

L.A. youth teacher's guide

Publishing Schedule

L.A. Youth will begin arriving Wed., Jan. 20

Key to using the January-February 2010 issue:

ARTICLE and PAGE NUMBER

KEY TEACHING POINTS

<p>Remembering a classmate p. 5 Jennifer was shocked and sad when a popular senior died after going to a party.</p>	<p>How do you feel about death? Does it affect you differently when you hear about a teen dying? Why or why not?</p>
<p>Our actions add up pp. 6-7 Brandie's science class showed her there are easy things everyone can do to help the environment.</p>	<p>How has a class inspired you to take action? What changes could your school make to help the environment?</p>
<p>Family comes first pp. 8-9 With a strict dad, Yasamin doesn't get to hang out with her friends that much, but she loves her Persian culture.</p>	<p>How do you balance time with your friends and time with your family? What are the benefits of spending time with family?</p>
<p>COVER STORY: I believe again pp. 10-11 For years Esteban thought religion was pointless but now it's a big part of his life.</p>	<p>Does religion play a big role in your family? Why do you think some people are faithful?</p>
<p>All the places we go pp. 14-15 From Hollywood to Long Beach, Ashley likes exploring L.A. on the train.</p>	<p>How do you have fun without spending a lot of money? What are some of your favorite cheap adventures?</p>
<p>Why didn't I learn this in sex ed? pp. 16-17 Since her health class wasn't informative, Meklit has tried to get answers on her own.</p>	<p>Do you feel like you've learned enough about sexual health? How do you think your school could improve sex ed?</p>
<p>My favorite style of dance p. 19 It's taken years for Caitlin to learn traditional Native American dance.</p>	<p>What's something you've worked hard to learn? How did you keep from getting discouraged?</p>
<p>Making peace with my past pp. 20-21 After being abused, Juliana took her anger out on everybody until she got help to change.</p>	<p>How has something in your past had a negative impact on you? How have you dealt with it?</p>
<p>Time to be counted p. 23 Ernesto says filling out the census doesn't take long and helps your community.</p>	<p>See lesson plan on page 2.</p>
<p>What parents don't understand pp. 24-25 Our essay contest winners wrote about parents who aren't home, want them to be religious, and don't get their music.</p>	<p>What don't your parents understand about you? What can you do to help them see things from your point of view?</p>

What's the census?

Learn how the census helps your community

A lesson plan to go with “Time to be counted” from the January-February 2010 issue of L.A. Youth. In this article, Ernesto writes about the importance of the census and encourages teens to help their parents fill it out.

By Amanda Riddle, co-managing editor

Grades: 7-12

Subjects: Government, history, language arts, social studies, life skills

Suggested Time Allowance: 45 minutes-1 hour

Resources/Materials:

- copies of the L.A. Youth article “Time to be counted” (one per student)
- pens and paper
- white board or blackboard

Overview:

Students will examine how the census helps them and their community.

Introduction:

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a count of everyone living in the United States to learn more about who lives in the country and how the population has changed. The 2010 Census forms will be mailed in March. Teens today probably don't remember the 2000 Census so it's important to inform them about what it is and how it helps their communities. The census is required by the Constitution, which calls for a full counting of the population every 10 years to determine how many seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives (which is called apportionment). But it's now used for much more than that. The federal government uses census data to determine how to distribute \$400 billion each year to states and cities. The money is used for many public services that affect teens and their communities, such as schools, hospitals, libraries, emergency services and road improve-

ments. In the last census, the city of Los Angeles was undercounted and lost \$206 million, according to the city's website lacounts2010.org. So when people don't mail back their questionnaire, less money goes to their community. (More information on how to teach the census in schools is at census.gov/schools.)

Warm-up discussion:

Write a list on the board of some of the community services that are funded based on census data:

- Schools
- Hospitals
- Roads
- Public transportation
- Libraries

Ask your students if they've used any of these things and ask them for details and examples. How often? How do these services help them? Have they been frustrated by a lack of services or improvements?

Activities:

Have your students read Ernesto's story “Time to be counted” on page 23. After reading the story, as a discussion ask students how the census helps communities.

They may say:

- It provides money for schools, hospitals, libraries, road improvements, sanitation services, job training programs and more.
- The population data determines how many seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Businesses use the data to help decide where to open new stores and what language to advertise to customers in.

Concluding discussion:

Then, ask your students how more money in their community could improve government programs and services that are funded based on census data. They may say to build a new school to alleviate overcrowding, upgrade a hospital to add a much-needed emergency room, repair roads with potholes, add bus routes near their home, extend library hours, etc.

Assignment:

Have students write a persuasive essay about how filling out the census can help their community. Have them imagine themselves as a community activist trying to persuade families to fill out and mail back the census form. Their essays should include an explanation of how census data affects federal funding. Remind them a strong argument is a key strategy to convince someone to agree with their position. They should use examples of services they or their families have used, and explain how those services could be improved with more money.

Extension activity:

Have students mail their essays to a local official, such as the mayor or their U.S. representative. Also, encourage them to enter our essay contest, which asks if they think the census should ask about race. They can win money! Details are on page 25 of the January-February issue.



Would you like a speaker from L.A. Youth?

Editors Laura Lee and Mike Fricano speak about journalism, current events, working as a reporter, how to be a better writer and how students can get involved in L.A. Youth.

Call Laura or Mike at (323) 938-9194 or e-mail llee@layout.com or mfricano@layout.com. PLEASE NOTE: You'll be asked to pay \$5 to help offset the cost of gas.

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Next Newcomer's Orientation: Saturday, Feb. 6, 11 a.m.-noon at
L.A. Youth 5967 W. Third Street Suite 301, L.A. 90036 *(between Fairfax and La Brea)*

Call Amanda, Laura or Mike at (323) 938-9194.