



Curriculum Connections

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Huddled Mass or Second Class?

Challenging Anti-Immigrant Bias in the U.S.

ADL®

In This Issue

Remember that when you say “I will have none of this exile and this stranger for his face is not like my face and his speech is strange,” you have denied America with that word. —Stephen Vincent Benét

When these words were published in 1943, the Alien Registration Act required the registration and fingerprinting of all immigrants to the U.S., President Franklin D. Roosevelt had recently authorized the transfer of Japanese Americans (including native born and U.S. citizens) to internment camps and the new Bracero Program—later described as a system of “legalized slavery”—brought tens of thousands of temporary agricultural workers to the U.S.

“We learn from history that we learn nothing from history,” wrote George Bernard Shaw. Following September 11th, a “Special Registration” program was established that required male immigrants over the age of sixteen from designated countries—mostly in the Middle East and South Asia—to be fingerprinted, photographed and interviewed. Since that time, thousands of immigrants have been detained and deprived of basic civil liberties, and many thousands of others have been systematically exploited under a guestworker system that the Migration Policy Institute calls “today’s version of bonded labor.”

The criminalization of immigrants in our laws and justice system has contributed to the mainstreaming of anti-immigrant fear and bias. Xenophobic rhetoric is a mainstay of today’s cable news and talk-radio outlets. Vigilante groups cloaked in patriotism stir up panic with claims of “hordes of invaders” spreading crime and disease. And communities across the nation have introduced “quality of life” campaigns that demonize the mostly Latina/o day laborers and migrant workers on which our economy has come to depend. The climate of bias and hostility in the broader society filters down to our schools and impacts the ways in which young people view and interact with their peers from different countries and cultures.

In response, this edition of *Curriculum Connections* helps students to build empathy and understanding for the experiences of immigrants, appreciate the integral role that immigrants have always played in U.S. life, heighten their awareness about the negative effects of anti-immigrant bias and challenge discrimination on personal and institutional levels.

George Bernard Shaw may have been cynical about our capacity to learn from history, but he also said that “we are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future.” Teaching today’s children to see beyond anti-foreign stereotypes and to look at our nation’s immigration challenges in thoughtful ways is a certain way to build a better tomorrow.

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Correlation of Lessons to Common Core Standards

Content Area/Standard	Elementary School Lesson	Middle School Lesson	High School Lesson
Reading			
R.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	X	X	X
R.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	X	X	X
R.3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.			X
R.4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	X	X	X
R.5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.			X
R.6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	X	X	X
R.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	X	X	X
R.9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.			X
R.10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.			X
Writing			
W.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.			X
W.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.			X
W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.	X	X	X
W.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	X		X
W.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	X		X
W.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.	X		

Content Area/Standard	Elementary School Lesson	Middle School Lesson	High School Lesson
W.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.			X
Speaking and Listening			
SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	X	X	X
SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	X	X	X
SL.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.			X
SL.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	X		X
SL.5: Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.		X	X
Language			
L.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.			X
L.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.	X	X	X
L.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.			X
L.6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.	X	X	X

Elementary School Lesson

“What is it Like to be an Outsider?”: Building Empathy for the Experiences of Immigrants

Rationale

This lesson helps students to build empathy and understanding for the experiences of immigrants in the U.S. Through stories, reflective writing and research on the influence that immigrants have had on U.S. culture, students heighten their awareness about the negative effects of anti-immigrant bias and the integral role that immigrants have always played in U.S. life.

Objectives

- Students will increase empathy for immigrants and others who are treated as “outsiders” in their community.
- Students will learn about the history of immigration to the U.S.
- Students will explore the negative impact of anti-immigrant stereotypes and bias
- Students will research the contributions of immigrants to the U.S.

Age Range

Grades 3–5

Time

2–3 hours or 3 class periods plus time for research

Requirements

Handouts and Resources:

- [You Have to Live in Somebody Else’s Country to Understand](#) (one per student or one large copy to post)
- [Native Americans](#) (one per small group)
- [A Nation of Immigrants](#) (one per small group)
- [One Nation, Many Languages](#) (one per small group)
- [Gifts from Many Lands](#) (one per small group)
- [Contributions of Native Americans and Immigrants](#) (one per small group)

Other Material:

- Chart paper, markers, large world map, small *Post-it*® Notes pad or pushpins

Advanced Preparation

- Reproduce handouts as directed above.
- (Optional) Instead of photocopying, chart the poem, “[You Have to Live in Somebody Else’s Country to Understand](#).”
- Make enough copies of the [Native Americans](#), [A Nation of Immigrants](#), [One Nation, Many Languages](#), [Gifts from Many Lands](#) and [Contributions of Native Americans and Immigrants](#) handouts so that each student in an assigned group receives a copy (see Part III #2).
- Obtain a copy of the English and Spanish versions of [Who Belongs Here?/¿Quien Es de Aqui?](#) by Margy Burns Knight (Tilbury House Publishers, 2003, 30 pages, grades 2–5).

Key Words

Bias
Cambodia
“Chink”
Descendent
Discrimination
Ellis Island
Empathy
Famine
“Gook”
Immigrant
Immigration
Native American
Outsider
Prejudice
Refugee
Stereotype

Techniques and Skills

brainstorming, connecting past to present, cooperative group work, critical thinking, forming opinions, historical understanding, large and small group discussion, reading skills, research skills, social action, using the Internet, writing skills

Procedures

Part I: Building Empathy for “Outsiders” (45–60 minutes plus time to write story/poem)

1. Prior to the lesson, obtain a copy of both the English and Spanish versions of the book, [Who Belongs Here?/¿Quien Es de Aqui?](#) by Margy Burns Knight

Summary: Nary, a young boy fleeing war-torn Cambodia for the safety of the U.S., is viewed by some of his new classmates as a “chink” who should go back where he belongs. But what if everyone whose family came from another place was forced to return to his or her homeland? Who would be left? This story teaches compassion for recent immigrants while sharing the history of immigration in the U.S. and some of the important contributions made by past immigrants.

2. Tell students that you are going to read a story aloud, and that for homework you would like them to write a summary of the story in their own words and a letter to the main character, Nary, describing how they felt as they heard about Nary’s experiences. Begin reading [¿Quien Es de Aqui?](#) (the Spanish version only) aloud to the class. Read several pages and pause to ask students if they have any questions about the story so far and if they feel prepared to complete the homework assignment.

NOTE: Read just enough to make students feel a little uncomfortable; the goal is for students to experience what it might feel like to be a newcomer to a country where they don’t understand the language. If [¿Quien Es de Aqui?](#) is not available or if many of your students speak Spanish, this exercise can be done with any book written in a language that is unfamiliar to the majority of your students.

3. Presumably many students will express frustration at having to listen and respond to a book that they can’t understand. After students have had a chance to voice their apprehensions, tell them that they don’t actually have to complete the assignment and discuss some of the following questions:
 - How did it feel to sit through a story that you could not understand?
 - What was your reaction when you thought you’d be expected to complete an assignment that you are not capable of doing?
 - What group of people experience situations and feelings like this every day? (If students do not use the term immigrants, introduce and define it.)
 - How do you think it would feel to move to a place where you do not understand the language or the customs?
 - Have you ever observed immigrants being teased or treated differently because of where they come from? Describe what you have observed.
4. Tell students that you’d like to read a poem together written by a ninth grade student, an immigrant from Cambodia who expresses what it feels like to be an outsider. Post or distribute copies of the poem, [You Have to Live in Somebody Else’s Country to Understand](#) by Noy Chou. Ask for volunteers to read each stanza aloud. Discuss the following questions:
 - What is it like for Chou to be an outsider from another country, and to look and sound different from the other kids in her new school?
 - What groups or individuals have you noticed are treated like outsiders in our community? How does it affect a person when they are made to feel like an outsider?
 - How do Chou’s new classmates in the U.S. react to her differences? How do they treat her?
 - Is it fair for Chou’s teachers and peers to expect her to keep up with everyone else? What do they think about Chou when she can’t keep up?
 - Why do you think that some of Chou’s classmates bother or make fun of her when she hasn’t done anything to them? Why do some people choose to hurt rather than help immigrants like Chou?
 - Have you learned anything from this poem that will cause you to behave differently in the future?
 - What can we all do to make immigrants like Chou feel welcome and supported in our school or community?

NOTE: The Cambodian name is spoken and written in the order of last name then first name, so Noy Chou should be referred to as Chou when discussing the poem with students.

5. Tell students that most of us have had the experience of feeling like an outsider—or as Chou says, “an opposite” or “a loser”—for one reason or another. Ask students to reflect on a time when they have felt this way, and to write a short story or a poem describing the experience and their feelings. Have students title their poems/stories, “You have to _____ to Understand” (e.g., “You Have to be Adopted to Understand” or “You Have to Have a Disability to Understand”).
 6. When students have completed their writing, ask for several volunteers to share their pieces with the class. Conclude by reinforcing the importance of demonstrating empathy for others and making “outsiders” feel like “insiders” through kindness and friendship.
-

OPTIONAL: If there is not sufficient time in class for this writing task, assign it for homework and do just the sharing/processing part in class.

7. For homework, ask students to find out whether or not their family is originally from the United States and, if not, approximately when they arrived in the U.S. and from what part(s) of the world. For the purposes of this assignment, ask students to trace their family’s history back as many generations as possible.
-

NOTE: Be aware that some children will not know where their family/ancestors are from for a variety of reasons including: their parents have not discussed it with them, the situation may have been difficult, they may be undocumented or they are African American and they may not know what country in Africa their ancestors lived before being forcibly brought to the United States.

Part II: Exploring Who “Belongs” in the U.S. (30–40 minutes)

1. Read aloud the English version of [Who Belongs Here?](#) by Margy Burns Knight and discuss the following questions:
 - Why did Nary and his family leave Cambodia and immigrate to the U.S.?
 - Nary’s grandmother once told him that the U.S. would be “better than heaven.” Did this turn out to be true for Nary? Explain your answer.
 - Why did some of Nary’s classmates call him names and tell him to “get back on the boat and go home where you belong”? Why do they believe Nary does not belong in the U.S.?
 - How did Nary and his teacher help the other students to better understand Nary’s experiences and feelings?
 - In what ways did Nary’s story help you to better understand the experiences of immigrants that you know?
 2. Post a copy of a world map. Tell students that the book they just read asks the question, “Who belongs here?” Ask, “what if everyone whose family came from another place was forced to return to his or her homeland? Who would be left?” Remind students that for homework you asked them to find out where in the world their families originally came from, if not the U.S. Invite students up to the world map to indicate where their families lived before coming to the U.S. using a small sheet of *Post-it*® paper or a push pin.
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NOTE: Students should indicate the place(s) that represent the earliest ancestors about whom they are aware. Encourage students who do not know precise locations to approximate. For example, African-American students who do not know exactly which country their forebears came from can select any spot on the continent of Africa; a Jewish student who only knows that his/her relatives lived somewhere in Eastern Europe before the war can select any spot in that region.

3. Ask students to stand if they did not come up to the world map that is if their family has always lived in the U.S. (Presumably few if any students will stand.) Ask students if all those families who come from someplace else “don’t belong” in the U.S. Ask why some people say that immigrants—like Nary in the story—don’t belong here and should go back where they come from.
4. Emphasize that while every country has to set limits on the number of immigrants who can arrive at any given time, it is never true to say that any particular group—such as Cambodians or Mexicans—don’t belong. Ask students if they know what it is called when someone holds a belief about a whole group of people that assumes that everyone in the group is

the same (e.g., Mexicans are criminals so they should not be allowed in the U.S. or Haitians are lazy so we don't want them in this country).

5. If students do not identify the term stereotype, introduce and define it (the false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way). Ask students why it is important to avoid stereotypes about immigrants and all groups of people (e.g., they are untrue, hurt people's feelings, limit opportunities, lead to prejudice and discrimination, etc.).

Part III: Researching the Influence of Immigrants on U.S. Culture (time will vary)

1. Emphasize that immigrants have always been and still are a central and important part of U.S. life, and that they have shaped the way we live in many ways. Tell students that they will conduct some brief research to further explore the ways in which Native and immigrant groups have influenced U.S. life and culture.
2. Divide the class into five groups and assign each group one of the following topics:
 - Native Americans
 - A Nation of Immigrants
 - One Nation, Many Languages
 - Gifts from Many Lands
 - Contributions of Native Americans and Immigrants

Have each group select a recorder and a reporter. Provide each group with a copy of the appropriate handout and review the directions with them. Allow groups time to research their topics using the classroom/school library and the Internet.

3. When groups have completed their research, reconvene the class and ask the group reporters to share highlights from their group's findings. Conclude by underscoring that the U.S. is a "nation of immigrants," that this is an important part of our history and that prejudice and discrimination against immigrant groups is unacceptable.

