

Name: _____

A Visit from a Census Worker

A Reader's Theater Script

Scene

A Saturday lunch at the home of Enriqu  Alcala. The family has just eaten. They are relaxing with fruit juice.

Characters

Enriqu  Alcala

Elena Alcala, his wife

Teresa Alcala, his mother

Nicolas Alcala, his infant son

Ann Lee, a worker for the U.S. Census Bureau

Script

(A knock is heard at the door.)

Enriqu  Alcala: Who can that be? I was hoping to get an afternoon nap!

Elena Alcala: *(laughing)* You'll have to wait. I'll get the door.

(She opens the door. A young woman is standing there. She is holding a clipboard.)

Ann Lee: Good afternoon! My name is Ann Lee. I am a worker for the U.S. Census Bureau. Here is my identification. *(She holds up a badge.)*

Elena: *(looking nervous)* Good afternoon. Enriqu ? This is Ann Lee. She is with the U.S. Census Bureau.

Enriqu : Good afternoon. We received our census form. But I'm afraid we did not mail it. Please come in.

Ann: *(stepping inside the home)* Yes, I came to help you fill out the form.

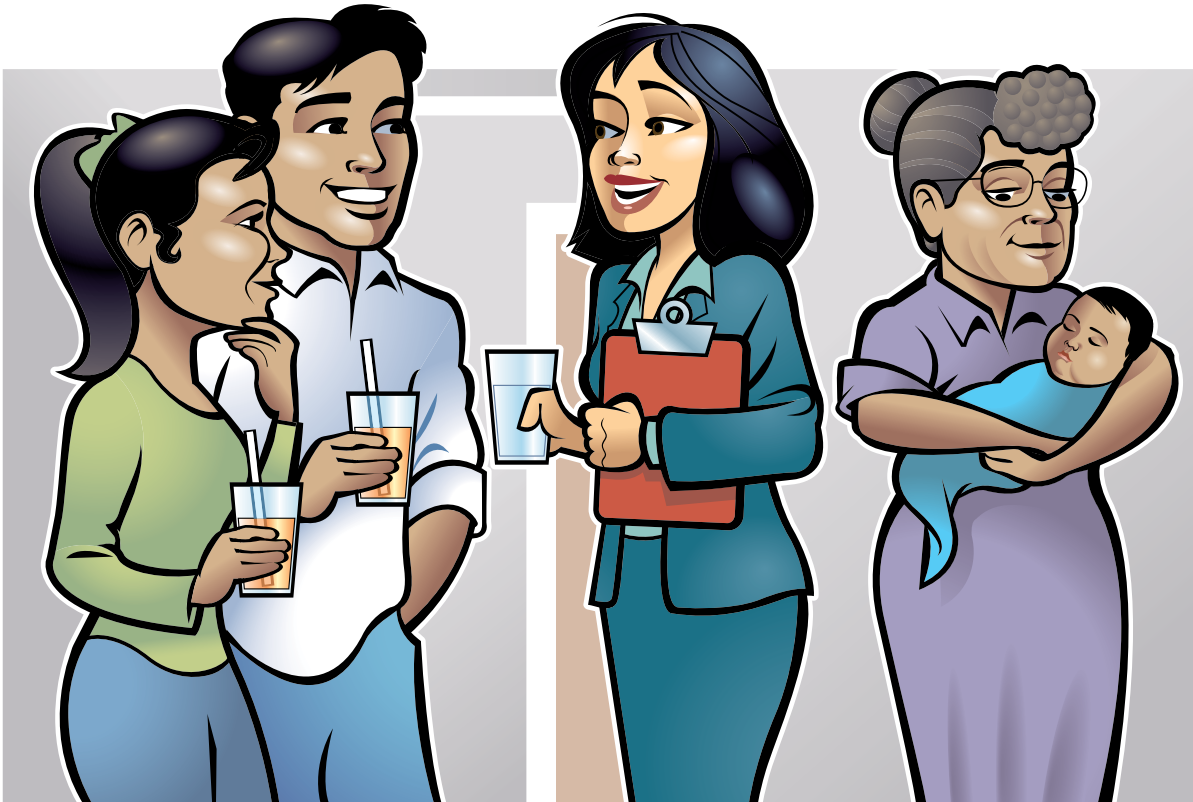
Enriqu : We were not sure about a few things on the form. My mother is living with us now. She is helping us care for our new son. *(On cue, a baby's cry is heard in the background. Teresa Alcala hurries to another room.)* Should we count her on our form?

Ann: Yes. Everybody in your household should be counted. I can help answer any of your questions.

Elena: Please have a seat. Would you like some water or fruit juice?

Ann: Water would be fine. Thank you. It's getting very warm outside!

Enriqu : I have to be honest. I was also not sure about giving out this personal information. Who sees it?



Ann: I understand your concern. But there is no reason to worry. The U.S. Census Bureau is the only agency that sees the information. We cannot share it with any other agency. In fact, it is a crime for us to do that. We collect the data only to have statistics about the people who live here.

Elena: *(returning from the kitchen)* Is that important?

Ann: Yes. Counting everybody helps the government decide how to spend money in your town. For example: Your son will be included in the count. That information could help decide whether to build new schools. *(She turns to Enriqu e.)* Your mother also will be counted. That will be helpful to people who plan services for seniors.

Enriqu e: Yes. I can see how being counted can help our family. Are there other reasons to be counted?

Ann: Yes. The count also decides our state's representation in Congress. As the state grows, the number of elected officials goes up, too.

Elena: That is important. We live here. We pay taxes. We want our state's voice to be heard.

Enriqu e: It sounds like we should have mailed back our form.

Ann: That's why I'm here. We can fill it out now. I can help answer any of your questions. Let's get started!