there in the classroom?	
How many desks are there in the classroom?	
How many chairs are there in the classroom?	
Learning preferences	
How many students prefer to write with a pen?	
How many students prefer to write with a pencil?	
How many students prefer to write using a keyboard?	
How many students prefer to write using a smartphone, tablet or other touchscreen device?	
How many students prefer to work by themselves?	
How many students prefer to work with a partner?	
How many students prefer to work in a group?	

1. Which statistics are the most interesting to you?
2. Which topic do you think is the most important for your class? Why?
3. What is one way you think these data might be different if you asked these questions to another class at your school?
4. Which topic do you think is the most important for making your class a better place to learn?
5. Write one idea for a service that would make your classroom a better place to learn.

Take-home activity:

Our Canadian class (optional)

Fill in the maple leaf below with a “snapshot” of your classroom, and show details from the data you collected about your class.



Activity 3: Food, feed and function

Overview

Intermediate-level students will learn about the Census of Agriculture and the difference between food, feed and function. They will investigate current data from the Census of Agriculture and become familiar with some of the agricultural products from their region. They will consider geographic factors that contribute to the success of these products and compare their region's production with that of other regions in Canada.

Estimated completion time:



Suggested grade level:



(Secondary 1 to 3)

Objectives

- Gain awareness of the Census of Agriculture and the information it collects.
- Learn to access and use data from the Census of Agriculture.
- Gain an understanding of the kinds of agricultural products that are produced in their region and the natural resources required for this production.
- Gain an understanding of the kinds of agricultural products that are produced in other regions of Canada and how they compare with what is produced in their region.

Subject-specific learning objectives

Mathematics

- Prepare and evaluate convincing arguments based on data analysis.

Social studies

- Examine the relationship between the economic development of regions and their available resources.
- Demonstrate an awareness of significant geographic factors that affect economic development and quality of life.

Materials

Supplies

- Board or poster paper
- Chalk or marker
- Sticky notes (Post-its)

Handouts

- What is the Census of Agriculture?
- 2021 and 2016 proportion of cropland throughout Canada
- Food, feed and function worksheet

Other

- Highlights and analyses—farm data and farm operator data for 2021 and 2016
 - o English
2021: [Data \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/95-640-x/95-640-x2016001-eng.htm)
2016: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/95-640-x/95-640-x2016001-eng.htm>
 - o French
2021: [Data \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/95-640-x/95-640-x2016001-fra.htm)
2016: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/95-640-x/95-640-x2016001-fra.htm>
- Questions from the 2021 Census of Agriculture (*optional*)
 - o English: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1283880&UL=1V
 - o French: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.f.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1283880&UL=1V

Vocabulary

Census farm: A farm, ranch or other operation that that produces agricultural products and reports revenues or expenses for tax purposes to the Canada Revenue Agency.

Census of Agriculture: A census that takes place every five years and asks questions about every farm, ranch or other agricultural operation in Canada, including questions about land use, crops, livestock, agricultural labour, farm income and land management.

Census of Population: An enumeration of every household and person in Canada, conducted once every five years. Topics include age, marital status, household members and languages spoken.