Extension Activities

- ➡ In *Who Belongs Here?* the author writes:

"Every year millions of people from all over the world try to come to the U.S. Not all of them are allowed to live here. Since the mid-1800s the government has made laws to keep certain people out of this country. Many people choose to come illegally...Who should be allowed to come to the U.S.? Should anyone be made to leave? If there aren't enough jobs, homes, and food for everyone, how do we decide who gets to live here?"

Have students research some of the past and current U.S. laws regulating immigration. Discuss with students the question of how the government decides who gets to live in the U.S. Have students write their own immigration law that addresses this question and incorporates their ideas about the fairest way to regulate immigration.

- ➡ Assign students to conduct research on activists who have worked to safeguard the rights of immigrants and migrant workers, such as Dolores Huerta and César Chávez. Have students write brief biographies and create dioramas depicting scenes that represent key episodes in the struggle for rights.

You Have to Live in Somebody Else's Country to Understand

By Noy Chou



What is it like to be an outsider?

What is it like to sit in the class where everyone has blond hair and you have black hair?

What is it like when the teacher says, "Whoever wasn't born here raise your hand."

And you are the only one.

Then, when you raise your hand, everybody looks at you and makes fun of you.

You have to live in somebody else's country to understand.

What is it like when the teacher treats you like you've been here all your life?

What is it like when the teacher speaks too fast and you are the only one who can't understand what he or she is saying, and you try to tell him or her to slow down.

Then when you do, everybody says, "If you don't understand, go to a lower class or get lost."

You have to live in somebody else's country to understand.

What is it like when you are an opposite?

When you wear the clothes of your country and they think you are crazy to wear these clothes and you think they are pretty.

You have to live in somebody else's country to understand.

What is it like when you are always a loser?

What is it like when somebody bothers you when you do nothing to them?

You tell them to stop but they tell you that they didn't do anything to you.

Then, when they keep doing it until you can't stand it any longer, you go up to the teacher and tell him or her to tell them to stop bothering you.

They say that they didn't do anything to bother you.



Then the teacher asks the person sitting next to you.

He says, "Yes, she didn't do anything to her" and you have no witness to turn to.

So the teacher thinks you are a liar.

You have to live in somebody else's country to understand.

What is it like when you try to talk and you don't pronounce the words right?

They don't understand you.

They laugh at you but you don't know that they are laughing at you, and you start to laugh with them.

They say, "Are you crazy, laughing at yourself? Go get lost, girl."

You have to live in somebody else's country without a language to understand.

What is it like when you walk in the street and everybody turns around to look at you and you don't know that they are looking at you?

Then, when you find out, you want to hide your face but you don't know where to hide because they are everywhere.

You have to live in somebody else's country to feel it.

Native Americans

In *Who Belongs Here?* by Margy Burns Knight, the author writes: *For at least 10,000 years before [immigrants made the U.S. their home], the U.S. was inhabited by thousands of tribes of native people. Descendants of these tribes live in the U.S. today.*

What Native American Nations still exist in the U.S. today? Where do they live? What can you learn about their culture? **Chart the answers to these questions in the table below.**

Name of Nation	Location	Cultural Facts
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

A Nation of Immigrants

In *Who Belongs Here?* by Margy Burns Knight, the author writes: *In the last five hundred years millions of people have made the U.S. their home. Some came by choice, while others were forced from their homelands by war, slavery, or famine...From 1892 to 1954 more than 12 million immigrants from at least 50 countries arrived on boats at Ellis Island, an immigration station in New York City.*

What are some of the immigrant groups that make up our nation today? How many people from each of these countries live in the U.S.? Why did they leave their homelands? **Chart the answers to these questions in the table below.**

Immigration Group/Country	Number of People in U.S.	Reasons for Immigrating
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

One Nation, Many Languages

In *Who Belongs Here?* by Margy Burns Knight, the author writes: *At least 350 languages are spoken in the U.S. today, and many English-language words come from other languages. Kindergarten is a German word that means children's garden, and Mississippi is a Chippewa word for large river. Jeans became the English word for Gênes, which is the French spelling of Genoa, a city in Italy. The original material for jeans was imported from Genoa.*

What are the main languages spoken in the U.S. today in addition to English? How many people in the U.S. speak those languages? What are some words or expressions from each language that have become a part of our everyday speech? **Chart the answers to these questions in the table below.**

Language	Number of Speakers of Language in U.S.	Common Words/Phrases
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Gifts from Many Lands

In *Who Belongs Here?* by Margy Burns Knight, the author writes: *Peanuts, peppers, corn, squash, and avocados are among America's native foods. Bagels, tortillas, olive oil, curry, potatoes, pretzels, and rice are some of the many foods brought to the U.S. from other countries.*

What other foods or products originate from foreign countries? When and how did they arrive in the U.S.? How are they prepared or used? **Chart the answers to these questions in the table below.**

Products from Other Places	When/How They Arrived	How They are Used
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Contributions of Native Americans and Immigrants

In *Who Belongs Here?* by Margy Burns Knight, the author writes: *Parts of the U.S. Constitution were modeled after the Great Law of Peace, a political system that six nations of Iroquois people developed in the 1500s and used for several hundred years. Representatives of each nation spent long hours talking about ways to build peace and cooperation among their people.*

What are some other contributions from Native Americans or immigrant groups? What person or nation is responsible for the contribution? How has each contribution helped to shape the way we live in the U.S.? **Chart the answers to these questions in the table below.**

Contribution	Who Introduced It?	How It Affects Our Lives
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Middle School Lesson

“They Don’t Know Me”: Exposing the Myths and Establishing the Facts about Immigration

Rationale

This lesson helps students to differentiate the myths from the facts about immigrants and immigration. Students participate in a quiz and analyze a political cartoon in order to better understand how stereotypes and scapegoating are used to marginalize immigrants. They then hear immigrant testimonials, view a video clip and investigate scenarios in order to increase their empathy and develop their skills as allies to targeted individuals and communities.

Objectives

- Students will distinguish myths from facts regarding immigrants and immigration.
- Students will learn how stereotyping and scapegoating marginalizes groups.
- Students will increase their understanding of the impact of anti-immigrant bias.
- Students will identify and practice strategies for being an ally to targeted individuals and groups.

Age Range

Grades 6–8

Time

2 hours or 3 class periods

Requirements

Handouts and Resources:

- [Immigration Quiz](#) (one per student)
- [Bloody Glow-Worms](#) (one to project or one per student)
- [Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration](#) (one per student)
- [Immigration Quiz Answer Key and Myths and Facts Sources](#) (for teacher)
- [Voices of Immigrants](#) (one copy or one per student)
- [Standing Up to Anti-Immigrant Bias Scenarios](#) (for teacher)
- [Being an Ally Worksheet](#) (one per small group)

Other Material:

- Chart paper, markers, scissors
- [What Would You Do?](#) video clip
- Computer, LCD projector, Internet access

Advanced Preparation

- Reproduce handouts as directed above.
- Set up computer/projector/screen (see Part I #2 and Part II #3).
- Decide which *Voices of Immigrants* option to use and prepare as indicated (see Part II #1).
- Cut apart *Standing Up to Anti-Immigrant Bias Scenarios* into individual strips (see Part III #3).

Key Words

9-11
 Ally
 Barrier
 Bias
 Border
 Day laborer
 Discrimination
 Immigrant
 Immigration
 Muslim
 Myth
 Native
 Prejudice
 Refugee
 Scapegoat
 Sikh
 Stereotype
 Terrorism
 Undocumented
 Unemployment
 Wages

Techniques and Skills

analyzing political cartoons, brainstorming, case study, cooperative group work, critical thinking, forming opinions, large and small group discussion, media literacy, reading skills, social action, substantiating factual information, writing skills

Procedures

Part I: Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration (45 minutes)

1. Tell students that they will be exploring the topic of immigration and that, as an introduction to the topic, you'd like them to take a brief true/false quiz. Explain that the purpose is to find out what the class as a whole believes rather than what each individual knows, so they will not need to write their names on the quiz. Distribute the [Immigration Quiz](#) to each student and allow 5–10 minutes for students to work silently. When students are finished, collect the quizzes.

OPTIONAL: Conduct the quiz by asking students to stand along an imaginary continuum for each question. Designate one side of the room as “definitely true,” the other as “definitely false” and the space between as “unsure” but leaning in one direction or another. Read each statement aloud and ask students to stand in the place that reflects their belief. If time allows, ask for volunteers to share why they believe each statement is true or false.

2. Project or distribute the [Bloody Glow-Worms](#) handout to each student. Have a volunteer read the caption aloud and clarify any vocabulary with which students are unfamiliar. Engage students in a discussion using some of the following questions:
 - How do the insects at the front table feel about the glow-worms? Why do they feel this way?
 - What accusations do they make of the glow-worms? Do you think these claims are true?
 - How does this cartoon relate to immigration?
 - What problems do immigrants sometimes get blamed for in our society? What myths or stereotypes are sometimes spread about this population? (**Optional:** List the myths that students come up with on a sheet of chart paper.)
 - What do you think the artist is trying to say through this cartoon?
3. Tell students that the quiz they took earlier contains some myths about immigrants—ideas that many people in society believe are true, but that are actually flawed or just plain wrong. Tell students that they will revisit the quiz to set apart the myths from the facts about immigrants and immigration.
4. Divide the class into small groups of 3–4 students and distribute the [Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration](#) handout to each student. Randomly divide the quizzes completed earlier among each group. Instruct groups to collaboratively mark the quizzes by reading through the *Myths and Facts* handout and searching for the correct answers. Allow about 20 minutes for groups to work.

Refer to the [Immigration Quiz Answer Key](#) as needed.

OPTIONAL: If time is limited or the reading is challenging for students, cut the *Myths and Facts* handout into sections and assign each group to read just one or two of the myths.

5. Reconvene the class and discuss some of the following questions:
 - What surprised you about what you learned from the handout?
 - How did students do overall on the quizzes you marked? Did you find that most students were aware of the facts or did they believe some myths? Which myths in particular?
 - What is a stereotype (*an oversimplified idea about an entire group of people without regard for individual differences*)? How do you think myths or stereotypes about immigrants take hold in our society? Why do people buy into them?
 - What is a scapegoat (*an innocent person or group that is blamed for the general problems of society*)? How and why are immigrants scapegoated in our society?

Part II: Exploring the Impact of Anti-Immigrant Stereotypes (45 minutes)

1. Tell students that you would like them to think about how the myths and stereotypes they just read about can develop into negative behavior, and how this behavior might affect immigrants and all people. Proceed with one of the following options:
 - Divide the class into small groups of 3–5 students. Cut apart the handout, [Voices of Immigrants](#), and give each group several quotes to examine. Instruct groups to discuss how each quote made them feel, and to write down examples of myths, stereotypes and/or scapegoating that are reflected in the immigrants’ experiences.
 - Cut apart the handout, [Voices of Immigrants](#), so that there is one quote on each strip. Ask for volunteers to read aloud each quote one at a time, pausing in between for students to reflect on what they have heard.
 - Provide each student with a copy of the [Voices of Immigrants](#) handout and have them read all of the quotes. Instruct students to select one quote that they are particularly drawn to and to do some free writing in response to the quote. Have a few volunteers read their reflections aloud to the class.
2. After exploring the [Voices of Immigrants](#) quotes, discuss some of the following questions:
 - How do myths and stereotypes shape the way that people treat immigrants?
 - How does this behavior affect immigrants? How does it affect you?
 - Do the experiences described in the quotes reflect what you see and hear in our school or neighborhood? If so, describe what you have noticed.
 - Why do you think certain groups are singled out for negative treatment in our society?
 - What would you do if you heard or observed anti-immigrant remarks or behavior?
3. Tell students that you’d like them to watch a video that follows on the last question—“What would you do?” Explain that in this clip, hidden cameras capture how ordinary people react to prejudice and discrimination against immigrants. Make sure students understand that the immigrants in the video and those who treat them badly are all actors. Tell students that, as they watch, you’d like them to think about what they would do if a similar situation occurred in their school or community. Play [What Would You Do?](#) and discuss some of the following questions after students have viewed the video.
 - Describe the different forms of bias you observed (e.g., demanding that the day laborers speak English; demanding that they leave/take their business elsewhere; ignoring them or acting indifferently; laughing along with the mean comments; making threatening remarks; etc.).
 - What are some of the stereotypes and prejudices that motivated the biased behavior (e.g., immigrants won’t learn English; they’re invading/overflowing our country; they’re different from Americans; they don’t fit into American culture/society; etc.)?
 - How did Mario, the actual day laborer, react to what he observed and how did this make you feel?
 - How did some customers take a stand against the bias (e.g., they challenged biased assumptions; demanded polite behavior; asserted values such as respect for others; showed kindness to the immigrants by ordering/paying for them; threatened to leave/not give future business to the deli; shared their personal background/experiences to lend support; etc.)?
 - What would you do if you observed your peers behaving in a similarly prejudiced or mean way to immigrants in our school or community?
4. What can you do to make sure you never stereotype or scapegoat immigrants or any group of people?

