

Land of Hope: A 5th Grade Literacy Focus Unit
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FEATURED SELECTION

Land of Hope by Joan Lowery Nixon. New York: Laurel Leaf, 1993.

Russian immigrant Rebekah Levinsky hopes desperately that her dream will come true in America. On the difficult ocean journey to the "land of opportunity" she meets two other girls--Kristin Swensen from Sweden and Rose Carney from Ireland. The three quickly become friends as they share their visions of the future and endure life on the overcrowded ship. Once they reach Ellis Island the girls must separate and Rebekah and her family settle in New York on the Lower East Side. Instead of finding streets paved with gold, they slave seven days a week in a sweatshop. Will Rebekah find the courage to conquer the odds and find happiness in the United States of America?

RELATED MATERIALS

A Very Important Day by Maggie Rugg Herold. New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

This story is about a woman from the Philippines experience becoming a United State's citizen along with the other 11 families standing beside her. The ceremony explained in this book is similar to the ceremony Rebekah's family, along with other United State's immigrants, will experience when they become United State's citizens.

The Orphan of Ellis Island by Elvira Woodruff. New York: Scholastic Press, 1997.

Dominic, a lonely orphan boy, is accidentally left behind on a fifth-grade school trip to Ellis Island. The book tells a story about a dream he has about being an immigrant from Italy in the United States. The story is another example of an immigration story.

My America: Hope In My Heart, Sofia's Ellis Island Diary, Book One (My America) by Kathryn Lasky. New York: Scholastic Press, 2003.

When Sofia and her family arrive in Ellis Island after a long and difficult journey from Italy, a cruel twist of fate separates Sofia from her parents and sends her into "quarantine." This story is another example of the hardships immigrants experience when they arrive in the United States.

Journey to Ellis Island by Carol Bierman. New York: Hyperion, 1998.

This story is an account of the ocean voyage and arrival at Ellis Island of twelve-year-old Julius Weinstein who, along with his mother and younger sister, emigrated from Russia in 1922. This is another example of an immigration story.

Land of Dreams (Ellis Island Stories) by Joan Nixon Lowery. New York: Laurel Leaf, 1993.

When fifteen-year-old Rose Carney arrives in Chicago from her family farm in Ireland, she finds that life in America isn't so easy. This story is another example of the hardships immigrants face when they arrive in the United States.

GOALS

- Students will understand the process of becoming a citizen.
- Students will learn about the struggles immigrants go through after they arrive in the United States.
- Students will examine the reasons why people immigrate to the United States.
- Students will examine what it means to be a citizen of the United States.

STANDARDS

Social Studies 5.2.6 – Identify and give examples of individual rights in the Bill of Rights.
English 5.2.4 – Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

English 5.5.2 – Write responses to literature.

English 5.7.10 – Deliver informative presentations about an important idea, issue, or event

UNIT PLAN

Pre-reading

Activity: The class will explore the Ellis Island website about immigration (<http://www.ellisland.org/Immexp/index.asp>). While on the website they will watch the six videos about families that have immigrated to the country. While listening to the videos the students will write five new facts that they have learned about immigration. They will also look at the timeline about immigration and do a math related activity later in the week with those numbers.

Grouping: Whole Group

Reading

Activity: Teacher will read the first chapter of the novel aloud to the class, stopping periodically to examine key elements. The students will then finish the novel on their own or in pairs, discussing it every day in a response group.

Accommodations: The student will have the book available for them to listen to on tape. The students will also be able to read their book with a buddy. Also, the students will be able to have their response group questions available before they read the chapter, so they know what key elements to look for during their reading.

Grouping: Individual, Buddy Reading, and Group Reading

Responding

Activity: While reading the book, students write in their journals at least three times each week. One topic will include “What struggles did Rebekah’s family go through to become citizens in American?” Other journal entries might include “What made moving to America so appealing for Rebekah and her family?”

Grouping: Individual

Exploring

Word wall words to add: emigrate, immigration, refugee, hardship, citizenship

Activity: The students will interview a person who has emigrated from another country. The class will create a list of questions to ask each person that is interviewed. The teacher will ask students to try hard to find a person to interview on their own, but the teacher will also have a list of people available to interview if the students are not able to find someone to interview. The students will then create a report to share with the class about the interview.

Grouping: Individual and Whole Group

Applying

Activity: President Bush has just “appointed” your class to be in charge of passport checkpoints at airports, seaports, and highways across America. Using what you have learned about how Rebekah’s family felt when she came to America, and all of our other class activities, your charge is to create a document for new immigrants to the United States. Before beginning the assignment, determine questions that immigrants might have.

Grouping: Individual and Small Group

TIME SCHEDULE

Day 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Brainstorm○ Vocab○ Quickwrite○ Introduce immigration through website	Day 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Teacher reads about Ellis Island, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2○ Students will read Chapter 3 for tomorrow	Day 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 3○ Math: Chart Immigration	Day 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 4 & 5○ Introduce Interview	Day 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 6○ Social Studies: Map Immigration Routes
Day 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Teacher reads Chapter 7 & 8○ Check Interview Progress	Day 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 9	Day 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 10○ Teacher reads <i>A Very Important Day</i>○ Take US Immigration Test	Day 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 11	Day 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 12○ Check Interview Progress
Day 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Teacher reads Chapter 13 & 14	Day 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 15○ Interview Presentations	Day 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 16○ Interview Presentations	Day 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 17 & 18○ Immigration Document	Day 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 19○ Immigration Document

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- Journal entries during unit
- Quickwrite
- 5 Facts from the Website
- Immigration Chart
- Immigration Map
- Immigration Test
- Interview Presentation
- Immigration Document

Ideas for Focus Unit taken from:

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/destinationamerica/>

<http://www.ellisland.org/Immexp/index.asp>

<http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780440215974>

<http://www.ypress.org/nov2002/curriculum.html>