

Ethnic Studies Lesson 7A: White in America

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity
- 2) History and Movement

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)

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment:

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

Reading: Informational Text (RI.11-12)

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. (RI.11-12.7)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will investigate U.S. white ethnicities, cultures, and religious groups in the past and today

Essential Questions:

How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?

Materials:

[PBS NewsHour: America is becoming more urban, more diverse and less white, 2020 Census reveals U.S. Census Bureau, QuickFacts](#)

7A: Support Worksheet

[USAFACTS: Our Changing Population: United States](#)

[U.S. Census Bureau: English Most Common Race or Ethnicity in 2020 Census](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

census	White passing	MENA—Middle Eastern North
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		African
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, present this unit's 7A: Support KWL Chart. Ask students what they already know about the concept of who is considered white in America, in terms of the social construct, of power, of the disparities within that category, and of what country origins count as white. Fill in information on the shared KWL chart as students share.

Let students know that the last American census was conducted in 2020, and the next census will be conducted in 2030. Have students watch [PBS NewsHour: America is becoming more urban, more diverse and less white, 2020 Census reveals](#) (video 7 minutes, 57 seconds). As students watch, have them take notes on what the most recent census says about being white in the U.S. When the video is complete, have students pair up to check their notes. As a class, have the pairs share their notes. Help students see that the proportion of the population that is white and non-Hispanic is still the majority but has declined. It is also more complicated to define ethnicity as there is more intermarriage.

- **Step 2:** As a class, show students [US Census Bureau, QuickFacts](#). Help students see the correlation between the census data and the 7A: Support Worksheet. Divide the class into four groups to continue filling out the WORKSHEET. Show students [USAFACTS: Our Changing Population: United States](#). Show students how to change the date range just below the blue bar, how to click on the line graph in "How many people live in the US?", and how to find the number of persons by ethnicity by clicking on the graph "How has the US racial and ethnic populations changed?". Have students work in the following groups to continue filling in the graph. Also have students calculate the percentages of the total population for each ethnicity.

- 2000-2010
- 1990-2000
- 1980-1990
- 1971-1980

When students have completed their portion of the table, have them work together as a group to bullet item notes in order to answer the following questions that appear on the bottom of the worksheet. Students should be careful to cite their source in the worksheet.

1. How has the US population changed between 1971 and 2020?
2. How has the percentage of whites in the US changed between 1971 and 2020?
3. What are some of the challenges in using data to describe the number of whites in the US?

When the groups have completed their research, as a class, have the groups share their comments. Help students see that racial categories have shifted over time, more categories have been added, and more people are identifying with multiple ethnicities.

- **Step 3:** Let students know that the 2020 census allowed people who identified as white to write in a more detailed description of their identity. Show students [U.S. Census Bureau: English Most Common Race or Ethnicity in 2020 Census](#). Use a group reading strategy such as round robin or popcorn reading to read through Figure 3 (about half way down the page). As students listen, they

should take notes on what ethnicities and countries of origin are mentioned as part of the white category.

When the reading is concluded, project the three graphs again. Have students pair up with another student to review their notes. As a class, have the pairs share their notes and ask them what surprises them about these ethnicities. How does this compare with the ethnic category of white from what might have been included in the 1980 census?

- **Step 4:** As a class, ask students this lesson's questions, "How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 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 read [Phoenix Mag: History: The Abduction of 40 Orphans in 20th Century Clifton](#). As students read, they should take notes to summarize the story of the "Great Orphan Abduction." Students should write a long paragraph about a summary of this story and the historical expectations and benefits of being white in the U.S.

Additional Readings and Resources:

[CNN: Most People Think I'm White](#) (video 3 minutes, 54 seconds) (Some strong language)

Bernstein, David E. *Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America*. Bombardier, 2022.

DeWitt, Petra. *Degrees of Allegiance: Harassment and Loyalty in Missouri's German-American Community during World War I*. University of Illinois Press, 2012.

Wilfred Reilly. *Taboo: Ten Facts You Can't Talk About*. Regnery, 2020, chap. 7.

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 3-98.

Sowell, Thomas, The Poorest People in America Are Whites, Thomas Sowell TV.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGvn9YedVnU>

[Phoenix Mag: History: The Abduction of 40 Orphans in 20th Century Clifton](#).

Glazer Nathan. "Blacks and Ethnic Groups: The Difference and the Political Difference It Makes." In his *Ethnic Dilemmas*, 1964-1982. Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 70-93.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS REGARDING THE 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 Lesson 7B: White and Irish Americans

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity
- 2) History and Movement

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)
- 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)

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. (RI.11-12.7)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Examine the push factors leading to Irish immigration to the United States, including economic hardship, famine, and political instability. (8.6)

Evaluate the impact of Irish immigration on American society and culture, considering its contributions to economic development, labor movements, and urbanization. (11.2)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will investigate the push and pull factors of Irish immigration to the US and the nativist reaction.