Part III: Being an Ally to Targeted Communities (30 minutes)

1. Write the word, ALLY, on the board or a sheet of chart paper and ask students what it means. Record their responses and make sure that the following basic definition is conveyed:

An ally is someone who speaks out on behalf of someone else or takes actions that are supportive of someone else.

Comment to students that it can sometimes be scary to stand up for others. Ask them what some of the challenges are of being an ally (e.g., peer pressure, fear of being targeted, not wanting to be the only one, not knowing what to say, etc.). List their responses under the definition of ally.

2. Suggest that it takes reflection and practice to be an ally; that we need to think about and even rehearse the words we might use in a difficult situation so that we feel prepared in the moment. Tell students that they will be identifying and practicing strategies for being an ally in response to some made-up scenarios in which immigrants are treated with disrespect.
3. Divide the class into small groups of 3–4 students and have each group select a recorder and a reporter. Provide each group with one scenario from [Standing Up to Anti-Immigrant Bias](#) and the [Being an Ally Worksheet](#). Instruct groups to read and discuss their scenario, and to fill in the worksheet with their thoughts and ideas. Allow about 15 minutes for groups to work.
4. Reconvene the class and have the reporters share highlights from their small group discussions as time allows. Engage the class in a conversation using some of the following questions:
 - What strategies for being an ally did you discuss or hear that never occurred to you before?
 - What strategies did you discuss or hear that you can actually imagine yourself using?
 - Were there strategies that seemed unsafe or uncomfortable to you? Explain.
 - Have you acted as an ally to someone in the past? What happened and how did it feel to stand up against bias or cruelty?
 - What can you do to prepare yourself to act as an ally in the future?

NOTE: Make sure to acknowledge that there are situations in which it may not be safe to stand up to others. Point out that confronting people is only one way to be an ally, and that it is equally helpful to show support in other ways, such as getting assistance from adults, not laughing at biased jokes and showing friendship to the targets of bias and bullying.

Extension Activities

- ➡ Show students political cartoons that depict anti-immigrant sentiment throughout U.S. history. Discuss how such prejudice has been aimed at many immigrant groups who were newcomers to the U.S. Compare historical examples of prejudice to some of the anti-immigrant attitudes that exist today, and discuss strategies for responding to and reducing such bias.
- ➡ Have students collect newspaper and Internet articles that reflect current attitudes about immigrants and immigration reform. Discuss the articles in class and help students to identify changes they would like to see in this country regarding the treatment of immigrants. Work with students to identify strategies for achieving these changes (e.g., letter writing, participating in marches/protests, etc.) and help them to follow through on one or more of these change strategies.

Immigration Quiz

Directions: Read the following statements and indicate whether you think each is true or false by placing a T for true or an F for false on the line before each statement.

- _____ 1. There are more immigrants living in the U.S. today than ever before.
- _____ 2. The number of undocumented immigrants living and working in the U.S. has been increasing over the past ten years.
- _____ 3. Immigrants are less likely than native born U.S. citizens to commit crimes and spend time in jail.
- _____ 4. Immigrants are more likely to start their own businesses than people born in the U.S.
- _____ 5. Immigrants don't pay taxes.
- _____ 6. Undocumented immigrants are able to get most federal benefits like social security and food stamps.
- _____ 7. More women immigrate to the U.S. because they want to have babies to ensure they become citizens.
- _____ 8. Mexico has a higher vaccination rate than the United States.
- _____ 9. Many undocumented immigrants in the U.S. entered the country with lawful documentation and become undocumented because they overstayed their visas.
- _____ 10. Border walls have been proven to greatly reduce illegal immigration.

Bloody Glow-Worms...



“Bloody glow-worms... Coming over here... Hanging out in our dingy bars... Wantonly luminescing... Enticing our youth... Attracting our women... Eating them all...”

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Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration

Myth #1: Immigrants are overrunning our country, and most are here illegally.

The Facts: It is true that there are more immigrants living in the U.S. than ever before. However, the percentage of immigrants in the overall population is not much different than many other times throughout our history. Today immigrants make up approximately 13.5% of the total U.S. population. From 1900 to 1930, immigrants made up between 12% and 15% of the population, and similar spikes occurred in the 1850s and 1880s. During those periods immigrants successfully became part of U.S. society, helping to build the thriving and diverse country we have now, and there is no reason to believe today's immigrants will be any different.

More than sixty percent of immigrants in the United States today have lived here for at least 15 years, and the large majority (76%) of immigrants have lawful status. Of the approximately 43.7 million immigrants in the U.S. in 2016, 20.2 million (approximately 44.7 percent) were naturalized citizens. Together, lawful permanent residents (sometimes referred to as green card holders), people in the United States on temporary visas including student and work visas, refugees and people seeking asylum, and undocumented immigrants made up the remaining 55.3 percent of immigrants.

In 2016, there were 10.7 million undocumented immigrants living in the U.S., or less than 3.5 percent of the nation's population. This represents a significant decrease (13%) from the 12.2 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. in 2007, and is the lowest total since 2004.

Myth #2: Immigrants bring crime and violence to our cities and towns.

The Facts: Recently, public figures have claimed that immigrants are “killers” and “rapists,” bringing crime to the U.S. Study after study has shown, however, that immigrants—regardless of where they are from, what immigration status they hold, and how much education they have completed—are less likely than native-born citizens to commit crimes or become incarcerated. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, while the overall percentage of immigrants and the number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. both increased sharply between 1990 and 2010, the violent crime rate in the U.S. during that time plummeted 45 percent and the property crime rate dropped by 42 percent. Studies have consistently found that immigrants are less likely to be incarcerated than native-born Americans and that there is a negative correlation between levels of immigration and crime rates. Other studies have in fact found that crime rates are lowest in states with the highest immigration growth rates, and that states with larger shares of undocumented immigrants tend to have lower crime rates than states with smaller shares.

Myth #3: Immigrants hurt our country financially by taking jobs and services without paying taxes.

The Facts: Though some people claim that immigrants are taking job opportunities away from people born in the U.S., immigrants actually help to create new jobs. In addition to buying U.S. and local products, which helps create jobs, immigrants often start their own businesses. In fact, immigrants are twice as likely to start businesses as citizens born in the U.S., and companies owned by immigrants are more likely to hire employees than companies owned by native-born citizens. States with large numbers of immigrants report lower unemployment rates for everyone.

Immigrants collectively pay between \$90 and \$140 billion each year in taxes, and a recent study found that undocumented immigrants alone pay approximately \$11.64 billion in taxes each year. Moreover, undocumented immigrants nationwide pay an estimated 8 percent of their income in state and local taxes (their effective state and local tax rate), which is higher than the effective tax rate of the top 1 percent of all taxpayers in the U.S.

Everyone pays sales taxes on goods they purchase and property taxes on the homes they buy or rent, and more than half of all undocumented immigrant households file income tax returns using Individual Tax Identification Numbers.

Myth #4: Immigrants are coming to the U.S. to obtain welfare and other benefits.

The Facts: Most immigrants who come to this country work hard to take care of their families and themselves. Many studies have shown that on average immigrants pay more in taxes than they receive in benefits, meaning the taxes they pay more than cover the cost of things like public education and healthcare.

With very few exceptions (such as access to medical care for victims of human trafficking), undocumented immigrants are not eligible for federal public benefits such as Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare and food stamps. In addition, most immigrants with lawful status are not entitled to these benefits until they have been in the country for five years or longer. This means that Social Security is often being deducted from immigrants' paychecks but they cannot access those benefits. According to a 2018 study by the CATO Institute, eligible immigrants use 27% fewer benefits relative to U.S. natives of similar incomes and ages.

Myth #5: Immigrants are coming to the U.S. with the express purpose of having babies here.

The Facts: The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution says that "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside." People commonly refer to this right as "birthright citizenship." Some claim that undocumented immigrants come to the U.S. to take advantage of this right. Research consistently shows, however, that the vast majority of immigrants (both with lawful status and those who are undocumented) come to the U.S. for economic opportunity or to flee violence or poverty in their birth countries. Immigration trends—both over the last few decades and throughout history—show that immigration increases when the U.S. economy is booming and it decreases when the U.S. economy is doing less well, supporting the findings that people come for economic opportunity.

If people were coming to the U.S. with the express purpose of having children here, we would expect to see at least the same number of women as men. There are many more young immigrant men coming to the U.S., however, than young women.

Under U.S. law, U.S. citizens cannot petition for a green card for a foreign parent until they turn 21. In the meantime, the parent would have to live as an undocumented immigrant, often in very difficult conditions. When asked why they come to the U.S., undocumented immigrants consistently cite other reasons for migrating, not the desire to have a baby here.

Myth #6: Immigrants are bringing diseases into the U.S.

The Facts: Although people have claimed that undocumented immigrants have brought diseases to the U.S., including measles, hepatitis C, HIV, tuberculosis, and even Ebola, the allegations are not supported. There is no evidence that immigrants have been the source of any modern outbreaks in the U.S. According to the World Health Organization, 113 countries, including many countries in Latin America, have higher vaccination rates for 1-year-olds than the U.S. Mexico, for example, has a 99 percent vaccination rate for measles while Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador have around a 93 percent vaccination rate. The vaccination rate in the U.S., by comparison, is approximately 92 percent. The vast majority of immigrants arriving in the U.S. have been screened for health issues.

Myth #7: Terrorists are infiltrating the U.S. by coming across the border with Mexico.

The Facts: There is no credible evidence that terrorists are entering the U.S. through the border with Mexico. In 2014, the Department of Homeland Security noted that "the suggestion that individuals that have ties to ISIL have been apprehended at the southwest border is categorically false, and not supported by any credible intelligence or facts on the ground." And, according to a more recent report released by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Counterterrorism in 2017, "Counterterrorism cooperation between the Mexican and U.S. governments remained strong. There are no known international terrorist organizations operating in Mexico, no evidence that any terrorist group has targeted U.S. citizens in Mexican territory, and no credible information that any member of a terrorist group has traveled through Mexico to gain access to the United States." In fact, the vast majority of U.S. residents linked to terror since 2002 are U.S. citizens.

Myth #8: All undocumented immigrants sneak across the Mexican border.

The Facts: Although many people commonly think of undocumented immigrants as people who have snuck across the Mexican border, current estimates suggest that somewhere between one third and one half of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. have overstayed their visitor, student or work visas. That means that they entered the U.S. with lawful documentation and only later became undocumented.

Myth #9: We can stop undocumented immigrants coming in the U.S. by building a wall along the border with Mexico.

The Facts: A wall or a fence along the entire border with Mexico would be impractical and very likely ineffective. The border between the U.S. and Mexico is almost 2,000 miles long. It spans difficult terrain, including deserts and mountains. Rivers flow along two thirds of the border. Much of the area is private property, which the government would have to buy from the owners to build a fence or wall, and many do not want to sell the land. The logistics alone make building a wall very difficult, if not impossible.

From the Great Wall of China to the Berlin Wall, history shows us that people find ways to cross walls. Experts predict that a wall along the entire length of the border would lead coyotes—human smugglers who charge migrants high rates to cross the border—to dig tunnels and create breaches. This would increase smuggling prices, making the process simply more lucrative for those exploiting migrants.

As long as there is poverty, violence and persecution in other parts of the world, people will continue to come to the U.S. to seek a better life, no matter how big a wall we build. The U.S. prides itself on being a “nation of immigrants,” and on the values of fairness and equality. It is possible to create a process for addressing immigration that treats immigrants with dignity and respect instead of as criminals.

