

The Petite Immigration Dictionary

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We the people of the United States...
~ United States Constitution

INTRODUCTION

I am a Latino, a native of Latin America. I can not remember the first time I heard the word “Latino,” but what I can remember is when the word took more importance for me. It was a little more than a couple years ago when I first came to the U.S.

We really realize where we come from when we leave our country because the idea that we have of it changes as soon as we step outside. When we have not left the place where we were born, we can spend some time imagining how everything is with the technology and the different media that have made our planet “smaller.” Everything has become easier, faster, and sometimes more economic. For instance, a trip from London to New York would take more than a month by ship a long time ago, but now you can go and even come back the same day. For many people many years ago, if they wanted to know about a different place, they needed to wait until someone had the chance to go there, or until they met someone from that place, to tell them about it. Now, people have the possibility to travel by plane, train, or ship and to go almost everywhere, even to outer space if they have the money! Now we have the Internet, which has made almost everything easier and faster because you can get as much information as you want from a computer at home. But even though we have the technology to do that, it is still not the same as having been there. Traveling is one of the most fascinating experiences in life, it is kind of an “obligation” for every human being to travel and to see with our own eyes how big this world is and how varied it is. We can spend time thinking of other countries – the experience of having the four seasons, something different in many countries that have just two; the people and their customs, food, ways to dress, celebrations, and language; and the equivalent of sayings, words, or expressions that we use in our native language. There are so many other different things that probably we will only notice when we travel abroad.

Well, that happened to me. I realized what a “Latino” really means when I arrived in the United States. Being a Latino is being charming, warm, industrious, outgoing, talkative, cultural, familiar, traditional, adjustable, rhythmic (because the music is a synonym of Latino), and many, many other things. I knew that when I was in Colombia, but when I came here, I became really conscious of it, and those are two different things. You can have a big tree in your backyard, but you can only realize how tall it is when you climb it and see the landscape from there.

I have my own experience of being a Latino in a foreign country, and I really enjoy it when I talk with other people who share their own experiences as immigrants, too. I enjoy it when my students ask with curiosity what an immigrant is, the experiences of traveling abroad, and

the challenge of speaking a different language. I also enjoy when they tell stories about people who come to this country. Many of the students have little knowledge about immigration and some still think that a visa is just a credit card!

As an immigrant teacher I can say a lot about the immigrants' experience, and I can imagine how many different ideas my students have about me and about any immigrant. It has been interesting to listen to their opinions and to ask them specific questions of the role of immigrants in the growth of this country. I would like to ask them what they think when they hear to the word "immigrant" and how immigrants have contributed to the economy of this country. If they think the opposite, I would like to know why. Also, I would like to know how feasible is it to them to marry an immigrant, have children with them, or interact in any way with someone of a different race.

At the same time, I would like to share with them my personal experience as an immigrant. As a native of Colombia, I knew how difficult it is to get a visa to come to the US. We have to spend quite a lot of money for different documents, and if you do not live in the capital, make many trips to get an appointment with the U.S. visa officers. After that, you have to wait to be interviewed by a consul officer who determines if you will get a visa or not. The most important question is, however, why a Colombian would decide to leave his/her country. There are many reasons; even though Colombia is rich in natural resources and in its hardworking and intelligent people, the country has two terrible sicknesses: violence and narcotraffic. These two terrible sicknesses have created big problems like poverty; forced displacement of farmers, widows, orphans; unemployment; and persecutions, among others. When persons feel threatened, they look for shelter, and that is why many Colombians decide to leave their country and try to find a new life abroad. I can count myself as one of the few Colombians who decided to leave to enrich my personal experiences and to know the world. I still enjoy going back to visit my family and enjoy the wonders of Colombia, traveling around it, talking to the people, and tasting our delicious foods. Colombia needs its people to help the other people and to be cured of violence to show the world its hidden treasures.

