

## ACTIVITY 2

# CENSUS GUESSING GAME



|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| LEVEL:          | <b>Adult English as a Second Language (ESL)/<br/>French as a Second Language (FSL)</b><br>- beginner to intermediate |
| TIME REQUIRED:  | <b>25 to 35 minutes</b>  |
| THEME:          | <b>Understanding the Canadian census</b>   |
| LANGUAGE FOCUS: | <b>Vocabulary development, oral fluency,<br/>listening comprehension</b>   |

## Lesson overview

This interactive vocabulary review activity is designed as a follow up to [Activity 1: Understanding key Canadian census terminology](#). It helps learners whose first language is not English build familiarity and confidence with important census-related vocabulary. Through a team-based guessing game, students will describe and identify terms using simple English definitions and clues. The activity promotes oral language development, teamwork, and a stronger understanding of the vocabulary needed to complete the Canadian Census of Population.

### Learning objectives:

By the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- Recognize and use key vocabulary related to the Canadian Census of Population
- Strengthen their oral communication and listening skills in English
- Build confidence using English in a supportive, interactive setting

**Key vocabulary and suggested forbidden words**  
 (see [census vocabulary worksheet definitions \(teacher's copy\)](#)):

| <b>Words</b>                     | <b>Forbidden words</b>             |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Census of Population</b>      | Numbers, people, government        |
| <b>Dwelling</b>                  | Building, stay, roof               |
| <b>Household</b>                 | Family, home, group                |
| <b>Non-permanent resident</b>    | Live, country, from                |
| <b>Immigrant</b>                 | Arrive, move, passport             |
| <b>Occupation</b>                | Job, work, office                  |
| <b>Commuting duration</b>        | Minutes, distance, time            |
| <b>Ethnic or cultural origin</b> | Tradition, roots, language         |
| <b>Marital status</b>            | Couple, partner, wedding           |
| <b>Sex at birth</b>              | Baby, male, female                 |
| <b>Population group</b>          | Heritage, Identity, appearance     |
| <b>Indigenous group</b>          | First Nations, Métis, Inuit (Inuk) |
| <b>Religion</b>                  | Denomination, faith, belief        |
| <b>Resident</b>                  | Home, address, place               |
| <b>Enumerator</b>                | Ask, form, worker                  |
| <b>Census Day</b>                | Date, event, calendar              |

*(Educators may adapt the list to match methods of instruction and level of language proficiency)*



### Materials needed

- A printed copy of the Census Vocabulary Worksheet (cut out ahead of time)
- Whiteboard or paper to keep score
- Optional: Timer or stopwatch

## Lesson procedure:

### 1 Vocabulary worksheet (individual or in pairs) (15 to 25 minutes)

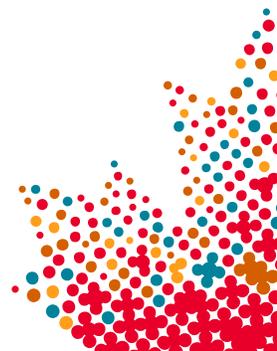
- Review the vocabulary words as a group.
- Ask students if they remember what the words mean.
- If helpful, ask students to say the meaning in their first language or give an example.

### 2 Explain the game (5 minutes)

- One student from each team comes to the front and picks a word card.
- That student describes the word using English only. They cannot say the word itself.
  - Optional challenge (for intermediate or advanced students): The student also avoids the “forbidden words” written on the card.
- The team has 1 minute to guess the word.
- Each correct answer = 1 point.
- If the student says the word or a forbidden word, they skip that card (no point).
- Teams take turns.

### 3 Play the game (10–20 minutes)

- Keep playing with different students each round.
- Write each team’s score on the board.
- Help students if needed and encourage them to try their best.
- For extra challenge or a second round, use the forbidden words rule.



## 4 Wrap-up (5 minutes)

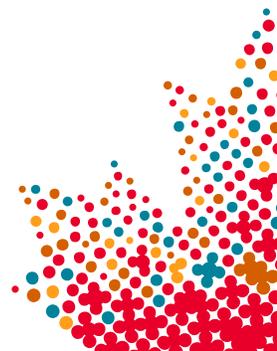
- Ask students which words were easy or hard to describe.
- Go over any tricky vocabulary together.
- *Optional:* Give students a handout or flashcards to take home for practice.

### Adaptations and differentiation:

- **To simplify:** Let students use gestures or basic sentence frames (e.g., “You can find this in a \_\_\_\_”). You can also remove or reduce the number of forbidden words.
- **To increase difficulty:** Add more forbidden words to make the game more challenging. Encourage students to use full sentences when giving clues.
- **For language support:** Allow students to work with a partner who speaks the same first language. They can check understanding together before playing.

### Possible extensions

- Have students create their own word cards using census-related vocabulary they think is useful, including “forbidden words.”
- Ask students to write simple sentences or a short paragraph using new vocabulary (e.g., about their household or community).
- Play a roleplay game where one student acts as the enumerator and the other as the respondent to practice using census terms in context.



# CENSUS VOCABULARY WORKSHEET



## **Census of Population**

Forbidden words: numbers, people, government

## **Dwelling**

Forbidden words: building, stay, roof

## **Household**

Forbidden words: family, home, group

## **Non-permanent resident**

Forbidden words: live, country, from

## **Immigrant**

Forbidden words: arrive, move, passport

## **Occupation**

Forbidden words: job, work, office

## **Commuting duration**

Forbidden words: minutes, distance, time

## **Ethnic or cultural origin**

Forbidden words: tradition, roots, language

# CENSUS VOCABULARY WORKSHEET

## **Marital status**

Forbidden words: couple, partner wedding

## **Sex at birth**

Forbidden words: baby, male, female

## **Population group**

Forbidden words: race, ethnicity, appearance

## **Indigenous group**

Forbidden words: First Nations, Métis, Inuit (Inuk)

## **Religion**

Forbidden words: denomination, faith, belief

## **Resident**

Forbidden words: home, address, place

## **Enumerator**

Forbidden words: ask, form, worker

## **Census Day**

Forbidden words: date, event, calendar