



## If China were a Country of 100 People Lesson Guide

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This is a “by the numbers” video about China with several key/interesting facts: Communist Party affiliation, ethnic minority population, gender ratio, demographics by 5 age groups, population literacy rate, size of the labor force, wealth and income, religion, internet and smartphones usage. There is a companion video “[A Tale of Two Countries](#)” by the 1990 Institute that juxtaposes US data with China data. In addition to introducing students to the basic facts of China, this video is also ideal for introducing them to the basics of reading and thinking critically about statistical data and how numbers, depending on how they are presented, can be used to tell different stories.

If China were a Country of 100 People [YouTube Link](#)

### Vocab List

**Communist** - a person who supports or believes in the principles of communism.

**Communism** - Communism is a political and economic ideology that positions itself in opposition to liberal democracy and capitalism, advocating instead for a classless system in which the means of production are owned communally and private property is nonexistent or severely curtailed. ([As defined by Investopedia](#).) 5 Important characteristics of Communism (<http://studylecturenates.com/what-are-the-important-characteristics-of-communism/>)

- Abolition of Private Property.
- Collective Ownership of Means of Production.
- Central Planning.
- Elimination of Unfair Gaps in Incomes.
- Provision of Necessaries of Life.

**Ethnicity** - the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition

**Percentage** - a relative value indicating hundredth parts of any quantity; a rate, number, or amount in each hundred used to express a portion or share in relation to a whole

**Literacy** - the ability to read and write.

**Compulsory Education** - Compulsory Education refers to the most crucial period of formal education required by law of all children between certain ages in a given country. The period of

compulsory attendance is usually determined by the government as the students' age for beginning and ending obligatory formal education.

**Labor Force** - labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons.

**Wealth** - A combination of money in the bank, property and land, shareholdings, jewellery and art, pension rights and possibly life assurance, and so on. This is referred to as a person's asset. But a person may also have liabilities, such as loans and mortgages. A person's net wealth is that person's total assets minus his/her liabilities.

**Income** - People sometimes think of their before-tax salary as their income, even though it's rarely the same as what they actually receive into their hands each month. So, instead, it's useful to think in terms of **disposable income** (or income after taxes and transfers), which gives a much clearer sense of how much money people actually have available to them to spend on rent, food, clothes and so on.

**Agnostic** - a person who believes that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God.

**Atheist** - a person who disbelieves or lacks belief in the existence of God or gods.

## Suggested Discussions

- Why does this video normalize China's population to 100?
- What information from the video can you cite to support the statement that China is not a true Communist country?
- Compare the male and female ratio of China and the US or the world average. Is China's ratio normal? What is the cause of China's male/female ratio the way it is?
- The video tells you that 65% of Chinese people own a smartphone. The equivalent number in the US is 85%. Calculate the actual number of people who own a smartphone for both countries using 330 million for the U.S. and 1400 million for China. What do the numbers tell you that the percentages do not?
- What doesn't the Labor Force number tell you? *How many people are actually working or vice versa, unemployed.*
- What is the difference between Wealth and Income? *Income is the flow of money that comes into a household from employers, owning a business, state benefits, rents on properties, and so on. Wealth essentially represents people's savings and it's typically higher – and spread out more unevenly – **than income**. Wealth matters but, in some ways, income matters more because you need income to build wealth.*

## Suggested Activities

- Find out how many officially recognized ethnic minority groups there are in China. What is the comparable % in the US? What are they in actual numbers? [U.S. Census Bureau](#) has the U.S. Minority Data.

- Do numbers lie or can they be manipulated to tell different stories? Have students think about why using % comparison vs actual numbers may be better or worse. A good example of using % instead of actual numbers would be comparing the Literacy Rate. If you use the actual numbers, China would have more people who can read/write than in the U.S. but that does not tell you whether the government is doing a good job educating its population which the percentage would show. Give other examples from the video where % is more informative than the actual number, or vica versa.
- What are some potential social implications of China's male to female ratio?
- Find out what the foreign language requirements are in China for K-9 education (compulsory education period) and what foreign language choices there are for 10th -12th grade (optional education).
- What fact(s) did you find surprising? Find three new interesting facts about China to present to the class.