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Immigration Quiz Answer Key

1. There are more immigrants living in the U.S. today than ever before.
True and False; see Myth #1
2. The number of undocumented immigrants living and working in the U.S. has been increasing over the past ten years.
False; see Myth #1
3. Immigrants are less likely than native born U.S. citizens to commit crimes and spend time in jail.
True; see Myth #2
4. Immigrants are more likely to start their own businesses than people born in the U.S.
True; see Myth #3
5. Immigrants don't pay taxes.
False; see Myth #3 and #4
6. Undocumented immigrants are able to get most federal benefits like social security and food stamps.
False, see Myth #4
7. More women immigrate to the U.S. because they want to have babies to ensure they become citizens.
False; see Myth #5
8. Mexico has a higher vaccination rate than the United States.
True; see Myth #6
9. Many undocumented immigrants in the U.S. entered the country with lawful documentation and become undocumented because they overstayed their visas.
True; see Myth #8
10. Border walls have been proven to greatly reduce illegal immigration.
False; see Myth #9

Voices of Immigrants

“I remember going to school in the U.S. at six or seven—I would cry every day when I first came and always wanted to go back home. I had none of my friends here, and I didn’t understand the language. People also treated me differently because I dressed and acted different and I didn’t speak English.” —Romina, Uzbekistan

“Elementary and middle school were very rough years. I didn’t understand English well. Kids would mess with me. Punch me. They’d tell me to curse at teachers, and I would do it without understanding. Then the school would call my dad, so I’d be punished at school and at home. I got suspended a lot during those years because students would trick me into getting in trouble, and I didn’t know how to defend myself in English.” —Inayet, Afghanistan

“High school was an extremely difficult stage for all of us [brothers]. I remember how hard it was to eat alone in the cafeteria full of your peers. I pretended to read books as I ate, pretended to be okay, and I was horrible at pretending. Each one of my brothers has a story but we rarely told our parents how hard it was for us. We knew our parents did not have it easy either.” —Jeff, Philippines

“This is a great country, don’t get me wrong. But when I started school, I was received with such negativity. I had people walk up to me and say things like, ‘You dumba** of an African, why don’t you go back to where you came from?’ I was shocked, but I was thinking, they don’t know anything about me.” —Neema, Kenya

“One time I was playing in the park, playing basketball by myself, the kids they used to throw stones at me. Brothers, they wouldn’t let me play in the park. And they used to curse at me and tell me, ‘Go back to your country.’ I think what made those people treat me the way they treated me was because they don’t know me, they don’t know anything about my culture.” —Mohammed, Guinea, West Africa

“It was a very slow and awkward process of being ‘Americanized.’ After the first year I became fluent in English, gained the ability to hide most of my accent, shed the FOB [fresh off the boat] look, and eventually became less of a target for scrutiny. My appearance was one of my biggest paranoias. I received a major beating the first week of school by two boys in Metallica t-shirts. They did not like ‘Kmart-wearing Asians.’ To this day I refuse to shop there for clothes.” —Jeff, Philippines

“Terms like discrimination, prejudice, stereotype, I never heard those terms in my country. I learned them here. I remember someone saying that Dominicans in Washington Heights, they are all drug addicts.” —Luincys, Dominican Republic

“If a Muslim is a terrorist, it doesn’t mean that we all are terrorists. That’s totally wrong. That is not—you don’t know me. You don’t know me. If you want, if you want to know me, you got to come up to me and ask me.” —Fatima, Tanzania

“I remember in elementary school, this girl that I met said, ‘Go back where you came from.’ People don’t understand that you would have to go back to a war zone or a refugee camp. Those comments are emotionally painful. I was young and didn’t know how to explain that my country was full of bombing and murders, and occupation by the Soviets. We were the lucky ones to come to the U.S., and we expected Americans to know why we came, but they didn’t know.” —Inayet, Afghanistan

“I have been rejected for different reasons, the worst one being from ignorance about who I am by teachers and classmates. Once I was brave enough to complain to the head of my school. One of my teachers was spreading stereotypes about Moslems and how they shouldn’t come to the U.S. because they cause trouble and don’t fit in. The principal seemed surprised and said he’d talk with the teacher. I felt good being able to speak up for myself.” —Roya, Iran

“I remember when my mother used to tell me, ‘In the U.S. you can find a job on every corner. It’s the only place where everybody is equal; it’s the promised land, mijito.’ Mom, I love you, but that was the biggest lie anybody ever told me. I have

been here four years, and I still don't see the promised land...Nobody tells you about the hard work of an immigrant, and people making fun of your English. You can never get respect if you come from another country. For a person who has graduated from university, it's hard to think you will be working at a restaurant in New York City." —Waiter, Columbia

"It's not easy to talk to the customers. I feel sad when they have a bad attitude talking to me. I am like a slave in their eyes; they think my job is for low level and poor people...I'm here illegally, so there is little chance for me to travel back and see my parents. Now is the time for me to save money and work hard. I feel sorry that I came here to struggle. I don't know what I will do next." —Manicurist, China

Quotes from Romina, Inayet, Jeff and Roya are from Judith M. Blohm and Terri Lapinsky, *Kids Like Me: Voices of the Immigrant Experience* (Boston: Intercultural Press, 2006).

Quotes from the Columbian waiter and Chinese manicurist are from Students of Three New York International High Schools, *Forty-Cent Tip: Stories of New York Immigrant Workers* (New York: Next Generation Press, 2006).

Quotes from Neema, Mohammed, Luincys and Fatima are from *Teen Immigrants: Five American Stories*, PBS In the Mix at www.pbs.org/inthemix/shows/show_teen_immigrants5.html.

Standing Up to Anti-Immigrant Bias Scenarios

1. Jaspreet enrolled at your school after his family moved to the U.S. from India earlier this year. Though Jaspreet's family is Sikh, he is often mistaken for Muslim because he is from South Asia and wears a turban. On the way home from school one day, you observe a group of kids from school throw sticks at him and shout remarks like, "Is your family in ISIS?" and "Go back to Syria."
2. Different groups at your school claim certain spots during lunch. For example, the Latina/o students hang out at the picnic tables, the white students by the basketball court and the African-American students on the grass. One day a student from El Salvador sits with an African-American friend on the grass. Several other students demand that she leave the grassy area, telling her to "Go back to Mexico" and that she's not welcome in this country.
3. Ivo is a Bosnian immigrant who recently moved to the U.S. and knows only a few words of English. You notice that every day at lunch some of the kids in your class invent ways to get Ivo in trouble, and then laugh when he is unable to defend himself. You watch one day as one of your classmates sneaks a cell phone from a girl's bag and plants it in Ivo's backpack. When the girl starts searching for her phone, the other kids point at Ivo and tell the teacher on him. Ivo stares helplessly at the teacher and the other kids shout things like, "Cat got your tongue?" and "We speak English in this country."
4. When the biology teacher tells the class to find a lab partner, the kids quickly pair up and Chun Hei is left sitting alone. When the teacher asks for a volunteer to work with Chun Hei, no one offers. The teacher finally assigns Michele to work with Chun Hei. Michele reluctantly walks over to Chun Hei's station and sits as far away from her as possible. You hear Michele whisper to some neighboring students that Koreans eat dog and it smells like Chun Hei has a dead one in her lunchbag.
5. Jose is one of several students who have been selected as finalists in an essay contest at your school. The winner will receive \$1,000 toward his or her college fund. A couple of classmates tell you that they don't think Jose should be allowed to win, and ask you to go with them to complain to the principal. They tell you that Jose and his family are "illegals" and shouldn't be entitled to scholarship money from a public school. "They'll probably be sent back to their country at some point," says one, "and then they'll have our money instead of a real American."
6. A large number of Liberian refugees have settled in your community over the past few years as the result of a long civil war in that country. Some of the families in your school have complained that the Liberian students are wild, that they steal and are interfering with the education of American students. After several fights break out between Liberian and U.S.-born students, a petition circulates demanding that the school stop taking in Liberian refugees. Some classmates approach you and ask you to sign the petition.

Being an Ally Worksheet

Directions: After reading your *Standing Up to Anti-Bias Immigrant* scenario, discuss the questions below with your group members and record the group's thoughts and ideas.

1. Describe the problem behavior(s).

2. What stereotypes, biases or other beliefs motivated the problem behavior(s)?

3. What actions could you take in the moment to be an ally?

4. What specific words could you use in the moment to be an ally?

5. What actions could you take following the incident to be an ally?

High School Lesson

“Walling Out the Unwanted”: Understanding the Barriers that Perpetuate Anti-Immigrant Bias

Rationale

This lesson increases student awareness about the physical and symbolic barriers that create divides between immigrants and native born residents of the U.S., and engages students in an exploration of the ways in which mainstream discourse on immigration can perpetuate bias and bigotry. Students analyze poetry, blog posts, readings and media clips in order to deepen their understanding of the negative consequences of anti-immigrant language. Students also learn about current legislation related to immigration and ways to take action against anti-immigrant prejudice and discrimination.

Objectives

- Students will analyze poetry in order to better understand immigration issues.
- Students will learn about the U.S.–Mexico border fence and debate the notion of walls as a strategy for limiting illegal immigration.
- Students will explore the language used to discuss immigration in the mainstream media, and increase their media literacy skills.
- Students will increase their awareness about the repercussions of anti-immigrant discourse and bias.
- Students will learn about current legislation related to immigration.
- Students will develop skills to take action against anti-immigrant bias.

Age Range

Grades 10–12

Time

Part I: 60–90 minutes

Part II: 60–90 minutes

Part III: 30–45 minutes plus time for action projects

Requirements

Handouts and Resources:

- [Mending Wall](#) (one per student)
- [A Voice from the Border](#) (one per student)
- [700-Mile Border Fence Between the United States and Mexico](#) (one per student)
- [Walls or Barriers?](#) (one per student)
- [You've Been Framed!](#) (one per student)
- [Media Analysis: The Framing of Immigration](#) (one per small group)
- [Immigration in the Media: Sample Commentary](#) (one per small group)
- [Excerpt from “Who is to Blame for Marcelo Lucero’s Murder?”](#) (one per student)

Other Material:

- Chart paper, markers
- (Optional) Computer, LCD projector, Internet access
- [Mending Wall](#) audio version
- [US-Mexico Border Fence](#) video

Key Words

Alien
Amnesty
Assimilate
Barrier
Bias
Border
Commentary
Comprehensive
Demographic
Demonize
Deportation
Enforcement
First World
Immigrant
Immigration
Immigration reform
Legislation
Mainstream media
Melting pot
Minority
Nativist
Pundit
Scapegoat
Stereotype
Third World
Undocumented
Wedge issue
Xenophobia

- [Codewords of Hate](#) video
- (Optional) [Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration](#)

Advanced Preparation

- Reproduce handouts as directed above.
- Assign Mending Wall for homework (see step #1).
- Prepare computer, projector and screen (optional).
- Label a sheet of chart paper “700-Mile Border Fence Between the United States and Mexico”.
- Cut sheets of chart paper into strips, about 4–6 inches tall, enough for each student to have one strip.

Techniques and Skills

analyzing poetry, brainstorming, case study, cooperative group work, critical thinking, debate, forming opinions, large and small group discussion, media literacy, reading skills, research skills, social action, substantiating factual information, using the Internet, writing skills

Procedures

Part I: “Something there is that doesn't love a wall” (60–90 minutes)

1. **[Homework Assignment]** Prior to the lesson, have students read “[Mending Wall](#)” by Robert Frost for homework. Assign students to think about or respond in writing to one or more of the questions or topics for further study that follow the poem.
2. Begin the lesson by having volunteers read “Mending Wall” aloud or by playing the [audio version](#) of Robert Frost reading his poem. Discuss some of the questions that you assigned students to think or write about for homework.
3. Divide the class into small groups of 3–4 students and provide each student with a copy of “[A Voice from the Border](#)” by Jorge Nunez. Direct groups to read the poem and discuss some of the questions that follow it. Allow about 10 minutes for discussion.
4. Reconvene the class and discuss some of the following questions:
 - How would you compare “Mending Wall” and “A Voice from the Border”? What themes do both poems have in common?
 - A physical wall is the focal point of both poems. What literal or figurative walls might these be symbols for?
 - What does each poem say about the nature of walls?
 - “Mending Wall” was written in 1914 and some have interpreted the poem as a comment on the growing tendency of the U.S. to isolate itself from the rest of the world at the beginning of World War I. What contemporary issue might Nunez be exploring through his poem? What message do you think he is trying to communicate about this issue?
5. Play the video of the [US-Mexico Border Fence](#). Ask students if they know what wall is depicted in the footage. If students do not know, tell them that it is a section of the border fence that separates the U.S. and Mexico. Point out that this is most likely the “huge wall” that Nunez writes about in his poem. Ask students what they know about the wall. Share some of the following facts with them:
 - In 2006 Congress passed the Secure Fence Act, which authorized nearly \$3 billion for 670 miles of fencing stretching from California to Texas, as well as lights, sensors and cameras.
 - The fence is actually several separation barriers designed to prevent illegal movement across the U.S.-Mexico border.
 - The barrier is located on both uninhabited and urban (e.g., San Diego, El Paso) sections of the border.
 - As of 2016, the border between the United States and Mexico has been built to stretch 1,954 miles of fence from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean.
 - According to the Congressional Research Service, the cost of building and maintaining the border fence could be as much as \$49 billion over the expected 25-year life span of the fence.

NOTE: If it is not possible to play the video in class, display or pass around a still photo of the U.S.-Mexico Border Fence; photos are readily available on the Internet.

6. Ask students to reflect on the discussion they had earlier about the two poems and the nature of walls, and to consider whether or not they think the border fence is an effective response to the issue of illegal immigration.
7. Post the chart paper entitled *700-Mile Border Fence Between the United States and Mexico*. Distribute the [handout](#) with the same title and a blank strip of chart paper to each student. Explain that the handout is a blog post taken from the Web site, <http://www.activoteamerica.com>. Direct students to read the blog and then to add their own “Reader Comment” by writing their opinion on the blank strip of paper. Allow about 10 minutes for students to respond and invite them to tape their strips to the master chart as they finish writing.
8. When all of the comments have been posted, ask for several volunteers to read their opinions aloud and lead a class discussion about their responses.
9. For homework, assign students to write a brief essay in response to the quote on the handout, *Walls or Barriers?* Have students read aloud their essays in class as time allows, and discuss the ways in which the U.S.-Mexico border fence creates not just a physical barrier, but also relational barriers between Mexican and U.S. citizens, immigrants and native born residents of the U.S. and other groups of people.

