

# The Immigration Act of 1965 & The Valley

**Overview:**

This lesson is designed to help students gain a better understanding of changes in United States immigration after the Immigration Act of 1965. They will connect the evolving national immigration experience to local immigrant stories to learn the varied reasons people choose to immigrate and the struggles immigrants face.

**Lesson Summary:**

Immigration is a fundamental part of many Americans experience. This country was built by the labor of immigrants. Evolving immigration laws reflected prevailing prejudices amid our struggle to find our national identity. In 1965, the federal Immigration and Nationality Act allowed for family sponsorship and opened the United States to immigration from previously restricted countries. In this lesson, students will analyze the changes in United States immigration after the Immigration Act of 1965. They will be assigned a demographic group and use the sources provided to write an essay summarizing their research. Students will format their essays in the style of a personal narrative from the perspective of an immigrant coming to the central San Joaquin Valley in the 1970s. Students will gain a more personal understanding of the push/pull factors for immigration. Students are also directed to include the immigrant experience as they struggle to adapt to another culture in a new country, including lack of resources and discrimination. This lesson will help students to connect the evolving national immigration experience to local immigrant stories in California and the central San Joaquin Valley.

This is designed as a local supplement to a broader foundational lesson.

**Time Allotment:**

40 minutes

**Grade Level:**

Secondary - Grades 9, 10, 11

**Standards:**

Grade Eleven US 11.11.1

Discuss the reasons for the nation's changing immigration policy, with emphasis on how the Immigration Act of 1965 and successor acts have transformed American society.

Grade Eleven US 11.B.1.1.J

Explain important factors that have helped shape American society diversity of the population.

Grade Eleven US 11.B.1.1.I

Explain important factors that have helped shape American society large scale immigration.

Grade Eleven US IV.B.2.2

Describe the impact of major demographic trends on the United States, e.g. population growth, increase in immigration and refugees.

Grade Eleven US 11.9.7

Examine relations between the United States and Mexico in the twentieth century, including key economic, political, immigration, and environmental issues.

Grade Eleven US 11.10.6

Analyze the passage and effects of civil rights and voting rights legislation (e.g., 1964 Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act of 1965) and the Twenty-Fourth Amendment, with an emphasis on equality of access to education and to the political process.

Grade Eleven US 11.11.1

Discuss the reasons for the nation's changing immigration policy, with emphasis on how the Immigration Act of 1965 and successor acts have transformed American society.

**Learning Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

Understand that immigrants to the United States have had many reasons for wanting leave their home countries and wanting to live in the United States.

Understand the various reasons why people have immigrated and still continue to immigrate to the United States. Identify the hardships many immigrants face when leaving their home country for a new country.

Identify the changes made in the Immigration Act of 1965 from the Immigration Act of 1924.

Describe the various reasons why people would want to leave their home countries for the United States.

### **Materials:**

Document. Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Public Law 89-236, October 3, 1965. Eighty Ninth United States Congress.

Document. Immigration Act fo 1924. Public Law 68-139, May 26, 1924. Sixty Eighth United States Congress.

Article. "Valley Mosaic – Fresno Bee Time Capsule." Special Edition. *The Fresno Bee*, January 1, 2000. Courtesy of Arte Americas.

Article. Bill McEwen. "[Immigrants Built Fresno. And We're Better For It.](#)" GV Wire, January 8, 2018.

Article. "[Essay: 1921-present: Modern California - Migration, Technology, Cities.](#)" Calisphere, University of California, 2011.

Article. History.com Editors. "[U.S. Immigration Before 1965.](#)" History.com, October 29, 2009.

Article. "[The Legacy of the 1965 Immigration Act: Three Decades of Mass Immigration.](#)" Center for Immigration Studies, September 1, 1995.

Article. Ran Abramitzky and Lea Boustan. "[Immigration in American Economic History.](#)" *Journal of Economic Literature* 55(4), December 2017: 1311-1345.

Article. "[Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants: What's the difference?](#)" Rescue.org, June 22, 2018.

### **North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia & Libya**

Article. Sandra Tompkins. "Out of Ethiopia." *The Fresno Bee*, February 2, 1986. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. Dennis Pollock. "All the Way From Ethiopia." *The Fresno Bee*, circa 1985. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. Ugwumba Eqbuta. "[The Migrant Crisis in Libya and the Nigeria Experience.](#)" African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, January 2019.

**South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran & Pakistan**

Oral History. "[Passport](#)." New Tech High School, Napa, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum, 2019.

Document. "Who Are The Sikhs?" Mabelle Selland Research Papers, circa 1980. Fresno County Historical Society.

Document. "Portraits: Indian Sikhs." National Endowment for the Humanities presentation script, circa 1980. Mabelle Selland Collection, Fresno County Historical Society.

Booklet. Frank Lewis and Puran Stevens. "Iranian Refugees in America: A Cross-Cultural Perspective." U.S. Bahá'í Refugee Office, 1986. Maybelle Selland Collection, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. Zak Cheney-Rice. "[How Fresno, California, Became a Hotspot for Anti-Sikh Violence in America](#)." Mic.com, January 20, 2016.

