

The POINT!

E-Letter for Western Pennsylvania Social Studies Educators
Vol. 13 No. 2 February 2020



Making Sense of the Census

Since 1790, Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution has mandated the head count of each and every person residing in the United States every ten years. Results of the census help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states and communities each year. This affects local schools, fire departments, roads, bridges and other infrastructure in state and local communities.

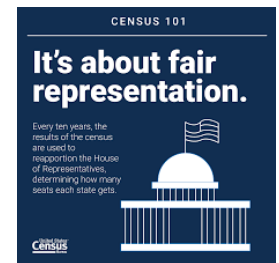
Because Congressional representation is based on population, the census determines how many seats in Congress each state gets.

All information collected by the census is protected and kept strictly confidential. Your private information is never published and your answers cannot be used against you by any government agency or court under Title 13 of the U.S. Code.

Because it occurs only once every ten years, many people forget what it is all about and try to avoid the count. They are ill informed and in today's mass miscommunication through electronic devices, a huge problem can occur. It is important to get the word out.

In 1980, my wife, who was a technical writer for a scholarly institute was working as a census taker. On a follow-up visit to a home that had not responded, she met some opposition from a woman who was ill informed. She was accused of being one of those welfare people who were hired by the government because they could do nothing else. The census was a sham to register people for jury duty. This lack of memory and knowledge is still around. There is still a great need to get the word out about the importance of the census.

In mid-March, homes across the country will begin receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, people should respond for their home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail.



Soldiers & Sailors Hall!

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum houses a vast collection of primary and secondary documents and military artifacts. It is their mission to promote the use of these educational items and create an understanding for all groups who visit the museum. They provide a rich learning experience for all people by exploring the deeds and sacrifices of ordinary citizens during extraordinary circumstances.

S&S is pleased to announce that we have once again received funding to support our **Bus Scholarship Program**.

Don't forget contact S&S about VIP Tours and Footlocker program.

For more information visit our web site:

<https://soldiersandsailorshall.org>



One-Day Seminar: “Captains of Industry or Robber Barons?” hosted by Heinz History Center (Pittsburgh, PA)

August 14 @ 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Revisit the Gilded Age, or Age of Enterprise as some call it and read about the ideas, actions, and legacies of the leading political and industrial figures of the times, exploring the question of whether these people are properly portrayed as either ‘Robber Barons’ or Captains of Industry’ – or perhaps, something of both. Lunch will be provided at this free program, as well as a certificate for continuing education. All registrants will receive a copy of the reader, on paper, in advance of the program; and **digital copies will be available here** after early July 2020. Click **here** to register.



Free Lesson Plan

In light of the recent escalation of events between the United States and Iran, this new *Teaching with the News* lesson helps students understand the history of U.S.-Iran relations and consider the current status of U.S.-Iran relations as they develop media source analysis skills and analyze different perspectives on the current situation.



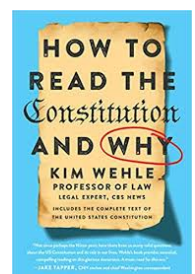
Use This Free Lesson

Report examines scope of high-school civics curricula

Education Week Teacher (tiered subscription model) (12/16)

Do states' high school civics programs explicitly teach the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights? What about the democratic system compared to other systems of government? What about avenues for public participation in a democracy? How about state and local voting rules?

The Center for American Progress has waded into these very deep curricular weeds **in a new report issued** Monday — an update of sorts to its 2018 report on civics education. In it, analysts looked to see whether states included those four above-named topics, plus a fifth area: Media literacy and the role and influence of media ...



The Point

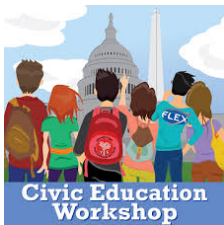
For
Western Pennsylvania
Social Studies Educators

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The Point is the
e-newsletter
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WPCSS was a non-profit 501c
organization dedicated to promoting
the teaching and learning of social
studies in Western Pennsylvania

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Opinion: 1 high-school civics class is not enough

The current approach to teaching civics is insufficient, writes book author Natalie Wexler. In this article, Wexler discusses different approaches that have the potential to resonate with students, including "action civics" and news reporting about civics topics, but cautions that more is needed than making modifications to high-school civics instruction.

[Forbes](#) (1/5)

Ark. civics students learn about government, court

High-school students in Arkansas recently attended a presentation at city hall to learn about local government after previously participating in a mock district court trial to learn more about the justice system. Getting students interested in government from a young age is a positive, said city administrator Phillip Patterson, who hosted the students.

[Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette \(Fayetteville\)/The Herald-Leader \(Siloam Springs, Ark.\)](#) (1/5)

How iCivics helps teach about the US Constitution

History teacher Sarah Cooper describes using materials from iCivics to engage her 8th-graders in lessons about the US Constitution, highlighting the visual appeal of the readings, age-appropriate material, challenging activities and enjoyable games. Cooper writes in this blog post about plans to use the materials in classes, incorporating visual displays and current events to add a personal touch to the lessons.