Essential Questions:

What were the push and pull factors of Irish immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?

How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?

Materials:

[PBS: Irish Immigrants: Emerald Isle to Ellis Island](#)

7B: Support Worksheet for lessons 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F

[NBC News: Nativism](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

Irish famine	tenement	nativism
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, ask students what they know about Irish immigration to the U.S. Have students watch through minute 24, [PBS: Irish Immigrants: Emerald Isle to Ellis Island](#) (video 27 minutes, 2 seconds). As students watch the video, they should take notes on what were the push and pull factors of Irish immigration. They should also note what challenges they faced along the way and when they arrived.

When the video is complete, have students pair with another student to check their notes. Introduce students to 7B: Support Worksheet. As a class and as students share their notes, include the push and pull factors on the worksheet. Make sure students see that Irish immigrants came from a rural background and settled on the East Coast in urban areas—usually next to the port where they disembarked. Also, even though they were considered white, Irish immigrants faced discrimination, and it took several generations for Irish Americans to reach the middle class and success.

- **Step 2:** Have students watch [NBC News: Nativism](#) (video 3 minutes, 38 seconds). As students watch the video, students should take notes on the religions of these immigrants and the nativist reaction to Irish immigration.

When students have completed the video, have students pair up to share their notes. Have pairs compare their notes and then make comments on the worksheet. When students have finished comparing notes, as a class, have pairs share their comments on the shared document.

- **Step 3:** As a class, ask students this lesson's questions, "What were the push and pull factors of Irish immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?" and this unit's question, "How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 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 [NYTN: How Irish Americans became White: finding your roots](#). (video 16 minutes, 10 seconds). As students watch the video, students should take notes on the stereotypes that were attributed to Irish immigrants during the 1900's. Student notes should help them answer the question, "Where did Irish American stereotypes from the 1900's come from and how did they lead to xenophobia?" Students should write a long paragraph and be careful to cite their sources.

Additional Readings and Resources:

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 63-67.

How British Immigrants Shaped the United States We Know Today
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cesu4vTeGY4&t=83s>

The History of Irish Immigrants Around the World, Thomas Sowell TV.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvBDYwMa7ss>

Hackett Fischer, David. *Albion's Seed*. Oxford University Press, 1989.

Novak Michael. *Unmeltable Ethnics*. 2nd ed. Transaction, 1996.

Kleppner, Paul. *The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892: Parties, Voters, and Political Cultures*. University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Frankel, Garion. "Old Kinderhook and Civic Integration in America," *The Independent Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Summer 2024): 5-30. <https://www.independent.org/publications/tir/article.asp?id=1976>

Glazer, Nathan, and Daniel P. Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. M.I.T. Press, 1963.

Kleppner, Paul. *The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850–1900*. The Free Press, 1970.

Jensen, Richard. "Religion, Morality, and American Politics." *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 6, No. 3 (1982): 321–332. <https://mises.org/journal-libertarian-studies/religion-morality-and-american-politics>

Kleppner, Paul. "Religion, Politics, and the American Polity: A Dynamic View of Relationships." *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 6, No. 3 (1982): 349–358. <https://mises.org/journal-libertarian-studies/religion-politics-and-american-polity-dynamic-view-relationships>

Sibley, Joel H. "Let the People See": Reflections on Ethnoreligious Forces in American Politics. *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 6, No. 3 (1982): 333–347. <https://mises.org/journal-libertarian-studies/let-people-see-reflections-ethnoreligious-forces-american-politics>

Marks, Gary, and Seymour Martin Lipset. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. Chapter Four: "Immigrants and Socialism: Double-Edged Effects."

[NYTN: How Irish Americans became White: finding your roots](#)

NOTE TO EDUCATORS REGARDING THE ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES:

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Support Ethnic Studies 7B: White and Irish, Slavic, German, Italian, Middle Eastern and North African Americans

Waves of Immigration by Country (push/pull factors for immigration)	Major Religions	Nativist Reactions in the U.S. and difficulties
Russia		Reaction to Slavs:
Ukraine		
Belarus		
Poland		
Czech Republic		
Slovakia		
Slovenia		
Croatia		
Bosnia		
Serbia		
Montenegro		
North Macedonia		
Albania		
Bulgaria		
Scots-Irish Ireland		
Eastern European Jews		
Germany		
Italy Sicily		
Middle Eastern and North African Countries (MENA)		Reactions to MENA:

Ethnic Studies Lesson 7C: White and Slavic Americans

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity
- 2) History and Movement

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)
- 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)

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (RI.11-12.1)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Investigate the push factors leading to Slavic immigration to the United States, including economic opportunities, religious persecution, and political unrest. (11.2, 8.6)

Evaluate the impact of Slavic immigration on American society and culture, considering its contributions to labor markets, ethnic communities, and cultural diversity. (11.3)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will investigate the push and pull factors of Slavic immigration to the US and the nativist reaction.

