

Document C: [1870 Census](#)

Source: The Census Bureau

6. Color

Enumerators⁸ could mark "W" for White, "B" for Black, "M" for Mulatto, "C" for Chinese [a category which included all east Asians], or "I" for American Indian.

*Historical context: This is the first census since the Civil War (1861-1865) and Reconstruction. The 13th Amendment (1865) abolished slavery. In addition the 14th Amendment extended citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States. During Industrialization and Imperialism, many Asian immigrants came to the United States as labor. Although the first Chinese immigrants arrived in San Francisco in response to the California Gold Rush (1848) and westward expansion of a continental railway system, the option of selecting Chinese as a census answer first appeared in 1870.

Document D: [1890 Census](#)

Source: The Census Bureau

1. Christian name in full, and initial of middle name

2. Surname

5. Race

Enumerators were instructed to write "White," "Black," "Mulatto," "Quadroon⁹," "Octoroon¹⁰," "Chinese," "Japanese," or "Indian."

*Historical context: The Chinese Exclusion Act (1868) was the first and only immigration law to target a specific race. As a result, an increase of Japanese immigrants replaced Chinese immigrants during the Industrialization era. The Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act of 1943 reopened immigration to Chinese immigrants, but set an annual quota of 105 persons.

⁸ Enumerator: A person completing the census

⁹ Quadroon: A person who is one-quarter black by descent

¹⁰ Octoroon: A person who is one-eighth black by descent