

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute

“The Immigrant Experience in California through Literature & Theatre”

San José State University - Summer 2022

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Topic/Theme	Angel Island Immigration Station
Institute Text Inspiration	<i>Island</i> Edited by Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim, Judy Yung
Student Grade Level	High School
Lesson Plan Length	1 class period (60 min) (May go longer depending on adaptations)
Unit Overview	Westward Expansion and the Industrial Revolution
Essential Questions & Skills	Essential Question: How do the inscriptions on Angel Island’s walls help us to better understand the experiences of the people detained there?
Key Student Learning Objectives	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Contextualize the accounts of people who experienced detention at Angel Island in 19th and 20th century US immigration history.- Compare the variety of experiences people had on Angel Island.
Sequence of Key Learning Activities	<p>Prior Knowledge: Students should be familiar with major waves of immigration, push and pull factor theory vs. Critical Transnational Perspective, Chinese Exclusion Act, ongoing Transnational Railroad Construction and disputes between Chinese and white Workers.</p> <p><u>Lesson Procedure:</u></p> <p><i>*HW from previous class: Students were assigned a reading of one of the following oral histories from Island:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Lai Bing: Paper Son of a Merchang- Pg 213</i>- <i>Law Shee Low: “That’s How it Was” - Pg 230</i>- <i>Ja Kew Yuen: “Treated as Second Class Citizens,”- Pg 325</i>- <i>Koon T. Lau: “Why?” - Pg 292</i>- <i>Wong Gue Jue: A True Chinese Character- Pg 254</i>- <i>Helen Hong Wong: “No Gold to be Picked Up” - Pg 267</i> <p><i>They will have 3 quotes they have chosen from the reading that they believe were the most important, interesting, shocking, or surprising in the reading.</i></p>

	<p>poems themselves.</p> <p>6. (10-15 min) Shareout and Discussion- Each group will share some of the responses and ideas that they want to share and discuss with the class. Some possible discussion questions can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What did you think of these poems? What is the significance of these being found in the walls? - How do these poems further illustrate what we have learned from the oral histories we read prior? <p>7. (5 min) Exit Ticket: (Can be an Extension or Final Discussion Question) How do the inscriptions on Angel Island’s walls help us to better understand the experiences of the people detained there?</p>
<p>Texts and Materials Used</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Island</i> Edited by Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim, Judy Yung - (My own adaptation) Facing History and Ourselves: https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/graffiti-boards
<p>Assessments</p>	<p>Discussion, Exit Ticket</p>

Angel Island Oral Histories Activity

Discussion Questions:

What aspect of Immigration history do these sources illuminate?	
According to these sources, what motivated this person to immigrate to the United States? What were their goals?	

Oral History Discussion Questions:

What were significant events in this person's life and how did they shape them? What choices did they make?	
How was their experience shaped by being a Chinese immigrant during this time period?	

Connecting Oral Histories:

Were these people relatable to you? Why or why not?	
How did they demonstrate agency* according to their oral history? (Before coming to the	

US and after their arrival)	
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**agency-a person's individual ability to act autonomously/independently*

Other Oral Histories:

Discuss with people from other groups and summarize your key takeaways from the other Oral Histories.

Lai Bing	
Law Shee Low	
Ja Kew Yuen	
Koon T. Lau	
Wong Gue Jue	
Helen Hong Wong	

Corroborating Oral Histories

How do the oral histories of the people who were detained on Angel Island help us to better understand the experiences of the people detained there?

*Explain your response with specific evidence about 2 of the people you have learned about.
(Historical Paragraph)*