



Additional Program information for

Challenges & Choices: Immigrant Experiences in 19th Century New Jersey

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Best for 3rd to 5th grades

✓ At METC

X Outreach

✓ Live Virtual

✓ Digital Written Lesson Plan

✓ Digital Video Lesson Plan

The United States is a country of immigrants. Individuals and families have been coming for hundreds of years for varying reasons, but facing many of the same challenges. This program focuses on immigrants to New Jersey in the first half of the 19th century, putting a personal face on the thousands who made this journey. Students will explore the difficult choices involved in immigrating to the United States, coming to understand what it meant to leave behind everything and everyone they had ever known. Students will also take on the role of real 19th century immigrants and use the museums exhibits and artifacts to understand the challenges and choices these immigrants faced.

STANDARDS & PRACTICES

6.1.5.GeoPP.6: Compare and contrast the voluntary and involuntary migratory experiences of different groups of people and explain why their experiences differed.

6.1.5.EconET.3: Explain how scarcity and choice influences decisions made by individuals, community and nations.

6.1.5.HistoryUP.1: Describe the reasons various groups, voluntarily or involuntarily, immigrated to New Jersey and America, and cite evidence from multiple perspectives the describe the challenges they encountered.

6.1.5.CivicsPD.3: Explain how and why it is important that people from diverse cultures collaborate to find solutions to community, state, national, and global challenges.



STANDARDS & PRACTICES (Cont.)

Seeking Diverse Perspectives; Presenting Arguments & Explanations; Using critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Understand the challenges faced by immigrants in the 19th century.
2. Experience the types of choices immigrants undertook.
3. Gain insight into immigrants from the past who might be quite different from them
4. Communicate effectively while presenting information to classmates.

SUGGESTED PRE-PROGRAM ACTIVITY

Family History Research

Have your students research someone in their family who was an immigrant. This could be someone who immigrated recently, or many generations ago. If the subject is still alive, the student should interview him or her. Either way, the students should interview other family members who knew the subject, or who have stories about them. Students should also draw on any existing family documents and photographs. Through this process, student should focus on addressing the following questions:

1. Why did they (or their family) choose to leave their home and move to a new country?
2. How did they feel about this decision and what was it like to leave their home?
3. What was the journey like to the United States (or other new country)? Did they go by boat? By plane? By car? By foot? How long did it take? Was it a fun journey?
4. What was it like adjusting to a new life in a new country?
5. What other stories would they like to share about the process of immigrating?



MUSEUM OF EARLY
TRADES & CRAFTS

SUGGESTED POST-PROGRAM ACTIVITY

Immigrants Then and Now

Revisit the identities each student took on during the *Challenges & Choices* program and have your students complete the back side of the sheet (the side asking about why they made the journey and so on).

Then have each student prepare a short presentation about the family member they researched and their character from the METC program. This could take many different forms, but should include a comparison of the two individuals and their immigrant experiences.

After the presentations, discuss with your students what they learned about immigration and the way in which the United States is a country of immigrants. Discuss how the individuals they presented are very different in some ways, and yet in others are quite similar and shared many common challenges and experiences.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact the METC Education Department at 973-377-2982, x12 or education@metc.org