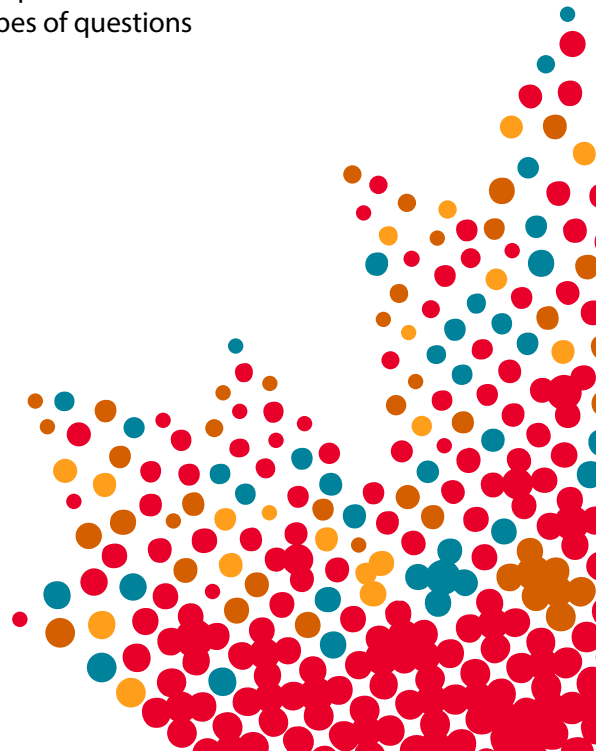


Data:	Facts that can be studied and considered to form ideas or make decisions.
Enumeration:	The completion of a census questionnaire at home, online, on paper, by telephone, or with the help of an enumerator.
Farm operator:	A person who is at least 15 years old and who is responsible for the day-to-day management decisions made in operating a census farm.
Farm population:	All people who are members of a farm operator’s household who are living on a farm.
Field crop:	A crop that does not include fruits or vegetables, such as hay, grains (e.g., wheat and corn), oilseeds (e.g., flaxseed, canola, soybeans and sunflower), pulses (e.g., dry beans and peas, lentils and chickpeas), potatoes and other crops (e.g., tobacco, ginseng, sugar beets and other spices).
Statistics:	Numerical facts.
Survey:	An activity where a specific group of people is asked a series of questions to find out information.

Part 1: Getting started (25 to 35 minutes)

- 1 On the board or on poster paper, draw a Venn diagram with two components, “Census of Population” and “Census of Agriculture.”
- 2 Give students the **What is the Census of Agriculture?** handout. Read the description as a class, or have students work in small groups to read and summarize their understanding with a partner.
- 3 If time and resources allow, provide students with access to an online or printed version of the **2021 Census of Agriculture questionnaire** so they can see the types of questions asked and investigate the different categories of agricultural products.

- English: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1283880&UL=1V
- French: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.f.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1283880&UL=1V



4 Divide the class into small groups, and provide each group with four sticky notes. Ask groups to number each note from 1 to 4.

Ask groups to write their answers, on separate sticky notes, to the following questions for the Census of Population, the Census of Agriculture, or both.

1. What is the importance of this/these census(es)?
2. Who might contribute to this/these census(es)?
3. Who benefits from this/these census(es)?
4. How do you think this/these census(es) contribute to Canada overall?

5 Have students place their sticky notes in the relevant section of the Venn diagram.
As a class, compare and analyze the results.

Part 2: Activity (60 to 75 minutes)

6 On the board or on poster paper, draw a simple diagram to illustrate the concepts of food, feed and function.



Explain that agricultural products can be used for **food** (consumed by people), **feed** (consumed by livestock) or **function** (consumed to make materials, for recreation or for decoration). Demonstrate these concepts through a scenario in which all three are used.

Corn is a good example of a crop grown in many provinces of Canada that is consumed by people and by livestock, and that is used in many different materials.

- **Food:** A lot of people enjoy eating corn on the cob at their summer barbecues.
- **Feed:** Corn is part of the daily feed that farmers give their beef and dairy cattle.
- **Function:** Corn is used in many materials that can be found in your house, such as paint, wallpaper, cement used for foundations, soap, and toothpaste. It is even found in antibiotics like penicillin.



7 Put students in small groups and have them identify scenarios where crops or other agricultural products can be used for **food, feed** and **function**. If they need examples of agricultural products, provide students with access to an online or printed version of the **2021 Census of Agriculture questionnaire**:

- English: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1283880&UL=1V
- French: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.f.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1283880&UL=1V

Ask one person per group to present their group's findings to the class and explain why each concept is important to the overall consumption lifecycle.

8 Distribute the [2021 and 2016 proportion of cropland throughout Canada](#) handout, or display the relevant data for applicable regions where all students can view them. Divide the class into groups of four to six and assign a province to each group.

