

Immigration: Resources for Teachers

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Today's K-6 teachers find themselves looking for materials and resources that can both help them to understand culturally diverse students, provide quality ideas for lessons, and bring current issues and data to their students on the topics of immigration and citizenship. Often, it seems like there is too much information to digest. The tasks facing teachers are problematic, but not impossible. We have selected a set of resources that might be especially useful to elementary teachers as they prepare lessons on immigration (and its relation to citizenship, current events, and U.S. history).

The first section below lists websites that offer activities specifically for the elementary classroom, occasionally with handouts.

The second section lists websites with secondary-grade activities, some of which might be modified for the upper elementary grades 5 and 6.

Elementary Teaching Ideas and Materials

www.thirteen.org/edonline/lessons/changing/

A lesson plan, “Changing Places” for grades 3-5, is offered by New York City Public Television (Channel 13). It includes video segments from the documentary film “Becoming American: The Chinese Experience.”

www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/themes/immigration

A plethora of resources from the Library of Congress for teaching and learning about the history of U.S. immigration. They include primary historical documents, images and audio files, and some elementary-level activities.

www.tolerance.org

The free magazine *Teaching Tolerance* is published by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), known for its tolerance education programs and track-

ing of hate groups. See their teaching kit on Vietnamese Americans (grades 6-8) as well as the SPLC Immigrant Justice Project, at www.splcenter.org/legal/ijp.jsp.

www.reacheverychild.com/feature/immigrate.html

A portal listing lesson ideas and resources collected from many different websites. Horace Mann and nationally recognized teacher Alan Haskvitz developed this website of educational resources for teachers and students.

www.aifl.org

The Curriculum Center at the American Immigration Law Foundation produces an annual Teachers' Resource Guide, created by teachers for teachers, which provides new lesson plans, book reviews, and other educational tools. The website contains K-12 teacher-written lesson plans, suggested reading lists, and links to other educational resources.

The third section lists websites that could help teachers develop a deeper understanding of immigration history, policy, and current trends and controversies.

The last section looks at the lives of recent immigrants through children's literature. When immigration is addressed in social studies, it is often in terms of broad, historical trends. Trade books can provide more personal perspectives on the experiences of today's immigrants, including those of refugees.

We hope that, as a consequence of teachers being better informed, student learning will be enriched, and all of the children in our classrooms will feel valued. 🌐

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www.socialstudies.org/teacherslibrary

Search the new NCSS website by historical period (ex. Gilded Age) and level (ex. Elementary) to access a collection of articles published in *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, *Middle Level Learning*, and *Social Education*. Various articles about immigration appear throughout the collection.

Secondary-Level Teaching Materials

www.pbs.org/ancestorsintheamericas/viewersguides.html

PBS has produced curricular materials that accompany the video series “Ancestors in America” and the companion website, which focus on Asian immigration to the United States.

www.crf-usa.org/immigration/lessons-1-and-2.html

The Constitutional Rights Foundation provides a large collection of links to articles and other online resources, from

various websites, all organized under 12 lesson topics, from Lesson 1 “General History,” to Lesson 12 “California’s Proposition 187.”

score.rims.k12.ca.us/score_lessons/immigration_debate

A list composed by Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE). Scroll down (past the list of online Resources) to see “Classroom Lesson” links to other websites that describe teaching activities.

Background for Teachers

www.pewhispanic.org

Pew Hispanic Center is a nonpartisan “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world.

www.urban.org/toolkit/issues/immigration.cfm

The Urban Institute studies U.S. immigrants—their impacts, settlement patterns, and incorporation into the labor market, as well as their acculturation. Six myths about immigration are debunked at www.urban.org/publications/900898.html.

www.brookings.edu/topics/immigration.aspx

The Brookings Institute has “Research and Commentary” on topics such as “The New Geography of U.S. Immigration,” with very recent (July 2009) data.

www.immigrationpolicy.org

Immigration Policy Center has policy briefs on topics such as undocumented students in our classrooms, foreign college students, and the public benefits of immigration.

www.uscis.gov

At the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website, click on “Education and Resources” and then “Civics and Citizenship Study Materials” to order products such as “Civics Flash Cards for the New Naturalization Test.”

www.iom.int

International Organization for Migration works to ensure the orderly and humane

management of migration and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

Children’s Literature:

Today’s Immigrants

A Day’s Work by Eve Bunting

Illustrated by Ronald Himler. Clarion Books. 32 pp.

A young Mexican-American boy named Francisco experiences the day-to-day struggle to find work in California as an immigrant. Francisco learns about hard work and honesty from a day’s work with his Abuelo. Ages 5-8

Coming to America, a Muslim Family’s Story written and photographed by Bernard Wolf.

Lee & Low Books. 48 pp.

An Egyptian Muslim family begins their life together in the U.S. This book shows the daily routines of their school life, religion, work life, and the importance of family togetherness. Age 5-8

First Day in Grapes by L. King Perez

Illustrated by Robert Casilla. Lee & Low Books. 32 pp.

Chico, a Mexican-American boy who travels California year round as a migrant worker, attends another new school where he fears encounters with unfriendly children. Experiences open him up to his inner strength. Ages 6 & up.

Going Home, Coming Home by Truong Tran (In both Vietnamese and English)

Illustrated by Ann Phong. Children’s Book Press (CA). 32 pp. Ages 6 & Up.

Ami Chi is a first generation Vietnamese-American, traveling for the first time to Vietnam. She meets her Ba Ngoai (grandmother) and makes friends in the market where she becomes open to her heritage, realizing that both East and West make her who she is.

Hannah is My Name by Belle Yang.

Candlewick Press (MA). 32 pp. Ages 5-9.

Through the eyes of Hannah, a Taiwanese

immigrant and her family, readers experience what it is like to be living in the United States while awaiting green cards. The book illustrates a family adjusting to a new life in San Francisco.

My Name is Yoon by Helen Recorvits

Illustrated by Gabi Swiatkowska. Farrar Straus Giroux. 32 pp. Ages 4-8.

Korean-born Yoon struggles to write her name in English in her new school. Readers will be captivated by Yoon’s curious thoughts about her new life as depicted in marvelous illustrations.

One Green Apple by Eve Bunting

Illustrated by Ted Lewin. Clarion Books. 32 pp. Ages 5-8.

On a field trip to an apple orchard in a new country, a Muslim girl, Farah, compares life in the old village with that in her adopted country. Unsure why those around her dislike and speak poorly of her former home (which is never named in the story), Farah attempts to fit in with her classmates. She gains some self-confidence in the apple orchard.

The Color of Home by Mary Hoffman

Illustrated by Karin Littlewood. Phyllis Fogelman Books. 32 pp. Ages 4-8.

Young Somali refugee Hassan recounts his life in war-torn Somalia when he draws a painting for his teacher. His new unfamiliar home becomes a place for hope as his teacher allows him to share some heart-wrenching memories through drawings.

The Silence in the Mountains by Liz Rosenberg

Illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet. Orchard Books (NY). 32 pp. Ages 4-8.

A Lebanese family arrives from their war-torn country. The young boy, Iskander, feels that his new home is missing something. With his grandfather, he heads to the mountains to hear silence—an unexpected gift of his new home. 📖