True or False?

1. **The number of people living in poverty in the United States decreased from 2009 to 2010.**

   This is false. In 2010, 46.2 million people were in poverty, up from 43.6 million in 2009—the fourth consecutive annual increase in the number of people in poverty. Since 2007, the poverty rate has increased by 2.6 percentage points, from 12.5 percent to 15.1 percent.


2. **The number of families in poverty is decreasing.**

   This is false; the number of families in poverty is increasing. In 2010, out of 78.6 million U.S. families, 9.2 million lived in poverty—which is statistically different, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, from the 8.8 million families living in poverty in 2009. The poverty rate for families rose to 13.2 percent in 2010, up from 12.5 percent in 2009.


3. **Since its inception in 1946, the National School Lunch program has served over 200 billion lunches to school children in need.**

   This is true. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 101,000 public and non-profit private school and residential child care institutions. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty line are eligible for reduced-price meals, for which students can be charged no more than 40 cents. In 2010 alone, more than 31.7 million children each day got their lunch through the National School Lunch Program. Since the modern program began, more than 219 billion lunches have been served.

   Source: USDA Food and Nutrition Service

4. **According to the U.S. government, a family of four—two adults and two children—is living in poverty if it earns less than $35,000 annually.**

   This is false. The federal “poverty threshold” in 2010 for a family of four with two children 17 or younger is $22,113. However, basic needs researchers estimate that it takes an income of about 1.5 to 3.5 times the official poverty level, depending on locality, to cover the cost of a family's minimum day-to-day needs.

   Source: U.S. Census Bureau
5. **Most people who are living in poverty are African American.**

   This is false. Over 19.5 million non-Hispanic white Americans lived below the poverty line in 2010. In the same year, there were 13.2 million Hispanics (of any race) in poverty, 10.7 million African Americans, and 1.7 million Asian Americans in poverty.

   As a percentage of the population, however, 27.4 percent of African Americans lived below the poverty line in 2010—the largest percentage of any group, up from 25.8 percent in 2009. 26.6 percent of Hispanics, 12.1 percent of Asian Americans, and 9.9 percent of non-Hispanic white Americans are living in poverty.


6. **The federal minimum wage is $5.85 per hour.**

   This is false. The federal minimum wage became $7.25 per hour July 24, 2009.

   A single parent with one child working at this minimum wage full-time every week of the year ($7.25 x 40 hours x 52 weeks) would earn $15,080 before any deductions or taxes—only $240 above the poverty threshold of $14,840.


7. **The poverty rate among the elderly in the United States is higher than that of any other age group.**

   This is false. Though the poverty rate for America's elderly (people over 65) rose from 8.9 percent in 2009 to 9.0 percent in 2010, the poverty rate for children under 18 is still higher, at 22 percent for 2010. The next highest poverty rate is for young adults aged 18-24, at 21.9 percent in 2010.

8. True or False? If every person in the United States that is living in poverty, lived in the same state, it would be the most populous state in the nation – the state of Poverty, USA.

This is true. The current population of Poverty USA is larger than the populations of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, Nevada and Nebraska... combined.

Source: People and Households, US Census Bureau

9. True or False? One of every five children in America lives in poverty.

This is true. In the year 2010, 16.4 million, or 1 out of 5, children lived in poverty. Children in America have higher poverty rates than in many industrialized nations. In 2010, children represented 35.5 percent of the people in poverty in the U.S., but only 24.4 percent of the population.


10. True or False? Adults who have regular work, but remain poor – the "working poor" - are finding it more difficult to lift themselves out of poverty.

This is true. The working poor in America grew poorer during 2010, with incomes dipping farther below the poverty line than in any other year in the new millennium.


11. True or False? In a 36 month period almost one out of every three Americans lives in poverty at least two months.

This is true: Many Americans tread just above the poverty line every year; barely hanging on.

Source: Dynamics of Economic Well-being, US Census Bureau

12. While the number of people in poverty is increasing, the number of people in extreme poverty is decreasing

This is false. The number of people living in extreme poverty, those with incomes below half the poverty line, increased to 20.4 million in 2010.

13. Children of single mothers are more likely to experience poverty than the children of married couple families.

This is true. Children under 6 years old are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Children under 6 living in families with a single female head of household live in poverty at the rate of 58.2%, compared to 13.4% of children living in poverty in married couple families.


14. Almost one quarter of persons with annual incomes of less than $25,000 had no health insurance in 2010.

This is true. 26.9% of people with annual incomes less than $25,000 were uninsured in 2010, compared to 8% of people with annual incomes of $75,000 or more. The total number of uninsured persons increased to 49.9 million in 2010, from 48.9 million in 2009.