

Race and Ethnicity in the United States

Substandard C - Spatial Organization

Sub-strand

The student will describe and provide examples of the primary factors behind the regional patterns of culture groups in the United States and the world.

Benchmark 3: Students will describe the regional distribution of the major culture groups of the United States (as defined by the U. S. census) and recent patterns of change.

Grade Level: 9-12

Overview: In this lesson students learn the U. S. Census Bureau's definitions of race and ethnicity and compare race and ethnicity data from 1900, 1950, and 2000 looking for patterns of change.

Time: This lesson will take 4 periods of approximately 50 minutes. If this is the first time your students have made choropleth maps you will have to add time for instruction. This is a good source for choropleth map information

http://www.maclester.edu/geography/mage/authentic/summer2002/lessons/beckman/beckman_1esson1.htm

Subjects: Geography

Required Materials:

Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-1.pdf>

Data sets for racial population of states available from the US Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056.html>

[Data table](#) (data I have already modified for my classroom use in Microsoft Excel format)

[Population Change Worksheet](#)

[Population Change Map Instructions](#)

Blank US maps, both paper copies and transparencies (one good source is

<http://www.50states.com/maps/usamap.htm> for other sources see Supplemental web links)

Calculators

Colored pencils or markers

Optional Technologies:

Data sets from the Census Bureau can be imported into a spreadsheet program and the percent change can be calculated there.

Objectives: After completing these activities a student should be able to:

- define the races and ethnicities counted by the U. S. census
- explain the settlement patterns of culture groups in the United States
- describe changes in population of culture groups in the United States

Suggested Procedure (Pedagogy):

Day1: KWL Chart and definitions of race

1) Do a KWL chart with whole class to lay the foundation for racial classifications in the US. See this site for examples of KWL Charts <http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic73.htm> as well as other types of graphic organizers. Some questions for discussion might include:

- How many different racial groups are included in the U. S. Census?
- What are those racial groups?
- Which racial group has the greatest population?
- What states have the highest populations of different racial groups?
- Has the (name of group) population always lived (state or region)?
- How has the census changed the way it asks for racial identification?

2) Have students read the “Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin” at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-1.pdf> (this is a fairly long reading, you may want to cut and paste the relevant sections into a shorter handout.)

3) Return to KWL chart and update based on reading.

Day 2 and 3: Mapping Population Change

1) Explain to students that they will be working in groups to map changes in populations of culture groups in the US over the last 100 years. Assign each group at least one racial category. You will need to decide how to handle the addition of racial groups through time. Each group will need data tables, Population Change Worksheets, several blank and transparency maps, colored pencils or markers and at least one calculator. (If you have never made choropleth maps in your class you will need to teach students how to do this. This site has a good set of instructions

http://www.macalester.edu/geography/mage/authentic/summer2002/lessons/beckman/beckman_lesson1.htm or do a Google search for making choropleth maps.)

2) Students should make maps that show the percent of population change from 1900 to 1950 and change from 1950 to 2000 for their assigned racial group(s). To determine percent population change they will need to do some simple math on the [Population Change Worksheet](#).

3) When the Population Change Worksheets are complete students will be making choropleth maps showing the percent change of their assigned population groups. Instructions for the assignment are on the [Population Change Map Instructions](#), when maps are complete students should answer questions.

Day 4: Presentations and Discussion

1) Have each group of students present their maps and comment on population clusters and changes they discovered. Lead class in discussion of trends, changes and possible reasons for change.

RESOURCES

Definitions:

Choropleth Maps -- a map that displays statistical information by using shading or colors to compare spatial relationships

TODALSS – title, orientation, date, author, legend, scale and source. Basic information to be included on every map made.

Supplemental Web Links for Teachers and Students:

US Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/index.html> This is the best starting point for all kinds of data on population. The related links connection on the left side of the page connects to statistical agencies in other countries.

Data for past census: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056.html>
This site has data table for census information dating to 1790.

Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-1.pdf>
This is a PDF file describing the U. S. Census Bureau's definitions and data on race and ethnicity.

National Geographic xpeditions atlas: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/>
one source for blank outline maps

About.com geography site: <http://geography.about.com/> a source for blank outline maps as well as other geographic information.

Extension Activities

- 1) As an alternate assignment students could make line graphs for each state showing increase in racial group population through time. The data for past census is at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056.html>
- 2) Have students research events in US history that would contribute to the increase and movement of racial groups in the US.

Credits

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