Part II: Analyzing Media for Anti-Immigrant Language and Themes (60–90 minutes)

1. Remind students of the earlier discussion about the ways in which the border fence creates a divide between immigrants and native born residents of the U.S. Ask students for examples of other, non-physical, barriers that may deepen this divide (e.g., laws, policies, prejudices, segregation in housing and schools, language differences, etc.).
2. If students don’t bring it up, ask them how the language we use to discuss immigration and immigrants can create a barrier—or an invisible wall—that promotes distrust of and even prejudice against immigrants.
3. As an example, read the quote below aloud. Tell students that it is from a book by Pat Buchanan, a conservative politician and columnist, who has run for president, written bestselling books and appears regularly on mainstream news programs. Ask students to think about how Buchanan’s language may deepen the divide discussed above.

“Unlike the Ellis Island generations, all of whom came from Europe, those pouring in today come from countries, continents, and cultures whose peoples have never before been assimilated by a First World nation. And they are coming in far greater numbers than any nation has ever absorbed. History has never seen an invasion like this. For there are more illegal aliens in the United States today than all the Irish, Jews and English who ever came, and the total number of immigrants here now almost equals the total number who came in the 350 years from the birth of Jamestown to the inauguration of JFK.”

— From Patrick J. Buchanan, *Day of Reckoning: How Hubris, Ideology, and Greed are Tearing America Apart*.
(New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007): 9.

4. Ask students to share their reactions to the quote and chart their responses. You may want to highlight one or more of the following ideas:
 - The quote makes a distinction between immigrants from Europe and those from non-“First World nations,” and suggests that the latter may not be able to fit in here.
 - The quote describes immigration as an “invasion” and implies that the U.S. is under attack.
 - The quote characterizes some immigrants as “illegal”—and thereby illegitimate—rather than people in search of a better life.
 - The quote conveys panic about the number of immigrants in the U.S. and insinuates that this swelling population will bring ruin to the U.S.

5. Point out to students that the debate over immigration in the U.S. has created ways of talking about and framing the issue that often dehumanize the people whose lives and fates we are debating; and that this language sometimes promotes stereotypes and prejudices against immigrants and those perceived to be “foreign.” Add that no matter what our beliefs are about specific policy issues, it is never acceptable to talk about human beings in stereotypical or demeaning ways.

NOTE: The handout, [Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration](#), can be used as a reference during this part of the lesson to help students distinguish legitimate information from stereotypes and hyperbole.

6. Tell students that they are going to spend some time analyzing articles, book excerpts, ads and other mainstream examples of commentary on the issue of immigration. Explain that the task will be for students to identify the types of language used to frame the issue, and to think about how it may promote stereotypes, bias and unnecessary fear. Use one or both of the following options to set the stage for students:
 - Show the video [Codewords of Hate](#): This 7-minute video, produced by the National Council of La Raza, features an ADL Government and National Affairs representative discussing how some commentators fuel the scapegoating and demonizing of immigrants as part of the national debate over immigration reform. It offers four broad themes, and clips from a variety of news programs that demonstrate these themes.
 - Read the handout [You've Been Framed!](#): Distribute a copy of the handout to each student. Read individually or together as a class, this adaptation of an article by two University of California, Berkeley linguistics professors that looks at the problematic ways in which the immigration debate has been framed by politicians and the media. It discusses five frames that contribute to anti-immigrant bias.
7. After providing the background above, divide the class into small groups of 3–5 students and have each group select a recorder and a reporter. Provide each group with the handout [Media Analysis: The Framing of Immigration](#) and content from [Immigration in the Media: Sample Commentary](#). (If possible, provide each group with one commentary from each of the three categories—Articles/Book Excerpts, Print Ads and Public Service Announcements; if this is too much for your students to manage, limit analysis to just one or two pieces of content.)
8. Tell groups to read/view/listen to and discuss the sample commentaries together, using the questions on the [Media Analysis](#) handout as a guide. Instruct the recorders to take notes on the handout, and tell the reporters to be prepared to share back a few main points to the whole class. Allow about 20 minutes for groups to complete this task.
9. Reconvene the class and have each group’s reporter briefly share two or three key findings from their investigation. After all groups have shared, lead a class discussion using some of the following questions:
 - What themes or patterns did you notice across these commentaries?
 - When did it seem as though reasonable criticisms crossed the line to become unfair or extreme?
 - In what ways is language used in the media to create a barrier or divide among different groups of people?
 - How does this language lead to stereotypes and prejudice? What are other consequences of this type of language?
 - How can you protect yourself from the influences of extreme language, and how should you respond when you hear it?

Part III: Understanding the Repercussions of Anti-Immigrant Bias and Taking Action Against It (30–45 minutes plus time for action projects)

1. Ask students why they should be concerned about anti-immigrant language and bias in the media. Ask what the consequences are of this type of discourse, and how it relates to them and to their communities.
2. Distribute the [Excerpt from “Who is to Blame for Marcelo Lucero’s Murder?”](#) handout to each student. Ask for volunteers to read each paragraph aloud or have students read the article silently to themselves. Discuss some of the following questions:
 - What feelings or reactions came up for you as you listened to/read this article?
 - What do you think motivated the teenage boys to “find a Mexican” to beat up?
 - What is a scapegoat? Do you think Marcelo Lucero was a scapegoat? If so, what factors do you think triggered the teens to target him?
 - What is xenophobia? How does it relate to what happened to Marcelo, and to the issue of immigration in general?

- What is the connection between this hate crime and the way immigration is talked about by politicians and in the media?
 - What is the connection between this hate crime and recent laws that criminalize immigration and immigrants?
3. Comment that incidents like the murder of Marcelo Lucero can leave us feeling angry and helpless. Repeat the following line from the article:

We must all own our part in this crime ... We can legislate and educate the hate away.

Ask students what ordinary community members can do if they feel outraged about anti-immigrant prejudice and discrimination. Chart their ideas (e.g., get informed/educated about the issues, don't laugh at anti-immigrant jokes, join groups that promote acceptance of others, befriend/support immigrants who are new to the community, challenge unjust laws, etc.).

4. Suggest that one way to get involved is to challenge unfair laws and support good ones. Point out that the author of the article discusses whether "elected officials, through legislation and rhetoric, have created a xenophobic climate that breeds hate crimes." Ask students if they are aware of any laws related to immigration, and what community members can do to challenge or support a law. Add their ideas to the chart.
5. Have students conduct research on immigration legislative efforts. They can either investigate past federal efforts on immigration (e.g. Comprehensive Immigration Reform, DREAM Act) or can research whether their state has adopted any number of policies about immigrants (e.g. in-state tuition for undocumented students, driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants, policies that local police will not get involved with federal immigration enforcement). You can also have students learn about comments that their state's Governor has made about refugees. Work with students to implement one or more of their ideas and engage them in advocacy activities around the issue such as: writing letters to local representatives, circulating petitions, organizing a rally or informational event, writing an editorial, or developing a social media campaign to raise awareness.

Mending Wall

By Robert Frost (1874–1963)



Stone wall at Frost's farm in Derry, New Hampshire, which he describes in "Mending Wall." Photo by Craig Michaud / [CC BY 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/).

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,

Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'

Poem from Robert Frost, *The Poetry of Robert Frost: The Collected Poems, Complete and Unabridged*, ed. Edward C. Lathem (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1979), 33.

Questions for Discussion/Writing

1. What does the narrator mean by, "Something there is that doesn't love a wall"? How does the meaning of this phrase change when it is repeated during the last part of the poem?
2. Why is there a wall separating the neighbors' properties? Why do they repair it each spring?
3. What does the narrator mean when he says, "Oh just another kind of out-door game"? Does he think the wall is necessary? What does his neighbor think?
4. The narrator says, "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know / What I was walling in or walling out, / And to whom I was like to give offence." Do you think the builders of the wall thought about these questions? Why or why not?
5. What does the narrator mean when he describes his neighbor as "an old-stone savage armed," who "moves in darkness" and "will not go behind his father's saying"?
6. The neighbor in the poem asserts that "Good fences make good neighbors." What do you think makes a better neighbor, good boundaries or good communication? Why?
7. The wall in the poem is a stone fence between two pieces of property. What other kinds of walls, literal and metaphorical, might this wall be a symbol for?
8. What does the poem suggest about the nature of walls?
9. When have you felt "walled in" or "walled out" in your own life? What caused you to feel this way?

Topics for Further Study/Writing

1. Research a well-known wall in history (e.g., Berlin Wall, Israel/Palestine Security Barrier, Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall, Maginot Line, U.S.-Mexico Border Fence). Write a brief essay answering the following questions: Did this wall make for "good neighbors"? What did the wall accomplish? What problems did it create?
2. Write a poem about a barrier that separates one human being from another.
3. Write a dialogue between two people on different sides of the U.S.-Mexico Border Fence that addresses the themes in *Mending Wall* and that explores the tensions that exist around immigration in our society.

A Voice from the Border

By Jorge Nunez



I stand on an unknown shore,
 It seems as I wash upon it.
 My mind is blurred, I really don't recall what happened.
 Maybe a shipwreck, where I might have fell overboard,
 I stand here on this strange shore.
 It seems out of this world that a huge wall would be
 Running as far as my eyes could see onto the land
 And straight into the ocean water.
 It's a strange place, and for a second I think I'm no longer
 on earth.
 A woman's voice tells me your family your kids
 And your mother
 Can come up to this wall to see you,
 But you can't cross over.
 My thoughts are confused,
 My heart is pounding, I suggest to this woman
 I just want to step on this side for a second.
 She tells me I can't
 They'll call you an alien.
 It feels like I'm dreaming,
 I sit on the sand, my head hanging I look up and stare into
 the sunset
 And try to remember how I got on this side of the wall
 On to this strange soil.

Poem © Jorge Nunez/Youth Radio, <https://youthradio.org/>.

Questions for Discussion/Writing

1. Where do you think the "strange shore" that the narrator washed up onto might be located? How do you think he got there?
2. What do you think the huge wall is that stretches before the narrator?
3. What feeling does the scene evoke? Why do you think the narrator feels that he is "no longer on earth"?
4. Why do you think the narrator is forbidden to cross over the wall, even though his family is on the other side?
5. What explanation does the woman give for this prohibition? Who or what do you think the woman represents?
6. What do you think the wall symbolizes, both literally and figuratively?

700-Mile Border Fence between the United States and Mexico Blog



In an effort to stem the tide of illegal immigration coming up from Mexico, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives passed the “Secure Fence Act of 2006,” which was signed by President Bush. The bill calls for the construction of about 700 miles of fencing along the Mexico-U.S. border. There are already several walls or fences between the two countries, most notably in highly populated areas. However, opponents argue the proposed wall would harm environmentally sensitive areas, hurt the economies of border towns, and is not worth the cost.

Reader Comments:

Build it and they will NOT come.

...

I agree that we need controls. I don't think the fence will completely stop the problem but it will slow it down and allow the border patrol agents some relief. The bill has passed, the money allocated, why hasn't it been implemented?

...

Hey America, let's start curing the PROBLEMS that lie behind the issues, instead of just trying to cure the symptoms. Fences, no matter how big or large won't stop it, bodies of water won't stop it, guns won't even stop it. So WHY is that? Hmm...

...

It's kind of a form of flattery. If I was right next to the Land of Opportunity, I'd want in too. If these immigrants can become law-abiding, tax-paying citizens, then why not? Or if you don't go for that, let's pressure Cuba and Mexico to create more jobs and demand better living conditions in both countries and bring the land of opportunity to them.

...

Go hang out at The Athens Regional emergency room for a few hours any day of the week and ask yourself, “how long can we absorb illegal immigrants before our infrastructure collapses?”

...

America was not founded on the principle of “let's give everyone opportunity, then when someone actually succeeds immediately take everything they have earned and give it to illegals and lazy people.” Funny, I don't remember that part in Social Studies.

...

In South Texas during the last 6 weeks they have picked up 18 Africans (from Ethiopia and Eritrea) and 26 Chinese illegal immigrants. They are not just coming from Mexico and Central America. At one time I was not in favor of the wall since it would cut through the campus of the University of Texas at Brownsville, TX. It will also cut the Sabal Palms Wildlife Sanctuary and many homes will be behind the wall. I am concerned about the locked gates and access for emergency vehicles will be limited, but the number of immigrants coming is ridiculous. They have caught over 47,000 since October 2007 and I would remind you that this number was given by the Border Patrol for the lower Rio Grande Valley. This includes only Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr Counties. Enough is enough.

Blog retrieved April 20, 2009, from <http://savannah.activote.com/issues/border-fence-between-united-states-and-mexico>.

Walls or Barriers?