I wanted to come to the United States to learn more and to share my knowledge with other people. My experience is not too different from those of other people who immigrate to the United States from many other countries. Every immigrant can tell an interesting story about how his/her family came to the United States. There is no exception, everybody is an immigrant or has someone in the family who immigrated at a certain point in U.S. history, even if it happened two or three hundred years ago. We can write millions of books with fascinating chronicles about people coming to this country, leaving everything, even their families, and we still cannot tell all the immigrant stories.

Some of my students, or their relatives and friends, belong to the Latino culture; they have parents whose grand or great-grandparents came from another country, but I also have some other students who do not have immigrant family members. Obviously, Latinos are not the only group of immigrants in this country. We can find people from each country living in the U.S., and each immigrant has something to share with others, like food, music, customs, religion, and political points of view. The point is that the multi-racial populations create a wonderful mixture of cultures that has something in common. We all live in a country made by everyone and for everyone. That is why I find incredible the idea of recreating the historic moments when immigrants started coming to the U.S. and to study the "evolution" of this important process, that is, the arrival of peoples from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. It is important to understand why these migrations occurred and what specific contributions the immigrants have made to this country.

UNIT BACKGROUND

As a Spanish teacher I feel the responsibility to teach the different aspects of Hispanic cultures: music, customs, economy, and foods among others. I also consider it relevant to talk about immigration, which affects all of us. Immigration to the United States has occurred for different reasons, in different ways, and in different places:

In the history of New York City, few events loom larger than the wave of immigration that peaked in the first decade of the twentieth century. Between 1880 and 1920, close to a million and a half immigrants arrived and settled in the city. (Foner 1)

Since 1959, thousands of Cubans have braved the shark-infested waters of the Caribbean to escape Castro's dictatorship. (Figueredo 21)

The immigration topics I want to focus on include dates, important events, and cultural influences, especially the languages. One of the aspects that my students enjoy the most is learning new words or learning the meaning of those they hear everyday.

My students will be involved in searching for information, reading, and discussing the historical events of immigration in the U.S. As we find important events related to the immigration of people from different countries, we will try to establish parallel events in world history to "feed" the introduction of our project.

Part of this project will be the creation of an immigration time tracker. We will keep records of the research using a special chart to establish a parallel of historical events that occurred when people immigrated to the U.S. For instance, we will keep record of the parallel cases of the immigration of Jews and the Second World War during the 1940s and the immigration of the Irish and the Potato Famine in Ireland in the 1800s.

A second part of the project will consist of tracking the origin of words and expressions to help us understand not only their meaning but also their importance in American culture. So, we will create a "Petite Immigration Dictionary," where we will see the cases of words like *patio*, *siesta*, *chauffeur*, *taco*, and so on, of European, African, Asian, and Central/ South American origin. We also will consider the very interesting phenomenon of the use of "Spanglish" in the U.S., such as the case of words like "troca" for the English "truck," "llamar pa' trás" for the English "call back," "luz" for the English "traffic light," "taxas" for the English "taxes," "espelear" for the English "spell," or the mixed word "washatería" where we should say "lavandería," among others.

The conclusions that can arise from this project should be unlimited because, as we know, "my experience" is not "your experience;" that is, we have different ideas, and we also have different points of view. For that reason, the main goal I expect to accomplish in this project is to work with my students in the creation of a mini-dictionary of the commonly but not correctly used words and the proper way to say them with the equivalent in English. At the same time, we should have the opportunity to research events about immigration that are relevant to the development of this country.

OVERVIEW

The history of immigration to the United States is like a big tree where every branch represents a country and the millions of the descendants of the early generations. The immigrants in this country came from different countries, for different reasons, and at different times. Three major waves of immigrants have occurred, according to the video the *Golden Door*, with Ellis Island in New York the most important door even from the early 1800s for most of immigrants, especially North Europeans, the biggest group:

In the history of New York City, few events loom larger than the wave of immigration that peaked in the first decade of the twentieth century. Between 1880 and 1920, close to a million and a half immigrants arrived and settled in the city-so that by 1910 fully 41 percent of all New Yorkers were foreign born. (Foner 1)

It is estimated that 12 million immigrants entered the United States through Ellis Island. The island served as the place where medical personnel examined all newly-arrived immigrants. It also served as the district headquarters for US Immigration and Naturalization Services until 1954. In 1990, the island became a museum “documenting four centuries of immigration to the United States” (“Ellis Island Examining Room”).

