

# The Immigrant Experience

## OVERVIEW

The United States is a nation of immigrants. From crossing a land bridge over the Bering Sea to traveling by steamship across the Atlantic Ocean, everyone in this country originally came from somewhere else. Everyone who has come to America has their own unique and interesting story. Featuring the Oral Histories from the Lincoln's Legacy Project through Lincoln Financial Group, the following lesson immerses students in the experiences of immigrants to the United States over the past 200 years. Students will make connections to current immigration issues and document the stories of immigrants in their families and communities.

### Goals/Objectives:

To explore the experiences of immigrants to the United States.

- Explain the various reasons for immigration to the U.S.
- Describe the challenges and successes of immigrants to the U.S.
- Analyze primary sources (oral histories).
- Build and support a position using evidence on a current issue on immigration.

### Standards:

#### Common Core Standards

##### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

##### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

##### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

##### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.2

Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

##### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

### Time Required:

1-3 days

### Recommended Grade Level:

7-12

### Topics/Eras:

- Irish and German Immigration (1840s)
- Gilded Age Immigration [Southern and Eastern Europe, China] (1876-1910)
- Contemporary Immigration [Latin America, Africa, Asia, Middle East] (1950-Present)

### Materials:

- Lincoln's Legacy Oral Histories ([http://lfg.com/misc/legacy/Oral\\_Histories.html](http://lfg.com/misc/legacy/Oral_Histories.html))
- LCD Projector for PowerPoint
- Immigration Lesson PowerPoint
- Postcard Instructions (PDF)
- Talk Show Instructions (PDF)
- Agree/Disagree Statements on Immigration Issues Today (PDF)
- Letter to Congress Instructions (PDF)
- Oral History Interview Instructions (PDF)

# The Immigrant Experience

## Additional Resources:

1. Library of Congress – Challenges for New Americans  
Primary Sources <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/immigration/>
2. National Park Service – Primary Sources for Your Classroom  
<http://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/education/primary-sources-for-your-classroom.htm>
3. Harvard University – Library Open Collections Program – Immigration to the United States <http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/immigration/scope.html#sel>
4. Historical Society of Pennsylvania – Irish Immigrant Letters Home <https://hsp.org/education/unit-plans/irish-immigration/irish-immigrant-letters-home>
5. University of Connecticut – Thomas J. Dodd Research Center  
<http://doddcenter.uconn.edu/asc/research/guides/immigration/immigration.htm>