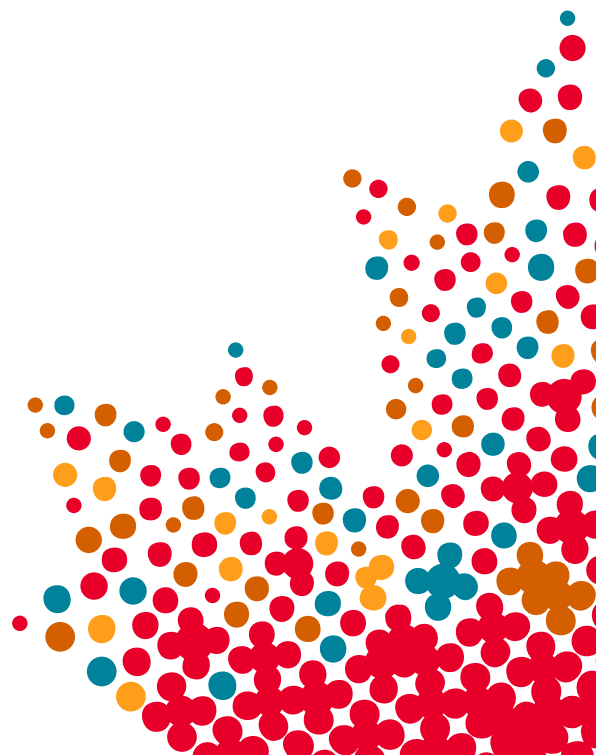
9 Ask groups to use Statistics Canada data to provide a snapshot of their region by completing the questions on the [Food, feed and function worksheet](#) handout.

To consolidate, ask groups to present their findings to their peers. As a class, compare the results between regions and analyze them. What is different from one region to another? What is similar?

Part 3: Consolidation of learning (10 minutes)

10 Answer the following discussion questions as a class.

- Why is the Census of Agriculture important?
- How does the Census of Agriculture benefit Canada?
- How does the consumption lifecycle affect your life?



Modifications

If students require additional support, try the following:

- Instead of having students work in small groups, complete the activities as a class.
- For the **Food, feed and function** activity, assign groups a particular type of crop and provide access to online or printed resources with background information about how those crops are grown and produced.
- If students are new to Canada, make a list of agricultural products grown in their home country. Students who live in urban areas may benefit from a trip to the local supermarket or a search through their refrigerators at home to investigate where the produce they eat is grown. As a class, talk about why these products may or may not be grown in Canada. Discussion points may include differences in climate or other environmental factors, or differences in preference and demand.

If students require an additional challenge, try the following:

- Ask them to complete a more in-depth investigation into the production of a particular agricultural product and its economic impact on a given region. Use online resources, including Statistics Canada's **Highlights and analyses from the 2021 Census of Agriculture**:
 - o English: [Data \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/26-667-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)
 - o French: [Data \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/26-667-x/2021001/article/00001-fra.htm)This could include research into jobs created, profits generated and the ecological impact of production.

Next steps

To continue this activity, try the following:

- Have students research the natural and human-made resources required to produce a given crop and create a “web” or “chain of connections” from seed to consumption. This chain should include themselves or their families, if appropriate.
- Arrange for guest speakers who work in agriculture and in the production, distribution and marketing of local products, or take students on a field trip to a business or organization that supports local agriculture. In either case, the focus should go beyond the farm to encompass other community members who earn their livelihood by producing or using these products.
- Complete the same activity with agricultural production related to livestock in a region of Canada, or extend this comparison to another country.



What is the Census of Agriculture?

Every five years, the Government of Canada conducts a census, which includes two components: **the Census of Population** and **the Census of Agriculture**.

The Census of Population is an enumeration of every household and person in Canada and includes questions on topics such as age, marital status, household members and languages spoken. All levels of government, Indigenous communities, the private sector, social services sectors and other organizations use census data to make informed decisions that affect the lives of everyone in Canada.

The Census of Agriculture has a different goal: to learn about Canada's farming and food production. It asks questions about every farm, ranch or other agricultural operation in Canada, including questions about land use, crops, livestock, agricultural labour, farm income and land management. The government and agricultural operators in Canada need to know about agricultural trends, products and operations in their region so that they can make informed decisions about goods and services, how to sell or advertise agricultural products, and what kinds of financial investments should be made.

The Census of Agriculture collects data on the agricultural industry, including

- the number of farms and farm operators
- the area of land used for farms
- farm business
- land use and management
- livestock numbers (e.g., number of sheep, cows, chickens)
- areas where crops are grown (e.g., field crops, fruits, vegetables, hay, sod, Christmas trees)
- the cost to run a farm
- the machinery and equipment used to run a farm.