EUROPEANS

Irish

At its beginning, the U.S. demonstrated that it was an enormous country with plenty of possibilities to build a new life. Many Europeans decided to come, first from northern and western Europe and then from southern and eastern Europe, to escape the oppression of governments that kept their people in poverty. Although immigrants still often come to escape oppressive governments and poor economic conditions, much has changed (Foner 9). But the reasons for which they came were varied. Although it is well known that the basic reason for immigration has been freedom, people also came to escape famine, as was the case of Irish immigration when “fungus struck the potato fields in 1845 creating extreme poverty, starvation, and ensuing epidemic illnesses suffered by Ireland’s farm laborers”(Graves 12). They reached incredible numbers as in the decades 1831-1840 when 207,381 arrived, then, 436,871 during 1871-1880, and 655, 482 during the decade of 1881-1890. By 1840, more than one million Irish were living abroad and hundreds of thousands of Irish were already living in the United States. Letters from foreign countries told of the opportunities awaiting those left in Ireland. For these people, making the decision to leave was not too difficult; what was really complicated was to get the money to pay the passage fares:

Saving enough money to finance the trip proved to be far more difficult for most Irish families. The Trans-Atlantic ships did have some passenger compartments, but at fares between 12 and 15 pounds (approximately \$60 to \$75 at the time), these staterooms were designed to be used by the wealthy traveling between Europe and the United States on holiday trips. These were not the accommodations used by the masses of Famine emigrants. (Graves 38)

Today, the Irish have become part of America in a very deep sense, and one out of every seven people has Irish ancestry. They even have “transformed themselves from being targets of anti-immigration laws to becoming the lawmakers themselves, as senators, representatives, and presidents of the United States” (Graves 102). This was the case of persons like Andrew Jackson, Woodrow Wilson, John F. Kennedy, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and William Jefferson Clinton, all with Irish ancestors.

Italians

Italians had a major role in the development of the United States, even though by 1871 when Italy was a nation, with Rome as its capital, only 12,000 to 25,000 people Italians were living in America. This number changed dramatically at the beginning of the 1880s until 1920, when almost 4 million Italians came in a mass migration to this country looking for hope and fortune. Never before and never since has one ethnic group has come to the United States in such large numbers within this short time span (Aldridge 14).

Most of these immigrants came with the idea of finding solutions to many problems, to be rich, or to leave behind a land where they were often at the mercy of wealthy landlords (to find out later that they would not be treated much better in the U.S.). Italians came to build bridges and skyscrapers among other things. In the words of an Italian immigrant:

I came to America because I heard the streets were paved with gold. When I got here, I found out three things: first, the streets weren't paved with gold; second, they weren't paved at all; and third, I was expected to pave them. (Aldridge 15)

The Italians also found that a strong sense of family could provide the essential support to face the difficulties and challenges of a new life in America. Extended families living, working, and worshipping together in close communities could help reach the goal of well-being.

Today, the almost 20 million Italian Americans living in the United States have added entertainment to their occupations, run successful businesses, and influenced the politics of the country.

Russians

The history of Russians in America goes back to 1747 when fur traders arrived in Alaska, although most of them returned to Russia in 1867 when Alaska was purchased by the United States. But it was not until late 19th century when Russians started to immigrate in the U.S. in large numbers due to the persecution against the Jewish community that followed the assassination of Alexander II (Tsar of Russia) in 1881. Between 1820 and 1920, more than three million Russians migrated to the United States (“Russian Immigrants”).

Many of these newly immigrants settled in the Lower East Side of New York and started searching for job opportunities as every immigrant. As most Russians were unskilled workers, they were forced to accept low-paying jobs in factories and mines. Eventually it became more and more popular to join a union, but some of these unions refused to accept them as members, resulting in some Russians joining such organizations as the International Workers of the World (“Russian Immigrants”).

