



GRADE 8 - Government, Immigration, & You

Featuring a play on immigration and lessons through history!



Class-time: 5 class periods over a week

Topics: Teaches students about immigration in America through its rich history in a non-partisan narrative. Ideal for History & Geography classes!

Worth noting: Students participate in lessons that enrich their understanding about immigration in America through readings and activities. Students also participate in a play on immigration or they may view a live presentation.

For more information or to request a resource, contact our Senior Director at mkamer@projectrealnv.org or 702.703.6529

Or visit:

<http://projectrealnv.org>



Government, Immigration, & You (Grade 8): 5-Period Lesson Plan Summary

'Government, Immigration, & You (Grade 8) is an experience from Project REAL that takes place over the course of a single week and is available to all eighth grade classes in Nevada for free! Using the resources we provide, you will teach your students concepts about immigration. It is undoubted that the subject of immigration is a sensitive topic, but through our non-partisan narrative, your students will be able to form their own answers to the complex questions that surround immigration. More detailed instructions are available, but here's a summary of how to use the materials we'll be providing you over the course of a week.

SUGGESTED USE & TEACHING PLANS

Day 1: Immigration Basics

Before using the materials, teachers will administer a pre-test to prepare students for the lessons. Students will read about the basics of immigration... why is immigration a thing? Why do people move? Why do immigrants come to America? How does immigration affect you?

Day 2: Immigration Then & Now

Students will learn the history of immigration in the United States... a 'Nation of Immigrants'
Students will compare immigration laws in the past to immigration laws in the modern era

Day 3: Immigration, The Law, & You

Students will learn about the immigration processes & procedures
After students have read the materials, they may complete a supplemental activity found in the teachers' guide

Day 4: Student Play and other activities

Students have the option to act out our immigration play or to view a live presentation of our play
If time allows, students may complete any of our other activities.

Day 5: Wrap up

After using our materials, teachers will administer our post-test to wrap up the lessons students have learned. Teachers may also administer the Naturalization test, which all immigrants seeking to become an American citizen must take before becoming a naturalized citizen of the U.S.
Note that all days end with answering lingering student questions.

To signup or request more information, contact Project REAL's Senior Director at
mkamer@projectrealnv.org or 702.703.6529



presents

Government, Immigration, & You

*Immigration's Role in the
History, Laws, and Policies
of the United States*

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I - Introducing Immigration



Goals

Law, Policy, & You

The gravity that keeps our feet on the ground and the air we breathe that fills our lungs are both key elements of the daily our environments that shape our lives. They're important and we would struggle to survive without them. Even though they are essential elements of our day-to-day lives, not many people spend a lot of time thinking about their importance.

If you think about it, laws are in our lives just as much: Whether you are on the run in North Korea from a totalitarian dictatorship or lost on a mountain-top and subject to the law of nature, some form of law is everywhere. When you wake up, while you're sleeping, and all over again the next day, you will be living under certain laws and legal systems.

Law has a consistent presence like air and gravity, but it requires a lot more attention than those two elements. We don't really need to think about gravity until we're on a hike on the edge of a cliff, and we don't need to tell ourselves 'Breathe in, breath out, breathe in, breathe out' ... we just breathe! Laws and policies change – and they change often.

During the time in class that you are using this material, you will be learning about one specific area of law and legal policies – immigration. For some students, immigration laws and policies may have already shaped their lives in an important way. Other students may think of immigration as an unimportant subject that won't ever impact their lives.

No matter which of those two types of students you are, immigration is a topic that is likely to produce intense emotions and strong feelings. Given the goals of this material, that makes immigration a perfect subject! We want you to learn about immigration laws and policies so that you can:

- 1) Look past your emotions when discussing a provocative topic, and form arguments based on facts rather than feelings,
- 2) Relying on facts and your own research, form your own opinions on a topic that is the subject of much debate so that your position – whatever it becomes - is a well-informed one, and
- 3) See the value in keeping yourselves informed of current events – especially those relating to the law – because (as you'll discover) it is rare that a law or policy won't affect you. The olds refer to that as 'picking up a newspaper once in a while', but we don't care what you call it, so long as you choose to keep yourself informed and engaged with the world around you.

We hope at the end of this exploration into immigration law and policy, you'll see just how much all laws and policies – not just those about immigration – have influence in your life.



By listening to other perspectives before reaching conclusions, conducting your own research, keeping track of your sources, and staying up to day on current events you will be able to engage in debates about law and policy that can be healthy and rewarding...even if everyone doesn't agree with you in the end!



Government, Immigration, & You

Between television, news articles, conversations you've heard your parents having, classes at school, you are bound to at some point heard words like immigration, visas, and aliens.

Maybe you understand a bit of what you've read about, but if you were ever asked to explain it in front of your class, how confident would you be? Would you pretend to be sick to get out of it and insist you need to go to the nurse's office?

We understand that without knowing more, immigration can be a confusing topic. It may even seem like it isn't the most important thing to learn about. We hope by the time you reach the end of this book, you'll see things differently.

You may have lived in the same neighborhood your entire life, but as you'll see, immigration is a part of every family's story – especially here in the United States. It may be hard to see that at first. Now more than ever, immigration can seem like one more thing people are fighting about on TV and online.

In the early 1800's, America had 740,000 immigrants arrive in the country. By the late 1900's, the number of immigrants coming to the country reached more than 9 million. These days, the country sees an average of 44 million immigrants arriving each year. People coming to live in America from across the world has made - and continues to make millions of lives better. For all the good it has done though, immigration has been and continues to be a source of heated national debate in our nation.

Some people insist that immigrants are great for the country and help everyone live better lives. Other people argue that citizens from other nations should not be allowed to move to the United States anymore. A few people even say that residents of other nations should not be allowed to even visit the United States!

In addition to having goals that can be reached by studying *any* one area of law and policy, we hope that after learning about *immigration* law and policy you will be able to :

- 1) Discuss how cultures from across the world shaped the unique identity of the United States.
- 2) Explain how laws and policies have historically reacted to major moments in immigration, and the what the results of those reactions were
- 3) Provide details on the reasons for immigration,
- 4) Clearly offer your own view on immigration laws and policies, and
- 5) Have the ability to defend your views on immigration laws and policies with great clarity and specificity.

How This Text Can Impact You

Do you already have an opinion about people immigrating to America from other countries? Should we welcome them in, or do you believe there are other options that need to be explored?

This book is not designed to tell you how to think and feel about immigration. Instead, it has been designed to be a tool – one you can use to begin to form your own informed opinions on the subject.

Gut reactions and emotions are easy, and so is the option of just going along with the thoughts and opinions of the people around you. When the facts become available to you – as they will begin to be as you explore this material – will those change your mind and shape your views? That decision will be up to you; we just want to provide you with an opportunity to decide for yourself.

As you make your way through *Government, Immigration, & You*, you'll have more than a chance to learn how immigration shaped the history of the United States, and how the movement of people shaped our current culture. You'll also be shown how immigration has influenced the creation of different laws and policies in America in nearly every era of our nation's history.

As you begin to understand more about immigration and its role in America's history, we hope you will form your own thoughts and opinions on this subject. You will learn the role immigration plays in your life (surprise – if you live in America immigration has a role in EVERYONE's life!), and the lives of those people belonging to the many generations yet to come.

Your fellow students may have vastly different opinions than you do: as you'll learn, everyone comes from different circumstances, even if they all end up in the same place!

Don't Rely On (Just) This Book!

Just like most of the other books you'll read at school, this one has plenty of questions in it. Unlike many other questions from textbooks, this one will ask you questions that don't have right or wrong answers – just correct and incorrect ways of answering them. We did that so you can become skilled in critical thinking.

Being skilled in developing positions that are informed by facts – even when those positions are emotionally driven – will only benefit you. As you'll discover more and more as you get older, many people let their emotions, opinions, and assumptions get in the way of finding out the truth when they should be using facts to fuel their conversations.

Government, Immigration, & You is not a complete history of Immigration. This material has been designed as a starting point. You'll learn about the process of immigration and about the times in history when immigration was a key factor in the shaping of American life...then, and now.