Canadian farms produce a large amount of our food and many non-food products that are used around the country or exported to other countries. Agriculture is an important part of the Canadian economy.

Data from the Census of Agriculture are used to understand trends and changes in farming practices and products over time, and this is important for decision making. Here are some examples:

- The Canadian government uses these data to make sure that people who work in agriculture receive programs and services to meet their needs.
- Agricultural producers use census data to tell the government and people who live in Canada how they are doing economically.
- Companies that supply agricultural products and services use this information to decide where service centres should be located.

More information on the Census of Agriculture is available on the **2021 Census of Agriculture portal**:

- **English:** <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census-agriculture>
- **French:** <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/fr/recensement-agriculture>

2021 and 2016 proportion of cropland throughout Canada



Proportion of cropland, Canada (excluding territories), 2011 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	85.4	84.1
Hay	13.8	15.1
Fruits	0.4	0.4
Sod and nursery	0.1	0.1
Vegetables	0.3	0.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	10.4	8.4
Hay	78.1	79.2
Fruits	3.8	4.4
Sod and nursery	3.4	3.8
Vegetables	4.3	4.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Nova Scotia, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	25.2	23.7
Hay	53.1	54.8
Fruits	18.0	18.3
Sod and nursery	1.4	1.1
Vegetables	2.2	2.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Prince Edward Island, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	67.4	65.7
Hay	28.5	30.1
Fruits	3.6	3.6
Sod and nursery	0.1	0.1
Vegetables	0.5	0.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, New Brunswick, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	43.0	39.2
Hay	44.5	46.6
Fruits	11.8	13.2
Sod and nursery	0.2	0.4
Vegetables	0.5	0.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Quebec, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	59.7	60.1
Hay	35.4	35.2
Fruits	2.5	2.3
Sod and nursery	0.4	0.4
Vegetables	2.0	2.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Saskatchewan, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	92.2	90.7
Hay	7.8	9.2
Fruits	0.0	0.0
Sod and nursery	0.0	0.0
Vegetables	0.0	0.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Ontario, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	78.7	78.4
Hay	18.8	19.1
Fruits	0.5	0.6
Sod and nursery	0.5	0.5
Vegetables	1.4	1.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Alberta, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	84.4	83.2
Hay	15.5	16.7
Fruits	0.0	0.0
Sod and nursery	0.1	0.1
Vegetables	0.0	0.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, Manitoba, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	88.7	86.8
Hay	11.3	13.1
Fruits	0.0	0.0
Sod and nursery	0.0	0.0
Vegetables	0.0	0.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Proportion of cropland, British Columbia, 2021 and 2016

Composition of cropland	Percentage of cropland	
	2021	2016
Field crops	36.4	33.7
Hay	56.9	60.0
Fruits	5.0	4.4
Sod and nursery	0.5	0.8
Vegetables	1.1	1.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2021 and 2016.

Note: In 2021 and 2016, hay includes reported alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures and all other tame hay and fodder crops.

Food, feed and function worksheet

1. Name a crop that is commonly grown in your region and indicate how it is used (circle all that apply).

Crop: _____

Food

Feed

Function

2. What products created from this crop are used in daily life by you, your community, people across Canada or people in other countries?

3. Describe up to three characteristics of the environment in your region that help to make this crop a successful part of your local economy.

4. What other natural or human resources make this crop successful in your region?

5. Name a business in your region that could benefit from this crop or from a product created from this crop.

Activity 4: 92 years from now

Overview

Senior-level students will investigate some of the questions asked in the census, using the 2021 Census as a tool. They will think critically about the census questionnaire and consider how information gathered from the census would be useful to past and future generations. They will also be asked to create their own census questions.

Estimated completion time:



Suggested grade level:



(Secondary 3 to 5)

Objectives

- Become familiar with the kinds of questions asked in the census.
- Think critically about why particular questions are asked.
- Consider and craft questions to gather additional information about the Canadian population.

Subject-specific learning objectives

Language and communication

- Identify and analyze perspectives in text and comment on questions they raise about beliefs, values, identity and power.
- Write for a particular purpose and audience.