Russians have contributed to the development of the United States in different fields, like science, industry, biology, aircraft engineering, and television, among others (“Russian Immigrants”).

ASIANS

Chinese

Asian immigration is another important wave that marked another important “immigration door” and has affected American culture in different ways. In the last two centuries, many peoples from Asia have “ventured to the United States to forge new lives” (Novas and Cao xiii). When talking about Asians, we include the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and people from South Asia and Southeast Asia. The Asians began to arrive in the late eighteenth century when “a few adventuresome Chinese crossed the oceans and settled in lands that presently constitute the United States” (Novas and Cao 9), although there is some evidence that suggests the presence of Asians that accompanied “the Spanish on their expeditions north along the coast of California” (Novas and Cao 9). Or the document “preserved in the National Archives in Washington D. C. that tells about three Chinese sailors ... who sailed into Baltimore in 1875 and were left stranded there” (Novas and Cao 9).

The news that the Americans had struck gold electrified the Chinese. In 1848 and 1849 only a few hundred Chinese made their way to California; however, by 1851 some 2,716 Chinese with gold on their minds had “braved the rough ocean crossing to America” (Novas and Cao 11), and

by 1852 that figure had increased nearly tenfold to 20,026. The “gold fever” marked the beginning of another wave of immigrants to the U.S. through California.

During the decades after the California gold rush, when the young America embraced the concept of Manifest Destiny as the guiding principle to expand the nation’s borders to the western edges of the continent, it became necessary to construct a transportation system to facilitate the movement of workers and goods (Novas and Cao 16). The U.S. Congress enacted legislation to construct a transcontinental railroad to link the nation from east to west. The Chinese proved to be the most dependable workers in the western region, and the employers sought them out as their main source of labor. Chinese were attracted to railroad construction because by the early 1860s gold was growing scarce in the mines of California, and “virulent nativism in that state had made life rather unbearable” (Novas and Cao 16). As pressure mounted to complete the construction on the railroad, the Central Pacific Railroad Company dispatched an agent to China to recruit Chinese laborers. With little opportunity in an impoverished China, and convinced that America was the land of golden opportunity, a large number of Chinese accepted the Central Pacific job offers (Novas and Cao 16).

Japanese

In the case of Japanese, it was mostly young, unmarried males who dreamed of making money and returning to Japan who began venturing to the United States in significant numbers in the 1890s:

While just 149 Japanese came to the United States in 1871 and 1880 (which was fewer than the 186 who arrived in the country between 1861 and 1870), and only 2,270 ventured to American shores in the years 1881 to 1890, between 1891 and 1900, 25, 942 Japanese citizens entered the United States. Japanese immigration reached its peak when 129,797 Japanese citizens arrived in America. (Novas and Cao 97)

The Japanese who came to United States in these early years entered the country through ports in California, Oregon, and Washington, where they found abundant work “in agriculture, on the railroads, in small businesses, in domestic service, at lumber mills and salmon canneries, and in mining, due in part to the virtual halt in the immigration of Chinese workers to the United States [because of] the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882” (Novas and Cao 97).

Little by little, the Japanese workers became more involved in agricultural labor, and by 1910 more agricultural workers in California “were Japanese than any other ethnicity” (Novas and Cao 160).

Korean

The first period of recorded Korean history, known as the period of the Three Kingdoms, commenced in 53 B.C. Koreans did not venture to the United States until about two millennia later, at the close of the nineteenth century (Novas and Cao 160). Koreans started coming to the U. S. when sugar plantations in Hawaii attracted Korean labor. From the several groups of immigrants recruited to toil on the Hawaiian plantations, the Koreans were the first to migrate to the mainland United States, especially to the West Coast.

As the other Asian immigrants, the Koreans were “designated aliens ineligible for citizenship” and they experienced racial discrimination from those Americans who wanted to preserve America for the Anglo-Saxon Americans (Novas and Cao 166). According to Novas and Cao (2004):

The Chinese and Japanese had soured Americans’ views of Asians by adhering to the ways of the old country. To reverse the tide of Asians discrimination, Koreans believed they had to prove their willingness to conform to American ways (Novas and Cao 167).

