

I. Social Studies Preparation Activity for fourth graders

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Background information

Title: A Land of Immigrants ~ An Anticipation Guide

Bibliography: America Will Be

Houghton-Mifflin Social Studies
Boston, 1994

I will be using an anticipation guide to prepare students to read the first chapter of their social studies textbook. The chapter is entitled *A Nation of Many People*. Its main focus is the fact that America is made up of many different people who represent an amazing variety of backgrounds and cultures. The specific lesson we will be working with is Lesson 2, *A Land of Immigrants*. I believe that students today do not understand the struggles and hardships their ancestors faced in coming to America. This guide will serve to put the student in the place of their ancestors, discovering some of their possible emotions and thoughts about their journey.

Audience

I will be presenting this lesson to my upcoming class of fourth graders. The class is made up of 20 students – 1 of Indian background, 1 of Chinese background, and 18 of Caucasian backgrounds. The vast majority of my students come from affluent homes with two parents who are very supportive of their educational pursuits. I have three students who receive regular pull-out help with their reading and math skills. I also have a small number of students who are pulled out of the classroom for gifted enrichment exercises, mostly pertaining to mathematics. The majority of my class is average to high-average as far as their reading and comprehension abilities go. They are an extremely enthusiastic bunch that enjoys learning, especially if it is made exciting. They are challenged by new ideas that are thrown at them – often engaging in surprisingly mature discussions about the issue with their classmates. Due to their affluent lifestyles, I am going to assume that the struggles an immigrant might endure are completely foreign to these students unless they have encountered them in a literature setting.

Purpose of Activity

The purpose of this anticipation guide is to allow students to explore some potential emotions and thoughts that they might experience if they, too, had to pick up their entire lives and move to a foreign country. In doing this, students will be able to empathize with characters and situations that they will meet in their reading selections. This activity will deal with the affective domain of learning, stimulating students' feelings, emotions, and attitudes. Not only will they see a clearer picture of their own feelings, but they will learn of their classmates'

feelings as well through small group and whole group discussions, further promoting an appreciation of diversity and/or unity within the classroom. This is a wonderful way to prepare students for reading from their social studies textbook. It accomplishes this by doing two things: it helps the students acknowledge and build upon their background knowledge and attitudes toward immigration, and it provides a clear purpose for reading the selection in the text.

Objectives

- The learner will be able to define the terms culture, immigrant, descendant, and ethnic custom.
- The learner will be able to describe the growth and change that has taken place in America, from many centuries ago to the present day.
- The learner will be able to identify specific countries on a world map from which people have immigrated to the United States.
- The learner will be able to identify why people of various cultures have come to America.
- The learner will develop an understanding of the struggles that immigrants went through when they journeyed to America.

Procedure

- Materials needed:
 - Anticipation guides for each student
 - Social Studies text
 - *Students are already seated in small groups to facilitate discussion
- 1. Begin the **preparation phase** of the lesson by reading to the class, Gooseberries to Oranges, a literature selection within the textbook (p. 22-25) by Barbara Cohen. Some of the vocabulary in this will need to be explained as it is read. Look for definitions along sides of pages. This is a story of an 8 year old girl who leaves her village in Europe to join her father in New York. As the little girl is somewhat close to the students' age, they may begin relating to her feelings and thoughts in the story.
- 2. Explain to the students what an Anticipation Guide is. It is not a graded exercise – there is not one correct answer for the questions. It is simply an exercise to warm up their thinking. Perhaps one of the statements will remind them of a story they'd like to share with the class. Go over the printed directions with them.
- 3. Allow the students ample time to follow the directions – first working independently to complete the guide, then gathering in their small groups to discuss and share their responses.

4. When it seems that most groups have discussed the majority of the guide, bring the class back together as a whole. Use this time to share with the whole class what was discovered by individuals and/or small groups.
5. Here is where the **assistance phrase** begins. Turn with the students in the textbook to Chapter One, Lesson Two, *A Land of Immigrants*. Look at the bold words in the lesson first and discuss what students think they mean.
6. Allow the students to read the Lesson (pages 12-16) individually. During this time, the teacher may want to walk around and monitor the students to see if any are having trouble with any of the vocabulary.
7. As students finish reading individually, instruct them to take a second look at their anticipation guide and see if any of their opinions have changed.
8. To wrap up the in-class portion of this lesson, discuss as a whole group any new opinions that were formed by the reading. At this point it would be appropriate to use a direct teaching method to clear up any textual confusion or misinterpretation of the facts.
9. For a fun and informative **reflection activity**, ask students to find out from what countries their own families originated. This homework assignment can spawn all kinds of written connections – writing an article about your journey to America, keeping a mock diary of your trip across the ocean, and writing advertisements for opportunities in America...

Evaluation

The effectiveness of this activity will be measured in several different ways. First of all, I hope to see a respectful attitude develop toward ancestors who traveled to America while enduring excruciating circumstances. This will not be something that can be evaluated by traditional means. It will simply come across as students discuss and write about their own thoughts on the matter. In a more tangible way, students' comprehension of the reading material can be measured through vocabulary exercises and written exercises.

This is one of the first lessons in the fourth grade social studies textbook. I plan to use this lesson early on in the year. I believe that anticipation guides will be a method that I use throughout the year in several content areas, as they can evoke both emotional and factual knowledge that the students might possess. My personal teaching style allows for a lot of discussion time. I love listening to students' opinions on different issues. Therefore, I believe that the anticipation guide will be an effective preparation activity in my classroom. I think that students will react positively to it because it is a very non-threatening piece of class work that allows their opinions and stories to flow freely. The lesson allows for factual knowledge of immigration to be learned, and it also demands higher level thinking skills by asking students to evaluate the emotions and motivations behind immigration.

Name _____

Date _____

A Land of Immigrants ~ An Anticipation Guide

Directions: Read the following statements. Put a check in the box next to the statement if you agree with it, put an X in the box if you do not agree. Think about why you agree or disagree with the statements as you complete this sheet. When you have completed this, get together with the members of your small group to share your thoughts on the statements.

1. Many people have grandparents or great-grandparents who came to America from a foreign country.

2. The way people dress and greet one another can be different in different cities throughout America.

3. People in America usually only eat American food.

4. Americans always speak English better than any other language.

5. There are many foreign words or phrases that are used regularly in American homes.

6. Family customs and religious beliefs are built on traditions that may have originated in a country other than America.

7. I think it would be exciting and adventurous to leave America and go to live in a new country.

8. I think I would have the same opportunities, toys, and education if I lived in another country.