

Chapter 3
The U.S. Population: Looking Forward from the Past

Student assignments and activities designed to enhance learning and stimulate critical thinking.

1. Learn about the history of your own family's migration to the US. Answer the questions listed on pages 35-36.
2. Discuss the implications of the change in the US sex ratio over time (see Figure 3-3)?
3. In anticipation of the 2010 Census, what racial/ethnic group will you check off for yourself? (See page 42 for the classifications currently available.) Do you feel that this group truly represents your racial/ethnic background (i.e. where your ancestors are from)? Why or why not? Does this matter?
4. The number of children from interracial couples is increasing. Describe how this can affect the Census. Describe how this can affect racial categories.
5. Based on the population changes described in Chapter 3, what 5 questions would you add or change from the 2000 Census in developing the 2010 Census? Describe your reasons for adding or changing these questions. See Figure 3-5 for the 2000 Census questionnaire.
6. Define the term *transgender*. Would this be a useful identifier to add to the census? Why or why not?
7. According to the 2000 Census (<http://www.census.gov>), for the zip code you live in:
 - A. What was the median household income in 1999?
 - B. What percentage of families lives below poverty?
 - C. What percentage of the population speaks a language other than English at home?
8. Use US Census Bureau data from <http://censtats.census.gov/usa/usa.shtml> to compare infant deaths per 1,000 live births between 1990 and 2000 in your state and county. What are some of the reasons for changes in infant mortality over time or between your county and state?