Indians

One of the groups that immigrated to the United States in the last half of the twentieth century and that have stood out for “its rapid entry into mainstream American life” (Ingram and Girod 8), are the Indians, who have come in increasing numbers since 1965. Mostly educated and skilled, Indians have influenced different aspects of American life. This group of immigrants have become very successful “economically, professionally, and socially” (Ingram and Girod 10), holding traditional jobs as service workers or laborers, and at the same time as small business owners, high-tech engineers, physicians, scientists, and technology entrepreneurs among others. Indians constitute “more than 5 percent of all scientists, engineers, and software specialists in the country” (Ingram and Girod 10).

Although the history of immigration of Indians to the United States is basically similar to any other group, there are two important differences: Indians are fluent in English because India is the third largest English-speaking nation in the world, a fact that makes their immigration process a lot easier; and at the same time, Indians have a high level of education – about two-thirds of Indians have completed college, half hold an M.A., Ph.D., or hold other professional degree. (Ingram and Girod 10).

The population of Indians has reached about 2 million people. It grew rapidly between 1980 and 1990 although it more than doubled the group’s population during the 1990s. This represents the fastest growth of any immigrant group from Asia (Ingram and Girod 8), although Indians are the third largest Asian immigration group after the Chinese and the Filipino.

LATINOS

Latinos should be considered the new immigration wave for two reasons: Europeans are no longer the biggest population of immigrants, and the Latinos have become the biggest immigrant population in the U.S. Latinos numbered more than 35 million in 2000, constituting 12.5 percent of the American population (Novas 4). There is a tendency among Latinos to have large families which creates a permanent increase of the population. It is expected that the Latinos will triple in size by 2050 (Novas 4). Latinos are now the largest minority group, surpassing African Americans.

When talking about Latinos or Hispanics, we need to understand what comprises the term. Latin America is comprised of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. It is a “big family.” Due to the diversity of culture and traditions, each country tends to use the own nationality in place of the term “Latino” or “Latina” to call ourselves. As soon as Latinos step on this country, they are rarely known as Colombians, Cubans, Argentineans but Latinos or Hispanics. Latinos have a common language, but there are differences in the dialects of the language that make it sometimes difficult to understand Latinos from one country to another. But once Latinos come to the United States, they find their commonality as Latinos and create the “big family.”

This phenomenon is not completely new; it started many years ago when the first Mexicans “came back” to this country. The immigration of Latinos should be seen in different forms and historic moments. Also, the immigration should be seen through different situations depending on each country but mostly the immigration is due to two aspects: economical and political.

The three most influential Latino communities in the United States are the Mexicans, Cubans and Puerto Ricans, followed by communities not as numerous as the first but which have personalities equally influential.

Mexicans

Mexicans started coming or (coming back) to the United States during the late 19th century after the southern U.S. territories were annexed to the other states. Although some Mexicans decided to become citizens of the United States when the division occurred, some others moved south to Mexico but later come back looking for work or running from war. About 700,000 Mexicans came and produced what Novas calls “a positive impact on their adopted nation’s economy” (Novas 85). In the 1940s, many Mexicans were brought to work in different areas as temporary bracero workers because the American workers had gone to fight in the World War II. Until 1964, more than 4 million Mexican braceros came to toil in the United States. After the bracero program ended, many Mexicans decided to immigrate and established roots with or without documents and becoming the link for those relatives who came to join the others. This situation of illegal immigration led to the well known term “mojados” (“wetback” in English) for the thousands who swam across the Río Grande to American soil. Mexicans, then, are the biggest group of Latinos in the United States with “nearly two-thirds of the nation’s 35.3 million Latinos in 2000” (Novas 5).

Legal or illegal, Mexicans play one of the most important roles in the development of this country and have influenced it more than any other Latino with their music (rancheras, corridos and more recently Tex-Mex), their tasty food (burritos, enchiladas, tamales to mention just some of them) and language. Some of their words like “tacos,” “chile,” “¿dale,” and so on have been adopted easily by other Latinos and Americans equally.