Essential Questions:

What were the push and pull factors of Slavic immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?
How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?

Materials:

[Who are the Slavs?](#)

7B: Support Worksheet for lessons 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F

[Migration Policy Institute: European Immigrants in the United States](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

Slavic	Orthodox	xenophobia
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, ask students what they know about what countries Slavic Americans come from. Have students watch, [Who are the Slavs?](#) (video 7 minutes, 10 seconds), then have them take notes on 7B: Support Worksheet from the previous lesson. Have students take notes on the religion column. Stop the video frequently for students to take notes.

When the video is complete, have students share their notes. Have students make a prediction about nativist reactions to Slavic immigration.

- **Step 2:** Form students into 4 groups. As students read, have them take notes on the worksheet for push and pull immigration factors as well as nativist reactions by country or region (region names have changed over the last 200 years.) Some of the readings may overlap with other groups. Some Slavic countries may not be mentioned and some immigrants may be classified by religion rather than one country or multiple countries.

- [Library of Congress: Russian Beginnings](#)
- [Library of Congress: Soviet Exiles](#)
- [Library of Congress: The Nation of Polonia](#)
- [Library of Congress: A People at Risk—Easter European Jews](#) and [Library of Congress: The Lower East Side](#)

When groups have completed their research, have them share their notes on the worksheet with the class.

- **Step 3:** As a class, use a group reading strategy such as round robin or popcorn to read the section of ‘Subregions and Countries of Origin’ midway down the page on [Migration Policy Institute: European Immigrants in the United States](#). As students read, have them take notes on the worksheet on modern pushes and pulls for Slavic immigration.

When students have completed the reading, have them pair with another student to check their notes. As a class, have the pairs share their notes on the worksheet with the class.

- **Step 4:** As a class, ask students this lesson’s questions, “What were the push and pull factors of Slavic immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?” and this unit’s question, “How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 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 NYTN: [How Polish Immigrants became white](#) (video 11 minutes, 52 seconds). As students watch the video, students should take notes on the stereotypes that were attributed to Polish immigrants. Student notes should help them answer the question, “Where did

Polish American stereotypes come from and how did they lead to xenophobia in the U.S.?" Students should write a long paragraph and be careful to cite their sources.

Additional Readings and Resources:

Bernstein, David E. *Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America*. Bombardier, 2022.

Marks, Gary, and Seymour Martin Lipset. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. Chapter Four: "Immigrants and Socialism: Double-Edged Effects."

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 3-98.

Sowell, Thomas, [The Hidden Connections Between Geography and Slavs' Enslavement: Thomas Sowell TV](#)

Thomas Sowell, Why Poland Has A Complicated History, Thomas Sowell TV, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcBW-Y1NUT8>

Novak Michael. *Unmeltable Ethnics*. 2nd ed. Transaction, 1996.

[How Polish Immigrants became white](#)

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Ethnic Studies Lesson 7D: White and German Americans

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity
- 2) History and Movement

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)

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment:

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

Reading: Informational Text (RI.11-12)

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (RI.11-12.1)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Investigate the push factors driving German immigration to the United States, including economic opportunities, political instability, and religious freedom. (10.3, 10.7, 10.8)

Examine the nativist reaction to German immigrants in the United States, including xenophobia, anti-German sentiment, and the rise of nativist organizations. (11.7)

Evaluate the impact of German immigration on American society and culture, considering its contributions to agriculture, industry, and the development of ethnic communities. (11.3)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will investigate the push and pull factors of German immigration to the US and the nativist reaction.

Essential Questions:

What were the push and pull factors of German immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?

How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?

