

Fun Facts: The 2019 Holiday Season

TEACHING GUIDE



About Fun Facts

Fun Facts are student-friendly handouts that tie statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau to holidays, anniversaries, and other observances. These fact sheets—which are designed to be used at varying grade levels and across different subjects—can be used at the end of class (if students finish their work early), during a lighter day (perhaps when a substitute teacher is present), or on/before a holiday (when there may be an opportunity for flexibility outside the curriculum).

Using Holiday Season Fun Facts in the Classroom

Teachers should give students time to read and digest the information in the Holiday Season Fun Facts handout. Below is a list of ideas using the fact sheet with students at any and all grade levels.

Any Grade Level

Discussion: Potential discussion questions include:

- What surprises you about the information on this page?
- What questions do you have about the information on this page?

Travel Escape: With students, teachers could explore one of the cities or towns with “holiday” names using the [census.gov](https://www.census.gov) search feature. This could include learning about median household income, educational attainment, and number of homes and apartments.

Elementary School Level

Creative writing exercise: Based on information in the Fun Facts handout and what students have learned previously, students could write about what holiday their family celebrates and what traditions they follow. Then, teachers can encourage students to present their writings to the class.

Toys everywhere: Teachers could use the State Facts for Students (www.census.gov/schools/facts/) tool to search for the amount of toy stores in their particular state. To add to the discussion, teachers could also look at neighboring states to see how their state compares. Students could create a list of top toy items they would like to receive during the holiday season.

Middle School Level

Places with holiday names: Students could locate some of the towns from the Fun Facts on a map. As a class or individually, students could then conduct research on the economy, employment, and history of those locations. Students could keep in mind the following questions: Is the name of the area arbitrary or does it have meaning? For example, does it snow a lot in Snowflake, Arizona?

Advertising campaign: Teachers could ask students to imagine opening their own toy store. Students could create a flyer advertising their new store and explain why a customer should shop there?

High School Level

Imports and exports: Teachers could ask students about their thoughts on the items in the “Holiday Decorations” section and the countries listed as leading the way in these imports. To further the discussion, teachers could ask students what kind of items they think might be exported from the United States to other countries?

Industry research: Using the American FactFinder (AFF) data tool, students could conduct research to discover the number of stores in their state or county that are referenced in “The Spirit of Giving” section.

To begin, they will access the AFF data tool at <https://factfinder.census.gov> then select the “Advanced Search” option. Next, they will enter the industry codes below (one at a time) along with their state or county, then click the “Go” button. A selection of tables will populate. Students should choose the first table “Geography Area Series: County Business Patterns” ID: CB1600A11. This table displays data from the annual County Business Patterns series that provides subnational economic data by industry.

Industry codes:

- **445291** (Baked goods stores)
- **445292** (Confectionery and nut stores)
- **4521** (Department stores)
- **451120** (Hobby, toy, and game stores)
- **448310** (Jewelry stores)

Note: The department store code brings up an overlay box requiring you to select from two options.