The information we provide summarizes those times, but you don't have to feel – and shouldn't allow yourself to be – limited by the material we've included in this book. That is why we hope you will choose to use online research and your history textbooks when developing responses to this book's questions.

As You Answer

Many of the questions in this book will ask you to provide an opinion, but how you feel will only be a small part of your answer (if you're answering the questions correctly).

When a question that asks how you *feel* about a law, policy, or historical event, your answer needs to contain at least two facts. For each fact, you need to explain how it supports your opinion or how it is a hurdle to the way you think should have been or should be. The way you get a correct answer is by (1) showing effort, (2) showing that you 'put some thought into it', and (3) prove that you understand that laws say what they say... not what you *want* them to say. Here's an example:

How do you feel about the Chinese Exclusion Act?

Correct Answer 1: After learning about the Chinese exclusion act, I was confused more than anything else. When I do hear people talk about politics, they talk about how rich people pay politicians for favors. Wasn't it the rich people that owned the mines and the railroads that were hiring the Chinese workers? Why weren't they more grateful, and why didn't they fight the exclusion act, if only to be greedy and save money?

Correct Answer 2: I think the exclusion act was really messed up, but I get why it happened. I can see how a bunch of American Citizens that could vote but who weren't able to find work and who were getting angry about immigration from Asia could make politicians to write a law like that. If the Asian workers had been able to vote, it might have been different, but even before the act a lot of them weren't naturalized yet, so it didn't leave a lot of room for the lawmakers to not do anything.

Wrong Answer 1: It was clearly racist, and dumb.

Wrong Answer 2: I feel like the act made sense, since the people voting for it were the ones losing their jobs.

As You Read

As you read through this book, you will begin to notice **words or phrases in bold red**. Those are vocabulary words that you may not be familiar with or key concepts to keep in mind as you explore the concept of immigration in depth. You can use the glossary at the end of the book to quickly review these terms and to gain a greater understanding of them

Enough explaining! Now that you know what to expect from this material, how to use it, and the resources you can use when deciding how to answer the questions we've provided, let's get started!

Understanding Immigration: The Essentials

Nations

"I pledge allegiance, to the flag, of the United States of America..."

There's a good chance you have said those words a few times in your life. You probably even said them this morning in school! The Pledge of Allegiance is a promise and a reminder. The people saying it are promising to do what is best for the nation. By making that promise, they are reminded they are part of a nation. But what is a nation?

Some people might describe a nation as a country or a government. Those people wouldn't be wrong, but they wouldn't be completely right either. That would be like describing a motorcycle as a heavy bicycle: the description leaves out the main difference between a bike and a motorcycle! The thing that allows a motorcycle to move in the first place is an engine.

Just like a motorcycle without an engine is just metal and rubber, a nation is not just roads, buildings, rules, and borders. A nation's engine – the thing that makes it a country – is its people.

Some might say nations are areas that exist within **borders** - imaginary lines that separate the area they occupy from other countries. That's not necessarily right either. Some nations exist as a people without a place.

A nation is nothing without people. **Nations** are large groups of people that share traits like language, history, descendants and beliefs that are united to achieve a common goal. That might sound weird to you. After all, if The United States is 'one nation' like the pledge states, what is the common goal of America? What is America trying to do?

In order to understand the goals of nations (including America), consider laws from other countries around the world: If you were caught spray painting a wall with graffiti in Singapore, you could end up being hit with a cane in an official punishment ceremony held by the government there. Until recently, women in Saudi Arabia were not allowed to drive cars. In China, people can only go to websites the government says are ok to visit. In Vatican City, women are not allowed to vote.

Those countries' laws may sound mean to you – and even to some of the people living there – but they were not written to please Americans. The laws reflect the values of their people, and they exist to maintain or improve each nation's way of life.

Just like those other countries, the goal of American as a nation is to uphold our values and maintain or improve our way of life.

Citizens

Imagine you won a contest and were given a fully-paid summer vacation in Canada. You would be given food, a place to stay, someone to drive you wherever you wanted to go, and even some spending money – enough to last you for 3 months!

Since you would be living in Canada for 3 months, you would probably follow their rules and laws, and at least try to act like the locals so you could make some friends. Would that make you a member of the Canadian nation?

No. Just because you live or work in a country, that doesn't make you a member of its nation. Each country has their own rules about who can be a member of the nation.

Citizens are people that are legally recognized as being an official member of a nation. If you are an American citizen, you are officially a member of the American people – a member of the nation. In most countries, citizens have more rights and privileges under the law than non-citizens.

A simple example is voting: in nearly all nations, in order to vote you need to be a citizen of that country.

If you think about winning that free trip to Canada, it makes sense why a country would only allow citizens to vote: would it be fair for you to vote in a Canadian election if you were going to be gone shortly after? Your vote might change how the country's laws work – laws that would last for years after your brief visit.

What would happen if you decided to stay in Canada and live there for the rest of your life, could you vote then? Would you be able to gain recognition as an 'official member of the nation of Canada'?

If you're not a citizen of the country you live in, that doesn't mean you can't become one. Each country has laws that make that possible. As you'll learn throughout this book, just because it is possible doesn't mean it is easy to change your citizenship.

Build Your Arguments: *The goal of the United States as a nation is to uphold our values and maintain or improve our way of life.*

- How would you describe American Values?

- How would you define our 'way of life', and what could be done to improve it?

- What evidence did you use to come to your conclusions?

Governments, Movement, & You

Immigration is the act of arriving in a foreign country to live there permanently. That seems pretty simple: Immigration is all about people moving and relocating.

The movement and relocation of people may not seem like a controversial topic, but throughout history people that have moved between lands have faced hate and **persecution** (mean and even violent treatment of someone because of their political or religious beliefs). Some large movements of people have even been the reason wars were waged. It's not all bad of course: wealth, success, and love have also all resulted from emigration (**emigration** is the act of leaving a nation to live in another).

Those aren't just the results of people moving between nations either: They're also the reasons many people move! While there are many different reasons for immigration, when people choose to move they tend to have a reason that falls under one of three categories

WHY: The Reasons People Move

If you brought 20 people together who had become American citizens when they were adults and asked them why they changed their citizenship, you would probably get 20 different answers.

Why do we move? Most children move because their parents move. Most parents move because there is a better opportunity for them to provide for their family elsewhere. Young adults tend to move to obtain a sense freedom or go to a college that's out of state. Then you have those who are moving just to be closer to something they love like family, the mountains, or the beach. While these are some positive reasons to move, sometimes people move because there are negative reasons.

Perhaps, a country's economy isn't doing too well. Families then will tend to move to somewhere the economy is thriving because it will be what is best for their family - especially families that own businesses. Or sometimes people have to move because they fear for their safety and the safety of their family, which is sad but happens more often than you might think. Everyone moves for a different reason. Do you know why you moved? Now, do you get an idea of why people move?



*Every family has a story of what brought them to the United States.
Do you know what your family's story is?*

Reason 1 | Danger: The reason for starting a life in a new country that may be easiest to understand is when a person wants to escape a dangerous situation.

A **refugee** is any person who is outside his or her country of nationality because they are unable or unwilling to return to that country, specifically because of persecution or a fear of persecution. If someone moves because they live in a city where a war is taking place, they would be considered a refugee.

The term refugee can be used to describe a person or a group of people. When a majority of a nation leaves their country though, there is another term that can be used to describe them. When large groups of people move because of danger, it is kind of like a big part of the heart of the entire nation has moved. **Diaspora** are a large group of people that left their homeland and are seeking a new place to live together.

War isn't the only reason someone would become a refugee, or that a nation's people would become a diaspora. Sometimes natural disasters like earthquakes, hurricanes, or volcano eruptions can produce so much damage that people can't live in the affected areas anymore. When that happens in countries that don't have a lot of money, many of the locals will seek out a new country to call home.

Another kind of danger that causes people to seek a new home is persecution. **Persecution** is when people are threatened, harmed, or killed because of a group they belong to. People have been persecuted because of their race, religion, political views, orientations, genders, identities, and disabilities.



