



# Ethnic Studies Lesson 3E:

## Latino American Immigration Push and Pull Factors, Part 1

**TOPIC:**

LATINO AMERICAN HISTORY

**GRADE LEVELS:**

11-12

**TIME:**

1½ HOURS

### California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Themes, Values, and Principles Alignment

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**Themes:**

2. History and Movement

**Values and Principles:**

2. Celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color by providing a space to share their stories of success, community collaboration, and solidarity, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth.

### California English and Social Science Standards Alignment

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**English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):****Reading—Informational Text (RI.11-12)**

Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text, including how researching the push and pull factors of Latino immigration to the United States between 1910 and 1945, as well as the realities for immigrants during this period, impacts understanding. (RI.11-12.3)

**Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):****History-Social Science Content Standards—(Grades 9-12)**

Understand the causes, consequences, and impact of Latino immigration to the United States between 1910 and 1945, including push and pull factors such as economic opportunities, political instability, and social conditions. (History-Social Science Content Standard 11.4)

### Lesson Purpose

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Students will research the push and pull factors of Latino immigration to the United States between 1910 and 1945, as well as the realities for immigrants during this period.

## Essential Questions

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*How does studying push and pull factors of Latinos to the United States between 1910 and 1940—as well as the realities for immigrants during that time—help us understand Latino and Hispanic Americans today?*

*How has life changed for Latino/Hispanic Americans over the last 250 years?*

## Materials

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[The International Catholic Migration Commission: What’s the Difference Between a Migrant, an Immigrant, and an Emigrant?](#)

[Lesson 3E Worksheet](#)

[Library of Congress: Depression and the Struggle for Survival](#)

[Bracero History Archive: Introduction and Background](#)

[KWL Chart for Unit 3](#)

## Vocabulary

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immigration	Mexican Revolution	Bracero Program
emigrate	Great Depression	World War II
isolation	World War I	
migrant	agribusiness	
refugee	deportation	

## Lesson Steps

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### Step 1:

- As a whole class, ask students what they know about US Mexican immigration policy. How does what they know differ from immigration policy from other countries? Over the next two lessons, students will be studying immigration pushes and pulls from Mexico as well as US immigration policy. Have students popcorn read (or other group reading framework) [The International Catholic Migration Commission: What’s the Difference Between a Migrant, an Immigrant, and an Emigrant?](#) Ask students to help create the definitions and write them on the board.
- Draw a T-chart on the board and label the left column “Pushes” and the right column “Pulls.” Have students round robin read [City University of New York: Early Twentieth Century Mexican Immigration to the U.S.](#) As students read, ask them to think of the pushes that were influencing Mexicans to immigrate to the US after 1910. This is often called the first wave of Mexican immigration. Students should also mention what pulls there were from the US side that invited Mexicans to immigrate. Shared answers should include the following from the short introduction:

Pushes	Pulls
<b>First Wave of Immigration</b> Mexican Revolution (1910) landless, desperate	mining, agribusiness, jobs

- Show students the shared [3E Support Worksheet](#). Break students into pairs and ask them to look at the primary source documents in the right-hand tab of the [City University of New York: Early Twentieth Century Mexican Immigration to the US](#) site. Students will pick at least two of the primary sources. They will find any additional pushes or pulls for immigration, as well as add details under the “Realities of Immigration” table at the bottom of the worksheet. Analyze the [Employers Favor Increased Mexican Immigration](#) with students, and include on the “Realities” table the following facts: one pull for the first wave of immigration was that agricultural businesses wanted the low-wage labor; one reality was that immigrants were often considered ignorant; and another reality was that the work they were brought in for was often the type of hard agricultural work that US citizens did not want to do.
- Have students complete their primary source research on the shared document and then share their findings. Some things to point out include: immigrants were often isolated by their need to retain their customs and language, the pay was much better in the US than in Mexico, the move to the US was sometimes considered temporary—as people passed back and forth across the border.

**Step 2:**

- Refer students back to the “Push and Pull” table on the group worksheet. Let students know that while there were three major waves of Mexican immigration to the United States, these were interrupted by periods of deportation. The first period of deportation came during the agricultural depression of the 1920s and the Great Depression and Dust Bowl of the 1930s. In the same pair groups, have students read [Library of Congress: Depression and the Struggle for Survival](#). Let students know that they should add at least two new realities to the worksheet. When the students have completed their reading in pairs, have them share the realities they found with the whole class. Students should note that some second-generation Mexican American citizens who had never been to Mexico were caught up in the deportations.

