

Thousands are Coming to Amerikay

The Basics

Time Required

1-2 class periods

Subject Areas

ESL

Language Arts

Development of the Industrial U.S., 1870-1900

Common Core Standards Addressed:

Writing Standards for English Language Arts 6-12

Author

Mark Dillon (2006)

The Lesson

Introduction

This lesson will address North Carolina standards for Intermediate Low/ Intermediate High ESL as well as English 1 standards 1.01, 1.02, 5.01, 5.02, 4.03, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04. The lesson is aimed for ESL level III students but will function for English I students. This lesson is designed to bring to the forefront the idea that immigration is rooted in American history and that the current wave of immigration is a continuation of this idea. Through the song "Thousands are Sailing to Amerikay", *Chinese Poem #69*, and the *corrido* "El Deportado" students will learn that immigration is a topic that has spanned not only different nationalities but also different times in America history.

Guiding Questions

- Who were the first immigrants to the Americas?
Depends on perspective? Native Americans "immigrated." Europeans immigrated starting in 1500's. In an interesting way we are all immigrants.
- Who were some of the first immigrants to what is now considered the United States?
English, Germans, Irish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Scottish, Mexicano (mention that in 1800's border moved across them)
- Is the current discussion about immigration new?
No, immigration has been a often discussed topic in the past.
- How have immigrants been treated throughout History?
They have often been treated with mistrust and disregard.

Learning Objectives

Students will better understand the history of immigration in the United States.

Preparation Instructions

Songs used in this lesson

“Thousands are Sailing to Amerikay”

“El Deportado”

Lesson Activities

Use “Thousands are Sailing to Amerikay” with a copy of the lyrics. It may be worthwhile to temporarily change the title to “Thousands are Coming to Amerikay” and remove any reference to country and date of song before playing the song. Ask some cursory questions about this song:

- Who would perform this song?
- When do you think that this song was performed?

Play the song as recorded. Ask the same questions as listed above as well as some follow up questions:

- How has the perception of the students changed?
- Could the experiences of the past be superimposed on the experiences of the future?
- Are the experiences of the Irish in immigration similar to current immigration?

Play the song “El Deportado” and distribute lyrics in English. Discuss the similarities and the differences between the immigrant experiences. Use a Venn diagram (double bubble) to show the differences and similarities between the two immigration experiences. As a follow-up show and play the primary source poem of *Chinese Poem #69*, to show further similarities between immigrant experiences.

Assessment

The lesson will be discussed in a classroom setting. A written grade should be given for the Venn diagram. The Venn diagram will be assessed using a rubric.

Extending the Lesson

Writing extension:

Put yourself in the position of a new immigrant (in an inclusion classroom this will help take pressure off of immigrant students). Write a letter home describing your experiences as a new immigrant. What are things that you like about the United States what are your dislikes?

Reading Extension:

Use short collection of first person accounts from *Stories of the Past* website for students to investigate different historical experiences. This is also an ideal introduction to the first person narrative style as used in the memoir.

Listening:

Use United Streaming (if available) *Dear America: So Far from Home: The Story of Mary Driscoll, an Irish Mill Girl, Lowell*. As an added bonus you can use this to discuss dialect. You could ask: Why do the characters in this video talk “funny”? What is dialect?

Speaking:

Students will use the *Stories of the Past* first person historical accounts as a read aloud exercise. Make sure that there is proper time for preparation and that each student has the opportunity to practice on teacher or assistant to correct pronunciation and punctuation pauses. Students should work to use clear and consistent pronunciation.

Resources

Lyrics

“Thousands are Sailing to Amerikay”

You brave Irish people wherever you be,
I pray stand a moment and listen to me;
Your sons and fair daughters,
They are going away,
And thousands are sailing to Amerikay.

cho: So good luck to those people
And safe may they land.
They are leaving their country
For a far distant strand.
They are leaving old Ireland,
No longer can stay,
And thousands are sailing to Amerikay.

The night before leaving
They are bidding goodbye,
And it's early next morning
Their hearts give a sigh.
They do kiss their mothers,
And then they will say,
"Goodbye, dearest father,
I am now going away."

Their friends and relations,
And neighbours also,
When the trunks they are packed up
All ready to go,
The tears from their eyes then

Are falling like rain,
And the horses are prancing
Going off for the train.

When they do reach the station
You will hear their last cry,
With handkerchiefs waving
And bidding goodbye,
Their hearts will be breaking
When leaving the shore.
So goodbye, dear old Ireland,
We will ne'er see you no more.

So pity the mother
Who rears up the child
And likewise the father
Who labours and toils.
To try to support them
He works night and day,
And when they are reared
They will go away.

Lyrics for "El Deportado" available at

http://www.gale.cengage.com/free_resources/chh/music/deportado.htm

Sound recording: *First Recording of Historic Mexican American Ballads (1928 -1937)*. 1 Jan. 1994.
Arhoolie Records. Available on Itunes

Chinese Poem #69 - link

<http://sun.menloschool.org/~mbrody/ushistory/angel/poetry/poem69.html>

Dear America: So Far from Home: The Story of Mary Driscoll, an Irish Mill Girl, Lowell

<http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

(login required)