Puerto Ricans

Puerto Ricans have migration advantages that no other Latinos have. Since Puerto Rico is a U.S. Commonwealth, Puerto Ricans have no right to vote to elect the president (unless they live in the U.S.) but are exempt from paying taxes; when coming to the U.S., they are not considered immigrants, and probably the most important advantage for many immigrants Puerto Ricans is that they are Americans no matter if they live on the island or the mainland.

Puerto Rico and Cuba were the last Spanish colonies in the late 1800s. Some Puerto Ricans who supported the cause of independence emigrated when the Spanish crushed the rebellion (Cabán et al. 162). Many of these people moved to New York and found work as cigar makers keeping in their minds the dream of freedom (Cabán et al. 163). These Puerto Ricans continued supporting the independent movement by collecting money for the cause. At the same time, they discussed whether the island should be independent or be connected with the United States.

Puerto Ricans brought their culture and customs with them and contributed to develop the culture of the United States in different fields (Cabán et al. 164), especially the arts. A great number of musicians, actors, and actresses have made of Puerto Rico an important cultural and artistic source.

Cubans

When revolution took place in Cuba by Fidel Castro and his men, many Cubans decided to abandon the island in the 1960s and 1970s because they did not share his communist ideas or were followers of the overthrown government. The vast majority of Cuban immigrants settled in Miami thanks to the proximity with the island and rebuilt their lives without wasting time to establish a Cuban American enclave. Miami has become known as the “Capital of Latin America” and is recognized as one of the most important cities in the world where mostly Latinos (especially Cubans) have found the “American Dream.”

CONCLUSION

This historical exercise is designed to help my students improve their knowledge of the immigration process in the United States. At the end of the unit I expect that my students have a better knowledge of the different groups of immigrants that have influenced the development of the country. I expect that they will understand the real meaning of the expression “United States: a melting pot” as a way to refer to the great variety of cultures with their own influences that have helped create the nation we all know today. I also expect from my students more critical thinking about the advantages of having this diversity of customs, foods, languages, and traditions to let them acquire a real meaning of the principle of cultural universality.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This unit will be used as a tool of the Spanish curriculum in the classroom to help my students recognize their cultural background due to the influence of the different groups of immigrants in the development of this country.

I will help my students to reach this goal, thanks to the work with other colleagues and other professionals, as a tool to provide my students with a path to improve their performance. This project will provide permanent and supportive interaction with my students, giving them constant feedback and reinforcement regarding their learning of specific and appropriate objectives.

Students will be asked a few questions at the beginning of the unit to establish how much they know about their origins and the origin of the cultural aspects that affect their lives. They will research information about their families and their background. Students will create their own family tree and will list a few characteristics about their customs. They also will try to find out more information about our ancestors: how they lived, the jobs they had, their religious beliefs among others.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson One

In the first lesson, my students and I will have the chance to discuss the different changes in U.S. history based on immigration phenomena. First of all, we will discuss and understand the meaning of some relevant words or expressions related to the topic of immigration that are absolutely vital in our project: *migration, immigration, emigration, visa, illegal, legal, alien, citizen, resident, green card, laborer, and employer*. Once the students learn the meaning of these words and how these terms are used everyday, we can discuss their importance for persons living in the United States. The students will work in small groups to discuss their opinions about these words, and then the whole class will reach conclusions about the importance of being informed about “immigration.”

Objectives

- Students will identify different terms related to the immigration phenomenon and will determine how important these terms are to understand the phenomenon.
- Students will interact through small group’s discussion to get different opinions.
- Students will discuss in small groups their opinions about the meaning of words related to immigration.
- Students will participate in a class discussion about the specific jobs immigrants do in the country.

Activity One

For the first activity the students will be given a brief questionnaire with terms related with the immigration phenomenon. They will be taken to the library where they can use different sources to research the terms (such as in encyclopedias, magazines, internet etc.)