Article. Diana Kruzman. "[Thousands of Indians Facing Persecution Back Home Seek Refuge In California](#)." LAist, September 2, 2019.

**Southeast Asia: Cambodia, Laos, Thailand & Vietnam**

Article. "The Hmong: A Struggle in the Sun." Special Edition. *The Fresno Bee*, circa 1985. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. Jim Steinberg. "Viet Family's Fresno Reunion Ends 8-year Flight to Freedom." *The Fresno Bee*, circa 1980. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. Donald E. Coleman. "A Hero's Rites in Fresno." and Jim Steinberg. "Common Woes," *The Fresno Bee*, circa 1990. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Book Chapter. "Heritage of Diversity: Laotian Americans." Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. "What If My Parents Had Not Escaped Laos?" *The Fresno Bee*, January 19, 2008. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Video. [HmongStory40 Project interviews](#). HmongStory40.org. YouTube.

**East Asia: China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines & Taiwan**

Oral History. "[Lovingly Letters](#)." California State University Channel Islands, Camarillo, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

Oral History. "[Filipino Flag](#)." Lakewood, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

Document. Consul Tae Hee Park, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea, San Francisco. "Korea Today" speech, May 20, 1981. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

Article. "Land." *The Fresno Bee*, June 8, 1980. Mabelle Selland Research Papers, Fresno County Historical Society.

**The Americas: El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua & Peru**

Oral History. StoryCorps Oral History Interviews: [Immigration, California](#). StoryCorps Archive.

Oral History. "[A Child of DACA](#)." New Tech High School, Napa, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum, 2019.

Oral History. "[Nacatamal](#)." New Tech High School, Napa, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum, 2019.

Oral History. "[Dreamer](#)." California State University, Channel Islands, Camarillo, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

Oral History. "[My Family](#)." California State University, Channel Islands, Camarillo, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

Oral History. "[Passport, Cruxifix](#)." Los Angeles, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

Oral History. "[Passport](#)." Santa Ana, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

Oral History. "[Cadillac Deville 98](#)." Anaheim, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

Oral History. "[American Dream](#)." Los Angeles, California. Your Story, Our Story, Tenement Museum.

**Homework:**

Assign the article below, and instruct students to arrive the next day ready to discuss.

Article. "Valley Mosaic – Fresno Bee Time Capsule." *The Fresno Bee*, January 1, 2000. Courtesy of Arte Americas.

**Introductory Activity (20 minutes):**

Discuss Valley Mosaic article. Which ethnic groups were focused on? Which were left out? Describe how it does or does not reflect changes in immigration over time?

Review Immigration Act of 1965 and discuss how it changed immigration to the United States.

Introduce essay assignment and set two week deadline. Students will write a 500 word personal narrative from the perspective of an immigrant to the central San Joaquin Valley or California in the 1970s. They will be assigned a demographic group and use the resources provided, as well as outside sources they find on their own. They will connect their immigrant's experience to the changes in United States immigration after the Immigration Act of 1965.

**Learning Activity (20 minutes):**

Encourage students to write a personal narrative that is thought provoking. The narrative must include their character's background, what motivated them to immigrate to the United States and describe the situation they left behind. Students should also include whether their immigrant will be allowed in to the United States based on the immigration laws that changed in 1965. The narrative should describe what they plan to do once they get to Fresno, what resources they have and what they lack, and any discrimination they may face. Students will gain a more personal understanding of the push/pull factors for immigration, as well as the struggle to adapt to another culture in a new country.

It should be stressed that students do not just say to follow the American dream. Each of the demographic materials discuss more pressing motivations such as war, civil unrest, prejudice, religious freedom, economic opportunity, etc. These are the reasons the students should attempt to unpack. Students should make distinctions between immigrants and refugees.

Students are encouraged to explore the oral histories at [Your Story, Our Story](#) and [StoryCorps](#), and conduct research online.

Students are required to cite their sources. Provide direction on preferred citation

style and review research methodology. Remind students about the distinction between legitimate sources and sites like Wikipedia.

Students are required to turn in a quick write summarizing their research for feedback at least once before essay is due.

**Assessment:**

Students' essays should reflect on the learning objectives of the lesson provided above based on the narrative rubric provided.

**Key Questions:**

List some of the important changes in American immigration after the passage of Immigration Act of 1965.

Analyze and describe the various reasons why people would want to leave their home countries to immigrate somewhere new like the Central San Joaquin Valley.

What are some of the basic categories of immigrants admitted to the United States?

List some of the difficulties of immigration. Ex. lack of resources, lack of support, and discrimination.

**Extension Activity:**

Students interview a family member or community member who is an immigrant or has immigrant ancestors. Where did they come from? Why did they come to the United States? Were they a refugee? Why they came to the central San Joaquin Valley? Did they know someone here when they arrived? Did they seek help from an immigrant organization, or the government to get settled? Did they experience discrimination?

The interview should be submitted in question/answer format.

**Distance Learning Options:**

- Assign the essay and demographic groups. Provide Demographic Groups handout. Set deadline.
- Provide direction on citation style and review research methodology.
- Require students to turn in a quick write summarizing their research for feedback at least once before essay is due.