Social studies

- Understand that governments and other decision-making bodies evolve over time and are shaped by the traditions and pressures of the communities they govern.
- Formulate research questions.
- Investigate demographic trends and how data about the life patterns of individuals are obtained.
- Use appropriate information technology to access or transmit information (e.g., surveys).

Materials

Supplies

- None

Handouts

- What is the Census of Population?
- Summary of census topics
- Census question worksheet

Other

- Access to the 2021 Census short-form questionnaire (printed or online)
 - o English: [2021 Census: 2A \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www2021.gc.ca/2021-census/2A)
 - o French: [Recensement de 2021 : 2A \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www2021.gc.ca/2021-census/2A)

Vocabulary

Census: A collection of information from every household in a country, on topics that are important to that country, that is used to help all levels of government, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others make decisions.

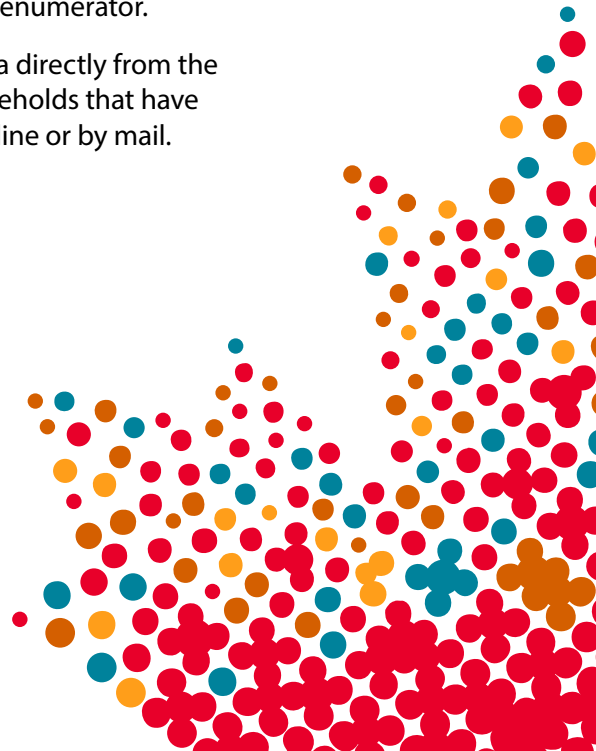
Census of Population: An enumeration of every household and person in Canada, conducted once every five years. Topics include age, marital status, household members and languages spoken.

Census questionnaire: A written series of questions intended to gather specific information about all household members.

Confidentiality: All personal information collected in the census is protected by law. Statistics Canada does not release any information that could identify individuals or households without their consent.

Enumeration: The completion of a census questionnaire at home, online, on paper, by telephone, or with the help of an enumerator.

Enumerator: A person whose job is to collect census data directly from the population. Enumerators also contact households that have not returned their census questionnaire online or by mail.



Part 1: Getting started (15 to 30 minutes)

- 1 Gather and show students images of their region 100 years ago. As a class, discuss the images and ask students how they think life would have been different or similar for everyday Canadians in that period.
- 2 Provide students with the [What is the Census of Population?](#) handout and give them a few minutes to read the text and summarize with a partner.
- 3 Tell students that census information provides a snapshot of people living in Canada, on one particular day, every five years. Every household in Canada is required by law to complete it, and Statistics Canada is required by law to keep individual results confidential. Information obtained through previous censuses can be used to learn about people living in Canada in the past, and information from the most recent census can be used to help make decisions that will affect people living in Canada in the future.
- 4 Encourage students to consider the lives of Canadians at a time when their great-grandparents were alive, 92 years ago. What would they like to know about the life of everyday Canadians 92 years ago? What do they think their own great-grandchildren might like to know about everyday Canadians in 2021?

Part 2: Activity (30 minutes)

- 5 Divide the class into small groups and provide them with the **Summary of census topics** handout.

Ask groups to consider which questions are important to their classmates and to rank the questions in order of relevance or interest.

Discussion questions

- What information are these particular questions designed to collect?
- Do all of the questions apply to you and your classmates? Which ones seem more or less relevant?
- If a question is not relevant to you now, will it be relevant to you in five years? Ten years?

- 6 Draw attention to the topic of consent at the bottom of the summary. In 2021, census respondents had to specify whether they wanted to give Statistics Canada permission to release confidential information after 92 years.