Materials:

[NBC News: German Immigration](#)

7B: Support Worksheet for lessons 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F

[Library of Congress: The Call of Tolerance](#)

[Library of Congress: Building a New Nation](#)

[Library of Congress: A New Surge of Growth](#)

[Library of Congress: Filling the Nation's Breadbasket](#) and [Library of Congress: Urban Germans](#)

[Library of Congress: Building Institutions, Shaping Tastes](#)

[American Experience: Anti-German Sentiment](#)

[Library of Congress: Shadows of War](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

Germanic	World War I	xenophobia
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, ask students what they know about German American immigration. Have students watch [NBC News: German Immigration](#) (video 2 minutes, 22 seconds). As students watch, they should take notes on the push and pull factors of German immigration. When the video is complete, as a class, have the students share their comments and note them on the 7B: Support Worksheet from the previous lesson.
- **Step 2:** Form students into five groups. As students read, they should create a poster with major movements of German immigration and their difficulties and nativist responses. Students should be careful to cite their sources and should include their notes for pushes/pulls and nativist reactions/difficulties on the worksheet.
 - [Library of Congress: The Call of Tolerance](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Building a New Nation](#)
 - [Library of Congress: A New Surge of Growth](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Filling the Nation's Breadbasket](#) and [Library of Congress: Urban Germans](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Building Institutions, Shaping Tastes](#)

When student groups have completed their posters, have students tour the room gallery style and put their questions on sticky notes that are placed on the posters. As a class, have students present their posters.

- **Step 3:** Let students know that even though German Americans had experienced some influence in American culture prior to World War I, German Americans experienced wide-scale discrimination during World War I. Have the class watch, [American Experience: Anti-German Sentiment](#) (video 2 minutes 52 seconds). As they watch the video, students should take notes on nativist responses to German Americans during World War I. As a class, when the video is complete, have students share their notes and add them to the worksheet.

As a class, use a group reading strategy such as round robin or popcorn to read [Library of Congress: Shadows of War](#). As students read, they should take notes on why the nativist reaction to German Americans during World War II might have been different than during World War I. When the reading is complete, have students share their notes.

- **Step 4:** As a class, ask students this lesson's questions, "What were the push and pull factors of German immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?" and this unit's question, "How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 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 [NYTN: German Immigrants: not White and not wanted](#). (video 11 minutes, 33 seconds). As students watch the video, students should take notes on the stereotypes that were attributed to German immigrants. Student notes should help them answer the question, "Where did German American stereotypes come from and how did they lead to xenophobia in the U.S.?" Students should write a long paragraph and be careful to cite their sources.

Additional Readings and Resources:

DeWitt, Petra. *Degrees of Allegiance: Harassment and Loyalty in Missouri's German-American Community during World War I*. University of Illinois Press, 2012.

Kleppner, Paul. *The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892: Parties, Voters, and Political Cultures*. University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Kleppner, Paul. *The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850–1900*. The Free Press, 1970.

Jensen, Richard. "Religion, Morality, and American Politics." *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 6, No. 3 (1982): 321–332. <https://mises.org/journal-libertarian-studies/religion-morality-and-american-politics>

Kleppner, Paul. "Religion, Politics, and the American Polity: A Dynamic View of Relationships." *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 6, No. 3 (1982): 349–358. <https://mises.org/journal-libertarian-studies/religion-politics-and-american-polity-dynamic-view-relationships>

Sibley, Joel H. "Let the People See": Reflections on Ethnoreligious Forces in American Politics. *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 6, No. 3 (1982): 333–347. <https://mises.org/journal-libertarian-studies/let-people-see-reflections-ethnoreligious-forces-american-politics>

Marks, Gary, and Seymour Martin Lipset. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. Chapter Four: "Immigrants and Socialism: Double-Edged Effects."

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. Germans and History, in Sowell, Thomas, *Black Rednecks and White Liberals*. Encounter Books, 2005, pp. 171-201.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 3-98.

Sowell, Thomas. *Migrations And Cultures: A World View*. Basic Books, 1996. Chap. 2.

Thomas Sowell, Germans Around the World, Thomas Sowell TV

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-birN_CExrI&t=43s

Thomas Sowell, How Germans Reshaped Modern America, Thomas Sowell TV.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mm6ESRtHUTA>

[The Surprising Contributions of Germans Throughout History | Thomas Sowell](#), Thomas Sowell TV.

[Unique Ways in Which German Immigrants Preserved Their Culture Around the World | Thomas Sowell](#), Thomas Sowell TV.

[Facts about Germans Never Taught in School | Thomas Sowell](#), Thomas Sowell TV.

Trefousse, Hans L. *Carl Schurz: A Biography (The North's Civil War)*. Fordham University Press. 2nd ed. 1998.

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Ethnic Studies Lesson 7E: White and Italian Americans

TOPICS:

WHITE 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

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. 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)

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (RI.11-12.1)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards—(Grades 9-12)

Investigate the push factors driving Italian immigration to the United States, including economic opportunities, political instability, and social changes. (11.2)

Examine the nativist reaction to Italian immigrants in the United States, including xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiment, and discriminatory laws and policies. (11.7)

Evaluate the impact of Italian immigration on American society and culture, considering its contributions to the labor force, cuisine, and urban development. (11.3)

Lesson Purpose

Students will investigate the push and pull factors of Italian immigration to the US and the nativist reaction.

