

Standards-Based Curriculum Unit
Searching for the American Dream: Immigration and the Melting Pot
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INTRODUCTION

Goals and Aims

Humans are creatures of movement and change, as evidenced by the advancing habitation of the planet through time. Perhaps no modern country owes as much to this human movement as does the United States. The government and identity of this nation owes its existence to immigrants. Native Americans, by the theories of those who study ancient civilizations, were arguably the continent's first immigrants. Then, by way of European explorers, came colonists whose committed settlements eventually led to the formation of a legally independent nation. The reasons immigrants came to America were varied — unemployment, famine, war, persecution due to race, religion or political beliefs, or simply the vision of America as a land of opportunity. The ideals, traditions, needs, expectations, and demands brought by successive waves of immigrants from European, Asian and Latin American countries have shaped, and continue to shape, American culture, laws and economy.

This unit is designed to help students explore immigration as an integral part of American history with a focus on the 20th century. As part of that they will examine the impact of immigration on the social and political fabric of the United States; recognize immigration as an ongoing phenomena with inherent tensions that shape people, communities, and government; recognize the reasons for, and barriers to, immigration; understand the immigrant experience from a variety of perspectives; recognize the contributions of immigrants; and analyze the connections between immigration and their world.

Rationale

Our students are growing up in a United States more diverse than ever before in its history, and if current trends continue, this diversity will only increase. To understand what it is to be an American today, students need to understand immigration's role in shaping their communities and the nation. Exploring the history of immigration will challenge students to more fully appreciate the fascinating mix of cultures and attitudes that make up their modern world. This unit is designed as a window to understanding

immigrant societies, to help students develop their historical thinking around the issues of courage, tolerance, prejudice and citizenship, and what it is to be an American. As they examine the varied facets of immigration, they will recognize how the United States earned its unique designation as “the great melting pot” and may look for the truth of this descriptor today.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The overarching goal of this unit is to help students uncover the roots of United States culture and to continue their development as historical thinkers in the context of a larger world.

This unit is aligned with selected state and national content standards for history, as well as Alaska State Performance Standards for reading and writing. (TK)

National History Standards in Historical Thinking

1. Chronological Thinking
 - C. Establish temporal order in constructing historical narratives of their own making...
 - E. Interpret data presented in time lines and create time lines and record events according to the temporal order they occurred.
2. Historical Comprehension
 - A. I identify the author or source of a historical document or narrative and assess its credibility.
 - B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.
 - H. Utilize visual, mathematical, and quantitative data presented in charts, tables, pie and bar graphs, flow charts, Venn diagrams, and other graphic organizers to clarify, illustrate, or elaborate upon information presented in the historical narrative.
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
 - B. Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes and fears.
4. Historical Research
 - A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.
 - B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries,

eyewitness accounts, newspapers and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.

5. The student engages in historical issues-analysis and decision-making,
 - A. I identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives and points of view of those involved in the situation.
 - F. Evaluate the implementation of a decision by analyzing the interests it served, estimating the position, power and priority of each player involved, assessing the ethical dimensions of the decision, and evaluating its costs and benefits from a variety of perspectives.

Alaska State Content Standards in History

- A) A student should understand that history is a record of human experiences that links the past to the present and future by
 6. knowing that cultural elements reflect the ideas and attitudes of a specific time and influence human interactions.
- B) Students should understand historical themes through factual knowledge of time, places, ideas, institutions, cultures, people and events.
 2. understand the people and the political, geographic, economic, cultural, social and environmental events that have shaped the history of ...the United States...
- C) A student should develop the skills and processes of historical inquiry.
 3. apply thinking skills, including classifying, interpreting, analyzing, summarizing, synthesizing, and evaluating to understand the historical record.
- D) A student should be able to integrate historical knowledge with historical skills to effectively participate as a citizen and lifelong learner.
 3. define a personal position on issues while understanding the historical aspects of positions and roles assumed by others.

INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Enduring Understandings

Americans come from many places for many reasons.

When people move, they take their cultures with them.

Societies change to accommodate new members.

When people move they face challenges.

Immigration is ongoing; laws change according to needs and pressures.

Essential Questions

How do we live as members of an immigrant society?

How does immigration create and change communities?

How does immigration relate to "E Pluribus Unum"?

Does America treat immigrants fairly? (Encourage students to explain and defend their answer)

What changes occurred, and continue to occur, in the nation because of immigration?

How did/do immigrants adapt to life in the United States?

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Define and distinguish between key vocabulary words essential to understanding immigration.
2. Explain reasons and give examples for immigration.
3. Locate on maps countries of birth/origin of immigrants, where they immigrated to, and why they settled in specific places.
4. Interpret graphs related to immigration.
5. Analyze primary source documents related to immigration. (Students should have background in recognizing and reading primary sources and know the difference between primary and secondary sources.)
6. explain and support their opinions about immigration.
7. Communicate orally and in writing their understanding about immigration and the immigrant experience.

*Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions*Content Knowledge

- ◆ Vocabulary: immigration, emigration, migration, refugee (and various forms of these words); E Pluribus Unum
- ◆ Immigrants come from different places, but historically have included large groups from Northern, Eastern and Southern Europe, as well as Asia and Latin America. (see bibliography for background readings about various groups)
- ◆ Reasons that people emigrate include unemployment, famine, war, persecution due to race, religion or political beliefs, or the vision of America as a land of opportunity.

- ◆ Reasons for the Chinese boycott; components of the Chinese exclusion act; and views of Chinese and nonChinese business owners.
- ◆ Immigrants brought food, traditions, and attitudes that became part of the fabric of America.
- ◆ Barriers to immigration included transportation, laws, attitudes, language, education, health, marital status, customs.
- ◆

SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS

- ◆ Questioning – forming open-ended and follow-up questions
- ◆ Comparing and contrasting viewpoints
- ◆ Noting cause and effect
- ◆ Drawing inferences
- ◆ Data-gathering– locate, organize, compile and interpret
- ◆ Intellectual– classify or group items into categories;
- ◆ compare items based on similarities or differences;
- ◆ interpret evidence and draw conclusions
- ◆ Interpersonal – work cooperatively with others; listen and respond appropriately

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Student understanding and learning will be assessed through the following formative and summative methods:

- ◆ History journal of daily notes and responses will be monitored on an ongoing basis for participation, explanation, and perspective;
- ◆ Formative assessments will be made from graphic organizers that will also serve as prewriting for diary entries that students write from the perspective of a fictitious immigrant.
- ◆ Narrative writing in a diary format will demonstrate the student’s ability to construct meaning from evidence and sources;
- ◆ Formative assessments will also be made from anecdotal records (from observations of student participation and work);
- ◆ Student understanding will be assessed from their creations of drawings, graphs, posters, annotated timelines, and participation in simulations of selected immigrant experiences.

- ◆ As a culminating assessment, the student will create an illustrated map, wall panel or visual metaphor that relates to one of the essential questions and includes the following:
 - ◆ key elements in the immigrant experience
 - ◆ a personal connection that the student has made with immigration
 - ◆ ALTERNATE CULMINATING ASSESSMENT: Depending on the students' experiences with using and analyzing primary documents, have them respond to the essential question with a visual metaphor and include at least one primary source with a narrative analysis that explains how the source contributed to the student's historical thinking about immigration and/or how the document supports the essential question.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Where are we going? This unit is designed to help students understand the history of immigration and how immigration affects their world through a series of lessons linked to the identified standards and to support the students demonstrating their learning through the culminating assessment. This unit, as it is currently written, focuses mostly on early 20th century immigration, but there are ample opportunities to connect with current trends and issues.

Hooking the students: Students will be engaged through thought-provoking questions and focused experiences, such as simulations and constructing their own fictional immigrant's story told through diary entries.

One possible hook for the students before starting the unit is to have them bring in information about their family's ancestry (where they came from) and have them locate with sticky dots or push pins on a world map their families' country's of origin. This is one way to make a personal connection to the topic of immigration, when they realize that they are from immigrant families. If you decide to open with a KWL chart, you want to be sure that the following questions appear, to guide the teaching: What is immigration? Who are immigrants and where did they come from? Why do people emigrate? What did immigrants bring with them?

Explore, Enable/Equip: The lessons in this unit involve a mix of hands-on activities, using primary sources, simulations, student inquiry and exploration of text sets, diary writing, oral presentations, discussions, direct teaching, and peer teaching. Depending on the teacher's time and

interest, more in-depth studies could be made of particular immigrant groups or waves.

The eight lessons attached to this unit start with an introduction to immigration and the key content components through guided exploration with text sets; this lesson can be adapted depending on availability of texts. The lesson on the Chinese exclusion act immerses students in a simulation using a primary document and engages their thinking about the barrier to immigration, and legal and fairness issues. A two-part lesson focusing on the immigrant's experience coming through Ellis Island allows the students an up-close look at entry into the United States. Students will also examine immigration trends by working with immigrant population data. Two lessons are included that involve students with historical thinking through primary documents.

Be sure to check your building's resource library for relevant text sets that were recently bought for 6th grade classrooms (see bibliography). If you have access to a computer projector, you might consider taking the class on a virtual tour of Ellis Island (see bibliography for web address). If you have time, consider bringing in guest speakers, such as an officer from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, or someone who has recently immigrated to the United States to help students make current connections. You might also invite students to bring in newspaper and magazine articles about current issues in immigration and post them on a reading board for discussion.

