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All Around Mulberry Street

Standard/Objective

- Describe how people create places that reflect cultural values and ideals as they build neighborhoods, parks, shopping centers, and the like. (NCSS)
- Students will be able to understand and apply basic and advanced concepts of statistics, data collection and analysis, and graphing.

Materials

copies of both sides of the Mulberry Street in New York City photo card; copies of the historical background information (page 26); research materials

Discussion Questions

- Do you think the people in the picture are happy with their lives? Why or why not?
- What ethnic groups had the largest numbers of people that immigrated to America?
- Where did the majority of people settle once they were allowed entry into America?
- What obstacles did people face after they immigrated to this country?
- Brainstorm ways that the immigrants coped with the changes once they arrived in America.

Using the Primary Source

Students should study, describe, analyze, and reflect upon the photograph. Students can imagine who is in this picture. What type of food do they think would be at this market? What would these people be feeling? What nationalities are represented here? Ask students to imagine standing in the street with this group of people. Have them describe what they would be seeing and what they would be doing.

Break the students into small groups of three to four students. Have students work together to research the numbers of different nationalities who came to America through Ellis Island. Students should collect the data and record it. To display the information that they found, have each group produce a bar graph representing and comparing each nationality. Then, with the same data, have each group also produce a circle graph, a line graph, and one other type of visual graphic. Finally, have students evaluate the various forms of graphic display and decide which best represents the data they collected.

Extension Ideas

- Have students compare and graph other data about the immigrants besides nationality (e.g., educational levels, sexes, ages, or careers).
- Have students collect data from another port of immigration. Graph and then compare and contrast that information to the information collected from Ellis Island.
All Around Mulberry Street (cont.)

Historical Background Information

Immigration is the act of coming to a foreign country to live. Immigrants are those people in search of a new country. Immigrants to America came from Germany, Russia, Italy, China, Scotland, Ireland, and other countries. Usually, their countries pushed them to seek new homes for some reason. These immigrants may have left their countries seeking freedom from political or religious persecution. They may have left because of famine, disease, or just to seek a better life. America seemed a logical choice, and they were pulled here in search of good farmland, plentiful jobs, political and religious freedom, or simply to enjoy a new life.

Immigrants coming to the United States faced the adjustment to a life in a new and strange country. Many people entering the United States spoke a different language and practiced different customs than the majority of people in America. In order to succeed and to increase their comfort levels, the immigrants sought out people with similar backgrounds, languages, and customs. Thus, many ethnic neighborhoods began to appear. New neighborhoods sprang up that were established by people who shared nationalities and similarities. New York City has many examples of these types of ethnic neighborhoods. The Italians established an Italian neighborhood that became known as “Little Italy.” Jewish people from eastern Europe settled in an area called the Lower East Side. There is an area of lower Manhattan that became home to Chinese immigrants and their descendants.

Imagine standing on Mulberry Street in New York in 1802. As an Italian, you would stand on the narrow cobblestone street amid the smells of the Italian cuisine. The markets that line the street would remind you of your homeland. You would know that life in America offered more promise than the one you left behind. Years ago, in that first wave of immigration, the Italian people would have kept to themselves. They would have spoken their native tongue and provided services for each other.

Today, this street, a main area of the section of New York City, is referred to as “Little Italy.” In 1802, Italians were gathering here to work together. This neighborhood of Italians, even then, reflected the Italian heritage, food, and customs. It would have been more comfortable having people who spoke your language and who shared your beliefs near. Today a person visiting this area will be met with Italian food, shops, heritage, and people. The descendants from those first immigrants are much more assimilated than were their ancestors. These people now communicate well in English and welcome visitors to their restaurants and shops.

Leaving your home, possibly your family, and many of your personal belongings would have been difficult. Traveling a long distance in an uncomfortable boat ride, and then having to be processed with the idea that you might just have to go back home was difficult. Immigrants then had to overcome language and culture obstacles. In spite of all the barriers, most immigrants managed to build a great life for themselves and their families, and they helped make the United States the powerful nation it is today.
Mulberry Street in New York City

Historical Background Information

Immigrants coming to the United States faced the difficulty of trying to adjust to a life in a new and strange country. Many people entering the United States spoke a different language and practiced different customs than the majority of people in America. In order to succeed and to increase their comfort levels, the immigrants sought out people with similar backgrounds, languages, and customs. Thus, many ethnic neighborhoods were established by people that shared nationalities and similarities. New York City has many examples of these types of ethnic neighborhoods. The Italians established an Italian neighborhood that became known as “Little Italy.” Jewish people from eastern Europe settled in an area called the Lower East Side. There is an area of lower Manhattan that became home and remains home today to Chinese immigrants and their descendants.

Analyzing History

Knowledge
Name some of the nationalities that came to America.

Comprehension
Describe some of the different neighborhoods that sprang up in New York.

Application
Why did people come to this country?

Analysis
Compare and contrast the way immigration is handled today to how it was handled during the 1900s.

Synthesis
Create an outline that would explain immigration in this country.

Evaluation
What do you see as the greatest impact that immigration made on America?

Historical Writing

Fiction
You are an Italian immigrant living in New York City. Compare your old life with your new one.

Nonfiction
Design and compile a cookbook of favorite ethnic dishes. Be sure to write the country of origin on each ethnic dish.

History Challenge

Design a postage stamp honoring immigrants and their contributions to America.
Using Primary Sources  

**Going Somewhere?**

**Standard/Objective**

- Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations. (NCSS)
- Students will study the Mexican and Canadian borders along the continental United States and analyze the history of how the countries have patrolled the borders.