Above: Child refugees of the Syrian Civil War comfort each other as they walk through a camp in Greece set up for refugees.

Refugees may have to wait for months or years in camps like these while they apply for visas to travel to different countries, in search of a better life.

Reason 2 | Opportunity: Another reason people move to a new country is for opportunities that don't exist back home. Some will move permanently and change their citizenship, but others don't want to stay in the country they go to work in – they just want to work for a bit, and then go back to wherever it is they think of as 'home'.

Migration is the act of moving from one location to another, and can be temporary. You've probably heard about birds or whales migrating south for the winter for warmer climates. After a few months, they return to a more Northern location. So birds and whales migrate, while people that leave one nation to permanently live in another immigrate. If your family moved from Nevada to California, they would have migrated since they stayed within the borders of a single nation, even if they crossed the borders between states.

Unfortunately, some people use the words migration and immigration as if they mean the same thing. Don't let other people's misuse of either term confuse you: Just try to remember that immigration is the act of moving to a *foreign country* to live there permanently, and migration is the act of moving from one place to another and that migration may be temporary. If you hear someone else use the words the wrong way, don't be afraid to correct them!

Work is one of the common reasons people might migrate temporarily, but not necessarily immigrate to another country. Sometimes there just isn't enough work in the country they are from during certain times of the year. They may not want to become citizens of another country, but they're willing to move to a new nation in order to make enough money to feed their families. People that travel to farms to help with harvests, and then returns to a place far away they call home at the end of the season are considered migrants. These types of migrants are known as **seasonal workers**.

Other times there is a very special job that makes a person want to move permanently. If you could be paid to do your favorite thing, but you could only do it in a different country, wouldn't you consider it?

Of course, there are other opportunities reasons besides work that cause people to move to a new country. Going to school in a different nation is seen as an exciting opportunity for many people! Generally described as **international students**, these are people who move to a country to learn a specific skill or attend a certain program before heading back home to the country they are from. Some may just want to go so they can see what it's like to live in a different culture, and others go hoping it helps them to learn a new language. Most international students would be considered migrants, but sometimes they will try to stay in the country they are studying in after they've been there a while and decide they like it.

Reason 3 | Love: Have you dreamt of walking up the Eiffel Tower in Paris? What about eating Pizza in Rome? Maybe you want to explore the Middle East and its ancient ruins!

The world has plenty of exciting things to offer, and even if you don't know what it is yet, there is something in another nation that you would love to experience for yourself (for example we hear the Icelandic Aurora borealis is much cooler to see than anything you might view from Alaska - Sorry Alaska!)

When you hear the word tourist, you may picture a goofy looking person with shorts, a big camera, a Hawaiian shirt, and maybe even a fanny pack. A **tourist** is really just a person that is travelling for their own enjoyment.

Does that mean a tourist is a migrant though? They may travel between locations before eventually returning home, but most tourists are not moving to the new locations to live there. They are just visiting when they travel to their destinations. Most of the time, tourists are not considered migrants.

There is an exception though!

Some tourists sell nearly everything they own and then travel between different places without any kind of plan. This is called **backpacking**. Some people will just backpack until they run out of money and then settle on somewhere to live. Other people will travel and pick up work wherever they go, living in each spot for a few weeks or months before moving on.

Since people that backpack don't have a home to return to though, they're not exactly migrants. Instead, people that backpack can be described as nomads. **Nomads** are people that don't have one single location that they live in and think of as a 'home'. They may travel constantly to new locations, or have a pattern of travel where they live in many different locations that they leave and return to.

Sometimes when people travel to new countries, they fall in love with the food, language, music, and the **locals** (the people who live in a specific location). When people begin to love everything that represents the identity of the nation they're visiting, they might decide they want to make that country their new home.

A traveler might fall in love with more than a nation while they're on their journey. They might end up not wanting to say goodbye to a specific person they met during their travels. Whether it's for all a country has to offer, or a specific person living there, love has inspired people to move across the globe throughout human history.



*Sure, selfie-sticks seem like a tourist thing,
but what if you travelled to another country and wanted to stay?*

Do you know what steps it would take in order for you to remain there legally?

Immigration, Naturalization, & Citizenship

Naturalization is the process of becoming a citizen of a nation for people that are not freely-given citizenship (babies born in the United States to parents that are American Citizens are born as citizens, not naturalized upon birth).

Not everyone that immigrates will be naturalized by the country they move to... even if they do everything right in order to live in that nation permanently! So how *does* someone become a citizen? The rules are different in every country, but in America there are 3 easy ways a person can become a U.S. citizen. They are:

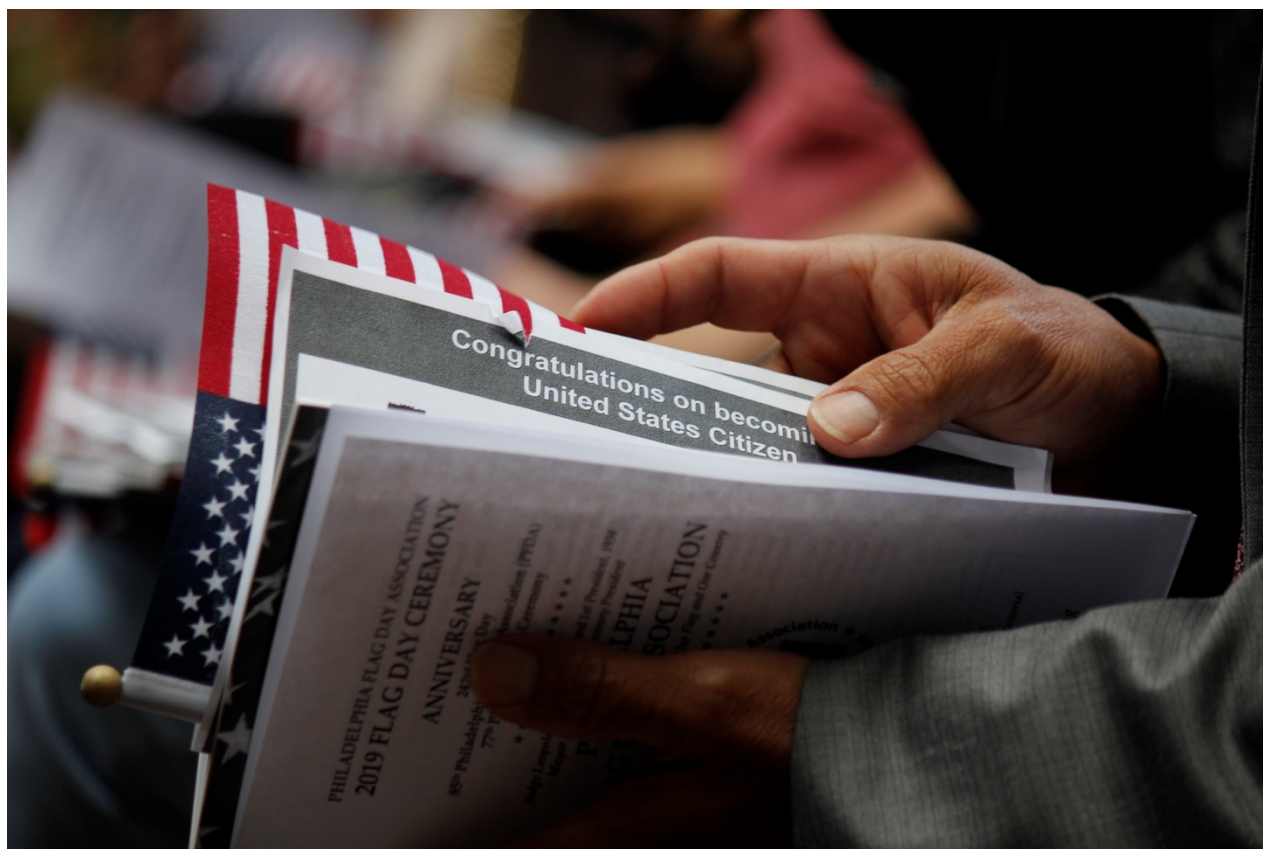
- 1) By being born somewhere in the United States or one of its territories.
- 2) By being born to an American citizen and meeting a few other requirements.
- 3) By being under the age of 18 when one of your parents becomes a citizen of The United States and then meeting a few other conditions.