Reflect: Students will reflect on their understanding of immigration in writing and in conversation and be given opportunities to formulate, support and defend their opinions. Teachers may want students to keep an interactive note book, which serves as a formative assessment and provides daily opportunities for student reflection; remember to make time at the beginning and/or end of the lessons for students to do fast writes or other forms of processing learning from that session.

Exhibit/evaluate: Student will discuss and share their diary entries; They will display visuals and share feelings about simulations to encompass an overall understanding about immigration.

A possible culminating activity would be a living-history day when students dress as immigrants or docents to Ellis Island, bring in music, food and other artifacts of immigrant life, and share entries of their choosing from their diaries (or sing/play music and/or recite authentic poetry) at an open microphone.

If you have students research their personal immigration history, the visual and Heritage Day celebration described below has many assessment/evaluation possibilities.

OVERVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES/LESSONS

- ◆ analyzing text, photos and political cartoons (primary source documents)
- ◆ key vocabulary (45 minutes to an hour)
- ◆ overview of immigration (text sets, note-taking, poster activity) (4 days)
- ◆ Chinese Boycott (paired and small-group reading/heterogeneous grouping, class sharing, simulation) (4 days or more)
- ◆ immigration trends (45 minutes to an hour)
- ◆ Ellis Island (session 1: read aloud, student notes and discussion; session 2: reenactment (2 day minimum))

[other lessons/activities could include:

- ◆ the Ellis Island virtual tour from the Internet;
- ◆ guest speaker (INS officer, recent immigrant);
- ◆ interviews/oral histories with recent immigrants];
- ◆ reformers and immigrants, such as Jane Addams and the Hull House (i.e., see Joy Hakim's *A History of US, An Age of Extremes*, pp 170-174); this addresses the essential understanding that immigration brings change to societies;
- ◆ personal immigration history: students research family immigrants through interviews and other sources; compile visuals including pie chart of immigration roots, flags, maps tracing immigration routes, primary source (document or visual) with analysis; as a challenge task ask students to write responses to one or more essential questions from the unit. This can culminate in Heritage Day open house with displays, costumes, food, music; a traveling museum format can be used to facilitate student presentations to small traveling groups;

[If you decide to include a research or biography component (or just for teacher background), some people of note are:

- ◆ Joseph Pulitzer, a Hungarian immigrant who became an influential reform-minded crusading newspaper owner, who was also instrumental in raising money for placement of the Statue of Liberty;
- ◆ Emma Lazarus, a descendant of Jewish immigrants whose poetry is inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty and at the John F. Kennedy Airport;

- ◆ Lewis Hine, photographer of Ellis Island; not an immigrant but he extensively photographed immigrants;
- ◆ Joseph Keppler and Thomas Nast, both immigrants and political cartoonists of the late 1800s.

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Thompson, Gare. (2002). *An Immigrant Community of the 1890s*. Washington, DC: National Geographic School Publishing. ISBN 0-7922-8686-3 (Provided in 2004 to Anchorage School District 6th grades as part of Elementary Education Reading Initiative).

(Loussac Library has a two series of good books about immigrant groups in the youth section.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

http://digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/immigration_chron.cfm

landmarks in immigration history

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/listdocumentpa.html>

An Internet Hotlist on Document Based Questions

http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/070_immi.html

photos from Library of Congress (LOC) . including immigrants on Atlantic liner; awaiting examination Ellis Island; examination Hall Ellis Island; immigrants coming to the "land of promise"; four immigrants and their belongings

<http://learning.loc.gov/learn/lessons/fw.html#inquiry>

lesson framework for using documents (loc)

<http://www.bestschools.org/cantiague/immigration.htm>

document based questions with documents for immigration

<http://www.balchinstitute.org/>

immigrant docs

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/index.html>

From The History Place, a nine-part history of the Irish Potato Famine, good for background if you want to go deeper in this part of immigration.

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAE1917A.htm>

excerpts from immigration laws about limitations and excerpts from presidents and others of their responses to the limitations.

<http://campus.northpark.edu/history/WebChron/USA/ImmigrationAct.CP.html>

background on immigration act, 1965 and earlier

<http://uscis.gov/graphics/index.htm>

Home page from US Citizenship and Immigration services with links to current and historical statistics and background, including

- current immigration numbers and trends and laws, regulations and guides
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/legishist/index.htm>
- an extensive glossary <http://uscis.gov/graphics/glossary.htm>

<http://immigrants.harpweek.com/>

page of links to editorials and cartoons about immigration, particularly Chinese uproar, in late 1800s.

<http://www.angelisland.org/index.html>

Angel Island site with some photos and history of immigration through this California station in the early 1900s; includes photos of Japanese picture brides, circa 1920.

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/immig/immigration_set2.html

Library of congress slide show on immigration; includes timelines for groups of immigrants; vocabulary (interactive activities)

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F>
page of political cartoons related to immigration

<http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/imageapp.php?Major=IM&Minor=F>
reading room