[MiddleWeb](#) (1/6)

Roberts: More support needed for civics education

The rise of social media has fueled the dissemination of false information, made more problematic by the dearth of civics education, US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts Jr. said in an annual address. He noted several ways federal courts strive to support civics education, including mock trials for students organized by the Administrative Office of the US Courts.

[Education Week \(tiered subscription model\)](#) (1)

Nonprofits help boost civics education in Ore.

Oregon does not require schools to teach civics. Some nonprofits including the Classroom Law Project and YMCA Youth in Government are working with schools to teach the topic, provide extracurricular activities and spark students interest in civics and government.

[Blue Mountain Eagle \(John Day, Ore.\)](#) (1/8)

N.Y. task force recommends diploma seal for civics

The New York Board of Regents is considering a task force's recommendation to offer a "seal of civic readiness" that high-schoolers could earn on their diplomas. The proposal suggests that students could earn the seal by demonstrating mastery of the subject of civics and participation in the civics process, such as researching and finding solutions to a real-world problem.

[Chalkbeat/New York](#) (1/13)



Canonsburg Workshop

Incorporating Civics into your Classroom

Dr. Elizabeth R. Osborn, Indiana University Center on Representative Government

Educators at every grade level and content area need to be involved in preparing students to be informed and active citizens.

This workshop will help civic-minded educators develop engaged citizens by:

- Improving inquiry based teaching using the Library of Congress methodology
- Interacting with the free civics app [Engaging Congress](#)
- Previewing the Library of Congress micro-credential

Attendees will receive:

- Teaching with Primary Source training
- Professional Development and Continuing Education Units
- \$100 stipend
- Lunch
- Free parking

Targeted to 6th–12th grade educators in all content areas, but useful for teachers in other grade levels, curriculum specialist, education faculty as well as pre-service teachers.

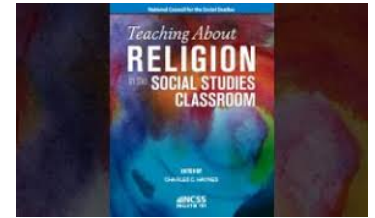
Free

[Register](#)



National Summit on Religion and Education White Paper Now Available

In the 2014 position statement, *Study about Religions in the Social Studies Curriculum*, National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) affirmed that study about religions is an essential part of the social studies curriculum. NCSS Bulletin 117, *Teaching About Religion in the Social Studies Classroom* is now available. See <https://www.socialstudies.org/publications>



ebook Editions now Available

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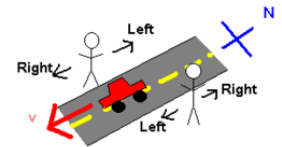
eBooks



Do history textbooks in Calif., Texas depict the same US?

A side-by-side comparison of history textbooks used in Texas and California shows variances in the content that paint different pictures of the same events. Reasons for the variances include state social studies standards, state laws and input from textbook review panels.

The New York Times (tiered subscription model) (1/12)



W.Va. drops effort to cut social studies requirement

The West Virginia Board of Education has shelved a proposal to reduce the social studies classes required for high-school graduation. Supporters said the policy proposal gave students the choice of world history, finance or computer science classes, but opponents voiced concerns about cutting the required social studies credits from four to three to graduate.

WVNews (Clarksburg, W.Va.) (1/27)



Teacher: Use artifacts to tell stories of history

Artifacts -- such as a stone from the original White House -- help students think about the historical figures and events as more than names and dates, according to Mike Burke, a high-school history and civics teacher in Illinois. Burke says he uses the stone during a unit about slavery and tells students that "this brick was probably put into place by a slave." The Jacksonville Journal-Courier (Ill.) (1/13)



Ohio students examine US history with Iran

A US history teacher at an Ohio high school recently adjusted his lesson plan to respond to questions from students about recent conflicts between the militaries and governments of the US and Iran. To learn more about the situation, history teacher Oliver Corritan's juniors and seniors watched videos and discussed foreign policy and the history of relations between the two countries.



 WBNS-TV (Columbus, Ohio) (1/13)



Second lady tours Pennsylvania to encourage census response


Pennsylvania's second lady Giselle Fetterman is kicking off a statewide tour to promote participation in this year's Census Bureau count. Pennsylvania receives \$26.8 billion each year for federally funded programs, which is linked to the state's population and [an accurate census count](#).

CHOICES: Teaching With the News

With President Trump's State of the Union Address scheduled for February 4, this free *Teaching with the News* lesson has students examine the constitutional origins of what has become an annual tradition. Students use short video clips from every president since Franklin Roosevelt to identify important issues and their historical contexts and relevance today. The lesson then has students identify likely themes for President Trump's address and compare their predictions to the actual State of the Union.

