

RESOURCE LIBRARY
ACTIVITY : 40 MINS

Introduction to Population

Students learn what *population* means, discuss crowding and why some areas are more crowded than others, and compare and contrast living in crowded and uncrowded places.

GRADES

1, 2

SUBJECTS

Geography, Human Geography

CONTENTS

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OVERVIEW

Students learn what *population* means, discuss crowding and why some areas are more crowded than others, and compare and contrast living in crowded and uncrowded places.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/introduction-population/>

DIRECTIONS

1. Introduce the term *population* and discuss crowding.

Introduce the term *population*. Tell students that *population* is the whole number of people living in an area, such as a town or city. Ask: *What happens when more people live in the same amount of space?* Provide students with the following example: In the middle of the school year, many more students join their classroom. Ask: *What changes would we have to make?* Encourage students to think about where new students would sit, how much noisier it would be, and any other changes they can think of.

2. Explain why some areas are more crowded than others.

Explain that people live in large numbers in some places and in small numbers in other places.

Tell students that the reasons why include access to:

- water
- food
- jobs
- transportation

Ask: *What other reasons can you think of?*

3. Conduct a brief simulation.

Direct the majority of the class into a small area of the classroom and allow three students to “claim” the rest of the classroom for themselves. Once students have taken their places, ask them to be as quiet as possible and to make silent observations on their current situation. Then ask: *What do you notice?* Ask students in the crowded area to share observations. Then ask students in the uncrowded area to share theirs.

4. Compare and contrast living in crowded and uncrowded places.

Have students return to their regular places in the classroom. Ask them to describe what they think it would be like to live in a place that's very crowded. Ask: *What's good about living in a crowded place? What's not good about it?*

Informal Assessment

Have students draw pictures of themselves and crowded and uncrowded parts of their town or school. The pictures should illustrate activities they would do in both areas. Discuss students' drawings. Ask: *What is good about being in the place you drew? What is bad?*

Extending the Learning

If available, have students examine a map of their local city or county and compare and contrast living in the crowded and uncrowded areas. Then give students copies of the world map. Have them find and mark the ten countries with the most people, currently:

- China
- India
- United States
- Indonesia

- Brazil
- Pakistan
- Bangladesh
- Nigeria
- Russia
- Japan

Ask: Would you like to live in one of the countries? Ask students to think about how their lives would be different in a country with a larger population. Make sure students take into account the varying sizes of the countries. Ask: What happens when more people live in the same amount of space?

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

Geography

- Human Geography

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- explain why some areas are more crowded than others
- compare and contrast living in crowded and uncrowded places

Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

Teaching Methods

- Discussions
- Simulations and games

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
 - Learning and Innovation Skills
 - Communication and Collaboration
- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Remembering
 - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
 - Acquiring Geographic Information
 - Analyzing Geographic Information

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STANDARDS

- Theme 3:

People, Places, and Environments

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- Standard 9:

The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

Preparation

What You'll Need

MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE

- Pencils
- Pens

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Optional

- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Large-group instruction

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Some places, parts of the country, or parts of the world are more crowded than others. Exploring the reasons why people live where they do helps you understand the good and bad things about living in crowded or uncrowded places.

Prior Knowledge

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Recommended Prior Activities

- [Create a Pasta Population Map](#)
- [Crowded Places](#)

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
crowded	<i>adjective</i>	filled with too many people or things.
population	<i>noun</i>	total number of people or organisms in a particular area.
uncrowded	<i>adjective</i>	not containing a lot of people.

For Further Exploration

Websites

- [U.S. Census Bureau: Kids Corner](#)



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