Overview

Many immigrants came into the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Those coming to the east coast of the United States may have gone through the facilities at Ellis Island (1892-1954). Why would thousands of people come and what would their lives be like in this new land? And how does this past experience compare to present day immigration?

Purpose
Tempest Tossed: Ellis Island

In this lesson, students examine the migration of people to the United States during the time of Ellis Island and the basic economics of their lives as American immigrants. They then will write on “Who had/has it harder? Yesterday’s or Today’s Immigrants.”

Materials
- Tempest Tossed Ellis Island reading and worksheet and Answer Key
- Calculators (optional)
- Transportation and Industry in the US in 1860 map
- Reading a Thematic Map worksheet and Answer Key

Objectives
The student will be able to:
1. Describe financial issues encountered by the immigrants.
2. Explain the implications of the railroad system on centers of industry and population.
3. Use multiplication to solve real world problems.
4. Research information on the Internet and document sources.
5. Write an opinion based on evidence.

Procedures
A recommended lesson prior to this one is Migration: “Push” and “Pull” Factors found at: https://geoalliance.asu.edu/migration This lesson gives students the background on why people migrate.
Also recommended is American Dream found at: https://geoalliance.asu.edu/Dream This lesson gives insight into modern day immigration.

SESSION ONE
1. Introduce the lesson by having students share what they know about Ellis Island. Distribute the Tempest Tossed: Ellis Island reading and worksheet. As a whole group, have the students read Tempest Tossed: Ellis Island reading and discuss any information.
2. Discuss financial solvency during the time period by having students generate a list of items that would need in a new living situation. Then have them focus on the fact that $1.00 in 1900 would be worth about $31.00 today. Discuss the first column of the table on the worksheet. Ask: Does everything seems cheap???
3. Give students a few minutes to determine the “today’s value” in the second column. Then instruct them to use their handheld devices to research and find the costs/wages for the third column. Instruct them to find a middle cost…not the cheapest but not the most expensive since all of these have price ranges. Collect their worksheets.

SESSION TWO
1. Distribute the Transportation and Industry in the US in 1860 map. Have the students work with a partner and answer the questions on the Reading a Thematic Map worksheet. Collect the worksheets and discuss how industry and transportation work hand-in-hand to provide economic benefits for a country. Then have them share how immigration works into this system (labor force).
2. Assign the following opinion paper: “Who Had/Has It Harder? Immigrants of the Past or Today’s Immigrants? Set the parameters for the paper (length, citations, validation of credible sources, etc.). Note: If you feel your students need more information about modern day immigration, complete the lesson American Dream https://geoalliance.asu.edu/Dream and then do the writing assignment.

Assessment
Mathematics
The table on the Tempest Tossed: Ellis Island worksheet can be graded for accuracy and completeness. Mastery will be considered 80% or higher.

Geography and ELA
The Reading a Thematic Map can be graded for correct answers. Mastery will be considered 80% or higher.

The opinion writing can be graded based on the criteria you set for length, credible sources, etc., or you can use the 6 Traits Writing Rubric in the area of Ideas and Content. Mastery will be considered a 4 or higher on the rubric.

Extensions
Have students set up a complete budget based on current costs to determine what kind of financial resources an immigrant must have to come to and live in America.

Sources
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tempest Tossed: Ellis Island</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>A special thanks to Kay McClain, Vanderbilt University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explorations in Iowa History Project; Malcolm Price Laboratory School University of Northern Iowa</td>
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<td>Immigration in the United States <a href="http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1999/3/99.03.01.x.html">http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1999/3/99.03.01.x.html</a></td>
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