Ellis Island: Entry to Opportunity

Students learn why Ellis Island is an important symbol of our democracy

<table>
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<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>2 class periods</td>
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**National Geography Standards**

**ELEMENT FOUR: HUMAN SYSTEMS**

10. The characteristics, distribution and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement

**Arizona Geography Strand**

**Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms**

**PO 5.** Construct charts and graphs to display geographic information

**Other Arizona Standards**

**Strand 1: American History**

**Concept 7: Emergence of the Modern United States**

**PO 1.** Discuss reasons (e.g., famine, political discord, religious persecution, economic opportunity) why people left their home country to start a new life in the United States.

**Strand 3: Civics/ Government**

**Concept 1: Foundations of Government**

**PO 1.** Describe national symbols and monuments that represent American democracy and values:

- a. Statue of Liberty
- b. Ellis Island
- c. Lincoln Memorial
- d. the U. S. Capitol

**Mathematics Common Core**

**Measurement and Data.**

3.MD.3. Draw a scaled picture graph and a scaled bar graph to represent a data set with several categories. Solve one- and two-step "how many more" and "how many less" problems using information presented in scaled bar graphs.

**ELA Common Core Standards**

**Writing**

**Production and Distribution of Writing**

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

**AZ.3.W.4**

With guidance and support from adults, produce functional writing (e.g., friendly and formal letters, recipes experiments, notes/messages, labels, graph/tables, procedures, invitations, envelopes) in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
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Overview
From 1892-1924, more than twelve million individuals passed through Ellis Island. It has been estimated that nearly half of all Americans today can trace their family history to someone who passed through the Port of New York at Ellis Island.

Purpose
In this lesson students will learn about the history of Ellis Island and American attitudes toward immigration. Students will look at their own family history and where they fit into patterns of American immigration.

Materials
- Rulers and colored pencils for the graphs
- 1/2 inch graph paper
- Official ELLIS ISLAND Research Project form
- Ellis Island Power Point
- Fact Sheet: Timeline of American Immigration through Ellis Island
- World map
- United States Immigration Data and Graph

Objectives
The student will be able to:
- Describe why Ellis Island is considered an American symbol.
- Construct a graph from family data.
- Complete a simple research interview.

Procedures
Note: Students do not have to have ancestors that passed through Ellis Island to participate in the research portion. While the Research Form has Ellis Island on it, students can report their countries of origin. Ellis Island is just an example of one port of entry for immigrants arriving in America.

Prerequisite Skills: Students should have some experience with making a bar graph.

SESSION ONE
1. Begin the lesson by asking the class if they have heard of Ellis Island. Explain that Ellis Island is an important symbol of the United States, that it is a symbol of our belief in the rights and values of humans. It is also a symbol of how America welcomes immigrants—immigrants who have made America the multi-cultural nation that it is.
2. Ask for a show of hands: “How many of your ancestors came from some other country?” Make a list of countries shared by the students. (It is not expected that all students will respond at this time.)
3. Explain that the class will be doing a simple research project to find out the countries of origin of the students in the class. This information will then be turned into a bar graph that will reflect this data.
4. Show the Ellis Island Power Point (or share the pictures in printed form). Discuss the images as students search for similarities and differences in clothing, hairstyles, etc.
5. Share the graph that has been constructed from US immigration data. According to the graph, where do most Americans come from? (Germany). Where have the fewest Americans immigrants come from? (Africa). Are there any countries on the list that they have never heard of? Locate the countries on a world map.
6. Pass out the Ellis Island Research form. Read over the form and explain that students will become researchers with their families tonight. Students have to ask family members about country(ies) of origin, sign their name to the form, and return it to school the next morning.

SESSION TWO
1. Have students share their countries of origin. Write the countries on the board and use counting marks to keep track of the number of families from each country.
2. Have students organize the data so that it can be interpreted. (greatest number of immigrants to least, or vice versa).
3. Show yesterday’s U.S. Immigration Graph to the class. Help the students decide what unit of measurement will be used on the graph paper. The graph from yesterday used figures in the millions. Would that work for their classroom?
4. Then determine the width of each bar (The more different countries the smaller the bars will be with 1/2 inch being the smallest bar possible.) Then have them decide what labels should be used for the X axis and the Y axis. Perhaps model making several bars with the students.
5. Explain how the graph assignment will be graded. Answer any questions that students might have.
6. Pass out graph paper. Remind students to make sure that each bar on the graph is labeled
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with country names, number of immigrants, measurement units and a title.

7. When students are done, share the Fact Sheet: Timeline of Immigration. This can be done through reading the information to the students or by using the following dipity timeline: http://www.dipity.com/geomom/Immigration-Facts/#timeline/rss  (Be patient, the timeline takes over 5 minutes to load.)

8. Have students identify reasons why people would come to the United States. List the reasons on the whiteboard.

Assessment

For Mathematics and Writing:
The graph will be scored as follows:

Title 10 points
Country names 10 points
Numerical counts 10 points
Accuracy of graph: 30 points
Neatness: 20 points
Math and geography mastery will be considered 80% or higher of the total points.

Social Studies:
In a sentence, students will give one reason (famine, political discord, religious persecution, economic opportunity) why people leave their homelands and come to the U.S. In a second sentence, they will describe how Ellis Island symbolizes a value or symbolizes American democracy (home for immigrants, place of safety, beginning of a new life, chance to be free).

Extensions

Have students map the locations from which their classmates families have originated on a world map.

Sources

History of Ellis Island
http://www.ellisisland.org/genealogy/ellis_island_history.asp

Photo Sources:

Immigrant Families at Ellis Island
Memory.loc.gov

Approved for Entry, These Immigrants Wait in the Ellis Island Railroad Ticket Office

Immigrant Family with Tags, at Ellis Island Circa 1920
National Park Service

Immigrant Children archives.gov

Hungarian Mother and Daughters
National Park Service

Families at Ellis Island
Archives.gov