What Counts Show

Use a census table and a newspaper message to test a historical claim.

AWH.P.3.1.B "Analyze information from visual, oral, digital, and interactive texts (e.g., maps, charts, images, political cartoons, videos, artwork) in order to draw conclusions and defend arguments."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two claims about the census counts, circle a clue that the newspaper was trying to persuade readers, and number two limits on what these sources can prove.

Reading Detroit's Growth

(1) Between 1910 and 1930, many Black Americans left the South for northern cities during the Great Migration. Detroit offered factory jobs, especially as automobile production expanded. The table reports the number of Black residents counted in Detroit by the U.S. census. These totals show a city's changing population, not how many people moved there each year.

BLACK RESIDENTS OF DETROIT, U.S. CENSUS COUNTS

Census year	Residents counted
1910	5,741
1920	40,838
1930	120,066

(2) A 1917 issue of the Chicago Defender urged readers to seek opportunities in the North. Its message helps explain why a family might consider leaving the South, where racist laws and violence restricted daily life. Yet a newspaper's appeal is meant to persuade. It cannot tell us what every migrant believed or what jobs they found.

(3) Together, the census counts reveal growth in Detroit's Black population, while the newspaper suggests one reason people moved north. Neither source proves the newspaper caused that growth. Births, arrivals from different places, and census counting practices could also affect totals. A sound argument distinguishes what the evidence supports from what remains uncertain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What conclusion about Detroit's Black population does the table support? Use the 1910 and 1930 counts as evidence.

2. Which decade had the larger increase in residents counted, 1910 to 1920 or 1920 to 1930? Use the table to support your answer.

3. How does the Defender's message help explain the census trend, and what does it not prove?

4. A student says the table shows how many people arrived in Detroit during each decade. Is that interpretation supported? Explain.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A museum label says, “The rise in Detroit's Black population proves that every Black newcomer found a factory job.” Write a three-sentence replacement that uses two census figures, explains how the newspaper's message might relate, and identifies what neither source can confirm.

ANSWER KEY

What Counts Show

HIGH SCHOOL · AWH.P.3.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two claims about the census counts, circle a clue that the newspaper was trying to persuade readers, and number two limits on what these sources can prove. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What conclusion about Detroit's Black population does the table support? Use the 1910 and 1930 counts as evidence.	**It grew substantially, from 5,741 residents counted in 1910 to 120,066 in 1930.**
2	Which decade had the larger increase in residents counted, 1910 to 1920 or 1920 to 1930? Use the table to support your answer.	**1920 to 1930 had the larger increase: 79,228, compared with 35,097 from 1910 to 1920.**
3	How does the Defender's message help explain the census trend, and what does it not prove?	**Its call to seek opportunities in the North suggests one reason people might have moved. It does not prove that the newspaper caused Detroit's population growth.**
4	A student says the table shows how many people arrived in Detroit during each decade. Is that interpretation supported? Explain.	**No. The table counts residents in Detroit in each census year, not arrivals during a decade.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Detroit's Black population rose from 5,741 in 1910 to 120,066 in 1930. The Chicago Defender's call to seek opportunities in the North suggests a reason some people may have moved, but it does not prove they went to Detroit. Neither the census counts nor the newspaper message shows whether every newcomer found a factory job.

Accept other accurate census comparisons. Students should treat the newspaper message as evidence of a possible motive, not proof of any individual's move or employment.