Instructions: Write a brief essay in response to the quote below, in which a Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor of linguistics comments on the U.S. – Mexico Border Fence. Your essay should address some of the questions that follow the quote.



...Too often what nations build are not walls but barriers. They keep out the unwanted. They keep in the unwilling. In his poem, Robert Frost sees the wall as a barrier that keeps him and his neighbor strangers. Frost's neighbor, the farmer, sees it as useful, an amenity between them invoking distance and ensuring civility, or at least lack of the complications that attend human interaction. I suppose it really comes down to this: Do we build barriers or do we build walls? Do we keep our neighbors at arm's length or do we keep the door open for a visit? In other words, it's either the farmer's view—"Good fences make good neighbors"—or it's the poet's—"Something there is that doesn't love a wall."¹

- How does Frost's poem relate to the debate over the U.S. – Mexico Border Fence?
- Who are the "unwanted" and the "unwilling" that Keyser describes?
- Do you subscribe to the "farmer's view" or the "poet's view"?
- Do you see the fence as a way to achieve, or a barrier to, safety and security?
- What other types of barriers—besides the physical one—does the border fence create?

¹ Keyser, Jay. 2006. The Xenophobic School: Misreading Poetry. All Things Considered (May 23, 2006). [You can listen to this interview at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5426125>.]

You've Been Framed!

Imagine you are looking out of your bedroom window at the house across the street. Through a narrow gap in the curtains, you see a masked figure pointing a gun. Alarmed, you reach for the phone and dial 911. At that moment, someone in the house pulls back the curtains completely and you see a room full of people in colorful outfits, enjoying themselves at what you now recognize to be a costume party.

The way in which the curtains framed the scene above shaped the way in which you perceived it. Similarly, the ways in which language is used to frame issues in our society influence how we understand those matters and what we believe are the best ways to address them.

The immigration debate in our society has been framed, or defined, in specific ways by politicians, journalists, activists, pundits and the media at large. The particular language and frames they use affect our attitudes and beliefs about immigration and immigrants, whether or not we are aware of their impact.

“Immigration reform,” for example, is a widely used term that is the very basis of discussion about immigration in the U.S. It is a term that is taken for granted, yet limits the conversation about immigration from the start. It suggests there is a pressing problem that needs to be fixed, and that the problem lies with immigrants themselves or with the agencies that oversee immigration law. There are many different frames that could be used to define the issue, but most are not a regular part of mainstream discussion. For example:

- The “foreign policy reform” or “globalization” frame, which would suggest that the ways in which the U.S. interacts with other countries contribute to world poverty and mass immigration;
- The “humanitarian crisis” or “economic refugee” frame, which would focus efforts on helping people who have fled poverty and terrible living conditions elsewhere rather than trying to keep them out;
- The “civil rights” frame, which would focus attention on the denial of basic protections and services to millions of people who work and pay taxes here; and
- The “cheap labor” or “cheap lifestyle” frame, which would bring attention to the employers who pay low wages and the consumers who buy their goods, thereby attracting laborers from other countries who are desperate for work.

None of these frames are neutral. They each reflect certain assumptions and beliefs. When reading or listening to others talk about immigration, it is important to be aware of the frames they have adopted and the language they use to advance those frames. This will help you to understand what viewpoints and biases they bring to the discussion, and to think beyond the limitations of one particular set of ideas, especially when those ideas promote stereotypes or intolerance.

The following are some common frames used to discuss immigration that may contribute to anti-immigrant prejudice and irrational fear about immigration.

The Illegal Frame: People often refer to “illegal immigrants” or “illegals” as if it were a neutral term, but this way of describing immigrants defines them as criminals, as if they are by nature bad people. Defining immigrants as lawbreakers overlooks the positive contributions they make to the U.S.—for example, by working hard for low wages—and suggests that they deserve to be locked up or punished in some way. Immigrants who cross into the U.S. outside of legal channels, though, are generally not dangerous criminals whose intent is to cause harm. Most immigrants are in search of honest work and a better life, and the “illegal” frame exaggerates the seriousness of their offense. It also ignores the unlawful acts of employers. Have you ever heard someone who has hired an undocumented worker referred to as an “illegal employer”?

The Alien Frame: The term “illegal alien” not only emphasizes criminality, but also otherness. “Aliens” suggests nonhuman beings invading from outer space—completely foreign, not one of us, intent on taking over our land and our way of life. Along these lines, the word “invasion” is often used to discuss the wave of people crossing the border. The “alien” frame dehumanizes immigrants and limits our ability to recognize the commonalities we all share—the desire for a secure job, a safe home and a better future for our families. The U.S. prides itself on being a “nation of immigrants.” What message does it send when we set some of those immigrants apart as “alien”?

The Security Frame: Immigration is commonly talked about as a “security problem” or a “threat to national security.” If one believes that immigrants are criminals and invaders, it is a logical response to demand that the government protect its citizens from the danger they represent. Congress, in fact, has linked border security with Mexico to the larger “war on terror,” and has

spent billions of dollars to place National Guard troops on the border and to construct a 670-mile border fence stretching from California to Texas. Most immigrants, of course, are not terrorists and pose no physical threat. They don't want to shoot us or kill us or blow us up. They only want to share the opportunity of pursuing the American Dream.

The Amnesty Frame: Much of the immigration debate centers on whether or not those who have entered the U.S. outside of legal channels should be given "amnesty," or pardoned for their illegal actions. Like the "illegal" frame, the discussion about amnesty implies that the fault lies with immigrants and that it would be merciful for the government to forgive their wrongdoings. This viewpoint overlooks the role of businesses that have knowingly hired undocumented workers and the government officials who have looked the other way. No one talks about granting amnesty to these parties because the issue has been framed as an "immigrant problem."

The Worker Frame: "Undocumented worker," "temporary worker" and "guest worker" are terms that have been widely used to describe the status of immigrants. While these descriptions are more respectful than "illegal" or "alien," there are some limitations to the "worker" frame. "Worker" suggests that immigrants' only function in the U.S. is to labor, not to be educated, have families, form communities, vote and have complete lives. Some "temporary worker" plans allow for only short-term stays in the U.S. with few or no benefits or rights. This narrow way of defining people is undemocratic and treats immigrants as second-class citizens who are separate and apart from the rest of society.

Adapted with permission from Lakoff, George and Ferguson, Sam. 2006. The Framing of Immigration. The Rockridge Institute, <http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/research/rockridge/immigration>.

Media Analysis: The Framing of Immigration

1. What frames or themes are used to define the issue and set the boundaries for discussion? Do you agree with these frames? Why or why not?

2. What specific language is used to advance the frames or themes presented? Do you think this language is fair or problematic? Explain.

3. Are the opinions expressed supported by rational facts or do they seem unreasonable/unfounded? If you are not sure, what can you do to investigate further?

4. Are criticisms limited to specific policies or events, or are generalizations made that may not apply across the board?

5. Does the piece promote stereotypes, prejudices or unnecessary fear? Explain.

Immigration in the Media: Sample Commentary

Articles/Book Excerpts

[Note: The following excerpts are provided herein which can also be accessed by clicking on the title.]

- Buchanan, Patrick J. *Day of Reckoning: How Hubris, Ideology, and Greed are Tearing America Apart*, 10-11. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007.
- Buchanan, Patrick J. *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization*, 2-3 and 133-134. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002.
- Dobbs, Lou. *Independents Day: Awakening the American Spirit*, 162-163. New York: The Penguin Group, 2007.
- Letiecq, Greg. [Statement to the PWBOCS](#) [Prince William Board of County Supervisors]. *The Front Line* 1, No. 1 (September 2007): 2. www.helpsavemanassas.org/files/newsletter/HSMNewsletter0907.pdf.
- Tancredo, Tom. *In Mortal Danger: The Battle for America's Border and Security*, 108-109. Nashville: Cumberland House Publishing, Inc., 2006.

Print Ads

- ["Americans may eventually find a way to live without oil. Water is another story."](#) (Ad paid for by America's Leadership Team for Long Range Population-Immigration-Resource Planning)
- ["Amnesty for illegal workers is not just a slap in the face to black Americans. It's an economic disaster."](#) (Ad paid for by Coalition for the New American Worker)
- ["Mass Immigration and Global Warming: Gives the Term Melting Pot a Whole New Meaning."](#) (Ad paid for by Coalition for Sensible Immigration Policy)
- ["Not all foreign tourists want to see the Grand Canyon."](#) (Ad paid for by Californians for Population Stabilization)
- ["20 Million Americans are unemployed. And it's not due to a lack of jobs."](#) (Ad paid for by Californians Population Stabilization)
- If Americans are having fewer children, why is California so crowded? (Ad paid for by Californians Population Stabilization)

Public Service Announcements

[Visit www.americanworker.org and www.capsweb.org to listen to the following ads and others that are available.*]

Television Ads

- Jobs for Americans Should be President Obama's Priority (American Worker)
- It's Time to Protect Americans (American Worker)
- Coalition for the Future American Worker Ad (American Worker)
- Anchor Babies TV Ads (CAPS)
- Save Our States (CAPS)
- CAP's 'Children Ad' (CAPS)
- Sanctuary City Television Ad (CAPS)

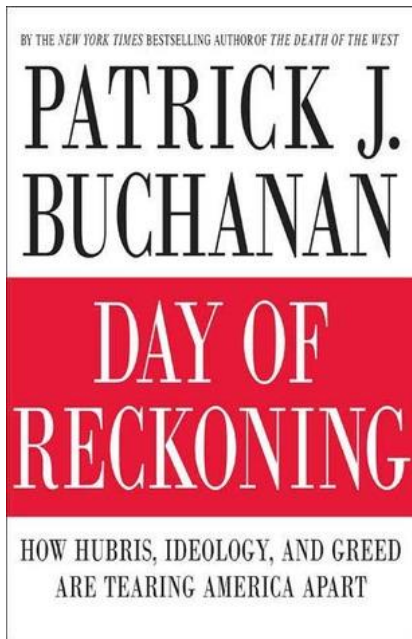
Radio Ads (CAPS)

- CAPS 2016 'Children' Ad
- American Workers Deserve Day of Respect, Not Illegal Aliens
- Inconvenient Truth

*You can find out more about some of the groups behind these ads in the ADL report, *Immigrants Targeted: Extremist Rhetoric Moves into the Mainstream*, at http://www.adl.org/civil_rights/anti_immigrant.

Day of Reckoning: How Hubris, Ideology, and Greed are Tearing America Apart

Book excerpt from Patrick J. Buchanan, *Day of Reckoning: How Hubris, Ideology, and Greed are Tearing America Apart* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), 10-11.



As critical, the greatest cohort of immigrants here today, legal and illegal, is from Mexico. One in five Mexicans is already here. But unlike the immigrants of old, Mexicans bear an ancient grudge against us as the country that robbed Mexico of half her land when both nations were young. By one survey, 72 percent of Mexicans look on Americans as “racists.” By another, 58 percent of Mexicans believe the American Southwest belongs to them.

At the Guadalajara soccer game where Mexico played the United States for the right to compete in the 2004 Olympics, each Mexican score was greeted with chants of “Osama! Osama!” During the Miss World contest in Mexico City in 2007, Miss USA’s every appearance was hooted and jeered.

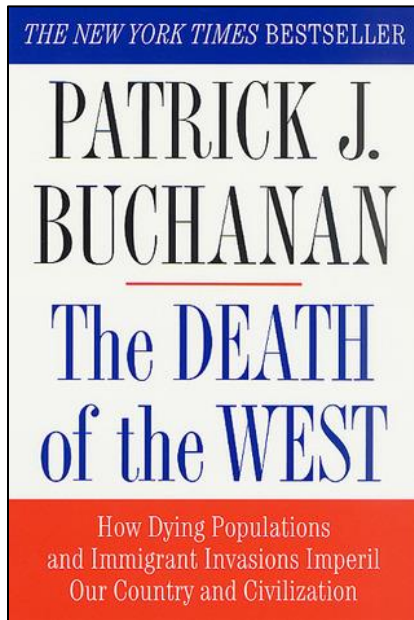
By 2050, more than 100 million Hispanics will be in the United States, concentrated in a Southwest that borders on Mexico. As the Serbs are losing Kosovo, so we may have lost the Southwest.

Why did America not secure her borders, enforce her laws, repel the invasion, expel the intruders? Because our leaders are terrified of charges of racism and lack moral courage, and because the United States has ceased to be a democratic republic. The will of the majority is no longer reflected in public policy. State and local referenda to deal with the illegal alien crisis are routinely invalidated by federal judges, as immigration laws go unenforced by federal officials.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the survival of this nation as a sovereign and independent republic comes from transnational elites who seek to erase our borders and merge America, Mexico and Canada into a North American Union—the penultimate step toward a World Federation of Nations and Peoples. There, as Talbott rhapsodized, “nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single, global authority, and the phrase ‘citizen of the world’ will have assumed real meaning.” This is the nonviolent path to national suicide America is now on.

The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization

Book excerpt from Patrick J. Buchanan, *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 2-3 and 133-134.



