

# Population Shifts

## Lesson Plan for Grade 6, Social Studies West Virginia State Museum Education

### OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

By examining current census data from the state, students will understand how to properly interpret map data and apply the information. Students gain the necessary skills to read data locally and take those skills to tackle data for national and international problem sets.

### EDUCATION STANDARDS

**SS.6.16:** Examine population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and infer the reasons for changes and differences in various areas (e.g., difference between rural and urban areas).

### OBJECTIVES

*"The United States (U.S.) Census Bureau provides current facts and figures about America's people, places, and economy. Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a census to count the residents of the United States. This data is critical for government programs, policies, and decision-making" ([www.census.org](http://www.census.org)).*

Through this lesson, students will:

1. Analyze the information provided in the attached Census maps (Population Density and Population Change).
2. Use the data from the maps to evaluate change in both Population Density and Population Change. (*i.e. identify if there are increases or decreases, specific areas that changed more than others, etc.*).
3. Assess and/or predict determining factors in these changes (*i.e., major industrial change(s), etc.*).

### MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Population Density map
2. Population Change map
3. Access to the online map for further investigation (<https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2566121a73de463995ed2b2fd7ff6eb7>)

## ASSESSMENT

### *Checking for student understanding*

- By the end of the activity, students can read and interpret the Population Density and Population Change Maps with at least 80% confidence and accuracy.
- Students can draw conclusions based on their analysis of the maps and their understanding of demographic changes (i.e., a county decreased due to a major industry loss, etc.).
- Students can support their conclusions—either verbally or in writing (i.e., a short presentation of analysis, written assignment, etc.) with accurate data and evidence.

## LESSON ACTIVITIES

1. Introduce students to the Population Density and Population Change maps provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. Explain or review specific terms and vocabulary as needed (i.e., population density, census, etc.)
  - a. Students can either use the images of these maps, or can explore them on the U.S. Census Bureau website linked here:  
(<https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2566121a73de463995ed2b2fd7ff6eb7>).
  - b. Allow ample time for the students to examine the maps in detail, explain what specific terms mean as applicable (i.e., population density, census, etc.).
2. Provide students with time to either individually or in pairs/teams, take notes on what they notice in both maps.
  - a. Students discuss (if in pairs/teams), and write down their observations.
3. As a whole group, have each student/group or several volunteers present a brief summary of their observations and why they think that the density and changes occurred where they did.
  - a. When necessary, prompt students to account for factors within the state, nation, and international spheres.
4. Assign each student/group to create a small brochure, poster, or short slideshow about their findings. Each student/group should include the following:
  - a. Their initial observations of each map
  - b. What change(s) they observed
  - c. Their conclusion(s) about why the change(s) occurred
  - d. Specific examples and data to support their conclusion(s)

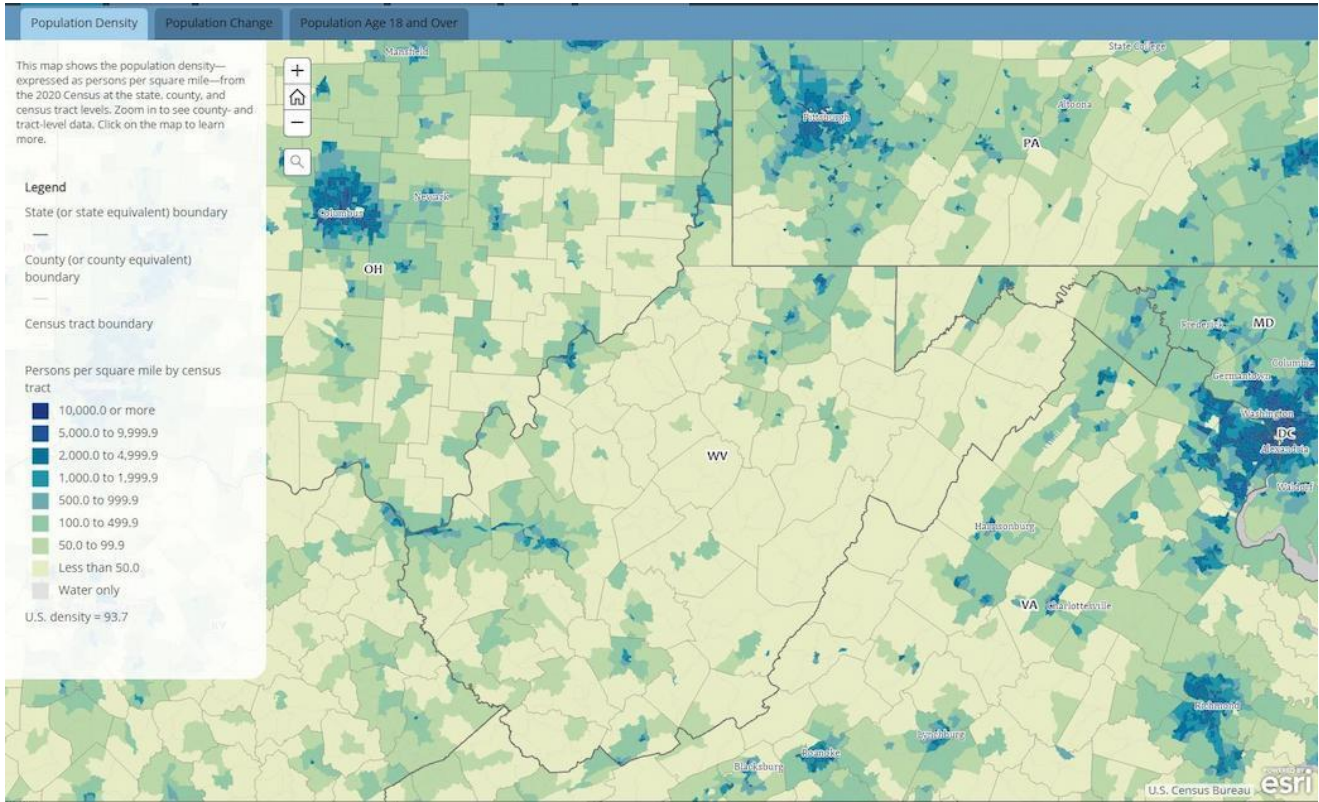
## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Extend the lesson by and engage critical thinking skills by asking students to speculate how population shifts affect local, national, and global events. Engage the students in discussion about the impact of population shifts and challenge them to provide evidence in their analysis of population shift effects. This could also present your students with a research and writing assignment to dig even deeper.

Students could also repeat the lesson activity for other states and compare to WV data to draw additional conclusions and comparisons.

# MAPS

## 2020 Population Density Map (U.S. Census Bureau)



## Population Change Map (U.S. Census Bureau)

