

Grade Level/Content Area: Elementary Social Studies Curriculum

Unit 1: Immigration

Created 2021

Rationale

The purpose of this lesson is to teach students how to retrieve information from interviews and immigration stories in order to learn about the varied cultures and peoples that make Rockford home.

Materials Required:

Laptops, internet access, whiteboard or chalkboard.

Time Needed: 1-3 class periods

Objectives: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to Know, Understand, and Do the following:

- *Read and interpret an oral history documentation.
- *Summarize and present information about a selected immigrant's experience.

Resources and Scholarship

<https://midwayvillagemuseumdigitalcollections.omeka.net/exhibits/show/immigrant-experiences>

<https://www.readwritethink.org/sites/default/files/CompareContrast.pdf>

<p>Illinois State Standards</p> <p>SS.H.3.2: Explain how different kinds of historical sources (such as written documents, objects, artistic works, and oral accounts) can be used to study the past.</p> <p>SS.IS.1.3-5: Develop essential questions and explain the importance of the questions to self and others</p> <p>SS.H.2.3: Describe how significant people, events, and developments have shaped their own community and region.</p> <p>SS.H.3.3: Identify artifacts and documents as either primary or secondary sources of historical data from which historical accounts are constructed</p> <p>SS.H.1.4: Explain connections among historical contexts and why individuals and groups differed in their perspectives during the same historical period</p> <p>SS.G.1.5: Investigate how the cultural and environmental characteristics of places within the United States change over time.</p>	<p>Set Introduction</p> <p>Ask students to brainstorm the following questions and write their answers on the board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: What is immigration? Who is an immigrant? 2: What is an “oral history”? Is that considered a primary source document? 3: How can oral histories be used to teach about immigration? <p>We are going to use excerpts from oral histories at Midway Village Museum to help us answer these essential questions:</p> <p>What challenges do you think immigrants face when moving to Rockford?</p> <p>Essential Question 1: What sorts of events might inspire a person to immigrate to America?</p> <p><u>Activity 1:</u></p> <p>Ask if anyone can tell you the definition of the word, immigration. (Wait for answer). Immigration is when a person moves permanently <i>into</i> a new country. A person who does this is called an immigrant. Ask if any of the students were born in a different country. (Wait for response. If some people say yes, then proceed to ask them where from).</p> <p>During the 1800s, many people from all around the world were coming by ship to America. Ask if anyone can think of any reasons why people from other countries would want to live in America. (Wait for responses). Explain how there are many reasons for moving to America during this time period. In 1845, there was a huge potato famine that occurred in Ireland. A famine is when there is not enough food to feed everyone. Because of the famine in Ireland, many people suffered of starvation. Because people were afraid that they or a loved one might die, many families and individuals sold all they had to buy tickets to America. Many Irish men who came to America were mostly seeking jobs on the railroad and picked large cities to find these jobs. Chicago, for example, was perfect because of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad being built through Rockford. Although this railroad was finished in 1852, the city of Rockford still needed workers to stay and build a bridge so many Irish families decided to settle in Rockford.</p> <p>Other reasons people came to America were for work and to escape being poor. In America, there were many opportunities for factory work, especially in big cities like Chicago and New York City. A lot of people from poorer countries had worked on farms their entire lives and needed to find other jobs to support their families, because the farm jobs they currently had were not bringing in enough money. Often times for poor</p>
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families, one or two members of the family, usually the men, would go to America, or another country, first. After they saved up enough money, they would send for their other family members. This could take many years for people to be reunited with their families. Ask the students if they can imagine not being able to see their dad or other siblings for years. (Rhetorical question).

Another big reason for immigrants moving to America was because of the freedoms that Americans had. Unlike many places around the world, Americans had the freedom to think what they wanted to think, also known as the freedom of expression. Many people moved to America for a chance to freely express themselves with their certain beliefs in issues like politics and religion.

