Analyzing Immigration Laws over time in the U.S.

Freshman High School History Class

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Introduction:

 This multicultural curriculum project will be set in a high school history class. This class will be a heterozygous class in a general education format. There are 21 students in the class with a range of abilities from honor role students to special needs students. The three special needs students also have a range of disabilities; one has Asperger’s Syndrome, another in wheelchair bound due to an accident (which at times causes behavioral issues), and the third has a learning disability related to reading. The lesson explained here will be centered on learning about Immigration Law in the U.S. in various times in history. This will include both modern laws which refer to non-citizens in general as well as older laws specifically geared toward specific nationalities. These nationalities examined include Chinese, other Asian nationalities, and Eastern Europeans.

“Relate social intolerance, xenophobia, and fear of anarchists to government policies restricting immigration, advocacy, and labor organizations.” (6.1.12.A.8.c)

Goals:

 To develop Multiple Historical Perspectives – Many Americans are unaware of how citizenship and immigration function, or that the current policies greatly vary from past policies. Through exploring these policies and how many targeted specific groups the students will learn about the first hurtle immigrants must overcome – getting here. Once we have covered this the discussion will allow for a greater understanding of how U.S. policies effected/reacted to how these groups were viewed in America. Incorporating cultural information gives the opportunity to find connections between immigrants from these time periods and traditions/stereotypes of these minorities within modern American society.

Objectives:

 Students will be able to name and describe four U.S. immigration laws

 Students will be able to describe basic cultural customs of each ethnicity represented

 Students will be able to relate how the impact of the immigration policies effected how each ethnicity was incorporated into American society

Materials:

 Handouts

 Poster board and markers

Group assignments

Laws and which groups they are assigned to

List of Websites to be used (for teacher – main source should be factsonfile but others suggested by students can be used if teacher approves)

At least one computer per group (if computers are unavailable teacher must have supplemental informational materials ready or ensure laws used are in the textbooks)

Activities:

 There will be a mix of activities preformed during this lesson. This includes both individual and group work.

Research: Students will, after breaking into groups assigned by the teacher, spend half an hour researching a particular law they are given. The group will gather the information required and then write said information onto the provided poster board. They will also prepare a short (2-3 minutes) oral presentation of this information. (See Assignment Handout for details)

Oral Presentation: Each group will, either from their current location or front of the room based upon mobility, will give a quick summary of the law they researched. They must present the information required in the assignment.

Notes Handout: Each student will fill in this sheet with information from their own law and the presentation of the other laws. Students will also record the cultural facts on this page.

Evaluations:

Presentation: (40%)

 This will be a group based grade. The students will be evaluated based on the completeness of their presentations. If one of the required sections is not included, the group will not receive full points. This will assess the student’s ability to research and examine how laws can target specific groups. (During students’ work time the teacher will note if some group members are contributing more or not contributing the group – if an extreme discrepancy occurs that speaking with the group does not resolve then points may be taken away of given in an individual basis)

Discussion: (60%)

 This will be an individual grade. Each student will be required to make two comments during the discussion. If students make a comment that connects previous comments and uses the cultural information then this one comment will count for both comments. These comments are not graded based on ‘correctness’ rather this is a completion grade that is meant to reflect attention to the lesson and understanding of its implications. The teacher will be responsible for continuing and guiding the discussion with comments such as ‘How do the earlier three laws compare to the newer one?’, ‘How can we see the impact of this law on this nationality’s acceptance into American society?’ or ‘How do you think potential immigrants from these regions felt about these laws?’. (Students with IEPs that need assistance will be given more direct questions and encouragement for their comments)

List of Laws to Use:

Immigration Act of 1924

REAL ID Act 2005

Emergency Quota Act of 1921

Page Act of 1875

References Page:

Core Curriculum Standards

<http://www.fofweb.com/NuHistory/default.asp?ItemID=WE52>

Facts on File: American History Online

<http://www.fofweb.com/NuHistory/default.asp?ItemID=WE52>

Historical Immigrant Admission Data: 1821 to 2006

<http://www.fairus.org/facts/us_laws>