



PERCEPTIONS OF A PLACE: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Activity Item

The following item is part of this activity and appears at the end of this student version.

- Item 1: L.A., California, and U.S. Data, 2017

Student Learning Objectives

- I will be able to write about my perceptions of Los Angeles, California.
- I will be able to write about how perceptions of a place may be different from the reality of that place.
- I will be able to read, understand, and analyze U.S. Census Bureau data.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Understanding the world around us means learning about different places, but it can also mean discovering how people view those places (and why people see them that way).

Read-Aloud: You are going to analyze one elementary school student's perception of Los Angeles, California. Listen as your teacher reads Sally's perception of Los Angeles aloud:

Sally has never been to Los Angeles, but she assumes that it is a beautiful place to live. She knows that Hollywood is part of Los Angeles and that it's where many movies and television shows are filmed. Sally assumes that Los Angeles is beautiful because she knows that many wealthy celebrities live there. She also assumes that most people who live in Los Angeles are in the entertainment industry and make a lot of money: actors, producers, set designers, stunt doubles, screenwriters, and more. Sally thinks that most people who live in Los Angeles must have graduated from high school and gone to college to earn a bachelor's degree because that's probably what it takes to work in entertainment. She also thinks that people in Los Angeles must be better educated than people in other places in California and even the rest of the United States. Sally believes that the weather in Los Angeles is always warm and that people there like to drive convertibles and do things outside. She believes this because some of her favorite shows take place in Los Angeles, and on those shows, there are kids hanging out on the beach and there are palm trees everywhere. Sally also recalls movies that show lots of people walking along a boardwalk in Los Angeles, so she thinks it's a very crowded city. Overall, Sally thinks Los Angeles would be the most perfect place to live in the United States.

1. How is your perception of Los Angeles similar to or different from Sally's? Explain your answer.

2. As a class, look at the data in **Item 1** to determine if Sally’s perceptions are accurate or not. Complete the following chart.

Topic	Sally thinks ...	The data say ...	Our analysis is that ...
Population per square mile			
Median household income			
Percentage employed in arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services			

Topic	Sally thinks ...	The data say ...	Our analysis is that ...
Percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher (aged 25 and older)			

Optional: See the data in **Item 1** to further compare Los Angeles, California, and the United States.

3. You will have about 10 minutes to respond to **one** of the three prompts below for this Quickwrite about perception versus reality. You may choose whichever option you prefer. The purpose of a Quickwrite is to just get your ideas and thoughts on paper. You do not need to worry about writing full paragraphs or a story. You should write freely, jotting down whatever comes to mind.
- **Option 1:** Describe a trip you went on recently, and explain what your thoughts were about the place before you got there. Was the place similar to or different from what you expected?
 - **Option 2:** Explain how the way a place is shown in movies or on television can affect how people understand that place.
 - **Option 3:** Describe how you see your community, and explain how your view can be different from the view of someone who is just visiting your community.

4. Think about any school field trips you've been on or vacations you've taken with your family, or even trips you'd like to go on. Why is traveling important? How does traveling somewhere new change our perception of a place?

5. Reflection: What did you learn from this activity?

Item 1: L.A., California, and U.S. Data, 2017

	Los Angeles, California*	California	United States
Population per square mile	8,532.96	253.80	92.22
Median household income	\$60,197	\$71,805	\$60,336
Percentage employed in arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	<p>12.7%</p> <p><i>This is the third most popular industry in Los Angeles. Industries that are more popular include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational services, and health care and social assistance: 19.3% Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services: 14.9% 	<p>10.4%</p> <p><i>This is the fourth most popular industry in California. Industries that are more popular include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational services, and health care and social assistance: 21.1% Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services: 13.5% Retail trade: 10.5% 	<p>9.7%</p> <p><i>This is the fifth most popular industry in the United States. Industries that are more popular include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational services, and health care and social assistance: 23.1% Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services: 11.5% Retail trade: 11.2% Manufacturing: 10.1%
Percentage with a bachelor’s degree or higher (aged 25 and older)	34.4%	33.6%	32.0%

*Data are from the city of Los Angeles (not Los Angeles County)

Data sources:

Population per square mile: Raw data not available online (calculated internally at the Census Bureau)

Median household income:

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/17_1YR/B19013/0100000US|0400000US06|1600000US0644000

Percentage employed by different industries:

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/17_1YR/DP03/0100000US|0400000US06|1600000US0644000

Percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher (aged 25 or older):

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/17_1YR/S1501/0100000US|0400000US06|1600000US0644000