Essential Questions

What were the push and pull factors of Italian immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?

How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?

Materials

[PBS: The Italian Americans, Birds of Passage](#)

[WORKSHEET](#) for lessons 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F

[Library of Congress: Early Arrivals](#)

[Library of Congress: The Great Arrival](#)

[Library of Congress: Ellis Island](#)

[Library of Congress: A City of Villages](#)

[Library of Congress: Tenements and Toil](#)

[Library of Congress: Working Across the Country](#)

[Library of Congress: Under Attack](#)

[Library of Congress: A Century in the Spotlight](#)

[Italian American Museum of Los Angeles: Recognizing Bias](#)

[Italy Segreta: 8 Sicilian Secrets, Stereotypes and Missteps from the White Lotus S. 2](#)

[WWTV, The 1891 Lynching of 11 Italian-Americans in New Orleans](#)

[Unit 7 KWL Chart](#)

Vocabulary

Sicily

Mafia

Lesson Steps

Step 1:

- As a class, ask students what they know about Italian American immigration. Have students watch [PBS: The Italian Americans, Birds of Passage](#) (video 9 minutes, 30 seconds). As students watch, they should take notes on the push and pull factors of Italian immigration. When the video is complete, as a class, have the students share their comments and note them on the [WORKSHEET](#) from the previous lesson.

Step 2:

- Break the students into eight groups. As students read, they should take notes on the push/pull factors and the nativist reactions/difficulties in order to create a poster. Students should also add push/pull factors and nativist reactions/difficulties to the shared [WORKSHEET](#).
 - [Library of Congress: Early Arrivals](#)
 - [Library of Congress: The Great Arrival](#)

- [Library of Congress: Ellis Island](#)
 - [Library of Congress: A City of Villages](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Tenements and Toil](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Working Across the Country](#)
 - [Library of Congress: Under Attack](#)
 - [Library of Congress: A Century in the Spotlight](#)
- When students have completed their posters, have students walk the room gallery style and put their questions on sticky notes that are placed on the posters. Have student groups present their posters and answer questions.

Step 3:

- Ask students what they know about Sicilian Americans. Did they notice that Italians often differentiate between Northern Italians of the mainland and Southern Italians from Sicily? Use a group reading strategy such as round robin or popcorn to read [Italian American Museum of Los Angeles: Recognizing Bias](#) (pages 6 and 7). As students read, have them take notes on the stereotypes that have been attributed to Southern Italians.
- Before students share their notes, ask students if they believe that current American shows continue Sicilian stereotypes. As a class, use a group reading strategy to read [Italy Segreta: 8 Sicilian Secrets, Stereotypes and Missteps from the White Lotus S. 2.](#) (read the Paragraph “the Inevitability of Sicilian Stereotypes halfway down the page). As students read, they should continue to take notes on the stereotypes that have been attributed to Southern Italians.
- When students have completed reading, have them pair up to discuss their notes. As a class, have pairs of students share their notes. Let students know that although stereotypes may seem like they have no consequences, that the anti-Italian sentiment at the beginning of the 20th century often resulted in violence towards Italians. Have students watch [WWTV, The 1891 lynching of 11 Italian-Americans in New Orleans](#) (video 1 minute, 40 seconds). As students watch, ask them to take notes on how the Italian government got involved in American prejudice. When students have finished watching, as a class, have students share their notes and add any new information to the WORKSHEET.

Step 4:

- As a class, ask students this lesson’s questions, “What were the push and pull factors of Italian immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?” and this unit’s question, “How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 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 [NYTN: Finding Your Roots: How Italians Became White](#) (video 12 minutes, 6 seconds). As students watch the video, students should take notes on the stereotypes that were attributed to Italian immigrants. Student notes should help them answer the question, “Where did Italian American stereotypes come from and how did they lead to xenophobia in the U.S.?” Students should write a long paragraph and be careful to cite their sources.

Additional Readings and Resources

Barzini, Luigi, Jr., *From Caesar to the Mafia: Persons, Places and Problems in Italian Life*, 2nd ed. Routledge, 2017.

Barzini, Luigi, Jr., *The Italians: A Full-Length Portrait Featuring Their Manners and Morals*, Atheneum, 1964.

WHITE AMERICANS

Bernstein, David E. *Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America*. Bombardier, 2022.

Glazer, Nathan, and Daniel P. Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. M.I.T. Press, 1963.