In late 1999, this writer left Tucson and drove southeast to Douglas, the Arizona border town of eighteen thousand that had become the principal invasion corridor into the United States. In March alone, the U.S. Border Patrol had apprehended twenty-seven thousand Mexicans crossing illegally, half again as many illegal aliens crossing in one month as there are people in Douglas.

While there, I visited Theresa Murray, an eighty-two-year-old widow and a great-grandmother who lives in the Arizona desert she grew up in. Her ranch house was surrounded by a seven-foot chain link fence that was topped with coils of razor wire. Every door and window had bars on it and was wired to an alarm. Mrs. Murray sleeps with a .32-caliber pistol on her bed table, because she has been burglarized thirty times. Her guard dogs are dead; they bled to death when someone tossed meat containing chopped glass over the fence.

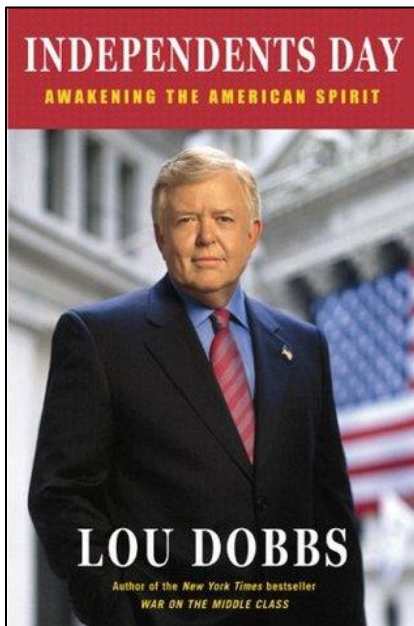
Theresa Murray is living out her life inside a maximum-security prison, in her own home, in her own country, because her government lacks the moral courage to do its duty and defend the borders of the United States of America.

If America is about anything, it is freedom. But as Theresa Murray says, "I've lost my freedom. I can't ever leave the house unless I have somebody watch it. We used to ride our horses clear across the border. We had Mexicans working on our property. It used to be fun to live here. Now, it's hell. It's plain old hell."

While Theresa Murray lives unfree, in hellish existence, American soldiers defend the borders of Korea, Kuwait, and Kosovo. But nothing is at risk on those borders, half a world away, to compare with what is at risk on our border with Mexico, over which pass the armies of the night as they trudge endlessly northward to the great cities of America. Invading armies go home, immigrant armies do not.

Independents Day: Awakening the American Spirit

Book excerpt from Lou Dobbs, *Independents Day: Awakening the American Spirit* (New York: The Penguin Group, 2007), 162-163.



Illegal immigration has, in fact, the potential to change the course of American history. Demographers at the Brookings Institution and the Population Reference Bureau paint a troubling picture of the future of our democracy. As more illegal aliens cross our borders and settle in large states like California, Texas and Florida, congressional seats will be redistributed to these bigger states following each decennial census. States with low levels of immigration will ultimately lose seats as a result. Unfortunately for American citizens, this seismic shift in political representation will be decided by noncitizens who cannot vote.

There's no question that this type of mass immigration would have a calamitous effect on working citizens and their families. Carol Swain, professor of law and political science at Vanderbilt University and author of *Debating Immigration*, would like to see more people speak up for the sectors of society most affected by illegal immigration.

When I talked to her on the show, she asked, "How many African American leaders have you seen come out and address the impact that high levels of illegal immigration (are) having in the communities when it comes to jobs, when it comes to education, when it comes to health care? And often, these low-skilled, low-wage workers compete in the same sectors for jobs."

President Bush's repeated exhortations that "the American people" need to get behind his plan reveal, on some level, his awareness that the American public is united against his legislation. Yet his rhetoric, and that of so many of our country's elites, makes it sound as if the working people of this nation are in conflict with one another over this issue. President Bush states that "America should not fear diversity." These are words of neither a leader nor a uniter. Senate majority leader Harry Reid referred to an amendment to make English the official language of the country as an act of prejudice, stating bluntly that "this amendment is racist." Even though 84 percent of all Americans and 71 percent of Hispanics say that English should be the official language of government operations, Reid used his position to make a divisive statement. Nonsense like this from national leaders is unworthy of their offices and fails to elevate the American spirit.

Statement to the PWBOCS

Article excerpt from Greg Letiecq, Statement to the PWBOCS [Prince William Board of County Supervisors], *The Front Line* 1, No. 1 (September 2007): 2.

Our country has been under assault from the influx of tens, if not hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens who have taken advantage of our lax enforcement of the law at the federal, state and local levels. These border crashers have contributed to rising crime rates, increasing burdens on our schools, hospitals and public services, and the very destruction of our American Culture. Prince William County is not the place it used to be, and as a result many of our productive citizens are leaving.

All of this is for the purpose of turning our citizens into the unwitting objects of a real-time social experiment in multi-cultural, diversity-worshipping social justice. They are told that to object to their involuntary participation in this replacement of our American culture would be nativist, racist or xenophobic. That they must, as good little cogs in the grand wheel of this experiment, be compassionate towards the eighteen men who have rammed themselves into the house next door, because they're hard workers. They must cheerfully turn over increasing portions of their wealth to lighten the burdens on these uninvited and unwelcome lawbreakers so that the children of illegal aliens can obtain free health care, free educations, and free food. Citizens are reminded that it would have chilling effects, or heaven forbid, create fear among the illegal aliens if they understood that the law would actually apply to them. The citizens must, in their role as involuntary guinea pigs, be meekly tolerant of their designated role in this grand experiment.

No more.

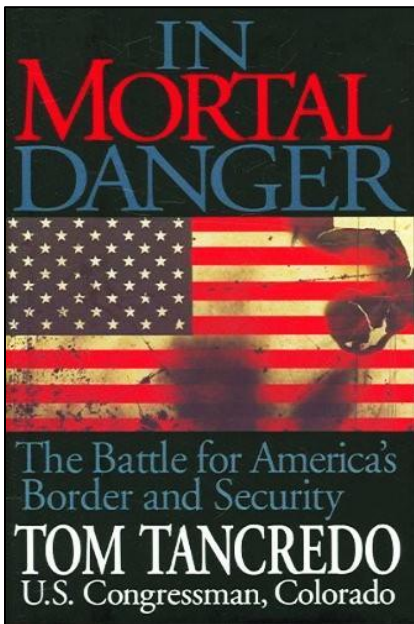
No more tolerance for criminal illegal aliens who commit assault and battery, stalking indecent exposure, driving while intoxicated or hit and run because these crimes aren't supposedly serious enough to warrant even notifying immigration authorities. No more protection for illegal aliens who attempt to obtain taxpayer-funded services which they are not entitled to receive in order to make their continued unlawful presence in the country more comfortable. No more selective enforcement of our laws in order to make it easier for vast numbers of illegal aliens to remain in our midst only to demand that we accommodate their deficient grasp of the English language and change our laws to suit their interests at the expense of the American citizens.

Supervisor Stirrup's proposed resolution helps to dismantle this unconscionable social experiment at the local level. If it is enacted, the safe haven which county policies have previously created will no longer exist. It does so not by changing who receives benefits, or what is or is not lawful, but by putting an end to this malfeasance in which the citizens of the county are not just unwitting test subjects, but victims.

With passage of this resolution, the citizens will regain their rightful place as the masters of their government, rather than its subjects. We urge all of the supervisors to vote in favor of this long overdue proposal.

In Mortal Danger: The Battle for America's Border and Security

Book excerpt from Tom Tancredo, *In Mortal Danger: The Battle for America's Border and Security*, (Nashville: Cumberland House Publishing, Inc., 2006), 108-109.



What Americans must understand is that while we have always had illegal immigrants and illegal immigration, the dynamics of our border problems are changing—for the worse. Today, it is no longer a few people coming across the border looking for jobs. It is now a very well-organized effort conducted largely by people who have heretofore been involved with drug smuggling. Because people smuggling has become very lucrative, drug cartels have become more interested. They are paid between a thousand to fifteen hundred dollars to get a Mexican national into the United States; costs for a Middle Easterner or an Asian rise to about fifty thousand dollars.

Over the course of my legislative career I have tried to deal with the issue of immigration reform in a variety of contexts. I've talked about the problems associated with porous borders and what they mean to the future and security of the United States. I've talked about the economic impact of the massive immigration of low-skilled, low-wage workers. I've talked about the environmental damage.

By the year 2050, if we do absolutely nothing and things continue as they are today, the U.S. population will reach some 420 million people, with a vast majority coming from non-English-speaking nations.

I come from Colorado, and things have changed pretty dramatically in my state over the last several years. The increase in Colorado's population has already been

substantial. As such, the infrastructure costs that go along with massive increases in people are, of course, prevalent, and the taxpayers of my state are payment them for.

But this kind of growth is happening across the country. Soon, if immigrant growth rates persist, it will be much more difficult to get through congested highways, to visit our national parks, to experience the pristine wilderness that we have all enjoyed, and to provide benefits for millions and millions of new arrivals. I can't begin to estimate what that will cost us.

The sheer number of immigrants is something far greater than anything we have ever experienced in this nation. It is far greater than what we experienced in the 1900s when my grandparents came here.

After I've spoken about our porous borders on the floor of the House—which I try to do as often as I can – the e-mails, telephone messages and letters start all over again. There is such an outpouring of emotion from Americans on this issue. They, too, feel it is vital that we do something about our borders.

Most of the feedback comes from Americans who are watching their lives and livelihoods disrupted. They often ask the Congress to do something about this illegal immigration problem. Speaking for myself, I am overwhelmed by these cries for help. And I know my colleagues care about this issue. But I don't see that care being translated into any sort of help for these Americans who put up with this hellish nightmare day in and day out. The Congress appears fearful of doing anything that would actually secure our borders, fearful of doing anything that would actually enforce the law in this country. Why? The fear stems from political reasons, and that disappoints me.

Excerpt from “Who is to Blame for Marcelo Lucero’s Murder?”

Elected officials in Suffolk County have created a xenophobic climate that breeds hate crimes.

By Marcelo Ballvé / New America Media, December 2, 2008

SMITHTOWN, N.Y. —Why here? That’s still the question on the minds of many residents of Long Island, the archetypal New York suburb, after the murder of Marcelo Lucero, a 37-year-old Ecuadorean immigrant who was stabbed to death after being attacked by seven teenagers on November 8th.

Lucero’s death was labeled a hate killing by local police, who said the teenagers, all locals, embarked on a beer-fueled rampage in search of “a Mexican” to beat up.

It was only the latest, and most serious, in a chain of attacks on Latino immigrants in Suffolk County. In 2000, two Mexican day laborers in Farmingville were picked up by men ostensibly offering them work and were nearly beaten to death with gardening tools. Three years later, local teenagers firebombed a home, and the immigrant family of five living in it barely escaped with their lives. Low-level harassment is even more common. Community leaders say Latinos are regularly taunted, spit upon and pelted with projectiles.

Local soul-searching over the crime has focused on whether local politicians are partly to blame for Lucero’s death. Immigrant advocates say elected officials, through legislation and rhetoric, have created a xenophobic climate that breeds hate crimes.

Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy and his allies in the local legislature have very publicly championed measures aimed at stemming illegal immigration. Levy has won some of these battles (requiring county contractors to check workers’ status, cracking down on landlords with overcrowded housing) but lost others, most notably an effort to deputize local law enforcement to nab illegal immigrants.

Meanwhile, Suffolk’s Latino population—a diverse mosaic of Salvadorans, Colombians, Dominicans, Ecuadoreans and Mexicans—has continued booming. Suffolk is 13 percent Latino, according to U.S. Census figures.

The contradictions of life in today’s Long Island were apparent recently at a county legislative session.

On the morning of Nov. 18...the legislators got an earful about their portion of responsibility in Lucero’s murder, which happened 10 days earlier.

Charlotte Koons of the Suffolk New York Civil Liberties Union was the first speaker. She read a poem about Lucero’s death, ending with this line: “We must all own our part in this crime ... We can legislate and educate the hate away.” Suffolk resident Andrea Callan, also with the NYCLU, blasted the lawmakers for setting a bad example. “The policies coming out of this legislative body, and no doubt from the playbook of Steve Levy, have been divisive and unfair, and send a message of intolerance into our community.”

Some in Suffolk may yearn for normality, but their county has forever become emblematic of a problem with national reach: the tension between the suburban myth of white-picket fences and orderly lawns and the realities of immigration. As job-seeking immigrants increasingly move from urban areas to outlying communities, suburbs must choose whether they will embrace diversity or scapegoat foreigners.

It’s no secret many Suffolk residents moved from more urbanized areas to put some distance between themselves and what they perceive as the chaotic diversity of New York City and its immediate surroundings, said Patrick Young, program director of the Central American Refugee Center (Carecen), who also spoke at the session. Suburbia’s irrational distrust and fear of minorities can manifest as anti-immigrant sentiment.

