

Name: _____

GRADES 3-4

STUDENT
Worksheet

1a

First We Count

A Reader's Theater Script

Characters: (up to 19 readers)

THE PEREZ FAMILY

- Mama Perez
- Papa Perez
- Grandpa Perez
- Rosa Perez, 8 years old
- Luis Perez, 10 years old

THE RUSSO FAMILY

- Mrs. Russo
- Mr. Russo
- Sofia Mariano, a friend of the Russos
- Paul Russo, 9 years old
- Antonia Russo, 5 years old

MS. SMITH, a census worker

NARRATORS (8)

Scene: Two families are gathered at the Perez home around the dinner table sharing a meal.

Script:

- Narrator 1:** *Ding-dong!*
- Mama Perez:** That's the doorbell.
- Narrator 2:** *Said Mama.*
- Rosa:** I'll get it!
- Narrator 3:** *Called Rosa.*
- Papa Perez:** Luis, you go with Rosa.
- Narrator 1:** *Ordered Papa.*
- Sofia:** Who is at the door at 5 o'clock on a Sunday?
- Narrator 4:** *Sofia wondered.*
- Narrator 5:** *Luis and Rosa walked into the dining room with a young woman.*
- Luis:** Mama, Papa, this is Ms. Smith.



- Narrator 2:** *Said Luis politely.*
- Ms. Smith:** Good evening. I am from the U.S. Census Bureau. May I speak with the head of this household?
- Narrator 6:** *Ms. Smith said, showing her census badge.*
- Papa Perez:** I am Mr. Perez and this is my home. May I help you?
- Narrator 1:** *Said Papa Perez quietly.*
- Mr. Russo:** This is probably about your census form. We got one in the mail at our house. Did we send it back yet?
- Narrator 3:** *Mr. Russo asked his wife.*
- Mrs. Russo:** Yes, we filled it out and mailed it in.
- Narrator 4:** *Mrs. Russo reminded her husband.*
- Antonia:** What's a census?
- Narrator 7:** *Antonia wondered.*
- Paul:** Oh, we learned about the census in school.
- Narrator 5:** *Paul bragged.*
- Rosa:** So did we! The census counts everyone in the whole country.
- Narrator 8:** *Rosa piped up.*

(continued)

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A Reader's Theater Script (continued)

- Luis:** Wow, that must take a long time! How do they do it?
- Narrator 1:** *Luis gasped.*
- Ms. Smith:** Well, we send forms to every home in the country and sometimes we also go from house to house and ask the questions in person.
- Narrator 2:** *Ms. Smith explained.*
- Luis:** Really? Do kids like us count, too?
- Narrator 6:** *Luis asked.*
- Paul:** And what about Sofia? She's not from here.
- Narrator 7:** *Paul wondered.*
- Ms. Smith:** Everyone who lives in your house counts. But people who are visiting don't.
- Narrator 8:** *Ms. Smith explained.*
- Sofia:** I just moved here from Italy. I'm staying with my friends the Russos until I find a job.
- Narrator 1:** *Sofia spoke up.*
- Mrs. Russo:** That's right. That's why we counted you on our census form. You are part of the Russo household.
- Narrator 2:** *Mrs. Russo agreed.*
- Rosa:** The census is very important. It helps the government find out which towns should get new roads, schools, and hospitals.
- Narrator 3:** *Rosa told them.*
- Antonia:** How?
- Narrator 4:** *Asked Antonia, curiously.*
- Mr. Russo:** Places with lots of people need different things than smaller towns. The census even finds out how many children are in each town, so maybe we'll get a new playground!
- Narrator 5:** *Mr. Russo chuckled.*
- Ms. Smith:** The Census Bureau didn't get a form back from this house, Mr. Perez. Can we fill one out together now?
- Narrator 6:** *Asked Ms. Smith.*
- Narrator 7:** *Mr. and Mrs. Perez looked at each other.*
- Papa Perez:** My father wasn't born in the United States.
- Narrator 8:** *Papa Perez said softly.*
- Grandpa Perez:** I am not an American citizen.
- Narrator 1:** *Admitted Grandpa Perez.*
- Papa Perez:** We weren't sure how to fill out the census form.
- Narrator 2:** *Explained Papa Perez.*
- Ms. Smith:** Everyone who lives here counts. And your answers are kept private, too.
- Narrator 3:** *Said Ms. Smith.*
- Luis:** Can we fill out the form?
- Narrator 4:** *Asked Luis.*
- Mama Perez:** Yes, Luis. Have a seat, Ms. Smith.
- Narrator 5:** *Invited Mama Perez.*
- Mrs. Russo:** Would you like some spaghetti?
- Narrator 6:** *Asked Mrs. Russo.*
- Sofia:** How about some tamales?
- Narrator 7:** *Said Sofia.*
- Narrator 8:** *Ms. Smith sat down.*
- Ms. Smith:** Let's fill out the form first.
- Narrator 1:** *Said Ms. Smith.*
- Grandpa Perez:** First we count, then we eat!
- Narrator 2:** *Agreed Grandpa Perez, smiling.*