Marks, Gary, and Seymour Martin Lipset. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. Chapter Four: "Immigrants and Socialism: Double-Edged Effects."

Novak Michael. *Unmeltable Ethnics*. 2nd ed. Transaction, 1996.

Daniel Okrent, *The Guarded Gate: Bigotry, Eugenics, and the Law That Kept Two Generations of Jews, Italians and Other European Immigrants Out of America*, Scribner, 2019.

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 3-98.

Sowell, Thomas, How Italians Fought Their Way to The Top In The United States <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTRN5jNMqL0&t=40s>

Sowell, Thomas. *Migrations and Cultures: A World View*. Basic Books, 1996, chap. 4.

[PBS: The Italian Americans - Becoming Americans](#) (video 52 minutes, 52 seconds).

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 Lesson 7F: White and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) Americans

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity
- 2) History and Movement

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)

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment:

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

Reading: Informational Text (RI.11-12)

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (RI.11-12.1)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Evaluate the impact of Middle Eastern and North African immigration on American society and culture, considering its contributions to various fields such as cuisine, art, and science. (11.3)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will investigate the push and pull factors of Middle Eastern and North African immigration to the US and the nativist reaction.

Essential Questions:

What were the push and pull factors of Middle Eastern and North African immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?

How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?

Materials:

[U.S. Census, 3.5 Million Reported Middle Eastern and North African Descent in 2020](#)

7B: Support Worksheet for lessons 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F

[Middle Eastern and North African Immigrants in the United States](#)

[World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Religion Runs Deep in Middle East](#)

[World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Politicians Exploit Sunni-Shia Divide to Advance Agendas](#)

[World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Kurds Face Historical Oppression Across Region](#)

[World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Humanitarian Crises Prove Extremely Deadly](#) and [Region Home to Millions of Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons](#)

[World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Palestinian Refugees Unable to Return to Former Homes](#)

[ABC News: Islamophobia in America 20 years after 9/11](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

Middle Eastern 9/11	North African refugee	Armenian Genocide
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, ask students what they know about Middle Eastern and North African Americans. The abbreviation MENA is used by the census. As a class, use a group reading strategy to read, [U.S. Census, 3.5 Million Reported Middle Eastern and North African Descent in 2020](#) through Table 1 (approximately 25% down the page). As students read, they should take notes on the push and pull factors of MENA immigration. When the video is complete, as a class, have the students share their comments and note them on the 7B: Support Worksheet from the previous lesson. Also, as a class, find the 10 most populous groups from Table 1 and make a note of them on the worksheet.

As a class, use a group reading method such as round robin or popcorn to read, [Middle Eastern and North African Immigrants in the United States](#) (through Figure 1). As the class reads, have students take notes on the three major waves of MENA immigration. When the reading is completed, have students form pairs to check their notes. As a class, have pairs share their notes and add them to the worksheet. Remind students that Islam is the religion, and Muslim refers to the people who practice that religion.

- **Step 2:** For 5 groups of students in the following groups. As students read, they should take notes in order to create a poster that summarizes their reading. Students should include at least six summary points and answer the question, “What issues in this region could create push factors for immigration?”
 - [World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Religion Runs Deep in Middle East](#)
 - [World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Politicians Exploit Sunni-Shia Divide to Advance Agendas](#)
 - [World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Kurds Face Historical Oppression Across Region](#)
 - [World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Humanitarian Crises Prove Extremely Deadly](#) and [Region Home to Millions of Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons](#)
 - [World 101: Middle East & North Africa: Palestinian Refugees Unable to Return to Former Homes](#)

When students have completed their posters, have the class walk the room gallery style and put their questions on sticky notes that are placed on the posters. As a class, have student groups present their posters, answer questions and add information to the worksheet.

- **Step 3:** Ask students what they know about Islamophobia or discrimination against Muslims or against people from Arab countries. Have students watch, [ABC News: Islamophobia in America 20 years after 9/11](#) (video 7 minutes, 42 seconds). As students watch, they should take notes to answer the question, “Does Islamophobia still exist in the US today?” When students have completed the video, have them pair with another student to check their notes. Have pairs of students share with the class, and add the information to the worksheet.
- **Step 4:** As a class, ask students this lesson’s questions, “*What were the push and pull factors of Middle Eastern and North African immigration to the U.S. and how did nativists react?*” and this unit’s question, “*How has the concept of being white changed in the U.S. over the last 350 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 read, [Armenian American Action Network: Who are the Armenians?](#) and watch [FOX 11 Los Angeles, The History of Armenian Americans in California](#) (video 6 minutes, 4 seconds). As students read and watch the video, students should take notes on the stereotypes that were attributed to Armenian immigrants. Student notes should help them answer the questions, “How did Armenian stereotypes reflect Middle Eastern and North African American stereotypes? Where did they come from and how did they lead to xenophobia in the U.S.?” Students should write a long paragraph and be careful to cite their sources.

