

TITLE: Chinese Immigration 1860s-1880s

By Cyndee McManaman

GRADE LEVEL: 8th Grade Social Studies/U.S. History

LENGTH OF CLASS PERIOD: 40 minutes

INQUIRY: How did political cartoons reflect public opinion regarding the issues of Chinese immigration in the mid- to late 1800s?

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this lesson students will be able to:

- Recall reasons why people from other countries want to live in the United States
- Identify vocabulary terms: “Know-Nothing Party;” Workingmen’s Party; prejudice; exploit; racism; economic depression
- Summarize arguments for and against Chinese immigration during the mid to late 1800s
- Interpret editorial cartoons on the topics of Chinese immigration or exclusion

MATERIALS: Copies of Chapter 23 “More About Immigrants,” from A History of US: Reconstructing America 1865-1890 by Joy Hakim, copies (paper copy for each student and one transparency each) of Thomas Nast editorial cartoons: “The Chinese Question” 2/18/1871 and “*E Pluribus Unum* (Except The Chinese)” 4/1/1882, copies of cartoon analysis worksheet (double-sided).

ACTIVITIES:

1. “Fast 5”—“Name 3 reasons why people from other countries want to live in the United States.” Allow students 2-3 minutes to write responses, and then share with class.
2. Distribute “More About Immigrants.” Orally identify terms from reading for pre-reading comprehension: exploit (*to make use of selfishly or unethically*); prejudice (*irrational suspicion of a particular group, race or religion*); racism (*the notion that one’s own ethnic group is superior*); economic depression (*a nation’s economy declines leaving unemployment, low prices and not much business activity*).
3. Students read aloud “More About Immigrants”—one paragraph each.
4. Ask students to give reasons for both sides of the argument regarding Chinese immigrants. Two students can record suggestions on the board: “IN FAVOR OF…” AND “AGAINST.”
5. Distribute cartoons and analysis worksheets. Put up transparency of “The Chinese Question” and ask the students to describe what they see: words, symbols, characters, etc. Complete the cartoon analysis as a class. When finished, have students work in pairs to analyze the other cartoon. Discuss as a class when finished. Collect cartoons and worksheets.
6. Ask students to decide if the cartoons accurately reflect the suggested feeling or position about Chinese immigration. Which cartoon reflects the views of the groups from the reading?

ASSESSMENT: Students will be evaluated based on their completion of the cartoon analysis worksheet.

CONNECTICUT FRAMEWORK PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

- #146 Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking—use primary source documents to analyze multiple perspectives.
- #151 Connecticut Standard 3: Historical Themes—explain how roles and status of people have differed and changed throughout history based on gender, age, class, racial and ethnic identity, wealth, and/or social position.
- #163 Connecticut Standard 11: Human Systems—explain the patterns and characteristics of human migrations at various levels

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES:

1. Draw your own editorial cartoon on the issue of Chinese immigration. Include a short description of the position you are representing and explain the elements of your cartoon.
2. You are a member of the Workingmen's Party in 1882. Write a letter to President Chester A. Arthur insisting that he approve the Chinese Exclusion bill. Include at least 3 supporting facts to argue your position.
3. You are a Chinese immigrant writing a letter home to your brother. Do you tell him to come to America? Why or why not? Provide at least 3 supporting details.

EXTENSION IDEAS:

1. If this lesson were used in a block-format class, I would extend, for the remainder of the block, the examination of both sides of the immigration argument by having the students read, in groups, excerpts from primary source documents such as the Angel Island poetry, Chinese immigrants' oral histories, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, "The Evils of Mongolian Immigration" (a speech given by Sen. Charles N. Felton, CA, 4/21/1892), or "Evidence of Public Opinion on the Pacific Coast in Favor of Chinese Immigration," (report written by Prof. Augustus Layres, of San Francisco, CA, for Congress, 2/1879).
2. Show the students additional cartoons about current immigration issues for a comparison of past v. modern sentiment and policies. NOTE: The frequent use of political cartoons in the classroom will increase the students' ability to interpret the symbolic meaning within its historical context.
3. Allow the students a portion of class time to work on the creation of their own editorial cartoons prior to assigning it as homework. This will allow for deeper understanding of the position and any symbols the students wish to include in their illustrations.

WEBSITE SOURCES:

Angel Island History: <http://www.angel-island.com>

Angel Island Poetry: http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/poets/a_f/angel/angel.htm

Cartoon Analysis worksheet:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/historyofus/teachers/pdfs/segment8-5.pdf?mii=1>

Editorial Cartoons: <http://immigrants.harpweek.com/>

“Evidence of Public Opinion on the Pacific Coast in Favor of Chinese Immigration”:

<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/chs1079>

The Chinese in California 1850-1925:

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/award99/cubhtml/cichome.html>

“The Evils of Mongolian Immigration”:

<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/brk6543>

Below you will find .jpeg images of the Cartoon Analyzer, both editorial cartoons and the reading selection. The images can be expanded for fit your size needs.

