

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute

“The Immigrant Experience in California through Literature & History”

San José State University - Summer 2022

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Topic/Theme	The Human Face of Immigration
Institute Text Inspiration	<i>The Circuit</i> – Francisco Jiminez <i>Letter to a Young Refugee & Letter to a Young Iraqi Refugee to America</i> – Andrew Lam
Student Grade Level	11th grade American Literature
Lesson Plan Length	50–60 minutes
Lesson Overview	As an introduction to a comparative study of <i>Of Mice and Men</i> and <i>The Circuit</i> , students will engage in several activities in which they explore their existing thinking about immigration.
Essential Questions & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What commonly held misconceptions do people have about immigration?• Why do you think people have these misconceptions?• What can we do to challenge those misconceptions?
Key Student Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will examine their own subconscious biases about immigration and migrant labor.• Students will understand the terms asylum, immigrant, migrant, nonimmigrant, refugee, unauthorized immigrant• Students will select evidence to support ideas
Sequence of Key Learning Activities	<u>Activity 1</u> Students match up the following terms and definitions: asylum, immigrant, migrant, nonimmigrant, refugee, unauthorized immigrant <u>Activity 2</u> Students complete the <i>Ten Myths About Immigration</i> table by visiting each of 10 stations set up around the classroom, reading the <i>Learning for Justice</i> evidence provided and adding a piece of evidence that contradicts each myth in each case. <u>Activity 2</u> Students analyze <i>The New Colossus</i> by Emma Lazarus and <i>Unguarded Gates</i> by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, annotating the poems and writing down observations in response to the prompts provided.
Texts and Materials Used	https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2011/the-human-face-of-immigration https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2011/ten-myths-about-immigration
Assessments	Exit slips – I used to think... but now I think... (Cultures of Thinking protocol)

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Ten Myths About Immigration

Complete the following table by visiting each of the stations around the classroom and adding evidence from *Learning for Justice* that contradicts each myth.

Myth	Contradictory Evidence
Most immigrants are here illegally.	
It's easy to enter the country legally. My ancestors did; why can't immigrants today?	
Today's immigrants don't want to learn English.	
Immigrants take good jobs from U.S. citizens.	
“The worst” people from other countries are coming to the United States and bringing crime and violence.	
Undocumented immigrants don't pay taxes and burden the national economy.	
The United States is being overrun by immigrants like never before.	
We can stop undocumented immigrants coming to the United States by building a wall along the border with Mexico.	
Banning immigrants and refugees from majority-Muslim countries will protect the United States from terrorists.	
Refugees are not screened before entering the United States.	

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Immigration Poems

The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

— *Emma Lazarus, 1883*

Unguarded Gates

.... Wide open and unguarded stand our gates,
And through them presses a wild motley throng
Men from the Volga and the Tartar steppes,
Featureless figures of the Hoang-Ho,
Malayan, Scythian, Teuton, Kelt, and Slav,
Flying the Old World's poverty and scorn;
These bringing with them unknown gods and rites,
Those, tiger passions, here to stretch their claws.
In street and alley what strange tongues are loud,
Accents of menace alien to our air,
Voices that once the Tower of Babel knew!
O Liberty, white Goddess! is it well
To leave the gates unguarded? On thy breast
Fold Sorrow's children, soothe the hurts of fate,
Lift the down-trodden, but with hand of steel
Stay those who to thy sacred portals come
To waste the gifts of freedom. Have a care
Lest from thy brow the clustered stars be torn
And trampled in the dust. For so of old
The thronging Goth and Vandal trampled Rome,
And where the temples of the Caesars stood
The lean wolf unmolested made her lair.

— *Thomas Bailey Aldrich, 1895*

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Poetry Discussion Prompts:

- What is suggested by the title of each poem?
- What do you notice about the form and structure of each poem?
- What kind of imagery does each poet utilize?
- How does each poet use allusion?
- What specific word choices stand out to you in each poem?
- How would you describe the tone and mood of each poem?

Terms and Definitions:

Asylum	Form of protection provided to noncitizens physically present in the United States who meet the definition of refugee.
Immigrant	Any person lawfully in the United States who is not a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or person admitted under a nonimmigrant category
Migrant	A person who leaves his/her country of origin to seek temporary or permanent residence in another country.
Nonimmigrant	Any person in the United States not a U.S. citizen or U.S. national who is admitted on a temporary basis to the United States for a specific purpose (work, study, tourism)
Refugee	Status granted to an individual, prior to arrival in the United States, who has been determined by competent authority to be fleeing persecution or have a well-founded fear of persecution in their own country because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.
Unauthorized immigrant	Foreign-born non-citizen who is not a legal resident, including naturalized citizens, persons granted lawful permanent residence, persons granted asylum, persons admitted as refugees, and persons admitted as resident nonimmigrants (i.e., students and temporary workers, as opposed to tourists) who have unexpired authorized periods of admission. Most unauthorized immigrants either entered the United States without inspection or were admitted temporarily and remained past the date they were required to depart.

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Exit slip

I used to think...	Now I think...