

# PUSH AND PULL FACTORS OF MIGRATION

## Push Factors

### **Economic factors:**

Lack of employment or low paying employment  
Mechanization of workplace (machines doing the work)  
Natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, droughts, etc.)

### **Social Factors:**

Lack of health care or sanitary conditions  
Lack of equal education  
Loss of family or friends

### **Political Factors:**

Unfair court system  
Not being able to vote  
Fear of one's safety  
No voice in decision making

## Pull Factors

### **Economic Factors:**

Hope for better paying jobs  
Work is not as physically demanding  
More variety in job opportunities  
Fewer natural disasters

### **Social Factors:**

Better health care or living conditions  
Better opportunities for an education  
Gain of family or friends

### **Political Factors:**

To gain civil rights and voting rights  
Desire to feel safe  
Having a voice in decision making

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Push and Pull Factors in Lyrics to Sunny California**

1. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave Texas?
2. What is 1 pull factor that would make the writer want to stay in Texas?
3. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave New Mexico?
4. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave Arizona?
5. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave California?
6. What is 1 pull factor that would make the writer want to stay in California?

Points earned (6pts) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer Key    Push and Pull Factors in Lyrics to Sunny California**

1. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave Texas?  
**Mom is dead. Dad is old.**
2. What is 1 pull factor that would make the writer want to stay in Texas?  
**Sisters, brothers, and friends are there.**
3. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave New Mexico?  
**Work is scarce. Weather is bad.**
4. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave Arizona?  
**House is a rag house.**
5. What is 1 push factor that would make the writer want to leave California?  
**Water is black (or flooding). There are too many homeless.**
6. What is 1 pull factor that would make the writer want to stay in California?  
**Sun always shines. Government provided homes. There is work.**

## Letter Writing Assignment

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment: Think about the information you have read in your textbook, the location of the Dust Bowl region on the US map, the photos you have seen in the two power points and the information given in the song called Sunny California. Incorporate this knowledge into your letter.

**You will pretend it is 1937, and you have moved to California from the Dust Bowl region. You are writing a friendly letter to a family member who lives in New York and knows nothing about your home state or California. Your letter will include:**

To whom are you writing the letter? \_\_\_\_\_

In what state (in the Dust Bowl) area did you live originally? \_\_\_\_\_

Three push factors for leaving the Dust Bowl region:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Three pull factors for going to California:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

A summary statement of whether California is a better place to live than your home state.

Also, your letter needs to include the following:

- \_\_\_ Heading (1 pt)
- \_\_\_ Salutation (greeting) (1 pt)
- \_\_\_ Body (3 push and 3 pull factors) (6 pts)
- \_\_\_ Summary statement of whether California is a better place to live or not (1 pt)
- \_\_\_ Closing and Signature (1 pt)

## **Background for Sunny California By Mary Sullivan**

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/lyrical/songs/california.html>

**Audio can be played at this site.**

The nationwide economic collapse known as the Great Depression touched the lives of every American, but it hit American farmers especially hard. In the 1930s, low crop prices forced tens of thousands of farmers to declare bankruptcy and leave their land. To make matters worse, the southern Great Plains suffered a catastrophic drought, followed by relentless dust storms, and countless families watched their farms literally dry up and blow away.

To escape poverty and unemployment, the survivors of this disaster—now known as the Dust Bowl—joined millions of other farm families in a great migration west to California, where agricultural work still could be found. California was no paradise, however, and the state soon became overcrowded. Many dislocated farmers were forced to live outdoors, where they risked death by starvation, exposure, or disease. The U.S. government responded quickly to the crisis and established a system of migratory labor camps to provide safe, clean havens for homeless families.

In addition to serving as a refuge, however, the camp system also became the catalyst of a great cultural exchange. As they gathered in the camps, migrant families from the Appalachian Mountains, the deep South, and the desert Southwest all shared their musical traditions, as well as writing raw, original songs based on the hard times they endured during the migration. This rich new mixture of regional styles influenced many of the country and blues performers of the mid-20th century and helped form the foundation for much of the popular music we hear today.

Mary Sullivan, a farmer from Texas, wrote "Sunny California" about the hardships she endured during the long, dangerous journey west, and was recorded singing her song in a government camp in California. As you listen to the song, think about the different emotions that Sullivan communicates in her song and in her performance. You might also ask yourself if this very personal song reminds you of any music that you listen to now.