



IN HISTORY: IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HERITAGE

Lessons

Common Knowledge

Overview/Description

Encourage students to think creatively about the process of immigration in very concrete terms by exploring questions asked to prospective citizens. Then, challenge students to develop their own questions that reflect their interests and values.

Grade Level

High school

Academic Standards for Social Studies

- Indiana Standards (as of Jan. 2010): High School, U. S. Government, Standard 5, Roles of Citizens (USG.5.2 and USG.5.5)
- National Standards (National Council for Social Studies): IV Individual Development and Identity; VI Power, Authority and Governance; and X Civic Ideals and Practices

Social Studies/Historical Concepts

Immigration and citizenship requirements

Learning/Instructional Objectives

Students will:

- take on the role of a new immigrant to the United States by answering sample questions that are asked of new immigrants
- research requirements for becoming a naturalized U. S. citizen
- practice interviewing skills by posing questions from the list provided to survey others in the class, school, or community
- consider what is important for new citizens to know about the United States and U. S. citizenship
- present their ideas on U. S. citizenship to others in the class

Time Required

Three hours for student research, group discussion, and writing activities

Copyright 2010
Indiana Historical Society
All rights reserved

This is a publication of the Indiana Historical Society, Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center, 450 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269 USA. Except for copying portions of the teacher resources by educators for classroom use, or for quoting of brief passages for reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise), without written permission of the copyright owner. All inquiries should be addressed to the Public Programs Division, Indiana Historical Society. Teacher Resource available online: www.indianahistory.org.

Materials Required

- Pencil and paper
- Student Handout: Citizenship Survey Questions

Background/Historical Context

Refer to the “INTRODUCTION: Ethnic History in America and Indiana” essay by John Bodnar from *Peopling Indiana: The Ethnic Experience* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996). The “Introduction” section of the Indiana Historical Society’s “IN History: Immigration and Ethnic Heritage” Web site provides a free download of this essay in PDF format.

Teacher’s Instructional Plan

Introduction

As an introduction to this lesson on immigration, consider using a book talk to introduce student choice reading selections or read a short excerpt as a class read aloud. Refer to the “IN History: Immigration and Ethnic Heritage Resources” section of the Indiana Historical Society’s Web site for sample “Student Choice Reading Lists.” Check with your school or local library for other selection options.

ACTIVITY

Part A: What do we all know?

- Begin the class by discussing the types of information that new immigrants are expected to know about this country before they come a U. S. citizen.
- Distribute the Student Handout: Citizenship Survey Questions.
- Consider the questions asked on the handout. How many of these questions can your students answer without help? How many can you answer immediately?

- Have students take the test in class. Then, ask the students to work individually or with a partner to find the answers. Have them identify the source where they found the information.
- Ask students to survey other students outside the class, the school’s staff, or even their parents to find out how much of this information is common knowledge among American citizens.
- Ask students to record the answers they receive and to report back to the class about their findings.

Citizenship Survey Questions and Answers:

Where would you find answers to these questions online? Give two suggestions. *Answers may vary.*

1. Can you name four of the original thirteen colonies? *Answer: Virginia, Massachusetts, Maryland, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, North Carolina, South Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Georgia*
2. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted? *Answer: July 4, 1776*
3. Name one idea in the Declaration of Independence. *Answer: That all men are created equal and have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*
4. Who was the first president of the United States? *Answer: George Washington*
5. Who was the president of the United States during the Civil War? *Answer: Abraham Lincoln*
6. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do? *Answer: The Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves.*
7. What kind of government does the United States have? *Answer: A Republic*
8. Who said, “Give me liberty or give me death”? *Answer: Patrick Henry*
9. Name one right or freedom guaranteed by the first amendment. *Answer: Freedom of religion, of speech, of the press, of assembly, and to petition the government.*

10. How many amendments are there to the U. S. Constitution? *Answer: twenty-seven*

11. What are the three branches of the government? *Answer: Executive, judicial, and legislative*

12. Name one qualification to be president.
Answer: Be a native-born, not naturalized citizen, be at least thirty-five years old, and lived in the United States at least fourteen years

13. What is the cabinet? *Answer: A group that advises the president.*

14. How many full terms can a president serve?
Answer: Two full terms

15. Where does the Congress meet? *Answer: U. S. Capitol*

16. How many senators are in Congress? *Answer: A hundred, two from each state*

17. Name two senators from your state. *Answer: Indiana—Evan Bayh and Richard Lugar (as of Jan. 2010); for other states, see <http://www.senate.gov>*

18. Who becomes president if both the president and the vice president die? *Answer: The Speaker of the House*

19. Who is governor of your state? *Answer: Indiana—Mitch Daniels (as of Jan. 2010)*

20. What are the duties of the Supreme Court?
Answer: To interpret and explain the laws

Part B: What should we all know?

- Challenge your class to come up with their own list of questions. What do they think new citizens—or all citizens—should know about their own country?
- Ask students, individually or in small groups, to come up with at least five other questions they think a new American should know.
- Ask students to share their ideas with the whole class.

Evaluation and Assessment

Consider using a rubric or checklist for evaluating student work.

Additional Resources

Refer to the “Resources” section of the Indiana Historical Society’s “IN History: Immigration and Ethnic Heritage” Web site for lists of educator and student resources on immigration and ethnic history.

Student Handout: Citizenship Survey Questions

Survey your classmates, parents, relatives, neighbors, and friends by asking them questions from this partial list of questions asked of new immigrants. Devise a system of recording their answers. Report your findings to the class.

Where would you find answers to these questions online? Give two suggestions.

1. Can you name four of the original thirteen colonies?
2. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
3. Name one idea in the Declaration of Independence.
4. Who was the first president of the United States?
5. Who was the president of the United States during the Civil War?
6. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?
7. What kind of government does the United States have?
8. Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death"?
9. Name one right or freedom guaranteed by the first amendment.
10. How many amendments are there to the U. S. Constitution?
11. What are the three branches of the government?
12. Name one qualification to be president.

13. What is the cabinet?
14. How many full terms can a president serve?
15. Where does the Congress meet?
16. How many senators are in Congress?
17. Name two senators from your state.
18. Who becomes president if both the president and the vice president die?
19. Who is governor of your state?
20. What are the duties of the Supreme Court?