

THE HOMELANDS, THE RULES, THE BARRIERS

GRADES 7-12

SUBJECTS Social Studies (U.S History, World History, Historical Understanding)

OVERVIEW Understanding key historic events discussed in **My Journey Home** gives clarity to immigration and refugee issues in the United States. These periods in history also provide a reference point from which to assess present conditions in Nigeria, Mexico, and, Vietnam, and examine current U.S treatment of immigrants/refugees from these nations.

OBJECTIVES Students will:

- Explore historic events and conditions in Vietnam, Mexico, and Nigeria that contributed to immigration and refugeeism.
- Assess current situations in these nations
- Examine the United States' past and present treatment of refugees and immigrants from these nations

TIME NEEDED At least six classroom periods, plus time beyond school for students to conduct research (can be shortened by concentrating on only one country.)

MATERIALS

- A copy of **My Journey Home**
- Television and VCR
- Print and online reference materials on the Vietnam War, Nigeria's political dissension, and Mexican Americans, all within the context of immigrants and refugees.

TEACHING PROCEDURE

- 1) Have students briefly discuss, based on the film, why people leave their countries to come to the United States. In what cases do they leave voluntarily? In what cases are they forced to leave? How has and/or does the United States treat immigrants and refugees? What influences U.S. immigration policy?
- 2) Divide students into small groups, each representing one of the nations featured in the film—Nigeria, Mexico, and Vietnam. (There may be two groups per country, depending on the number of students.) Have students note the specific conflicts their assigned nations experienced, as drawn from the film, noting specifically how these conditions affected nationals. Students should create some type of presentation visual of their research. Invite each group to share its findings.

Engage students in a comparative study of each nation; in the end, what are the common elements that drove immigration/refugeeism to the United States. What are the conditions in these nations now and are immigrants/refugees returning to them willingly or by force? For example, what draws people back to Vietnam?

3) Using the film as reference, have students discuss how the U.S. treated immigrants/refugees from the Nigeria, Vietnam, and Mexico when they first began arriving, and to look at how they are currently treated. For example, what is the status of Mexican Americans, particularly around issues of border control?

4) Given their understanding of current conditions in Vietnam, Nigeria, and Mexico, and U.S. policy regarding immigrants/refugees from these nations, have students assume the roles of mock members of an international coalition advocating for the rights of immigrants and refugees. Students can either work in small groups representing fictitious or actual organizations, or separately in the roles of actual or fictitious activists, to establish a lobbying platform that would secure immigrant/refugee rights overseas and domestically. Have each group/student present at a coalition gathering.

EXTENSIONS

Students can:

- Conduct a demographic analysis of recent immigrants and refugees to the United States, noting the countries from which the greatest percentage have emigrated and the reasons for this exodus
- Create timelines reflecting key historic events highlighted in the film
- Write biographies of key figures and leaders in the nations and events featured in the film
- Write and present a dramatic monologue in the voice of a leader heading up the Chicano Movement or the Civil Rights Movement.
- Research the status of Mexican deportation, beginning with Operation Wetback in the 1950s.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Mexican Americans:

PBS: My Journey Home

http://www.pbs.org/myjourneyhome/armando/armando_bg.html

PBS: The Border

<http://www.pbs.org/kpbs/theborder/history/index.html>

The Chicano Movement

http://members.aol.com/ht_a/jmt81/myhomepage/

A History of Mexican Americans in California: The Chicano Movement

http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/5views/5views5e.htm

A History of Mexican Americans in California: World War II and its Aftermath

http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/5views/5views5d.htm

Mexican Immigration

http://library.ci.fort-collins.co.us/local_history/topics/Ethnic/mex-immigration.htm

The Border: Interactive Timeline

<http://www.pbs.org/kpbs/theborder/history/interactive-timeline.html>

Nigeria:

PBS: My Journey Home

http://www.pbs.org/myjourneyhome/faith/faith_bg.html

Nigeria: Chronology of the Struggle for Stability and Democracy

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200008240352.html>

Nigeria - A Country Study

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/ngtoc.html>

Nigeria: Facts & Stats

<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/nigeria/facts.html>

Timeline: Nigeria

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1067695.stm

Vietnam:

PBS: My Journey Home

http://www.pbs.org/myjourneyhome/andrew/adnew_bg.html

Vietnam Online

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/>

Battlefield Vietnam

<http://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/>

Country Profiles; Vietnam

<http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/profiles/vietnam.html>

A Vietnam War Timeline

<http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/vietnam/timeline.htm>

Civil Rights Movement:

A History of Us: Let Freedom Ring

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/historyofus/web14/index.html>

Citizen King

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/mlk/index.html>

Civil Rights Timeline

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html>

RELEVANT NATIONAL STANDARDS

United States History, from Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel, at <http://www.mcrel.org/>) standards for grades 9-12:
27: Understands how the Cold War and conflicts in Korean and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics
rd Ed.)

29: Understands the struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties

31: Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States

World History, from Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel, at <http://www.mcrel.org/>) standards for grades 9-12:

43: Understands how post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up

44: Understands the search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world

Historical Understanding, from Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel, at <http://www.mcrel.org/>) standards for grades 9-12:

2: Understands the historical perspective

Geography: Human Systems, from Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel, at <http://www.mcrel.org/>) standards for grades 9-12:

9: Understands the nature, distribution and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics

12: Understands the patterns of human settlement and their causes

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

From classroom instructor to an executive director, Michele Israel has been an educator for nearly 20 years. She has developed and managed innovative educational initiatives, taught in nontraditional settings in the U.S. and overseas, developed curricula and educational materials, and designed and facilitated professional development for classroom and community educators. Currently operating Educational Consulting Group, Israel is involved with diverse projects, including strategic planning and product development.