Activity Two

Once they have obtained the information, they will return to class and will meet in small groups to share their answers and opinions about the words. They will be provided with a new set of questions regarding their personal points of view about what an immigrant is and how positive or negative it is to have immigrants in this country.

Activity Three

My students and I will play a game called “*the country*,” where everyone will be assigned two things: a nationality and an occupation. Then, based on that information, the students will be asked to describe his/her duties according to the job. After that, they will be asked to tell how they are supposed to be treated compared to people from other nationalities and how much they should be paid for the job.

Activity Four

At the end of the class we will spend the last minutes listening to the students’ final opinions and conclusions.

Materials

- Questionnaires
- Encyclopedias
- Magazines
- Internet

Lesson Two

Now that the students have a better idea about immigration, it is necessary to learn about the history of immigration in the country. It is time to search for information about the most important waves of immigration in the United States to know who came, why they came, and where they settled first. The students will use different resources to collect information and to classify it.

Objectives

- The students will search for information about immigration and the historical changes in the country due to this phenomenon.
- The students will learn more about their own history by collecting information of people and events related to the waves of immigration in the United States.

Activity One

At this point we will watch a video called the *Golden Door*. From this video, the students will learn about the three most important waves of immigration and the different legislations in favor or against the immigration of people from different places like Europe, Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. Notes will be taken during this activity by completing charts and filling in spaces in several sentences.

Activity Two

Taking into account the activities done during the first lesson and the information obtained from the video, the students will be asked to work in groups to complete a questionnaire called the “History of Immigration,” where the students will review the information they researched and at the same time get more information.

Activity Three

The whole class will discuss the answers obtained in the questionnaires through a Power Point presentation.

Materials

- Video: *The Golden Door*
- Charts
- Questionnaire
- Computer-Power Point slides

Lesson Three

In this lesson, when the students have acquired most of the information needed to have a better idea of the immigration process in the United States, they will have the opportunity to interact with history teachers who will make brief presentations of historical events associated with immigration. Afterwards, the students will create a “Time-Tracker” about immigration, combining events like the opening of Ellis Island in New York as the main door for European immigrants with other important historical events around the world in order to establish a parallel between the events as a way to remember them more easily. For this purpose, the students will have to ask questions to the presenters and take notes about the information provided.

Objectives

- The students will practice different ways of note-taking.
- The students will take notes, collect information, and organize data based on researching and asking specific questions.

Activity One

A few history teachers will be invited to lecture about immigration. They will share with the class relevant information about people arriving in the United States to do different kinds of jobs, like mining, cleaning, and construction among others. The history teachers will also tell the students details of the reasons for which the immigrants had to leave their countries.

Activity Two

The students will complete their “Time Trackers” with the information provided by the lecturers about the parallel events that occurred during the immigration waves or when legislations were enacted regarding the desire to admit more or restrict immigration.

Activity Three

At the end of this activity, the whole class will discuss the results and will share opinions about the data collected with the “Time Tracker.”

Materials

- “Time Tracker” sheets
- Maps
- Projector

Lesson Four

The students will learn new vocabulary to create a mini Spanish dictionary. The students will have the chance to identify some words commonly used in every day life. They will also recognize that some of these words that are frequently used do not correspond to a proper use of the Spanish language.

Activity One

The students will be asked to write on a sheet of paper as many words in Spanish as they know. This activity will provide a source of information of the students' vocabulary. The words will be written on the board and will be classified as "family words," words related to food, family, school, house, city, and so on.

Activity Two

Once the words have been classified, the students will use the dictionaries to find out the equivalent in English of those words. At this point the students will realize that the equivalent of some of the words does not match with the words that they know. This is because in many cases that word they typically use corresponds to a popular and non-correct use of it in the Spanish language. The teacher will have the opportunity to review basic grammar usage as word concordance, singular, plural, masculine, feminine, etc.

Activity Three

To create the mini-dictionary, the students will be able to use different resources which will involve the help of some other teachers in the school (business, photography, English, among others). They can use pictures, but the words will be classified one more time as "family words," that is, words related to the same topic (food, school, business, vacations, weather, etc.).

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