There are two other types of travelers as well: refugees and migrants. **Refugees** are people who must flee the country quickly to escape conflicts. Often times these conflicts have to do with war, making the country too dangerous for its people anymore. Refugees do not have a choice in the matter and sometimes only have a few hours to leave. Hungarians were some of the first refugees to come to Rockford. These refugees fled after rebellion in the 1950s occurred against Russian control in Hungary. (Show photo of Hungarian immigrants. Make a note to the students of how scared they look). Ask the students if they can imagine how scary it would be to be told that they have to leave and go to a new country in only a few hours. Ask the students if they can imagine not being able to say goodbye to their family and friends and potentially not being able to see them ever again. (Rhetorical questions).

The other type of traveler is a migrant. A **migrant** is a person who moves around within the country, usually to another state. Ask if any of the students lived in another state before. (If answer is no, proceed with next question). Ask if any of them have gone to a different school in another part of town or known someone who has. (Wait for response). Then they are considered a migrant! The term migrant, however, is usually used for a person who relocates for a job.

	<p><u>Procedure:</u> https://midwayvillagemuseumdigitalcollections.omeka.net/exhibits/show/immigrant-experiences</p> <p>Read the introduction of the oral histories of Xuan Dimh, William Johnson, Alene Munyemana, and Sunil Puri.</p> <p>Why did each of these people and/or their families decide to come to America?</p> <p>Are they an immigrant, refugee or migrant?</p>
	<p>Essential Question 2: What challenges do you think immigrants face when moving to Rockford?</p> <p><u>Activity 2:</u> One problem that almost every immigrant faced was the problem of assimilation. Assimilation is the process of becoming part of the culture of a place. See if anyone can tell you what the word culture means (Wait for a response). Culture is different behaviors, beliefs, or characteristics that are shared by a group of people. So, in the case of all of the immigrants, they all had a hard time being a part of the American culture. Ask if anyone can think of reasons why they did not feel like they fit into this American culture. (Acceptable answers are: language barriers, different foods, music, religion, tradition as a whole, etc). (If they are having a hard time guessing, ask them to think of any differences that an immigrant could have from Americans that would make it hard for them to relate to).</p> <p>What Barrier was Aurelio de la Rosa faced with?</p> <p>Language was by far one of the largest barriers that immigrants faced when entering America. All of the immigrants, besides those from the United Kingdom, spoke different languages than English. This immediately made it very hard for immigrants to communicate with the Americans.</p> <p>What about Margaret Dahlgren’s family? Did they face the same barrier as Aurelio?</p> <p>When immigrants of a certain group settled in the states, they would often times settle in areas close together, creating their own little homes away from home. In Rockford, different neighborhoods were unofficially given names like Little Sweden, Irish Patch, Little Poland, and German Valley to describe these neighborhoods. In these neighborhoods, the immigrants</p>

would continue to cook their traditional foods from their home countries, listen to their traditional music, play their traditional games, and speak their traditional languages. They would also create clubs and churches that went along with their traditional beliefs and interests. By doing all of this, many immigrants had a harder time assimilating into the American culture while in America.

How did William Johnson's father feel about his home culture?

Compare how Mr. Johnson felt about Sweden to how Alene Munyemana felt about Rwanda. And what about Patty Chavez' parents and Mexico?

<https://www.readwritethink.org/sites/default/files/CompareContrast.pdf>

What Barrier did John Ianni face?

While immigrants and migrants were eager to come to America, many Americans were not eager to have them here. Some Americans feared that the immigrants and migrants would take all of the jobs available and did not like that they could not communicate with the immigrants very well. Because of these differences, many immigrants and migrants faced **discrimination**. **Discrimination** is the unfair treatment of someone for small differences they have towards others.

Many immigrants and migrants who came to America were discriminated against in the work force. That meant that if an immigrant or migrant tried to get a job at an American business, they would be turned away for no apparent reason. The hidden reason, however, was simply because they were different immigrants or African Americans.