Additional Readings and Resources:

Bernstein, David E. *Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America*. Bombardier, 2022.

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 3-98.

Ungor, Ugur, and Mehmet Polatel. *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2011

[TED: What it’s like to be a Muslim in America: Dalia Mogahed](#) (video 16 minutes, 16 seconds).

[Armenian American Action Network: Who are the Armenians?](#) and watch [FOX 11 Los Angeles, The History of Armenian Americans in California](#)

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Ethnic Studies Lesson 7G: White in America and the English

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity
- 2) History and Movement

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)

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment:

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

Reading: Informational Text (RI.11-12)

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. (RI.11-12.1)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Examine the contributions of the English to American culture, language, law, and religion, including their influence on political institutions, common law, and the English language. (7.5, 7.11, 8.1, 8.2, 10.2, 12.1)

Evaluate the lasting impact of English colonization and settlement in America, considering both positive and negative consequences for various groups, including Native Americans, African Americans, and immigrants. (5.4, 10.4)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will research the contributions of the English to American culture, language, law, and religion.

Essential Questions:

How have the English added to American culture, language, law and religion?

Materials:

[The Conversation: Why the idea that the English have a common Anglo-Saxon origin is a myth.](#)

[Open Learn: English in the world: a very brief history of a global language](#)

[Cornell Law School: Magna Carta](#)

[National Archives: Magna Carta Legacy](#)

[UK Parliament: Bill of Rights 1689](#)

[MSNBC: Britain's Dark History of Racism and Brutality](#)

[Library of Congress: Religion and the Founding of the American Republic](#)

[What were the British origins of American constitutionalism?](#)

[How did the rights of Englishmen develop?](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

Anglo-Saxon	English	Magna Carta Bill of Rights Protestant
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, ask students what they know about the term Anglo-Saxon. Using a group reading strategy such as round robin or popcorn, have students read [The Conversation: Why the idea that the English have a common Anglo-Saxon origin is a myth](#). As students read, students should take notes on when the Anglo-Saxons lived and where they were originally from. Students should also ask the question, “What is the most appropriate name for Americans who came from Great Britain?”
- **Step 2:** Ask students what contributions the English have made to American society. Form three student groups. Students will research their area in order to create a poster that includes at least six facts and appropriate citations. Students may have to use other websites to create their poster, but they should cite their work carefully.
 - The English language: [Open Learn: English in the world: a very brief history of a global language](#) (video 3 minutes, 7 seconds)
 - English law and political structure: [Cornell Law School: Magna Carta National Archives: Magna Carta Legacy](#) and [UK Parliament: Bill of Rights 1689](#)
 - Religion: [Library of Congress: Religion and the Founding of the American Republic](#)

When students have finished their research, students should walk the classroom gallery style and leave their questions on sticky notes on the posters. As a class, have student groups present their posters and answer questions.

- **Step 3:** Ask students what they know about Great Britain’s political culture. Have students watch, [What were the British origins of American constitutionalism?](#) (3:14 minutes) and [How did the rights of Englishmen develop?](#) (2:06 minutes). As students watch, have them take notes on the British legal legacy.
- **Step 4:** As a class, ask students this lesson’s question, “How have the English added to American culture, language, law and religion as well as to ideas of political culture?” 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, have students watch, [CNBC: What is the special relationship](#) (4:43 minutes). As students watch, students should take notes on how American and British political life has similarities and differences.

Their notes should also help them answer the questions, “How has a partially shared ethnic and political culture between the British and the U.S. affected the foreign policy of both countries? How is America’s influence both a good thing and a bad thing?” Students should write a long paragraph and cite their sources carefully.

Additional Readings and Resources:

Thomas Sowell, [How the British common law made the difference](#) (2:38 minutes) Thomas Sowell TV.

Hackett Fischer, David. *Albion's Seed*. Oxford University Press, 1989.

[NATO—Official text: 'The Atlantic Charter'—Declaration of Principles issued by the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 14-Aug.](#)

[CNN: Reagan and Thatcher: 'Political soulmates'](#)

[Smithsonian Magazine: The Many Myths of the Term 'Anglo-Saxon'](#)

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14 - 100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, Chapter 2, pages 3-98.