For people that don't qualify for those three 'easy' ways, there is a fourth option 'of many options':

- 4) By following one of the many other 'paths to citizenship' that don't include the three ways above.

The many 'paths to citizenship' in the fourth option can be very confusing, and are unquestionably the most difficult. Most of the fourth option's paths are years-long processes, and even when someone does everything right along those paths, it doesn't guarantee they'll be granted citizenship!

Which path a person takes depends on what originally made them want to become a citizen of the United States. Those paths are explained later on in **Section III – Immigration, The Law, & You**



WHO: The People That Move

Just by learning why people move, you've already seen there are many ways to describe the people that move: Immigrants, migrants, tourists, and seasonal workers are just a few examples.

While you'll learn about different paths to citizenship later on in this book, to help you understand how different people were present in America throughout our country's history, it will help if you understand a few more types of people. People like aliens, resident aliens, residents, and permanent residents.

A lot of the time people don't see the difference between these titles that are given to immigrants and feel like they can use them for just about anyone who comes over the border.

Let's compare the different types of people living in countries to get a better understanding of the similarities and differences:

Immigrants: An **immigrant** is someone who moves to a foreign country with the intent of staying permanently. If you moved from Canada to France and then stayed in France the rest of your life, you'd be considered an immigrant.

Migrants: A **migrant** is someone who moves between locations, and may end up travelling back and forth on a regular basis. Migrants may have less restrictions on their travel, and their moves can be temporary. If you moved from Canada to France for two years for school, and then moved back to Canada, you would probably be considered a migrant since the move wasn't permanent.

Aliens: An **alien** is simply a person that is in the United States, but not a citizen of the country. Tourists, students, and migrant workers are a few examples of aliens.

Residents: A **resident** is a way to describe someone that lives in a specific place, but is not a legal term when used on its own in conversations about immigration. The term resident can be a legal term, but that is more likely to happen when talking about cities or states you live in. Confused? Let's try clearing that up:

Saying you are a resident in your home, in your neighborhood or in Nevada are not legal claims. Saying you are a resident *of* Nevada is a legal claim though, because people that live in Nevada may have special rights or responsibilities that the state gives (no matter what their citizenship or immigration status is).

Resident Alien: A **resident alien** is a non-citizen who is allowed to be living in the U. S. for an extended period of time. They aren't American citizens, but they have permission to have an ongoing presence in the country. Refugees are one example of resident aliens. People that have moved here as a step on their paths to citizenship would be another example.

A resident alien may need to renew their residency every few years, meaning they have to ask the government to extend the permission they were given to live in the United States. A refugee that was given permission to enter the country because of a war in the nation they were from would have to ask for permission to remain in America every few years unless they gained a different kind of immigration status.

Permanent Resident: A **permanent resident** is someone who is an alien, and not a citizen of the United States, but is residing in the country as a *legally recognized* resident. They have asked for and given permission to stay in the country for the rest of their lives. That means they do not need to re-apply for permission to stay every few years the way a resident alien may have to do. Often times, permanent residents are on a path to citizenship.

A refugee that wishes to settle in America instead of moving to another country could become a permanent resident, and then one day become a citizen.

Worth noting: Perhaps you've heard of a green card? A **green card** is a nickname for an identification form that is given to permanent residents (because it has traditionally had green coloring).

Even though the word permanent is in the title, a permanent resident can have their permission to remain in the country taken away if they are convicted of a crime, or if they willingly give up their right to residency (which would happen if they decided to live in another country).



*There are many reasons for travelling between nations.
If you were to travel between countries, what would your reasons be?*

Citizen: We already defined citizens, but you should also understand the difference between citizens and permanent residents. Unlike permanent residents, American citizens cannot easily have their status (as citizens) removed...though it can happen. If someone commits acts of war against the United States, runs for public office in another country, or accepts citizenship with another nation, they can have their American citizenship removed. The process of removing someone's citizenship is called **denaturalization**.

Naturalized Citizen: **Naturalized citizens** are people (often permanent residents) that have been awarded citizenship in a country of their choice. They have been given citizenship – they weren't just born into it. Someone that came to the U.S. as a refugee and decided they loved the country so much they wanted to stay here could apply to become a naturalized citizen. Another example would be a person that married someone who was already a citizen of the United States. If that couple wanted to live together in America, the non-citizen could apply to become naturalized. Just like people born with citizenship, naturalized citizens can be denaturalized for serious crimes or committing acts that suggest they aren't loyal to the U.S.

Undocumented Immigrant: **Undocumented immigrants** are people that don't have legal authorizations to be in a country. A tourist that has stayed 24 hours after their visa expired is as much an undocumented immigrant as a person that snuck into the country illegally ten years ago and built a life for themselves without ever being granted any kind of status as a resident

Deportable Alien: A **deportable alien** is a non-citizen who can be removed from the United States because they violated at least one of the terms that they agreed to before they were given permission to enter the country.

Illegal Alien: The term **illegal alien** is a term used to describe people that have illegally crossed into another country. The phrase has never been defined by federal law (meaning it's not an official or legal term), and tends to be used by anti-immigration activists.

Worth Noting: Many people consider it to be a **pejorative term** - a phrase that is an intentionally negative description of the thing that it is describing.

Now that you've learned about different types of people in the country, you begin to notice other the terms used to describe those people loosely by other individuals. Many people can't even keep the difference between migrants and immigrants straight, and think they mean the same thing! Hopefully you'll choose to correct them to bring factual information to an ongoing and heated national debate.

*Having trouble remembering each type of person?
Check out [Appendix II – Types of People](#) for an
easy-to-use table with each type's definition and example.*

HOW: The Ways People Move

Classifying the types of travelers and their reasons for travelling may seem like a lot of work, but doing that helps understand people's movement through a nation. To maintain the security of our country and to keep things fair for everyone, America has laws and policies that manage immigration and entry into its borders.

Most non-citizens entering a nation are good people, but tracking everyone's movement helps to stop the ones that try to ignore laws that help the country's citizens.

The majority of laws that are violated by foreign people in the United States relate to paperwork needed to enter the United States, and the length of time a person can stay here. Only a small percentage of legal violations are what you would normally think of as 'crime' (anything ranging from traffic violations to violent incidents). To better understand the majority of laws that are broken by non-citizens, let's explore how the United States tracks and manages the millions of people entering our country each year.

Did you know that if you want to enter a country, you can't just decide to go and travel there? Rules are different for each country, but most of them want you to be able to prove who you are and your **nationality** (what nation you are a citizen of) before they decide whether or not to let you in. To help their citizens travel to other nations, countries give passports to their citizens. A **passport** is a record made for travel that serves as a form of identification and proof of citizenship for the person it is issued to.

Because passports can prove a person's citizenship, it's more than just something used to help someone travel to different countries. A passport can make it easier for someone to get help from their home country's embassy or consulate if they run into trouble. An **embassy** is the main office one country's government operates in the lands of another country, with that country's permission. **Consulates** are like mini-embassies that are spread throughout a country. They offer some of the same functions but report to the embassy. If the post office was an embassy, all the blue boxes you can drop your mail in would be consulates.

If you were travelling in another country and got too sick to speak, the hospital might tell an American embassy or consulate. The people in those offices could then call your parents to help you out. If you lost a passport while travelling, you could contact the embassy or consulate and they could help you get a new one.

Once you have a passport, you can prove you are who you claim to be and the country you are from. You still don't have permission to enter another country though! For that, you'll need a visa.

The Vexing World of Visas

Yes, you might need a credit card to buy a plane ticket to another country, but that's not the 'visa' we're talking about. Most nations require you to get their permission before you can enter the country, and for that they have visas. A **visa** is a record of permission given by a country to an individual so that he or she may legally enter, stay in, or leave that nation's borders.

Visas are very important records. If you have one, you don't want to lose track of it! If you were in a car in another country and the driver was pulled over, you might be asked for your visa. If you didn't have it with you, the officer might think you were in the country without permission and arrest you!

