

TEACHING IMMIGRATION NOW: Current Events in the Classroom

WEBINAR SUMMARY

February 2019

Understand the impact on students

Immigration policy changes and anti-immigrant rhetoric are having negative impacts on students. These include increased behavioral or emotional problems, concern about immigration enforcement, absenteeism, academic decline, anxiety and stress among teachers, and hate incidents in schools.



ADAM STROM

Re-imagining Migration

Start the conversation

Literature. Teach with literature that tells immigrant stories so students can relate to immigrants and understand their perspective.

History. Bringing up immigration news can be contentious. Instead, look at groups that migrated in the past to avoid heavy political discussions.

Science and stats. Every subject area allows for immigration conversations, such as immigration statistics in math or migratory patterns in science.

Personal stories. Invite students to share their own family's story to encourage open thinking about the concepts of moving and migration.

Discrimination. Teach students about bias and discrimination to introduce the concepts of anti-immigrant prejudice and rhetoric.

News. Look at current discriminatory policies or rhetoric to examine bias with students.

Create inclusive classrooms

Research school demographics. Get familiar with your class' racial, ethnic and religious makeup.

Prioritize representation. With this knowledge, work to ensure students feel represented and valued. Hang country flags and offer books by authors of diverse backgrounds.

Get to know your students. Meet and engage with students and their families to better understand them and their backgrounds.

Set ground rules. To ensure respectful conversation about immigration, establish guidelines for discussions and projects.

Define discrimination. Explain words like bias, hate and discrimination so students can spot them both in and out of school.

Teach empathy. Use lesson plans and activities that foster understanding of others.



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Anti-Defamation League



FEDERICO SALAS-ISNARDI
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Build community

Provide spaces for students to share their immigration stories, even if third generation, so they can see the common themes of resilience between immigrants past and present. Be mindful that not all Americans have immigrant ancestors (i.e. those with indigenous or African ancestry) and not all immigrants chose to leave (i.e. refugees). Sharing these stories will build community and empathy.

Examine your identity

Before teaching students about immigration it's critical to start with yourself and your own immigration story. Spend time reflecting on your own identity and consider how immigration plays a role. Does your relationship with immigration make you a target for discrimination or put you at a certain advantage? This will inform how you interact with your students and help you to better facilitate conversations about identity.



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The ILC Public Education Institute

Teacher toolkit



[Anti-Defamation League Education Resources](#)
 [Re-imagining Migration: Talk, Teach and Learn](#)

[Teaching Tolerance: Classroom Resources](#)
 [Share My Lesson Resources](#)