[The Guardian: Britain is not America. But we too are disfigured by deep and pervasive racism](#)

["The White Man's Burden" Summary & Analysis by Rudyard Kipling](#)

Sean McMeekin, Review of [Colossus by Niall Ferguson—Commentary Magazine](#)

[Niall Ferguson - The 2004 TIME 100](#)

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Ethnic Studies Lesson 7H: White in America and Change

Topics: White American History

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

Themes:

- 1) Identity

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)

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment:

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

Reading: Informational Text (RI.11-12)

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence. (RI.11-12.6)

Writing: (W 11-12)

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. (W 11-12.2)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):

History-Social Science Content Standards (Grades 9-12)

Analyze the impact of social movements and reforms on changing societal norms and policies. (11.10)

Analyze the impact of landmark Supreme Court cases and legislation on the advancement of civil rights and liberties. (12.5)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Time: 1 ½ hours

Lesson Purpose:

Students will summarize their understanding of the concept of being white in the US and what ethnic and religious groups have been included in that definition in the past and today.

Essential Questions:

How has the concept of being white changed in the US over the last 350 years?

Materials:

[PBS: What is Racial Passing](#)

[Pew Research Center: Most Americans say the declining share of White people in the U.S. is neither good nor bad for society](#)

7A: Support KWL Chart

Vocabulary:

white passing		
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Lesson Steps:

- **Step 1:** As a class, ask students what they know about ‘white passing.’ Have students watch [PBS: What is Racial Passing?](#) (video 10 minutes, 5 seconds). While students watch, they should take notes on what have been the benefits of claiming white status.

When students have finished watching, have them pair up to check each other’s notes. Have pairs share their notes with the class.

- **Step 2:** Ask students what they have learned about whiteness in America over time. What problems are there in discussing the social construct of whiteness? As a class, use a group reading strategy to read, [Pew Research Center: Most Americans say the declining share of White people in the U.S. is neither good nor bad for society](#) (read the section, *How the U.S. White population has changed over the decades*, about half way down the page. As students read, have them take notes on summarizing this information and theorizing any issues that might come up when talking about this data.

When students have completed their reading, have them join with one other student to discuss their notes. As a class, have pairs share their notes. Help students to see that the categories for ethnicity have changed over time, and they may continue to change through 2030 and 2045. Also, racial mixing has become more common in the US and will probably become even more prevalent by 2030 and 2045. All of these factors make comparisons difficult.

- **Step 3:** Have students read [CBS News: White House releases Census revision to include Middle Eastern or North African category](#). As students read, they should take notes on how this change will impact the way Americans see diversity and white in the US in 2030. When students have finished reading, as a class, have students share their notes.
- **Step 4:** Remind students that their homework assignment for this unit will be completing an essay to address the question, “How has the concept of whiteness changed in the US over the last 350 years?” Post this thesis on the board, “White Americans are the majority in the US and have systematically kept other ethnic groups from obtaining their civil rights.” Ask students to work in pairs to bullet point a rebuttal to that thesis using the information from this unit. Answering the following questions may help students create their bullet items.
 - In what ways is this thesis correct, “White Americans are the majority in the U.S. and have systematically kept other ethnic groups from obtaining their civil rights”?
 - How has the construction and classification of being white changed over time?
 - How have some disadvantaged groups that were white-passing assimilated more quickly into American society and obtained the privileges of white society after a few generations?
 - What percentage of Americans are white and is that category clear?
 - What groups within the white category have had their civil rights limited?
 - What might the percentage of the white population be in the future?

- Who is responsible for ensuring civil rights for ethnic groups?
- What measures of a democratic society can be used to ensure basic civil rights?

Students should include this list of bullet points with their final essay for this unit.

- **Step 5:** As a class, ask students this unit’s question, “*How has the concept of being white changed in the US over the last 350 years?*” Make note of what was learned on this unit’s KWL chart - along with additional questions.

Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection:

Ask students to complete an essay (either five paragraphs or longer) summarizing their learning of “How has the concept of whiteness changed in the U.S. over the last 350 years?” All students should have access to the KWL chart for this unit, and all students should cite the sources of their information accurately. Students can use their pairs list of bullet points from this lesson’s final assignment in the essay, and they should include the list of bullet points in their final submission.

Additional Readings and Resources:

[CNN: Most People Think I’m White](#) (video 3 minutes, 54 seconds) (Some strong language)

Bernstein, David E. *Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America*. Bombardier, 2022.

Hackett Fischer, David. *Albion’s Seed*. Oxford University Press, 1989.

Wilfred Reilly. *Taboo: Ten Facts You Can’t Talk About*. Regnery, 2020, chap. 7.

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, pages 14-100.

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. 1998, pages 3-98.

Sowell, Thomas, *The Poorest People in America Are Whites*, Thomas Sowell TV.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGvn9YedVnU>

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