Discussion questions

- Would you have said yes or no? Why?



Part 3: Consolidation of learning (30 minutes)

- 7 Using the **Census question worksheet** handout, ask students to work individually or in pairs to define five topics they feel should be represented in the census data for 2026.
- 8 From these five options, ask each student to select three topics and write clear, concise and objective questions to obtain the desired information. Encourage students to consider what makes an effective or useful question.

Considerations for writing survey questions

- Does this question presuppose information? Is it open-ended? Is it objective?
- Is what I'm asking clear? Will people reading the question know what I want from them?
- Does the question solicit useful information?

- 9 When they have completed their list of questions, ask students to pair up and test their questions.

Partners should answer each other's questions, provide feedback about whether the questions were effective, and make suggestions about how questions might be improved. Be sure to give students time to reword and refine their questions, based on feedback from their peers.

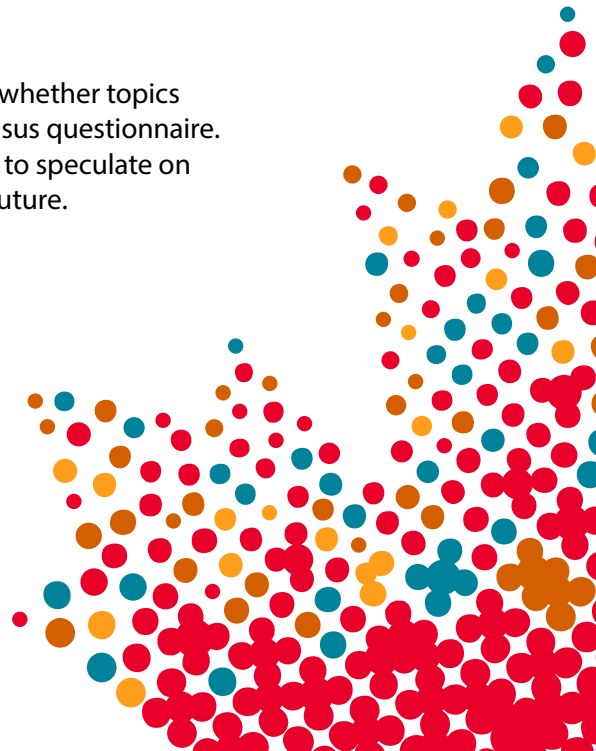
Modifications

If students require additional support, try the following:

- Some students may need to see example questions before they are able to create and test their own. Sample questions from the 2021 Census long-form questionnaire can be found here:
 - o English: [2021 Census: 2A-L \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www24.statcan.gc.ca/nom/en/2021/c2a-l)
 - o French: [Recensement de 2021 : 2A-L \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www24.statcan.gc.ca/nom/fr/2021/c2a-l)

If students require an additional challenge, try the following:

- Ask students to investigate previous census data to determine whether topics similar to theirs have ever been included in any form of the census questionnaire. If the information has not, to date, been included, ask students to speculate on trends in responses to the question for 5, 10 or 15 years in the future.



Data gathered from previous census questionnaires and other surveys conducted by Statistics Canada can be searched by topic, year, region, etc. here:

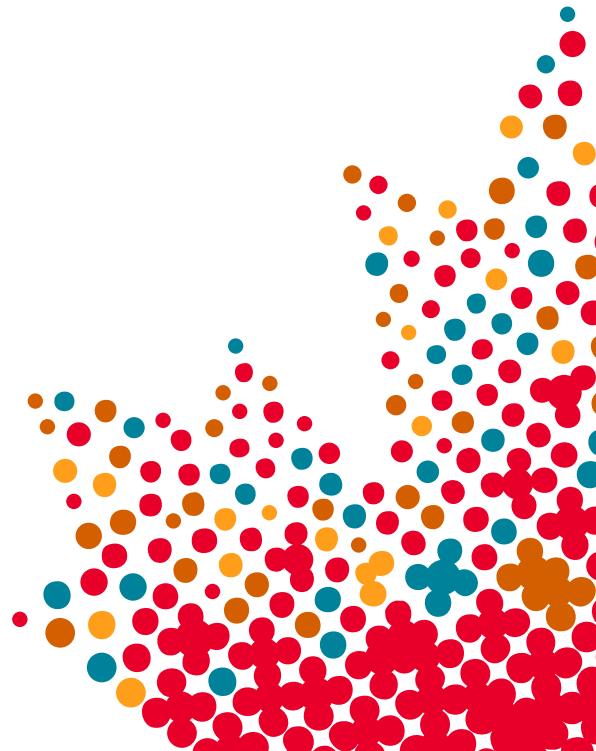
- o English: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/type/data>
- o French: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/fr/type/donnees>

Statistics Canada encourages people to download and reuse data provided in its socioeconomic database.

