

CensusGirl

Juan: Eli, are we going to do the census?

Eli: Of course. We have to do it.

Juan: What's the purpose of the census?

Eli: They need to count the people to know who is in the community—to know what the community needs. If a lot of children are counted, there's more money for programs that help children... Pre-K, healthcare for kids... If there are a lot of seniors in a community...

Juan: Do you know what questions they ask on the census?

Eli: Yeah, we talked about it in my English class. They ask how many people you live with. Everyone—from newborn babies to seniors. They ask things like our names, address, basic things... You know what else I've learned? The census does not ask about immigration status. Also, the Census Bureau is not allowed by law to give your information to anyone, not the immigration agency, not the tax people, not the police, not our landlord—nobody.

Juan: That's good to know.

Eli: Oh, one thing I forgot. They ask your age.

Juan: My age? I'm not telling how old I am.

Eli: Ay, Juan... Don't worry. Nobody will find out your age. They won't tell anyone.

Juan: No? Are you sure?

Eli: I'm sure. All your information is secret and confidential.

Miguel: (off screen) Hello, I'm home.

Juan: Miguel, is the census important?



Miguel:

The census?! You mean when they count the people? (Juan nods) Yes, papa. Of course it's important. The more people who are counted, the more money there is for schools, hospitals, job training, roads... But that's not all. The census is how they figure out how many representatives we get. So, the more people who do the census, the more representatives we get to fight for our rights in Washington.

Juan:

What do you think, Isabel? Is the census important?

Isabel:

Papa, the census is important for the present, but also for the future. Someday in the future, many years from now, someone will want to know about the people who lived here, in our building and in our community. They will look at the census and know we were here.

Juan:

You mean, I will be part of history?!

Isabel:

Yes, Papa... You, me, Mama, Miguel... everyone!

Juan:

Wow.

Eli:

Are you satisfied now?

Juan:

Eli, the census is very important. We have to do it!

All:

Count us in!



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