To help prevent situations like that from happening, countries stamp pages in the passports of visitors that are coming for a short stay. The stamp shows the date they entered the country and the type of permission they received before entering the borders. Some governments also give identification cards that show details of a visa to visitors that will be staying in the country for longer periods of time.

Before you can get that stamp or card though, you need the country to give you the permission you're seeking – to issue the visa to you! That's another service provided by embassies and consulates. If you want to go to Brazil, you would first have to go to a Brazilian consulate or embassy, apply for a visa, and be approved for it. Obviously, you would want to do that *before* you bought your plane ticket. If there was a mistake in your paperwork, Brazil might deny your visa request, and you'd have a ticket you couldn't use!

There are many different types of visas and each one has different rules, but the main thing to remember is that visas are a form of permission you are given in order to enter and be in a country.

Thinking about leaving the country?

Planning a vacation to visit a new culture?

Want to move to another nation one day?

Check out [Appendix IV – Types of Visas](#) to see which one you might need for your vacation to another nation!

Hold Up! Obstacles, Travel & Immigration

If it isn't already clear, immigration isn't a small topic. As you can now see, simply travelling to a country requires all sorts of documents and permissions, and just looking at all the different ways people living in the U.S. are classified should make it apparent that getting to live in a country is even more complicated! What's with the holdup? Why are there so many obstacles to moving between nations? Can't we all just get along? While there are many different reasons for controlling (and perhaps intentionally slowing) the movement of non-citizens into and throughout a country, those reasons tend to fall into one of three categories: Security, Prosperity, and Fairness.

Security Reasons: When you think of dangers to America, it is hard not to think about the events of September 11th, 2001 – the day when planes were used to attack America in acts of terrorism. As you'll learn later on in this book, the events of that day had a direct and long-lasting impact on how immigration is talked about and debated in the United States, and in how immigration laws and policies have been shaped since then.

Worries about security threats from non-Americans have been part of immigration debates long before that – and even long before America was a nation. In fact, security has been a concern when it comes to people moving throughout countries for nearly all nations, even ancient ones!

Example: Whether it was legend or historical fact, an example of how long people have been concerned with their nation's security would be the Trojans. Have you heard of the Trojan horse? That was when the ancient nation of Troy had great border security and tightly controlled who was allowed to enter their community. Their enemies couldn't just walk in, and had to find a way to get in.

According to legend, the Trojan's enemies built a giant horse and offered it as a peace offering. The Trojans accepted the gift and brought it into one of their cities. The legend says that the same night they accepted the gift, after the Trojans were all sleeping they were slaughtered – their enemies had been hiding inside the horse, and snuck out to destroy the community after getting past all of their security!

Clearly security being a reason to control movement in and out of a country isn't a uniquely American concern, let alone a new one!

Even if people coming into a country aren't enemies of that country, they might just not be great people. If you knew someone had been responsible for a murder in their home country, would you want them to come to yours – even just to visit?!

Don't forget: most of the people coming into our country – even the people that break laws while they are here – are not violent criminals (remember: most violations by non-citizens are related to paperwork and the length of time they are here, not things like theft or drug dealing). Still, if someone with a serious criminal history was trying to enter a country, shouldn't that nation do what it could to stop it? Having long and complicated processes for entering a country or becoming a citizen of a nation might seem kind of mean at first, but a slow process makes it easier to examine the people that enter America's borders to make sure they won't be a threat to anyone's safety and security.

Prosperity Reasons: America has long been described as a land of opportunity. Many people have moved here – whether for short periods of times or to live here permanently – in search of better lives. As you've already learned, seasonal workers will come here to take jobs on a short-term basis because they can make more money in America than in their home countries. Some people may want to move here permanently for similar reasons – their home countries just can't offer the same chances of success that America can.

Throughout our nation's history, there are times when it seemed as if entire nations were coming here for those opportunities. Many of those people were so poor in the lands they originally came from that when they arrived they were willing to work for less money than the citizens that were already here. During those periods of time – and even today – Americans perceived those waves of people as a threat to their own prosperity. They feared (and some continue to fear) that they would lose their jobs or be unable to find work because the people moving here from other countries would be willing to work for less money.

It would be nice if our nation could give everyone a chance to seek success in our country, but if nations are large groups of united people living together to achieve a common goal shouldn't one of those goals be to ensure that its citizens have the best chance at their own success before sharing those opportunities with other people?

Some people argue that is exactly the case. Others claim that giving equal chances to seek success to citizens and non-citizens actually produces greater wealth and prosperity. Another argument is that when it comes to America, there is too much opportunity for people to be worried about opportunity running out.

Which view is right? There may not be one answer, but the one constant when it comes to the subject of prosperity is that the possibility of threats to it are another reason nations have for controlling movement in their countries.

Imagine there are two people trying to enter America applying for travel visas at the same time. Neither are coming to work. One of them is coming to travel from coast-to-coast as part of a photography project. That individual plans to visit all the national parks in America, and share photos of their natural beauty with the rest of the world. The other person is coming to see a special surgeon who lives in Boston. The surgeon has just developed a procedure that can save lives, and agreed to accept this individual as a patient. Since no one else on the planet is doing the procedure, they are going to hire the surgeon in Boston. If you had to choose, obviously (hopefully) you would let the patient seeking a life-saving surgery in first.

As mentioned earlier, there are *many* types of visas each country issues (turn to page ## to see some examples of those visas in [Appendix III – Types of Visas](#)). In America, different offices that review visas can limit the amount of each type of visa they are reviewing. Those offices take into account security and prosperity issues first. Then, once they've filtered out some people (which is like sending them to the back of a metaphorical 'line'), they will consider issues of fairness. In some cases, those issues may impact how many visas of a certain type can be issued each year.

For a final example, consider the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, or INA for short. The INA was one of the first attempts to put many different immigration laws under a single, large body of text. In the process, two major changes occurred to the U.S. immigration system:

- The INA has gone through many changes since 1952, though its effects can still be seen today. One of the standards it established has today grown into an allowance of up to 675,000 visas that can be issued each year exclusively for permanent immigrants. It also requires the president to speak to Congress each year specifically to talk about how many refugees should be allowed in.

These amounts aren't just numbers: They are meant to be a source of fairness for the millions of people that hope to enter our country each year.



Should everyone be heard on a first-come-first served basis instead?

Immigration, The World Today, & You

Imagine you are living at home next summer without much to do. You dream of opening a restaurant one day, so you decide to try to get a job at one to learn more about the business. Around the same time, a refugee of a foreign war has fled to America with their 6 month old baby, and recently moved to your neighborhood. They arrived here with little more than a bag of clothes and a few dollars in their pocket.

Now imagine that the refugee has applied to the same job as you. Because they are so poor and have to feed their baby, they are willing to work for less money and longer hours than you. The owner of the restaurant you applied to decides to hire the refugee instead.

Is that fair? What if they really are a refugee, but in an act of desperation, they cut in front of 1,000 people waiting to get into the country before them by sneaking in? What if the person is lying about being a refugee just to get the job, and they're actually just an international student who is here for a few months who wants some extra money to spend?

To be clear, the majority of foreign people in America are here lawfully. Nearly 76 million foreign people entered the USA in 2016, and more than 90% followed the rules about travelling here. That's about 69 million of the roughly estimated 76 million entries to the country that arrived in the United States legally.

Sometimes, people enter the country but stay longer than they're supposed to. Other people sneak into the country. Those people – the law breakers – are estimated to be about 15% of visitors to America (about 12 million people), and most of them arrived here legally as well.

Hearing that 12 million people are breaking laws can sound really bad: what if 12 million people showed up to your birthday party without an invitation?! When you look at the total percentages of people following the law compared to the people breaking it though, you can see that the majority of people coming to America from other countries *do* follow our laws: More than 85% of them!

The majority of the 12 million people that 'broke' immigration and border control laws were not lying about being refugees or getting in the way of American teens seeking summer jobs. Many of them just entered illegally with hopes of finding work, and perhaps a safer place to live than the one they were originally from.

