



## IN HISTORY: IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HERITAGE

### Lessons

### Roll the Dice

#### Overview/Description

Students will research the history of a specific immigrant story and present it to the class in the form of a short essay, a poem, a picture, a play, etc.

#### Grade Level

High school

#### Academic Standards for the Social Studies

- Indiana Standards (as of Jan. 2010): High School, U. S. History, Standard 9, Historical Thinking (USH.9.2, USH.9.4, USH.9.5, and USH.9.6)
- National Standards (National Council for the Social Studies): I Culture; II Time, Continuity, and Change; III People, Places, and Environments; IV Individual Development and Identity; V Individuals, Groups and Institutions; and IX Global Connections

#### Social Studies/Historical Concepts

Immigration and immigration regulations

#### Learning/Instructional Objectives

Students will develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of the life of an immigrant from the eighteenth through twenty-first centuries.

#### Time Required

Two hours (minimum) for research and discussion

#### Materials Required

- Pencil and paper
- Dice (or numbers 1 through 12 written on slips of paper placed in an envelope)
- Library and/or Internet resources for background research by teams or individual students

#### 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.

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## 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 selection as a class read-aloud. Refer to the “Resources” section of the Indiana Historical Society’s “IN History: Immigration and Ethnic Heritage Web site for sample “Student Choice Reading Lists.” Check with your school or local library for other selection options.

### ACTIVITY

- Students will take on the role of a person facing a specific immigration decision and write an essay, a poem, a short play, or draw a picture to describe and respond to the situation.
- A roll of the dice determines which role each student will have use this exercise.
- This game can be played individually or by small groups of students.
- If dice are not available, draw numbers written on slips of paper.
- Each person or small group will roll the dice (or draw a slip of paper from the envelope) and match the number on the dice (or slip of paper) to the immigration scenarios.
- Thinking about the role they are assigned, students will research the situation on the Internet or at a local library or historical society. (To save time, the teacher may collect the appropriate materials for an in-class library.)
- Students will write an essay, a poem, a short play, or draw a picture to describe and respond to the situation.
- Students will share their project with the whole group.

## Immigration Scenarios

1. The year is 1943. You are an American citizen of Italian descent living in Terre Haute, Indiana. What makes your community unique? Do you have family members living in Italy? What issues concerning citizenship are you facing as an Italian American living in the United States during World War II?
2. It is 1996 and you are a young professional who moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, from Mexico City. What is the size of the Latino (Hispanic) community in your new state? What community-based organizations are available to you? What is the process you had to follow to obtain a work visa?
3. The year is 1850. You are an Irish Catholic who came to Indiana because your landlord paid you to emigrate. You survived the Potato Famine in your homeland and your journey by ship to the United States. How do you now survive in this new land? What jobs are open to you? How do you obtain citizenship papers?
4. The year is 1943. You are an American citizen of Japanese ancestry. What language(s) do you speak and write? In what part of the state do you live? Do you have family members residing in Japan? What issues are you facing as a Japanese American during World War II?
5. You are an undocumented worker living in Corydon, Indiana, in 1985, but your spouse is an American citizen. You have a young family. What health care and educational opportunities are available to you as an alien without a work visa? If you choose to stay in this country, what options are open for you to obtain citizenship?
6. The year is now. You are a Potawatomi Indian living in Indianapolis, Indiana, a region where your nation has lived for hundreds of years. What other Native American communities live in Indiana? What opportunities are there for you to celebrate your heritage in Indiana? What immigration issues are most important to you?

7. The year is 1925. You have just moved to Gary, Indiana, from Poland in order to find work in the steel mills. Do you have family in the area? Is there a Polish community already established in the region? What is unique about your heritage? What happens to the economy of northern Indiana during the next five years?

8. The year is 1990. You are an Amish farmer living near Elkhart, Indiana. How did your ancestors arrive in this state? Why did they choose to come here? What language(s) do you speak and write? What makes your community unique? Do you have family ties with relatives in another country? What do you think about current immigration policies?

9. The year is 1851. You are an African American who recently emigrated from the southern United States to Indiana. How did you get here? Now that you've arrived, what laws govern how you live your life? Where can you build a home? Where can you celebrate your religion? Where can you go to school? Where can you work?

10. The year is now. You are an Asian college student living in central Indiana. What languages do you speak and write? What community-based organizations are available to you? Make a list of the reasons why you would decide to stay in Indiana, or why you would return to your home country.

11. The year is 1882. You are one of 250,000 Germans who arrive in the United States this year. You plan to move to Evansville, Indiana, with your family but your parents are denied approval to come to America due to their age and are sent back to Germany. How do you keep in touch with them and with your home country? What jobs will you find in your new hometown?

12. The year is now and you are yourself. What is your cultural or ethnic heritage? What language(s) do you speak and write? What is unique about who you are? Do you know your family history? Is citizenship important to you? Explain why you feel this way.

## 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 additional resources on immigration and ethnic history.