Next steps

To continue this activity, try the following:

- Have students examine how census questions have changed as Canada and its population have changed. Provide sample questions from past census questionnaires (5, 10 or 50 years old) and have students try to guess which era the questions are from. Have them create a poster with a comparison chart of data trends for questions of interest.
- Have students investigate the history of the census; the data it provides; and how it is used by organizations, media outlets, researchers and policy makers. Have students consult the highlights and analysis of 2021 Census data; reflect on interesting or surprising findings; and discuss how they relate to those findings personally or, in the long-term, professionally.
- Create a survey from student questions and use free online survey tools to collect data from a sample population within the community. If collecting data from people in the local community, ensure that respondents are aware that their participation is voluntary and that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in an informal survey.



What is the Census of Population?

The Census of Population provides a statistical picture of Canada and its people. Almost every country in the world carries out a census on a regular basis.

The Census of Population collects information, in five-year intervals, on every person living in Canada, with some exceptions. By law, every household in Canada must participate and, by law, Statistics Canada must protect the information that is gathered.

Census questions ask about topics such as age, marital status, household members, relationships between household members, and languages spoken.

Census of Population data are important for all communities and are vital for planning services such as schools, daycares, family services, housing, police services, fire protection services, roads, public transportation and skills training for employment. These data are used by governments, businesses, associations, organizations and many others to make important decisions.

The last Census of Population was conducted in 2021. The next one will take place in 2026.

Summary of census topics

On the 2021 Census questionnaire, respondents were asked to provide contact information and a current address before answering the following questions:

- Including yourself, how many persons usually live at this address on May 11, 2021?

For each person, information was gathered about

- their sex at birth (male or female)
- their gender
- their date of birth and age (day, month, year, age)
- their marital status (never legally married; legally married [and not separated]; separated, but still legally married; divorced; or widowed)
- whether they were living with a common-law partner
- their relationship with the respondent (Person 1).

Person 2

- Husband or wife of Person 1
- Common-law partner of Person 1
- Son or daughter of Person 1 only
- Grandchild of Person 1
- Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1
- Father or mother of Person 1
- Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1
- Brother or sister of Person 1
- Foster child
- Roommate, lodger or boarder
- Other relationship — specify:

Persons 3-6

- Son or daughter of both Persons 1 and 2
- Son or daughter of Person 1 only
- Son or daughter of Person 2 only
- Grandchild of Person 1
- Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1
- Father or mother of Person 1
- Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1
- Brother or sister of Person 1
- Foster child
- Roommate, lodger or boarder
- Other relationship — specify:

Additional instructions for consideration:

- Adopted children are considered sons and daughters.
- Children in joint custody are included in the home of the parent with whom they live most of the time.
- Children who spend equal time with each parent are included in the home of the parent with whom they are staying on a particular date (reference day).

These questions were also asked about each person:

- Can this person speak English or French (or both or neither) well enough to conduct a conversation?
- What language does this person speak most often at home?
- Does this person speak any other languages on a regular basis at home?
- What is the language that this person first learned at home in childhood and still understands?
- Has this person ever served in the Canadian military?

Census question worksheet

1. What five topics do you feel should be included on future versions of the Census of Population?
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2. Select three topics from the ideas you listed in Question 1 and write clear, concise and objective questions to obtain the information for each topic.
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3. From Question 2, select and highlight the question that you would propose for inclusion in the census questionnaire. What services, resources or organizations would benefit from having these data about the Canadian population?
4. Are there any precautions that must be considered when collecting this kind of information?
5. Would this question have been relevant to people 92 years ago? Why or why not?
6. Will this question be relevant to people 92 years from now? Why or why not?