

Lesson Plan: Picture This - The Demographics of Fairfax County

Connection to POS: Topic 4: Public Policy Fairfax County Government

This lesson focuses on demographic characteristics of Fairfax County. The primary purpose is to connect students to a statistical profile of the County including population, income, age, employment, and housing. The information needed is available in print and on-line. This can be used as a take-home assignment or completed in a computer lab.



Objectives

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- § Identify salient demographic characteristics of Fairfax County.
- § Describe and explain recent trends in county population.
- § Analyze and reflect upon the impact of demographic changes on policy-making and the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the county.



Materials

- § Brochure: *Fairfax County 1998 Characteristics*. A single copy is in the resources section of the notebook. It is also available on-line.
- § Booklet: *FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA PROFILE (8/99)* A 12-page economic/demographic profile of the County published by the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. Also online at:

<http://www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org/demographics-f.htm>

- § These web sites offer access to extensive data:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/comm/demogrph/homepage.htm>

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/comm/demogrph/pdf/98brochure.pdf>

Completion of the search questions requires browse time with the demographic data. Students should use the various buttons on the demographics homepage.



Time Needed

- § Varies with the nature of the assignment.



Procedures

1. Distribute copies of the web search questions. Have students work in small groups in class or individually as a take-home assignment to find the correct answers.
2. Have students react, discuss, generalize, and write about the impressions they develop as a result of exploring the data.



Assessment

Use the enclosed answer key to score student inquiries "Twenty Questions."



Extensions

1. Use a PowerPoint presentation to overview the demographics of the county.
2. Have students research the data and prepare a brochure or newspaper headlining significant/interesting demographic characteristics which supports the view of Fairfax County as an economic powerhouse and leading center of technology. Note the impact of the 1998 World Congress of Information Technology in strengthening that view. (See FCEDA Website.)
2. Divide the class into nine groups, assign each group to research and profile a specific district. Have students prepare a mock press release noting interesting demographic characteristics of their district. Add a map component to this activity.
4. Have students include an interview of the supervisor noting his/her responses to the group's findings.