



Ethnic Studies Lesson 5B: Asian American Early Immigration, Part 1

TOPIC:

ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORY

GRADE LEVELS:

11-12

TIME:

1½ HOURS

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

Themes:

1. Identity
2. History and Movement
3. Systems of Power

Values and Principles:

1. Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).
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.
5. Challenge racist, bigoted, discriminatory, and imperialist/colonial beliefs and practices on multiple levels.

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment

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

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas. (RI.11-12.2)

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

Analyze the social, economic, and political factors that contributed to immigration and migration patterns in American history. (11.1.5)

Examine the experiences of immigrants and migrants from various regions of the world, including Chinese immigrants in the 19th century, and analyze the push and pull factors that influenced their decisions to migrate to the United States. (8.12)

Evaluate the impact of immigration policies and laws on immigrant communities and the broader society, including the US response to Chinese immigration during the 19th century.
(4.4)

Lesson Purpose

Students will study the push and pull factors of Chinese immigration during the 19th century. Students will also see the realities of life for Chinese immigrants, as well as the US response to this growing immigration.

Essential Questions

What factors contributed to Chinese immigration during the 19th century, and what was life like for Chinese immigrants?

How did the US respond to Chinese immigration?

How has life changed for Asian Americans over the last 150 years?

Materials

[Re-imagining Migration: Why Chinese People Came to the United States](#)

[WORKSHEET](#)

[Library of Congress: Intolerance](#)

[Wyoming History: The Rock Springs Massacre](#)

[U.S. Department of Labor: Hall of Honor Inductee: The Chinese Railroad Workers](#)

[Library of Congress: Building Chinatowns](#)

[Immigration History: People v. Hall](#)

[National Park Service: Mary Tape](#)

[Smithsonian Magazine: Anti-Chinese Riot of 1880](#)

[Library of Congress: The Anti-Chinese Wall](#)

[Nature: Plague in San Francisco: rats, racism and reform](#)

[TED-ED: The Dark History of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882](#)

[Unit 5 KWL Chart](#)

Vocabulary

xenophobic

bubonic plague

transcontinental railroad

Chinese Exclusion Act

Lesson Steps

Step 1:

- As a class, ask students what they already know about the push and pull factors for Chinese and Japanese immigration to the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries. Have students watch the video midway through this page: [Re-imagining Migration: Why Chinese People Came to the United States](#) (video 6 minutes, 16 seconds). As students watch, have them note the push and pull factors for the four waves of Chinese immigration. Ask students to also take notes on the realities of life for the Chinese immigrants. Stop the video frequently, so students can take notes.
- When the video is complete, show students the [WORKSHEET](#) for this lesson. Have students help fill in the push and pull factors as well as the realities at the bottom portion of the page.

Step 2:

- As a class, let students know they will continue to research the realities of early Chinese immigrants. As a class, use a group reading strategy such as popcorn or round robin to read out loud [Library of Congress: Intolerance](#). As students listen to the reading, have them take notes on what the realities were of living as a Chinese immigrant during the 1900s.
- When the reading is complete, as a class, have students help fill in the boxes on this week's worksheet that coincide with the realities they read about. Students will continue their research and continue adding to the shared worksheets in the following groups. Students should be careful to cite their sources. Form students into eight groups:
 - [Wyoming History: The Rock Springs Massacre](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Labor: Hall of Honor Inductee: The Chinese Railroad Workers](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Building Chinatowns](#)
 - [Immigration History: People v. Hall](#)
 - [National Park Service: Mary Tape](#)
 - [Smithsonian Magazine: Anti-Chinese Riot of 1880](#)
 - [Library of Congress: The Anti-Chinese Wall](#)
 - [Nature: Plague in San Francisco: rats, racism and reform](#)

Step 3:

- As a class, have students watch [TED-ED: The Dark History of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882](#) (video 5 minutes, 57 seconds). As students watch, have them listen for the who, what, where, when, and why of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the realities this act imposed on Chinese American immigrants.
- When students have finished watching, help students create an event card for a new Asian American timeline. Create this timeline below and running concurrently. Also have students add notes to the unit's worksheet on the realities of life for Chinese immigrants after the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Step 4:

- As a class, ask students this lesson's questions, "What factors contributed to Chinese immigration during the 19th century, and what was life like for Chinese immigrants? How did the US respond to Chinese immigration?" Also ask this unit's question, "How has life changed for Asian Americans over the last 150 years?" Make note of what was learned on this unit's KWL chart—along with additional questions.

Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection

As time permits and for homework, have students watch [Forest Service: Legacy of the Chinese on the American Railroad](#) (video 20 minutes, 27 seconds). As students watch, have them take notes on what was the legacy of the early migration of the Chinese to California. They should answer the question, “How might US history be different without the immigration of Chinese American immigrants?”

Additional Readings and Resources

Gochenour, Zachary. “Asian Exclusion in American Immigration Policy.” In *Public Choice Analyses of American Economic History*, vol. 2, edited by Joshua Hall and Marcus Witcher. Springer, 2018, 57-68.

Jacobsen, Thomas. “[Laissez-Faire and the Chinese Persecutions in San Francisco.](#)” *Rampart Journal of Individualist Thought* IV, no. 3 (Fall 1968): 39-44.

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, 133-179.

Sowell, Thomas. *Migrations and Cultures: A World View*. Basic Books, 1996, chaps. 3, 5, 7.

Weinberg, Julius. “E. A. Ross: The Progressive as Nativist.” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50, no. 3 (1967): 242-253.

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 5B: Asian American Immigration

PUSHES	PULLS
<p>Chinese 1st Wave of Immigration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taiping Rebellion 1850-1864 - Chinese Exclusion Act 1882 <p>Chinese 2nd Wave of Immigration</p> <p>Chinese 3rd Wave of Immigration</p> <p>Chinese 4th Wave of Immigration</p> <p>Japanese Wave of Immigration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angel Island - Gentlemen’s Agreement - Immigration Exclusion Act of 1924 - Immigration Act of 1965 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gold in California - Transcontinental Railroad

Realities of Immigration

Education	Language	Isolation	Regions
Pay	Types of Work	Permanent Immigration?	Citizenship
Discrimination	Organizing		

Ethnic Studies 5A: KWL Chart

KNOW

WONDER

LEARNED

<p><i>What do we think we already know about this topic?</i></p>	<p><i>What do we wonder about this topic? Write your questions below.</i></p>	<p><i>After the research is completed, what did we learn? Make sure to cite your source.</i></p>