

Health Opportunities High School  
Bronx, New York (07x670)  
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### **The Teaching American History Summer Institute Grant on Immigration.**

#### **Lesson plan for Immigration, Citizenship and the Constitution.**

**Instructional and Overall Objective-** The following lesson will be, at best, set up in a manner that will facilitate our student's understanding of past and present immigration patterns. In conducting a lesson in this manner for 11th grade New York City High School students of United States History and Government it should be understood that many of them are from immigrant families and backgrounds. The purpose in conducting a lesson whose objective it is to analyze past and contemporary immigration patterns is to help students visualize several of the following factors. One, that current immigrant push and pull factors have not changed much since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two, that many of the stereotypes aimed at categorizing immigrants over 100 years ago still persists today in some way, shape or form. Three, that many of the anti immigrant legislation of the past is similar to those laws being debated upon from the Southwest to the East coast today. And finally, the objective of our lesson is to illustrate how the lives of immigrants, regardless of era or time period, are shaped by their arrival in a foreign land and how that event in and of itself leads to a period of adjustment, resettlement and acculturation.

**Primary Sources-** Several sources will be used in attempting to conduct the lesson at hand. Jacob Riis' book, "How the other half lives." will be used to illustrate the struggles immigrants faced in urban areas upon their arrival in a foreign land over 100 years ago. Riis' photos are important in not only illustrating the struggles of immigrants but in attempting to show the urbanization process that these newly arrived migrants had to face. The Polish Peasant letters will also be used to illustrate how immigration affected the family bond here in this new land and back "home". The photographs of the Italian family will also be used as a way to counter Riis illustrations and examples. The Italian family photograph is important because of the alternative viewpoint that it shows the student about the struggles of America's Gilded Age immigrants. Lastly, as a follow up assignment, I would like to use the piece distributed by Katherine Caldwell, "Nobodies: Modern American Slave Labor and the Dark Side of the New Global Economy" by John Bowe. The brief passage illustrates some of the very contemporary issues that pull immigrants from all over the world to America's shores.

The lesson will be conducted in conjunction with the use of **New York State's Social Studies Standards.**

- In covering and demonstrating a knowledge of the History of the United States and New York, **Standard 1** will be used.
- In describing how Global factors play a key role in shaping several past and current pull and push factors, **Standard 2** will be used.
- In assessing laws and policy that have helped to shape past and contemporary immigration issues, **Standard 5** on Civics, citizenship and government will be used.

**Topic-** Immigration: Past and Contemporary patterns.

**Objective during Lesson (Aim):** How were the lives of immigrants reshaped in America over 100 years ago?

Once the aim of the lesson had been displayed and understood by the students, one would proceed by “breaking the ice”, with the standard Do Now component of the lesson. This could be done in several manners. A standard question could be displayed to get the students immediately contemplating and working on a task at hand or a primary source connected to the subject could be distributed in order to have the students analyze it objectively and begin to apply it to the lesson. For the purpose of this lesson I would have students describe several pull or push factors that would lead a person to migrate from one nation or community to another. Once these factors were discussed and displayed I would proceed to distribute several of the previously mentioned primary sources to help the students understand how the lives of these individuals were then reshaped upon arrival.

**The distribution of materials along with accompanying assignments:**

1. Five photos from Riis’ book “How the Other Half Lives” will be distributed to a group of students along with the following tasks. Students will be asked to analyze each item and to explain how the lives of these individuals were being reshaped in America and how these items illustrate the struggles faced by these individuals in America at that time. Another item to have them keep in mind is how urbanization reshaped their lives as well.
2. As a counter to Riis photos, two other photos will be distributed. The family photograph of the Italian familial unit and the labor union illustration will be given to another group with the task of having the students analyze and infer how the lives of these individuals were reshaped by arriving in America.
3. Several excerpt from Riis’ book will also distributed to another group. Some excerpts from Riis’ chapters on “Chinatown”, “Jewtown”, “The Italian in New York” and “The Color Line in New York” will be used to have students demonstrate several factors upon arrival. Students will be asked to explain why immigrants who were for example from China ventured and reshaped their lives in a “Chinatown” or why a Jewish person from Europe did the same. Students will be asked to conclude and make inferences about the decision making process of many of America’s late 1800’s immigrants.
4. Another group of students will receive at least two examples of the peasant polish letters to analyze. In distributing these primary sources students will be asked to explain how the lives of those individuals left behind were shaped by those individuals who chose to migrate to another land.

**Summary and wrap up session.**

Once the students have been given several minutes to collect, analyze and gather the information displayed via their primary sources they will be asked to report their findings. In reporting their findings the students will demonstrate how the lives of these individuals were reshaped and reproduced in America by the consequences of immigration.

## Follow up assignment

In following up on the lesson on Immigration I would have the students work on two assignments. The students would work on one minor assignment and one major assignment.

- The first assignment would require the students to read the excerpt on “Nobodies: Modern American Slave Labor and the Dark Side of the New Global Economy” by John Bowe. Once they had read that assignment the students would be required to identify the excerpt as either a “pull” factor or a “push” factor for immigration. In addition, students would also be required to find, via research, a similar circumstance that forced people to migrate to another nation or territory during the Gilded or Progressive era.
- The second assignment would require students to do a research paper where they would pick one group (Italian, Eastern European, Chinese, Japanese etc.) from the Gilded or Progressive era that arrived in America at that time and compare their lives with the lives of a contemporary individual who migrated to the United States recently. The students would be required to interview that person in order to gather an oral history of that person’s journey, circumstances and reproduction in America. The researched assignment would require the student to use several primary sources used in class from photographs to letters to journals.