



# From the Dust Bowl to Sunny California

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**Grade Level** 7  
**Duration** 3 class periods

## National Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Element 4: Human Systems

9. The Characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

#### Element 5: Environment and Society

14. How human actions modify the physical environment

15. How physical systems affect human systems

#### Element 6: The Uses of Geography

17. How to apply geography to interpret the past

## AZ Standards

### ELA

#### Reading

##### Key Ideas and Details

7.RI.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

11-12.RI.1 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.

#### Writing

##### Production and Distribution of Writing

7.W.4 and 11-12.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

##### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7.W.9 and 11-12.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

## Arizona Social Science Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### The use of geographic representations and tools helps individuals understand their world.

7.G1.2 Analyze various geographic representations and use geographic tools to explain relationships between the location of places and their environments.

#### Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth's surface.

7.G3.2 Analyze how relationships between humans and environments extend or contract patterns of settlement and movement.

7.G3.4 Evaluate human population and movement may cause conflict or promote cooperation.

### HISTORY

#### Economic, political, and religious ideas and institutions have influenced history and continue to shape the modern world.

7.H3.2 Analyze how economic and political motivations impact people and events.

HS.H3.1 Analyze how societies, leaders, institutions, and organizations respond to societal needs and changes.

#### Patterns of social and political interactions have shaped people, places, and events throughout history and continue to shape the modern world.

7.H4.2 Evaluate the changing patterns of class, ethnic, racial, and gender structures and relations; consider immigration, migration, and social mobility.

## Overview

Where people chose to live is an important factor in understanding the distribution of resources. Many factors can contribute to the decisions for human migration. Push factors can make an area

undesirable and pull factors can make another area desirable. Crisis such as the Great Depression can be a catalyst promoting populations to consider these push/pull factors that can lead to human migrations.

## Purpose

In this lesson students will gain a better understanding of how a lack of economic resources in one region during the Great Depression influenced human migration. And the availability of natural resources in another area created opportunity for employment and economic gain.

## Materials

- Lyrics to Song “Sunny California”
- Background to Sunny California song
- Image Analysis Tool with a Geographic Lens
- Setting the Scene PowerPoint
- Xerox copies of each of the slides in the Setting the Scene Power Point
- Life in California PowerPoint
- Push and Pull Factors of Migration
- Map of the Dust Bowl (See Sources)
- Push and Pull Factors in Lyrics to Sunny California worksheet and Answer Key
- Letter Writing Assignment
- Route 66 PowerPoint (optional)
- Computer and projection device
- Audio-visual Analysis Tool with Geographic Lens

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. describe push and pull factors in terms of the Dust Bowl era
2. analyze how social, political, and economic reasons impact where people choose to live

## Procedures

*Prerequisite Skills: Students should have read the information on the Dust Bowl in their textbooks. The PowerPoint on background to the Dust Bowl can also be used to supplement the textbook for further understanding of this event.*

### SESSION ONE

1. Anticipatory Set: Show the Setting the Stage PowerPoint. Just have the students look at the photos and not interact in any way.
2. Distribute the Image Analysis Tool with a Geographic Lens. Have students select a partner to work with. Explain the directions on how to complete the sheet. Show the PowerPoint again and have partner groups select a photo to analyze. Give

them a Xerox copy of the photo. Partners should complete the analysis tool for one of the photos.

3. Take a few minutes to discuss some of the image analyses done by the pairs.
4. Closure: Have the students look at a map of the region named the Dust Bowl.  
<http://media.maps.com/magellan/Images/okhist4.gif>  
Have them name the states that were affected on the back of their image analysis worksheets.

### SESSION TWO

1. Anticipatory Set: Ask the students who has ever moved to a new city or new state. Ask the students why did they move? List the reasons on the whiteboard.
2. Pass out the Push and Pull Factors of Migration handout. Discuss the 3 types of factors. Now look at the list on the whiteboard and see where each of the class’s contributions would fall (economic, social, or political).
3. Read the background to the Sunny California song and play the audio if possible. Hand out the Sunny California song lyrics. Have the students read aloud the lyrics and discuss any vocabulary that might be unfamiliar.
4. Distribute the Push and Pull Factors in Lyrics to Sunny California worksheet. Have the students complete the worksheet.
5. Closure: Discuss the push and pull factors according to this song.

### SESSION THREE

1. Anticipatory Set: Review with the students what are primary sources. Share with them that the photos from the earlier PowerPoint and the one they will be seeing shortly were taken by Dorothea Lange. These primary sources are a wonderful way to capture the emotion of the time period.
2. Show the Life in California PowerPoint. After each photos, have the students comment on the “pulls” for living in California or “pushes” that would make the traveler regret going to California.
3. Distribute the Letter Writing Assignment and discuss the directions for the assessment. Allow time for students to write their letters.
4. Closure: Have students who finish early draw illustrations for their letters or work on one of the extensions listed in Extensions below.

## Assessment

### Geography and ELA

The Image Analysis Worksheet can be graded for completeness. The Push and Pull Factors in Lyrics

to Sunny California worksheet can be graded using the answer key. The friendly letter can be graded on the scoring guide given at the bottom of the Letter Writing Assignment. Mastery on each of the assignments will be considered 80% or higher.

## Extensions

1. Have the students locate Route 66 from the Dust Bowl areas to California on a US map. Have them research how this migration of people changed towns along the route.
2. Have the students look for other primary source images that evoke emotion from another time period. Do the image analysis worksheet again with these images.
3. Students could create a handbill promoting or deterring migration to California during the Dust Bowl times. A handbill advertising for cotton pickers to migrate to Arizona could be used as a sample.  
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/afc/afcts/images/sb001/0021.jpg>

## Sources

Oklahoma Historical Map: The Dust Bowl 1935-1940 can be found at  
<http://media.maps.com/magellan/Images/okhist4.gif>

Photos in both Power Points were taken by Dorothea Lange <http://memory.loc.gov/>

Sunny California song and its background  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/lyrical/songs/california.html>

Background information from a primary source can be found at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=afcts&fileName=sb001/sb001.db&recNum=30> and <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=afcts&fileName=sb001/sb001.db&recNum=31>. This newspaper article comments on numbers of migrants and why farm laborers could not expect to find full-time employment in California fields.