

TEACHER'S GUIDE TO LEARNING ACTIVITIES: GRADES 7–9

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Americans All®

A National Education Program

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Activity 21: Stories about the People Who Helped Shape This Nation

Objectives

Activity Goal

To help the students personally relate to the experiences of diverse groups in American society.

Appreciation Objective

Students will appreciate the strengths demonstrated by their own and other cultural and/or ethnic groups as these groups adapted to new surroundings and overcame adversity.

Basic Information Objective

Students will give several reasons for immigration, migration (forced or voluntary) and slavery. They will identify the various ways that families and individuals traveled to and through the United States. They will discuss the experiences of people who relocated in this country.

Critical- and Creative-Thinking Objective

Students will be able to organize information in chart form to identify similar and contrasting attributes and consider the cause-and-effect factors related to the experiences.

Preparation

Materials: Student copies of TA 28: The Peopling of America—Summary Chart, TA 29: In Their Own Words and the Americans All® Maps representing the six groups emphasized in the Americans All® program (pages 196–201); a world map; push pins; and a chalkboard or flip chart and markers.

Review the stories from TA 29: In Their Own Words and select six stories to assign for reading. Draw a master summary chart modeled after TA 28: The Peopling of America—Summary Chart on the chalkboard or flip chart.



Have the students form six small groups. Pass out copies of TA 28: The Peopling of America—Summary Chart and a different story to each group from TA 29: In Their Own Words. Ask each group to read and summarize its story, using the discussion questions found on TA 28: The Peopling of America—Summary Chart.

Pass out the appropriate map to each group. Ask each group to locate on the map the place of origin for the person in its story.

As each group reports, have a student transfer the data to the master summary chart, and locate the person's place of origin on a world map with push pins.

Review the master summary chart and world map with the whole class. Then, lead a large-group discussion on the similarities and differences of the diverse peoples' experiences.

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- ▶ Organize a parents' activity in which at least one parent or grandparent of each student comes to the classroom to share his or her immigration and/or migration story.
 - ▶ Have each student write and illustrate a story of his or her family's immigration or migration experiences.
 - ▶ If the students have already studied the colonial period, ask them to compare the reasons for immigrating then to those given in the stories from TA 29: In Their Own Words.
 - ▶ Ask the students to pretend they are the people they have read about. Have them each compose a letter they might have written home to their friends or family in the first few months after arriving in their new home, or have them pretend they are friends or family in the old country or state and compose a letter to the person who moved.
 - ▶ Lead a discussion on recent immigrants and refugees, comparing the reasons why they have come with the reasons given in the stories.
 - ▶ Have each student research and write a short story about a special person in his or her family or community to present to the class.
 - ▶ Ask the students if they can think of any famous immigrants. Have them research and write short stories about a famous immigrant to present to the class.
 - ▶ Ask the students to draw pictures illustrating one of the stories from TA 29: In Their Own Words. Use these to create an Americans All® story display.

Conducting the Activity

Interdisciplinary Follow-Up Activities



Related Literature

- ▶ Assign student teams to develop short skits portraying an Americans All® story they have read. They can develop endings for what might have happened to the subjects later in their new lives.
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For literature related to this learning activity see Literature Selections (page 205), books numbered 1, 17, 49, 53, 54, 71, 74 and 102.

For post-reading activities, TA 32 through TA 39 (pages 144–151) may be used at the teacher’s discretion.