The problem for many that enter the U.S. illegally is that employers with jobs that pay well tend to require paperwork that proves the applicant can legally work within the country. Since most of them won't be able to provide that paperwork, they will only be able to obtain jobs that pay cash. Cash-only jobs don't leave bank records or transaction records, and that means they can be paid less than the **minimum wage** – a minimum amount a worker can be paid as required by the law!

What does this mean for that restaurant job you were so excited about? Perhaps by hiring someone who works for less money – even if they did it illegally – the owner of the business was able to lower their prices so they could compete with a nearby business that had been winning over some of their customers. If you liked eating there and weren't just looking to work at the first restaurant that would hire you, that would be a win for you! You can always find another business to work at anyhow.

These 'what if' scenarios are actually what drive a lot of the debates around immigration; What if immigrants are terrorists? What if they change the feel of our neighborhoods when we like the way they are? What if they take our jobs? Ultimately, people tend to have a lot of questions about immigration, a lot of ideas, and for people that are mostly opposed to immigration – a lot of fears.

As you will learn, historically there have been times where there were winners and losers as a result of immigration. Whether immigration will be a positive or negative force in our lives depends on the times, how it is managed by the government, and how the immigrants are worked with once they join the communities that they move to.



Immigration, National Debate, & You

Despite many hours of heated debate, the U.S. Congress has failed to agree on any immigration law reform. As Tamar Jacoby wrote in *Foreign Affairs*, "There is little doubt that the system needs fixing. But just how big a problem is immigration? Is it in fact a crisis that threatens U.S. security and our identity as a nation? And does it, as today's bitter debate suggests, raise so many fundamental questions as to be all but unsolvable." These are definitely things to think about when talking about immigration; but you also have to take into account the other side of the story, which is are we making immigration bigger than it should be? Could this situation actually help our nation in some way?

Lee Hamilton – a former Congressman - suggested that the lack of new and significant immigration laws can be interpreted many ways. He suggested that "...crafting legislation that will be accepted by 300 million people, or even a majority of them, is a gargantuan (extremely big) challenge." He also suggested that we must not blame politicians, and remember there are "genuine, deeply held political differences that have to be resolved."

Since Ponce de Leon arrived in Florida in 1513, the U.S. has both welcomed and rejected immigrants. While the United States has generally had the most open door policy of any nation in the world, you will see that there have been many times throughout our history when our doors have been closed. A broad variety of cultures and nationalities have been shut out during certain historical periods only to be accepted and incorporated during later years.

When the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were written, America's population was about 3.5 million. 3 million free whites and the rest slaves of African descent. At that time the majority of the population was Northern European or English and almost exclusively Protestant. Today with a population of over 300 million, we have become one of the most ethnically diverse nations in the world representing more than 150 nations and every world religion.

There is no question that addressing the consequences of an increase in population, particularly among legal and illegal immigrants, has become a major political and social concern. In this book we strive to encourage you to examine why immigration remains such a significant political and social issue when the United States has been a nation of immigrants from its beginning.

While Americans agree immigration reform is needed, our elected representatives have had trouble finding common grounds for improving the system.

"On the one hand we publicly pronounce the equality of all peoples; on the other hand, in our immigration laws, we embrace in practice these very theories we abhor and verbally condemn." – Emanuel Celler



The Great Debate: Arguments For & Against Immigration

In the great debate over immigration, there are many viewpoints. Some are driven by facts, studies, and statistics. Others come from passion, fear, empathy, personal experiences, and sometimes just gut-feelings. To try and collect them all would be impossible, but below we've provided a list of the most common claims and arguments for and against immigration. **These are not all hard facts:**

We have made a point not to include any outright falsehoods, but we also didn't put each of the items below through any kind of rigorous verification process. As you get older and move further along in your education, you'll learn that facts can be presented in selective ways, meaning that people pick the information that supports their arguments, and ignore information that might go against the claims they are trying to make. Even **statistics** – a form of science that collects information to create fact-based conclusions about the world – can be produced in ways that produce false conclusions. That doesn't mean you shouldn't trust information you encounter, or that the truth behind people's claims cannot be verified. Instead, you will have to find your own way of deciding what conclusions you arrive at, based on the sources of information you are consuming. Doing that is an exercise in critical thinking – a skill that will benefit you well beyond your experience in school.

The other reason we are presenting these arguments is to provide a summary of how the debate has taken shape. Our hope is that you can keep this summary in mind as you explore the history of immigration in the U.S. in the next section of this book, and as you participate in our activities later on. Doing so will help you better understand how the issue of immigration has been, and continues to be, a major component of American life.

Immigration Claims & Arguments

Arguments Supporting Immigration

Arguments Challenging Immigration

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Naturalized citizens pay more taxes and end up contributing significantly to the economy | Immigration takes jobs away from Americans |
| Immigrants are willing to take jobs that most Americans are no longer willing to do | Immigrants are willing to work for less money, and that drives down wages for American Citizens |
| Statistics show that immigrants and naturalized citizens are more law-abiding than most Americans born into citizenship: | Undocumented immigrants have less accountability to the law, and since we don't know who they are or where they are, it is easier for them to commit crimes and get away with them. |
| America has been shaped by immigration: we are one of the most diverse nations on the planet, and would not be the country our citizens love today without the many cultural contributions that came to us through immigration. | Too much immigration into the country can change our culture and way of life too fast. We may not have a 'national language' but there are communities and neighborhoods throughout America where English isn't spoken, and that's not fair to the majority of Americans who are English speaking. |
| Immigration creates economic growth – the more people in the country, the more people there are buying things, making everyone wealthier | Immigration adds to the national debt and takes away resources from other Americans– if immigrants are taking low paying jobs or have trouble finding work because they don't speak English, they will need more money from the government through social services like food-stamps and welfare |
| All political parties are welcome to establish whatever policies towards immigration they want, and even if immigrants arrive, and for most it is a years-long process before they are able to vote. That gives all political parties an equal chance to win the votes of people that decide to become naturalized as citizens | Immigrants give an unfair advantage to one political party over another, and attempts to open up immigration are a plot to win more votes by the parties that let them in |
| There is a human cost to enforcing certain immigration policies and laws (like when families are separated at the border, or making it very difficult to enter the country as a refugee) that goes against American Values. We can punish immigration law breakers with fines and be more open with refugee-status applicants – we don't need to jail people or reject them for wanting to be a part of this country – especially those fleeing from danger. | If we don't enforce laws – including immigration ones – then they lose their value. Even though the human cost might seem cruel, we need to uphold the law, otherwise our justice system loses its ability to enforce other laws. Small crimes like traffic laws or big crimes like drug dealing could all be harder to enforce. |

Wrapping Up: As You Explore

In the next section of this book, you will be working towards a greater understanding of the role immigration has played in America's history and in shaping our nation. As that happens, we hope you will begin to form your own opinion and thoughts about immigration along with a clear understanding that whether you notice it or not, immigration has shaped your life and will continue to do so every day (as well as the lives of many generations to come).

Remember to keep an open mind through all of this. Everyone has their different reasons for doing something. Whether you feel like those reasons are or aren't enough is up to you

You may already have some thoughts, feelings, and opinions about immigration in American and the way it affects your life, but if we thought you knew all there is to know about it, we wouldn't have created this book!

The more you know about the subject, the more informed your opinion will be. We've already shown you some of the benefits to immigration and some of the things people fear about it, but now we'd like you to explore the subject from a different angle.

The United States is undeniably a nation of immigrants. From the first people that settled the land after traveling across the Bering Strait, to the waves of immigrants from all over the planet, waves of people have come from all over to live in our nation throughout its history.

Clearly, immigration has shaped and will continue to shape the United States' laws, culture, and place in the world. To get a better understanding of immigration's role in today's United States, let's make our way to the present by first exploring what role it had throughout America's past.