“It has become an acceptable part of the culture of this area, and this is a culture that’s pandered to by these politicians and stirred up by them,” he said.

But Levy denied there was a link between Lucero's death and his attitude toward illegal immigration. "Advocates for those here illegally should not disparage those opposed to the illegal immigration policy as being bigoted or intolerant," he said.

In the past, Levy has cited the dream of a suburban lifestyle to justify his beliefs on immigration. "People who play by the rules work hard to achieve the suburban dream of the white picket fence," he said in 2007 to The New York Times. "Whether you are black or white or Hispanic, if you live in the suburbs, you do not want to live across the street from a house where 60 men live. You do not want trucks riding up and down the block at 5 a.m., picking up workers." With such statements Levy is advancing a polarizing vision, said immigrant advocates.

It's the same rhetoric the teenagers who killed Lucero have been hearing since they were old enough to understand it, said Carcen's Young, who added, "this constant branding of people as illegal is the most dehumanizing thing."

At the street corner in the tidy, seaside village of Patchogue where Lucero died, an improvised shrine has been set up, with flowers, candles, and photos. A line of orange spray-paint left by police still marks the path the mortally wounded Lucero followed before falling. A sign written in black marker reads: "God Loves All People, and All People Should Love One Another."

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Resources on Immigration

Primary Level Books

Blue Jasmine by Kashmira Sheth

When twelve-year-old Seema and her family move from their small Indian town to Iowa City, Seema feels like an outsider to the language and traditions, and must cope with the unfamiliarity of a new school system and the hostility of an intolerant classmate. (*Hyperion Books for Children, 2006, 192 pages, grades 4–7*)

Coming to America: A Muslim Family's Story by Bernard Wolf

Text and photographs depict the joys and hardships experienced by a Muslim family that immigrates to New York City from Egypt. (*Lee & Low Books, 2003, 48 pages, grades 2–5*)

Dreamers by Yuyi Morales

She brought her strength, her work, her passion, her hopes and dreams...and her stories. Yuyi and her son's passage was not easy, and Yuyi spoke no English whatsoever at the time. But together, they found an unexpected, unbelievable place: the public library. There, book by book, they untangled the language of this strange new land, and learned to make their home within it. (*Neal Porter Books, 2018, 40 pages, grades 4–8*)

Drita, My Homegirl by Jenny Lombard

Drita and her family come to New York as refugees from war-torn Kosovo. Even though she barely speaks English, Drita can't wait to start school and make a new best friend. But her new classmates don't make it easy, teasing her about virtually everything. (*Penguin Group, 2008, 144 pages, grades 3–5*)

From North to South/Del Norte al Sure by Rene Colato Lainez

When Mamá is sent back to Mexico for not having proper papers, José and his Papá face an uncertain future. What will it be like to visit Mamá in Tijuana? When will Mamá be able to come home? This bilingual (English and Spanish) story tackles the difficult and timely subject of family separation with exquisite tenderness. (*Lee & Low Books, 2014, 32 pages, grades Kindergarten–3*)

Gaby, Lost and Found by Angela Cervantes

When Gaby Ramirez Howard starts volunteering at the local animal shelter, she takes special pride in writing adoption advertisements. Gaby is in need of a forever home herself because her mother recently was deported to Honduras. (*Scholastic, Inc., 2015, 224 pages, grades 3–7*)

How Tía Lola Came To Visit Stay by Julia Alvarez

When ten-year-old Miguel moves to Vermont with his mami after his parents' divorce, guess who flies up from the Island to help take care of him and his little sister, Juanita? Tía Lola! *How Tía Lola Came To Visit Stay* is the first in a series of books called [The Tia Lola Stories](#). (*Yearling, 2002, 160 pages, grades 3–7*)

Just Like Home/Como en Mi Tierra by Elizabeth I. Miller

A young girl shares her experiences of a new life in the United States by comparing those things that are similar to her old home and contrasting those that are different. (*Albert Whitman, 2003, 32 pages, grades Pre-K–3*)

La Mariposa by Francisco Jimenez

Francisco, an immigrant from Mexico and the son of migrant workers, has difficulty adjusting to first grade in a new school because he doesn't speak English and, to make matters worse, the class bully seems to have it in for him. (*Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2000, 40 pages, grades K–3*)

Mama's Nightingale: A Story of Immigration and Separation by Edwidge Danticat

After Saya's mother is sent to an immigration detention center, Saya finds comfort in listening to her mother's warm greeting on their answering machine. (*Dial, 2015, 32 pages, grades Kindergarten–3*)

Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote by Duncan Tonatiuh

In this allegorical picture book about migrants, a young rabbit named Pancho eagerly awaits his papa's return. (*Harry N. Abrams, 2013, 32 pages, grades 1–4*)

Same Sun Here by Silas House and Neela Vaswani

With honesty and humor and narrated in two voices, Meena and River bridge the miles between them, creating a friendship that inspires bravery and defeats cultural misconceptions. (*Candlewick Press, 2012, 304 pages, grades 4–7*)

Separate is Never Equal by Duncan Tonatiuh

Sylvia Mendez and her brothers are excited to attend the neighborhood schools but are turned away and told they have to attend the Mexican school instead. Unable to get a satisfactory answer from the school board, the Mendez family decides to take matters into their own hands and organize a lawsuit. (*Harry N. Abrams, 2014, 40 pages, grades 1–4*)

Side by Side: The Story of Dolores Huerta and César Chávez by Monica Brown

This bilingual (English and Spanish) story is about two Dolores Huerta and César Chávez who joined forces and motivated farmworkers to fight for their rights and, in the process, they changed history. (*Rayo, 2010, 32 pages, grades Preschool–3*)

Who Belongs Here?/Quien Es de Aquí? by Margy Burns Knight

The story of Nary, a young boy fleeing war-torn Cambodia for the safety of the U.S., teaches compassion for recent immigrants while sharing the history of immigration in the U.S. and some of the important contributions made by past immigrants. (*Tilbury House Publishers, 2003, 30 pages, grades 2–5*)

The Year of the Rat by Grace Lin

The Year of the Rat brings many changes for Pacy: her best friend moving away, dealing with the prejudice directed toward a new student from China and learning to face some of her own flaws. (*Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2009, 208 pages, grades 3–7*)

Secondary Level Books**The Arrival** by Shaun Tan

This wordless graphic novel chronicles an immigrant's parting from his family and journey toward the future in a new land that is simultaneously ominous and hopeful. (*Scholastic, Inc., 2007, 128 pages, grades 7 & up*)

Colors of Freedom: Immigrant Stories by Janet Bode

Features interviews with people whose ancestors were slaves or slave owners and high school students who are immigrants themselves. They describe the customs of their native lands and compare their lives there to those in the United States. (*Scholastic Library Publishing, 2000, 144 pages, grades 6 & up*)

The Crossing by Gary Paulsen

Thirteen-year-old Manny, a street kid fighting for survival in a Mexican border town, develops a strange friendship with a tormented American soldier who decides to help him get across the border. (*Scholastic, Inc., 2005, 114 pages, grades 8 & up*)

Farmworker's Friend: The Story of Cesar Chavez by David R. Collins

The life and accomplishments of the labor activist, César Chávez, who helped organize migrant farm workers. (*Carolrhoda Books, 1996, 112 pages, grades 4 & up*)

First Crossing: Stories about Teen Immigrants by Donald R. Gallo

Stories of recent Mexican, Venezuelan, Kazakh, Chinese, Romanian, Palestinian, Swedish, Korean, Haitian and Cambodian immigrants reveal what it is like to face prejudice, language barriers and homesickness along with common teenage feelings and needs. (*Candlewick Press, 2004, 240 pages, grades 7 & up*)

Forty-Cent Tip: Stories of New York Immigrant Workers by Students of Three New York International High Schools

Through black-and-white photographs and essays, students new to the U.S. present first-person stories of the working lives of immigrants from their New York City neighborhoods. (*Next Generation Press, 2006, 72 pages, grades 6 & up*)

I Might Get Somewhere: Oral Histories of Immigration and Migration by Students at Balboa High School

Gathered, recorded, and edited by students, this anthology of oral histories includes more than 100 stories of immigration to the United States and a foreword by author Amy Tan. (*826 Books, 2005, 333 pages, grades 7 & up*)

Kids Like Me: Voices of the Immigrant Experience by Judith M. Blohm and Terri Lapinsky

This book features 26 personal narratives that explore the experiences of young immigrants and share their unique cultural identities. It also includes discussion questions, self-directed activities and research ideas. (*Intercultural Press, 2006, 296 pages, grades 6 & up*)

Newest Americans by Greenwood Publishing

This five-volume set contains the history of immigration to the U.S., a timeline of immigration legislation, a discussion of various immigration issues and profiles of 34 countries, with a focus on the experiences of American immigrants. (*Greenwood Publishing, 2003, 144 pages, grades 6 & up*)

REMIX: Conversations with Immigrant Teenagers by Marina Budhos

Intimate conversations and interviews with teenagers from all over the world, including Muslim girls from traditional families, Hmong athletes and Koreans facing extreme pressures to succeed. (*Resource Publications, 2007, 145 pages, grades 6 & up*)

Undocumented: A Worker's Fight by Duncan Tonatiuh

This book tells the story of immigrant workers who have come to the U.S. without “papers.” Every day, these men and women join the work force and contribute positively to society. (*Harry N. Abrams, 2018, 15 pages, grades 12 & up*)

What Rights Should Illegal Immigrants Have? by Lori Newman

Includes selections from varying perspectives by a number of different writers on legal, social, and economic issues, such as the effects of profiling on Muslims at airports, health care and college tuition for illegal immigrants and the impact of the war on terrorism on their rights. (*Gale Group, 2006, 90 pages, grades 9 & up*)

Videos

Crossing Arizona by Joseph Mathew & Daniel DeVivo

This documentary offers multiple perspectives on the hotly debated issue of illegal immigration as captured at the Arizona border. Seen through the eyes of ranchers, border patrol agents, local politicians, farmers dependent on an illegal work force, humanitarian activists and migrants preparing for their journey north, this documentary addresses the complicated dilemmas presented by the border crisis. (*Cinema Guild, 2006, 75 or 55 min versions, VHS/DVD*)

The Elevator Operator by Jonathan P. Skurnik

This short film is a portrait of an immigrant named Eugene. Eugene shuttles passengers up and down in a manual elevator while he discusses his work, his emigration from Chernobyl, the joys of fatherhood and his recent U.S. citizenship. This snapshot takes the viewer deep into the heart of the immigrant experience. (*New Day Films, 2004, 8 min, VHS/DVD*)

Golden Venture by Peter Cohn

This film chronicles the ongoing struggles of passengers who were aboard the Golden Venture, an immigrant smuggling ship that ran aground near New York City in 1993. The Golden Venture crash fed a media circus and became a symbol of a growing national concern over illegal immigration. (*New Day Films, 2006, 70 min, VHS/DVD*)

My Brown Eyes by Jay Koh

A 10 year-old boy, the son of working Korean immigrants, rises and prepares himself for his first day in an American school. Told from a child's point of view, the video reveals the problems he encounters. (*Culture For Kids, 1994, 19 min, VHS*)

The New Americans

This series follows a diverse group of immigrants and refugees as they leave their home and families behind and learn what it means to be new Americans in the 21st century. Segments feature the stories of immigrants from Nigeria, Mexico, Palestinian Territory, Dominica and Nigeria. (*PBS, 2003, 3 episodes 60 min each, VHS/DVD*)

Teen Immigrants: Five American Stories

Five immigrant youth educate young people on issues teen immigrants face and help to break down negative stereotypes, promote respect for diversity and build understanding across lines of color and nationality. (*PBS, 1999, 30 minutes, VHS/DVD*)

Web Sites

Define American, <https://defineamerican.com>

A non-profit media and culture organization that uses the power of story to transcend politics and shift the conversation about immigrants, identity and citizenship in a changing America.

Ellis Island, www.ellisland.org

Provides information about the history of Ellis Island and genealogy; allows users to search family histories and read and share personal immigration stories.

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, www.civilrights.org/issues/immigration

Offers educational materials on immigration and tracks legislation, court decisions and issues affecting the enforcement of immigration law.

My Immigration Story, www.myimmigrationstory.com

Includes the stories of American immigrants in their own words.

Unidos US, www.unidosus.org

Includes publications, speeches and information on policy and programs related to immigration.

National Immigration Forum, www.immigrationforum.org

Advocates for the value of immigrants and immigration to the nation; offers policy, action and research centers as well as community resources and publications.

Tenement Museum, www.tenement.org

Promotes tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of the variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Includes stories, lesson plans and other information.

U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, www.refugees.org

Addresses the needs and rights of persons in forced or voluntary migration worldwide by advancing public policy and providing professional services.

United We Dream, <http://unitedwedream.org>

The largest immigrant youth-led organization in the nation that organizes and advocates for the dignity and fair treatment of immigrant youth and families, regardless of immigration status.