OBJECTIVE: Students will exercise research, language, and analytical-thinking skills by reviewing a breadth of resource materials on the migrations of people to the United States. They will summarize their findings in a writing activity and presentation that analyze the different meanings of a “promised land,” the impacts of people from other countries coming to the United States, and the factors that brought them here.

INTRODUCTION

Note: Immigration has become a sensitive issue in some communities. While teaching this program, special consideration should be given to immigrant students in your class, who may be uncomfortable sharing or discussing their personal circumstances or experiences with immigration.

TIME: Two class periods, plus time to do research and to view the HISTORY® program America: Promised Land.

MATERIALS: Student Research Guide “Exploring America: Promised Land”; access to the Internet and a library; access to the HISTORY® program America: Promised Land.

1. Tell students that America, often called a land of immigrants, is a land founded and built by people from foreign lands who migrated here, or were brought forcibly, for many different reasons and under many different circumstances.

2. Show students this short video that depicts the different ways people migrated to and settled in the United States. After viewing the video, have students identify the different parts of the world from where people have come and where they have settled in the United States. Why did people migrate to America? Who did not come voluntarily, and why?

3. Use the passage below to provide students with some background on the impact of people from other countries on the United States.

The United States has received more foreign-born people than any other nation in the world. Between 1820 and 1930, the United States absorbed 60 percent of the world’s immigrants. Since 1900, someone has migrated to the United States every 57 seconds. Most people migrated here legally. Others came not as immigrants, but by force as enslaved people. Still others have come as refugees from disaster or war. Through their efforts and contributions to this country, foreign-born people have ultimately shaped the United States of today.

4. Remind students that analyzing primary and secondary resources provides people with a better understanding of the past. Historians use these and other resources, such as official documents and newspaper articles, to reconstruct historical events. But sometimes these sources contain biases based on which facts they present or leave out, as well as the perspective from which the facts are presented. Historians try to uncover the historical truth—a consensus about what actually took place—by looking for details that support one another from many different sources.

RESEARCH PROJECT

1. State that historical truth can change over time as people uncover new facts about historical events. These newfound facts can affect current perspectives on the past. Ask students to consider how this idea could influence future generations’ views of people from other countries coming to the United States.

2. Tell students that they will now complete a research project. They will attempt to discover historical truth about one of three topics related to the migrations of people to (and within) the United States after viewing the HISTORY® program America: Promised Land and after researching their topics.

3. Distribute the Student Research Guide. Assign students, or have students select, one of the topics from the guide to research. Tell your class that the research guide will provide them with several resources as a jumping-off point to begin investigating their topic. Students should also look for reliable sources of their own to help them answer the questions presented. Instruct students to take detailed research notes and closely read the resources to:
   ▶ Gather facts on the topic;
   ▶ Build an argument for how the topic should be viewed or considered;

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- **Identify** multiple perspectives on and/or biases about the topic;
- **Make connections** between the historical record and current events;
- **Provide details** about how the topic is addressed in the America: Promised Land program appearing on HISTORY®.

### CULMINATING ACTIVITY

When students are done researching, inform them that they will now share what they have discovered with the class. Have students choose one of the following assignments:

1. Imagine they are a newly arrived foreign-born man, woman, or child, and write a letter home to family or friends about their experiences.

2. Write an essay to compare/contrast the experiences of two different historical immigrants or groups. Why did they come to the United States and what commonalities/differences do you see in their experiences?

Then, have students choose or assign them one of the following presentation methods based on which best fits the grade level and the subject you teach:

- **Creative Group Presentations:** Assemble students researching similar topics in groups. Have them come up with a creative way to present their topics to the class—for example: a multimedia presentation, a video, an illustrated timeline, a historical reenactment, or an interview with a central historical figure.

- **Individual Written Reports:** Students will write an informative/explanatory text examining their topics. Research papers should contain accurate information and clear explanations of ideas. Students should also make sure to acknowledge where the facts they included came from, to distinguish them from their own conclusions.

### ADDITIONAL TEACHING RESOURCE

**Education and Viewing Guide to America: Promised Land.**

[history.com/shows/america-promised-land](http://history.com/shows/america-promised-land)

### STANDARDS

**Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts Standards History/Social Studies**

**Grades 6–8:**

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.3** Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7** Integrate visual information with other information in print and digital texts.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

**Grades 9–10:**

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.8** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

**Grades 11–12:**

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6** Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence.

**United States History Content Standards for Grades 5–12**

- **Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801–1861)**
  - **Standard 2:** How the Industrial Revolution, increasing immigration, the rapid expansion of slavery, and the westward movement changed the lives of Americans and led toward regional tensions.

- **Era 6: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870–1900)**
  - **Standard 2:** How massive immigration after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity.


[ctshs.uc.edu/history-standards/us-history-content-standards](http://ctshs.uc.edu/history-standards/us-history-content-standards)