Ill. teacher uses impeachment as history lesson

History students in an Illinois high school have had a lot of questions about the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump so teacher Ronnie Woods is teaching about the historic event. Woods said he hopes the lessons about the impeachment process helps students learn about the world and become adults who are "competent" voters.

 [KFVS-TV \(Cape Girardeau, Mo.\) \(1/21\)](#)


Women's suffrage history taught with escape room

Teacher Brandy Gearhart recently used a voting exercise and an escape room-type game to teach students about the women's suffrage movement. The Indiana middle-school teacher's students worked in small groups to use clues to solve the game and participated in a voting exercise to learn about women and the right to vote.

[News and Tribune \(Jeffersonville, Ind.\) \(tiered subscription model\)](#)


N.C. teachers frustrated with changes to social studies

Starting in the 2020-21 school year, high school freshmen will be required to take an economics and personal finance course before they graduate. To accommodate the class, the State Board of Education adopted [new graduation requirements](#) Thursday that say high school students will take one U.S. history courses, instead of two.

 \ [The News & Observer \(Raleigh, N.C.\) \(tiered subscription model\) \(1/17\)](#)

Challenge helps students appreciate water access

Michael D'Amato's social studies class participated in the One Gallon Challenge, an exercise to help them appreciate the experiences of individuals around the world who lack easy access to clean water. The sixth- to eighth-grade students carried around a one gallon jug of water all day long to get an idea of what it must be like to carry five gallons, as is done daily by people in developing countries.

 [WNYW-TV \(New York City\) \(1/10\)](#)



Remembering Auschwitz-Birkenau

During World War II, Jewish partisans engaged in acts of sabotage, including the bombing of railroads which brought supplies and ammunition to German troops. These acts of resistance helped Allied forces defeat the Nazis and liberate the concentration camps. The Jewish partisans saved thousands of lives.

Monday, January 27th was the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. While this arrived too late for the January issue, here are a few quick and important resources about the Jewish partisans to incorporate into your Remembrance Day lessons:

- Introduction to the Partisans [short film](#)
- Resistance Basics [video course](#)
- Teaching with *Defiance* [curriculum](#) and [video course](#)
- Jewish Women in the Partisans [study guide](#)
- Uprising [study guide](#) about the Warsaw Ghetto Revolt
- Jewish Partisans Saving Jews [study guide](#)
- Jewish partisan [biographies and video testimonies](#)



Sure, We Teach History. But Do We Know Why It's Important?

In 1980, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians began hearing testimony from Japanese-Americans who, after the Pearl Harbor attack, were forced at gunpoint into prison camps throughout the desolate interior of the United States.

Initiated by Sen. Daniel Inouye, a Hawaii Democrat who lost an arm fighting the Nazis, the commission was largely conceived in order to establish a legal and political case in Congress against internment and for some kind of redress. But Nisei men and women, the children of Japanese immigrants who had kept virtually silent for decades due to a social code inherited from their ancestors, captured the moment. They used the hearings to share their stories of sorrow and humiliation. The intense emotion of these personal histories galvanized a political movement that succeeded in [winning monetary reparations from the federal government](#) for those who had been interned.



Studying Religious Texts in School Is Bad. And Good

American schools generally do not teach about religious texts. This is unquestionably a good thing, an important way in which public institutions, including our venerable K-12 schools, abide by and uphold the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment, which prohibits the state sponsoring of religion.

But there is a part of me that sometimes worries about unintended consequences. It happens most frequently when I read about current events, like the ongoing debate over the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement in the Middle East, rising Hindu nationalism in India, or young Christians' differing attitudes toward gay marriage compared.



ECONOMIC SYMPOSIUM

The Cleveland Fed is hosting a **Women in Economics Symposium** on Thursday, Feb. 27. This event is ideal for high school, undergraduate/graduate students and young professionals with an interest in learning about careers in economics. Professors and other faculty are also encouraged to attend and participate in this great networking opportunity.

Additional programming for students traveling in for the symposium may be offered, depending on interest (more details will be shared with registrants closer to the event).

Cariss T. Smith • FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* CLEVELAND

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Women in Economics Join Us on Thursday, February 27th

The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland is hosting a Women in Economics Symposium, which aims to encourage women to pursue a career in economics by discussing the successful career paths of diverse economics professionals and raising awareness of diversity and inclusion in the profession. Join the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland's President Loretta J. Mester and featured keynotes Dr. Julianne Malveaux and Dr. Lisa Cook.

Event Date: Thursday, February 27, 2020

Location: Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland

Address: 1455 E 6th St, Cleveland, Ohio, 44114, USA

Time: 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM

The symposium is free, but registration is required before February 20th.

Register