*When it's your turn to join the national debate on immigration, which side will you fall on and what will you say?
What information will you use to craft your arguments, and what sources will you use in your research?*

II - A Nation of Immigrants

How the movements of people shaped American history



US History: A Nation of Immigrants

Immigration: Our History

From the beginning of time, people have travelled across the planet in search of better lives. In the prehistoric era nomadic humans moved constantly, following the herds of animals they would hunt and fed off of. Only after each community developed agricultural technology did they then begin to settle down into villages, and then eventually cities. In the modern era, we continue to explore and transit the globe, with some people even daring to dream of one day moving to Mars!

Human movement is how our lands have become inhabited, and that movement has led to the establishment of civilizations across the globe. America is a special example of how human movement has shaped civilization though: From the indigenous people that first reached the American continents to the modern people from across the globe, people from many different places and cultures have come to America and shaped our country and our culture of multiculturalism in the process.

Let's explore how some of the most significant movements to America have shaped the nation we know and live in today.



As You Explore

After you learn about each group of people and their movement throughout the world, you will see numbers with **BOLD WORDS IN ALL CAPS**. Those **ALL CAP WORDS** are question markers that represent longer, more detailed questions. Here are the markers and the full questions they represent, which your teacher may ask you to answer:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WHO | Using the definitions included in "WHO: The People That Move", what classifications would these people fall under and how so? <i>'They meet the definition' isn't an answer – provide details.</i> Don't feel limited to just giving one classification |
| WHY | Using the reasons included in "WHY: The Reasons People Move", what led to these people moving to America, and what which of the three categories of reasons do each of those circumstances fall under? Don't feel limited to just listing one circumstance, or saying each circumstance only falls under a single category. |
| U.S. CULTURE | How has the movement of these people shaped America today? |
| HOLD UP | What reasons (from those listed in the listed in 'Hold up' on pages X+Y) did the U.S. have for slowing the movement of these people into America? In your opinion, were the reasons for slowing these' people's immigration to America based in fact, fear, both, or neither? What information led to your conclusion? |
| TODAY | How did this historical movement of people contribute to the claims and arguments of today's immigration debate? |
| LAW & POLICY | What Laws and Policies shaped the movement of these people in America, and how did those laws and policies shape this populations cotnributions to and participation in American society? |
| YOU: | How do the laws, policies, and historical events tied to the immigration of these people impact your modern life? |

The First Americans: The Nations of Indigenous Americans

Prehistoric People & Movements

The history of the United States of America as a nation began in 1492, when Europeans first encountered the North and South American continents which they would come to think of as the '**New World**'. Shortly after learning of the existence of the North and South American continents, the Europeans would quickly begin to explore and migrate to those lands.

Eventually, the United States of America would form as a result of that movement of people, but that is nowhere near the whole story. The history of people living in the lands our country exists on begins long before Europeans made their way here. When we say long before, we mean *more than 10,000 years* before Europeans arrived!

Despite there being no written record of the first migrations to America, science is able to tell us that the first people to arrive on the American continents came from the Northeastern regions of the Asian continent over 15,000 years ago during **prehistoric times** (eras of history when there were no written records created to document what occurred). In a way, these nomadic people that would come to live across both North and South America were the first Americans. These first Americans are generally referred to as **Indigenous Americans** – people belonging to one of the many nations that existed across the American Continents before the arrival of Europeans. That time – the time before Christopher Columbus first landed in the Caribbean – is called the **Pre-Columbian Era**.

Theories of the First Arrivals to American Continents

Since there aren't written records of the migration of humans to the American continents, archeological and geological studies have been used to develop theories about those people and their movements. Four theories – two on when the people came to the continent, and two on how they arrived on it – are now generally accepted as 'highly likely' by the scientific communities of the world.

The first theory of when people first began to spread throughout the American continents suggests that they migrated in one single wave over the course of a 20-100 year period.

A second theory argues there were three waves of migration by prehistoric tribes of nomads. The first wave came from crossing a land bridge from Siberia during the last Ice Age more than 15,000 years ago, while the second and third waves are suspected to have migrated from Asia at later points in time.

As technology improves, there may be many more revelations about the migration of the people that would first spread throughout the American continents.

It is estimated that it was over 30,000 years ago, that humans had spread throughout the entire continent of North America. Most scientists also agree that by the year 10,000 BCE (11,492 years before Columbus would arrive in the Caribbean) there were many thriving nations spread out across the North and South American continents. Over the next 11,000 years populations would grow and thrive, leading to more than 100 *million* people living throughout the many Indigenous Americans nations by the time Columbus' would first arrive in the Caribbean in 1492.

Words Matter:

Were Indigenous Americans Migrants or Immigrants?

During the pre-Columbian years in North America, there were many nations spread throughout ten geographic regions. Each nation was made up of different tribes of people that would become the ancestors of Indigenous Americans. Some of these nations would trade with each other. Some nations would wage war. Each nation had unique relationships between each other, and the same was true for tribes within nations.

In the thousands of years when Indigenous Americans were spreading across the continent before the arrival of Columbus and the Europeans, they were moving in search of regions to call home. They were not looking to join nations that already existed or take part in communities that were already established in regions they were moving to which means they were migrants, not immigrants.

Members of one tribe would sometimes join another one (because of a marriage or war usually), but that was rare. Members of tribes mainly stuck together and relied on their tribes and stayed committed to their people for stability and strength of their communities.

The North American Nations

By the time the first colonists would arrive in what would become the United States of America, the American Continents had been inhabited and cultivated by tens of thousands of years of human migration. The lands that would form our nation had already been settled for thousands of years.

As Europeans began to explore the American continents, they came to begin **settlements** - places where people try to create lasting communities in locations that are far from the civilizations they came from. In the eyes of pioneers, the lands they try to build communities upon are uninhabited. Before the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous Americans had been settling the land for thousands of years.

The first attempt at a European settlement in what would become modern day America was made by Spain. San Miguel De Gualdape was a failed settlement established in 1526 in what is now the state of Georgia. While that settlement was struggling to survive, there were more than 50 Indigenous American nations spread out and thriving across ten geographic regions.

For many years, many Americans thought of these nations as having been mostly nomadic tribes of people living simple lives of hunting and gathering. Books much older than this one were used in schools to teach students that European *settlers* 'tamed' the lands of America, and those actions were the first to bring advanced communities and culture to the lands of North America.

Those ideas had very little truth to them.

Long before the arrival of Europeans, the First American Nations were made up of tribes that had their own languages, cultures, technologies, and practices. They were complex societies, and many of these nations included massive city-like complexes housing thousands of people.

In their own way, each Indigenous American nation had shaped the lands they occupied with advanced farming techniques. The methods would differ between nations, but each had their own way of managing animal populations – techniques that guaranteed their people had food available. Some of these First American nations would wage wars with each other, while others had strong ties and highly-developed trading routes.

There were also a large amount of nomadic Native American communities, and though these nomads would move regularly, they were not wandering aimlessly or just following the herds of animals they would rely on for food (though that was how their culture had been discussed incorrectly in the past).

These communities returned to locations season after season, occupying many different sites in a repeating pattern, while also expanding the territory they used to thrive as a people.

In their time, European colonists in America and early American citizens made claims that they were 'settling' the American continents, but they were unknowingly creating a false history. When they arrived in the Americas and as they spread throughout the lands, the Europeans and Americans brought diseases with them that their people had some resistance to.



Decimated by Disease: The Unseen Shapers

Those illnesses were new to the Indigenous people of the Americas, so they spread quickly and devastated entire nations, killing significant portions of the Indigenous Americans' populations.

For thousands of years the indigenous people living throughout America had physically and significantly shaped the country in many ways. Before the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous Americans had created farmlands for crops and grasslands that would attract large numbers of animals that could be hunted for food all across the country. When the European diseases arrived with European explorers and colonists, the death tolls among the native people were so significant that they destroyed many indigenous nations' abilities to maintain those changes to the lands. After these diseases spread throughout American Indian populations, bison and pigeons populations exploded while gigantic regions of America became re-forested with tree growth. By the time the American and European pioneers would arrive in an area, it would appear to be untouched lands with little to no sign of human habitation before their arrival.

Though the first Europeans to explore America (and later, the first citizens of The United States of America) would claim to 'discover', tame, and settle the Americas, the lands had been settled long before their arrival thanks to the migration and success of The First American Nations.