**Step 3:**

- As a whole class, refer students back to the “Push and Pull” table on the shared worksheet. Let students know that the second great wave of immigration came during the Bracero program during World War II. As a group, have a student read a paragraph from the [Bracero History Archive: Introduction and Background](#) and then choose the next reader. Pause frequently to add the push and pull factors to the worksheet table. Students should note that the lack of manpower due to World War II fighting was a major pull factor. Students should also note that the treaty was to create a pool of temporary workers, but many agricultural owners wanted it to continue. (There are links in the Additional Readings and Resources section to follow up on Mexican Americans who served in the military during World War II. If time permits, this can provide another point of view for Mexican Americans during this period.)

**Step 4:**

- While still in the whole class group, have students watch [NBC News Learn: The Bracero Program](#) (video 2 minutes, 49 seconds). Pause the video frequently to add to the “Push and Pull” table of the shared worksheet as well as to the “Realities” table for the Mexican workers at this time. Pause the video frequently to add, as a class, to the “Realities” table of the worksheet. When the video is complete, as a class, ask students to share their answers to this week’s questions: “How does studying push and pull factors of Latino immigration to the United States between 1910 and 1940—as well as the realities for immigrants during that time—help us understand Latino and Hispanic Americans today?,” and “How has life changed for Latino/Hispanic Americans over the last 250 years?” Add to the column of what has been learned in this unit’s KWL chart.

## Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection

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Let students know that one of the advantages about studying this recent history is that there are still people alive today who have firsthand knowledge of what the Bracero program was like. Have students pick one of the resources on the [Bracero History Archive](#) and write a short response to the primary source.

## Additional Readings and Resources

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### [Bracero History Archive](#)

Chavez, Linda. "The New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation." In *Beyond the Color Line: New Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America*, edited by Abigail Thernstrom and Stephan Thernstrom. Hoover Institution Press and Manhattan Institute, 2002, 383-389.

Fund, John. "Bring Back the Braceros." *Wall Street Journal*, July 27, 2006. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB115396144637218602>

### [Library of Congress: Hispanics in Service](#)

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, 244-270.

Sparshott, Jeffrey. "What Happened When the U.S. Got Rid of Guest Workers? Farms Used Less Labor." *Wall Street Journal*, February 8, 2017. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-REB-37301>

[Violet, Joyce. \*Temporary Worker Programs, Background and Issues: A Report\*. Congressional Research Service, 1980.](#)

**NOTE TO EDUCATORS REGARDING ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES:** America is a pluralistic country, ethnically. It is also a pluralistic country politically—left, right, and center. Ethnic studies educators have ready access to resources from the left-of-center in the [2021 California Model Curriculum](#) and in the [Liberated Model Curriculum](#). This Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum favors teachers exposing students to views from across the political spectrum. Educators often lack guidance to materials from outside the left-of-center. Therefore, in the sections on Additional Readings and Resources, the Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum alerts educators to credible resources that provide an alternative to the other Model Curricula. In doing so, this curriculum encourages educators to acquaint students with evidence-based views from left, right, and center.

**Ethnic Studies 3E and 3F: Latino American Immigration, Parts 1 and 2**

PUSHES	PULLS
<p><b>First Wave of Immigration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mexican Revolution 1910</li> <li>- Landless, desperate</li> </ul> <p><b>First Deportation</b></p> <p><b>Second Wave of Immigration</b></p> <p><b>Second Deportation</b></p> <p><b>Third Wave of Immigration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mining, agribusiness, jobs</li> </ul>

*Realities of Immigration*

<b>Education</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Isolation</b>	<b>Regions</b>
<b>Pay</b>	<p><b>Types of Work</b></p> <p>Hard agricultural work (from Employers Favor Increased Mexican Immigration)</p>	<b>Permanent Immigration?</b>	<b>Citizenship</b>
<p><b>Discrimination</b></p> <p>Considered ignorant (from Employers Favor Increased Mexican Immigration)</p>	<b>Organizing</b>		

**Ethnic Studies 3A: KWL Chart**

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**KNOW****WONDER****LEARNED**

*What do we think we already know about this topic?*

*What do we wonder about this topic? Write your questions below.*

*After the research is completed, what did we learn? Make sure to cite your source.*

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