**Materials**

- copy of the facsimile *Mexican Application for Border Permit Card*; copies of the historical background information (page 56); copies of the student activity sheet (page 57); art supplies; reference materials; political maps of North America; rulers; old magazines

**Discussion Questions**

- What does the term *alien* mean in the context of immigration?
- What was the purpose of this card?
- Why do you think this card gives permission for unlimited border crossings?
- Why would an alien need this type of card?
- Which part of the United States would have been most affected by alien workers such as this applicant?

**Using the Primary Source**

Have students read the card and note any details of importance. Using research books, interviews, or the Internet, have students find out if this type of work permit card is required today.

On a political map of North America, have the students identify the countries of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. As a class, discuss particular challenges related to shared borders and the movement of people and goods crossing them. Are emigrants from Mexico and Canada allowed any freedoms that emigrants from other countries around the world are denied? Has this always been the case, or were there times when the borders were more or less open?

Finally, discuss with the students how the INS handles the long Canadian and Mexican borders. Are the two borders handled in the same way? On the CD are a few images: one of the Canadian border in Montana (Canada.jpg) and two of the Mexican border in California (Mexico1.jpg) and (Mexico2.jpg). On a North American map, have the students use rulers and the map scale to determine the length of each of the borders. Then discuss how the lengths of the borders affect how they are patrolled.

**Extension Idea**

- Have the students research customs requirements along the Mexican and Canadian borders at present. Then, they should propose changes that they think would improve this system.
Using Primary Sources  

Mexican Application for Border Permit Card

Going Somewhere?  
(cont.)

Historical Background Information

The United States is bordered on the north by Canada and to the south by Mexico. Throughout the countries’ histories there have been changing regulations that governed the movement of people and goods across the political boundaries that separated the nations.

Sharing the same continent, the three countries have some similar factors that have influenced their development and that formed their cultures. European exploration was launched early in the 14th century and colonization soon followed during the Age of Imperialism. The British, French, Spanish, Dutch, and Portuguese each had holdings in the New World. However, as the countries of North America developed, they became independent at different times, under different circumstances, and under different terms.

The borders between the nations have changed over time by treaty and by war. At times, such as in late 1800s, few laws restricted the borders and the citizens were allowed unlimited access of movement, settlements, and employment. Later in the history of the nations the long stretch of adjacent land was highly patrolled and protected with millions of dollars allocated to the effort and thousands of hours of manpower used.

The term alien refers to a person who resides or works in a foreign country but remains a citizen of his homeland. They usually seek to enter a country on a temporary basis. Often they provide a seasonal labor force, also called migrant workers. Farmers near the borders of Mexico came to depend on this work force to plant, tend, or harvest crops. Canadians and Americans crossed borders to work in urban factories and other industries.

As the nations developed more complex economies and governments and as populations increased, so did the pressure to restrict the activities of aliens. Permits were issued for work and travel. Customs officials were used to determine the status of legal or illegal aliens, the duration they could stay in the country, the types of products that could be imported and exported, and the types of work they could do.

The future of the three countries that occupy North America will continue to evolve. New challenges will present themselves to the governments as they deal with emerging immigration issues. One of those new challenges is the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA is an agreement among Canada, the United States, and Mexico that went into action January 1, 1994. The legislation covers economic issues such as tariffs on imported goods. This agreement also deals with immigration issues.
Pass Go

Background Information

Migrant workers, such as the applicant whose border permit card you’ve studied, have played an important role in the agricultural history of America’s borders regions. Their plight has been one of struggle for legal status as a labor force in the United States. They often came across the border of Mexico to fill positions as farm laborers. They lived and worked under harsh conditions following the seasons of crops and the demand for their services. Many times, they suffered injustice, inequality in earnings, inadequate housing, substandard medical attention, and hardships in overcoming language and cultural barriers. They were, however, an integral part in building the complex agricultural industry of the United States and supplying the demand of the growing population for food items. They also left a cultural heritage in cities that dotted the border between Mexico and the United States. In recent times they have sought legal standing in the courts by lobbying for new migrant legislation. They have also increased their political influence by becoming a viable segment of the United States population by their increasing numbers and economic buying power. They have extended the regions in which they work and live and the types of industries in which they seek employment.

Activity

1. Investigate and describe the role migrant workers have played in the agricultural history of the United States (specifically the Southwest region).

2. Discuss the daily life of a migrant worker today versus that in the past.

Challenge

Research and report on the influence Canadians and Mexicans have had on the culture of the border cities in the northern and southern regions of the United States.
Mexican Application for Border Permit Card

Text of Alien’s Application for Border Permit Card
(For use on Mexican Border.)

I, the undersigned, declare that I am a citizen of Mexico that I was born at Jimenez, Coah., Mex; that I reside at Jimenez, Coah., Mex and that my business address is Jimenez and I hereby make application for permission to cross and recross the Mexican Border at any Immigration Port of Entry.

**Description**  Age 16

**Height**  5 ft. 0 in.

**Weight**

**Eyes**  Brn.

**Hair**  Blk.

**Occupation**  No

**Marks**  Scar outer R eye.

**Sex**  Female

**M or S**  Read  Yes

**Date**  Aug. 2, 1921.

Del Rio, Tex.

**Signature**  Irene Delgado
1. Examine the pictures. Describe a typical day for an immigrant trying to gain access to America through one of the United States immigration ports.

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

2. When entering Ellis Island or Angel Island, describe some of the first visions of America that an immigrant would experience.

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

3. On a separate sheet of paper, imagine that you are an immigrant entering one of the two ports shown in the pictures. Describe the sights, sounds, and smells that you experience as you take your first step to America.