Did You Know:

Pioneers, Settlers, & A Big Difference

When your parents went to school, there is a good chance their textbooks used to use the word 'settler' to describe European families that built homes and claimed property across America between 1776 and the late 1800's. Those families may have even referred to themselves as settlers.

They were called settlers because they thought that they were settling the land – taking a wild world with scary animals, difficult weather, and lands that weren't ready for harvest, and preparing them to be lived in and relied on by lots of people.

Today, we know better. Thanks to a greater understanding of the role Indigenous Americans played in treating all of America as a garden for thousands of years, we know the land did not need to be settled – it was just a tough life for those early American pioneers, who lacked the skills and knowledge of the Indigenous Americans.

To make sure the facts of history are not ignored, it is important to use the right words when discussing the settlement and pioneering of America.

Indigenous Americans were **settlers** because they were the first people to make the lands they lived inhabitable. Early European Americans were **pioneers** because they moved to areas with small populations that were difficult to live in for their specific way of life.

America Takes Shape By Pushing Away Its Past

The history of America as a nation is a tale of migration and immigration. The world we know today was shaped by how the people that came here to join our country were treated, but there's another side to the story: All of the growth, progress, and cultural development of our nation was the result of how we treated the nations that existed long before The United States of America was an idea.

American Indians were spread across the continent from the California coastline to the New York Islands before the arrival of Europeans. As colonization first took place in North America and as the new nation of The United States of America grew, the Indigenous Americans would lose lands that they had lived in for thousands of years. By taking this land, The United State of America would have room to grow its new nation at the expense of the many nations of the Indigenous Americans.

There was not one moment in time that led to the United States replacing the nations of indigenous people that were already here, but there was a type of action that led to that result: migration forced upon Indigenous Americans by the United States Government. **Forced migration** is when a group of people are not given a choice and forced to move away from a place they live.

As Americans spread from the east to the west, they forced the Indigenous Americans to leave their lands, often after winning very bloody and hard fought battles. Knowing that the people they were forcing to move would need to go somewhere and hoping to end the conflicts as quickly as possible, the United States Government created reservations.

Reservations are areas of land that a group of people have been forced to move to. In those lands, they are allowed to manage many of their own laws and how they govern themselves.

The United States government first created a reservation in 1786 when it [NAME HERE AND BRIEF HISTORY]. Over time, the idea of reservations was used by the American government to end disputes with different American Indian tribes and nations. The government would force indigenous people from their lands and sometimes even make tribes share reservations, even if those tribes had nothing in common. These forced migrations resulted in deaths, suffering, and major losses of culture and tradition.

One Nation Grows as Many Others Are Destroyed

There were many forced migrations after the first reservation was created in 1786, but a law passed in 1830 called the **Indian Removal Act** led to the most destructive series of forced migrations in American history. This law forced many different Indigenous American tribes and nations that were living east of the Mississippi River to move west onto reservations created by the United States Government. Between 1830 and 1838, thousands of indigenous Americans would head west, eventually leading to the Trail of Tears.

The Trail of Tears was an event when the American Government sent troops to forcibly move thousands of American Indians from Georgia to what at the time was called **The Indian Territories** and today is known as the state of Oklahoma. On the journey, over 5,500 Indigenous Americans died from disease, starvation, and exhaustion.

The Indigenous American Relocation & Slaughter

The Indian Removal Act becoming law and the Trail of Tears a series of were just two of the many times that the American Government had given lands and made promises to indigenous people, only to then force those people to move or break the promises made to them just a few years later. This pattern of give-and-take-back would repeat itself again often over the next 60 years as well. The United States of America would eventually stretch from the east coast of the continent to the west. In growing the reach of the nation and gaining that territory, the US Government created pockets of reservations throughout the nation, but the borders of those reservations would change whenever the government decided America needed more land.

Indigenous Americans that refused to move to reservations were eventually treated as enemies of America: The United States Government sent armies to force the tribes to move. Many fought back and were killed, but even those that simply refused to leave could be killed for their resistance. A series of wars known as the **Indian Wars** lasted from 1850 – 1915. Taking place mostly west of the Mississippi River, these wars saw Indigenous Americans fighting the American Army in resistance against the loss of their land and forced migration to the reservations that were being established.

[INSERT NUMBER SLAUGHTERED OVER YEARS HERE]

Before the nation was born in 1776 and for 148 years after, Indigenous Americans were treated as ‘others’ in America. It wasn’t until 1924 that they would be treated somewhat equally as Americans, when a law would pass granting them full citizenship as Americans.

An Embarrassing Past & A Tragic Legacy

The history of America as a nation is a tale of migration and immigration. The world we know today was shaped by how the people that came here to join our country were treated, but there’s another side to the story: All of the growth, progress, and cultural development of our nation was the result of how we treated the nations of people that existed long before The United States of America was an idea.

In modern-day America, this legacy of our country’s treatment of Indigenous Americans continues to haunt their people to this day. American Indian reservations continue to experience some of the worst levels of poverty in our nation, and little is done to address it.

Did You Know:

In the past, the term Indian (used without the proper adjective American) was a common way to refer to Indigenous Americans people because of a misunderstanding by Christopher Columbus. When he first arrived in the Antilles (a region of islands in the Caribbean sea that include the Cayman Islands, Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Hispaniola), Columbus thought he had reached the Indian Ocean. When they had their first encounter with the Taíno people of the Bahamas (the first Indigenous American Nation to encounter European explorers), Columbus and his team referred to them as ‘Indians’, not realizing they were nowhere near the Indian Ocean.

For many years, the term ‘Indian’ was used when talking about Indigenous Americans. Lessons about ‘The Pilgrims and The Indians’ or ‘Cowboys and Indians’ would even be taught in classrooms just like yours! Imagine if someone gave you a nickname without knowing anything about you! If that nickname had nothing to do with who you are as a person, you wouldn’t like that very much, would you?

The world we live in today has learned to show more respect for people by recognizing and acknowledging them. While many people in the past might have used the term Indian to refer to Indigenous Americans without meaning to hurt them, today we know that using the phrase Indian on it’s own to describe ‘American Indians’ or ‘Indigenous Americans’ is inappropriate, so we no longer do it.

Some American Indians even dislike another term that others consider to be okay: ‘Native Americans’ was a term created by the United States government and was meant to show respect for Indigenous Americans. Because the term was created by a government and was not developed in partnership with widespread input from Indigenous Americans, some do not like that phrase. There is less agreement between members of Indigenous American communities on the acceptability of using ‘Native Americans’ to describe their people. Since the acceptability of using that term is not clear the best thing to do is avoid using it unless you are of Indigenous American heritage.

Questions:

1. **WHO** Using the definitions included in “WHO: The People That Move”, what classifications would these people fall under and how so? *‘They meet the definition’ isn’t an answer – provide details.* Don’t feel limited to just giving one classification
2. **WHY** Using the reasons included in “WHY: The Reasons People Move”, what led to these people moving to America, and what which of the three categories of reasons do each of those circumstances fall under? Don’t feel limited to just listing one circumstance, or saying each circumstance only falls under a single category.
3. **U.S. CULTURE** How has the movement of these people shaped America today?
4. **TODAY** How did this historical movement of people contribute to the claims and arguments of today’s immigration debate?
5. **YOU:** How do the laws, policies, and historical events tied to the movement of these people impact your modern life?
6. **Beyond the Book:** The time between 1,000 BCE and 1492 is a Pre-Columbian time called the post-archaic period. Those years were the most successful for many cultures in America. Pick one of the ten regions from the map we’ve presented, Then, explain what connected the nations of that region, and what some of the biggest differences between that region’s nations were.

TIMELINE ITEMS

1492 – The Taíno first meet Columbus’ Expedition
1787 – First Indian American Reservation
1830 – Indian Removal Act
1838 - Trail of Tears
1851 – Indian Appropriations Act
1862 – Homestead Act
1889 – Oklahoma Land Rush
1890 – Sitting Bull & Wounded Knee
1891 – Indian Education – A Congressional Act
1924 – Indigenous Americans Gain Full Citizenship