Teaching Chinese Immigration
in the 19th Century

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The ILC Educational Resources
## The ILC Educational Resources

### Educator Resource Library

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https://www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants/ilc-workshops/educators-2/

https://sharemylesson.com/partner/immigrant-learning-center

https://www.youtube.com/user/immigrantlearningctr
The ILC Educational Resources
Agenda

• Introduction to The ILC educational resources
• Opening activity
• The Chinese Exclusion Act: Historical Context
• Jigsaw Activity: Laws and Rulings
• Discussion and Q&A
Objectives

• Summarize the historical context and discuss the importance of 19th century legal battles over Chinese immigration

• Use The ILC curricular resource to teach this topic
Poll

Have you taught about Chinese immigration in the 19th century?
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## Introduction

Humans have been migrating throughout every place and time in our history, so in this series we give you the tools to explore immigration through the lens of the history and social studies curricula already being taught. With this resource, we examine the landscape of immigration during the American Revolution with two lesson plans and a student resource. Each of the two lesson plans—"Comparing Early and Modern Immigration to America" and "Early Immigration Law"—is designed to be flexible and adaptable based on the needs of your class. Each has an extension geared toward older students and could cover one or two class periods. The student resource, "Foreign-Born Heroes of the American Revolution," summarizes the contributions of 10 individuals and is accompanied by discussion questions and extension ideas. Any of these pieces could stand alone or be woven together into the existing scope and sequence.

Immigration during this time of formation for the United States is a nuanced and fascinating topic, raising many questions. Through the 19th, 16th and 17th centuries, waves of Europeans were migrating to settle in the New World, clashing with and pushing out the Native Americans who already lived here. Why would all these settlers make such an arduous journey, with few guarantees of stability once they arrived? At what point could we truly classify them as "immigrants"? What are the parallels to today’s immigration patterns? The lesson plan "Comparing Early and Modern Immigration to America" asks students to tackle these questions.

It wasn’t until after the Revolutionary War, in 1790, that the new country attempted to take control of the de facto open-border policy and patchwork citizenship requirements across states. How did the founders of a country make up entirely of recent immigrants feel about immigration? How did these earliest attempts at regulation set the stage for the complex laws prospective immigrants face now? Students read the original 1790 law and consider its implications in the lesson plan "Early Immigration Law."

Finally, the faces of immigrants look very different now than they did in the late 1700s. Most newcomers were white Europeans, with men holding much of the public power, and enslaved Africans forced into migration by the tens of thousands. The resource "Foreign-Born Heroes of the American Revolution" examines the critical roles that 10 newcomers played in the struggle of a country they may not even have yet called their own and asks students to critically reflect on the societal structure of the time.
Lesson One

Immigrant Workers on the Transcontinental Railroad

**Educator Notes:**
This lesson plan invites students to learn more about the immigrant workers, particularly Chinese and Irish, who built the Transcontinental Railroad, a critical piece of American infrastructure in the 19th century. These activities would fit well into a study of Westward Expansion, the Gold Rush, or the building of the American railroad system. If students are in need of background information, please distribute the Historical Supplement at the back of this guide. Hopefully, students will have the opportunity in the course of their study to appreciate the skill and sacrifice of the railroad laborers. The lesson plan includes guiding questions and primary source documents. **Handling Tough Topics in the Classroom from Education World**

Lesson Two

19th Century Legal Battles Over Chinese Immigration

**Educator Notes:**
This lesson plan and resource guide aims to support teachers in exploring the legal, social, and economic struggles faced by Chinese immigrants in the second half of the 19th century and some of the ways in which they resisted discrimination. Students will need some background on the time period in order to understand the context into which immigrants were arriving. If a refresh is needed, please refer to our short Historical Supplement, *The First Wave: Chinese Immigration to the United States in the 1800's* at the end of this guide, or the **six-minute video** of Columbia's Professor Mee-Nei Nancy C. SPAN.

The lesson plan introduces students to two major court cases and three major laws culminating with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which specifically targeted Chinese immigrants. Also included is a reading that summarizes the important Chinese contributions to the United States in the years since they first began arriving and the text of a 2011 official Senate apology for the discrimination faced by Chinese immigrants.

In the resource guide, we encourage educators to give students the chance to examine two landmark Supreme Court cases that began with Chinese immigrants filing lawsuits against discrimination. We've included recommended lesson plans and resources for each court case. These would also be excellent opportunities for student individual or group research.
Lesson Plan:

Anti-Chinese Legislation

OBJECTIVES

- Students will research one of five recommended significant laws and court cases targeting Chinese immigrants in the late 1800s and share their findings with a group.
- Students will examine all five significant laws and court cases to draw conclusions about history and make connections to the present day.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How did Americans respond to Chinese immigration during this time period?
- How have Chinese immigrants contributed to the United States despite discrimination?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Grade 6-8

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.3
Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Grade 9-10

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3
Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

Grade 11-12

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

MATERIALS

- Copies of the Historical Supplement at the end of this guide, or access to this six-minute video of Columbia Professor Nisei Nani on C-SPAN
- Copies of primary source images to display (listed under Activities)
- Copies of handout: Anti-Chinese Legislation and Furloughs at the end of this Lesson
- Computers or other internet-connected devices for student research
- Copies of or access to the New American Economy article: "Japanese Railroad at 90: The Contribution of Chinese Immigrants and Chinese Americans"

ACTIVITIES

Opening:

Share with students the following images (on display board, as a gallery walk, with copies at tables or as a digital image gallery, etc.).

- Chinese immigrants at the San Francisco-Arrow House
- A street in Chinatown
- To the President of the United States, and to the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled
- "What online is to be shown next?"

Ask students to think and write silently about each image. What do you notice? What questions do you have?

Discuss students' observations and reflections.

Ask: What topic do you think this lesson will be about?

Introduce the lesson topic to students giving additional background information as necessary.

Share with students the two guiding questions and ask them to make predictions or use what they already know to try and answer them. Let students know they will be checking their knowledge and learning more today.

Signoff:

Assign students to "home groups" of five to six. Distribute the Anti-Chinese Legislation and Furloughs handout and explain that they will be learning about five significant examples: three laws and two court cases of government-sponsored discrimination against Chinese immigrants after they began arriving in significant numbers around 1850. These fit a pattern of many more specific and local laws and incidents (especially in California), where many Chinese arrived, which were explicitly unwelcoming to Chinese immigrants.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: ____________________</th>
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### Anti-Chinese Legislation and Rulings

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<tr>
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Historical Supplement

The First Wave: Chinese Immigration to the United States in the 1800s

The first large wave of Chinese immigration to the United States began during the California gold rush in 1849 and ended abruptly in 1882 with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act. This first wave was marked by an entrepreneurial spirit, as Chinese immigrants, fleeing harsh conditions in China, adapted and found ways to earn livelihoods despite challenging circumstances. Yet this period was also defined by virulent anti-Chinese racism on both personal and societal levels.

In the 1850s, the prospect of striking it rich drew many to the West Coast. Pushed from China by political and social instability, many Chinese men ventured to the "Golden Mountain," a nickname for the United States. By the mid-1850s, Chinese immigrants made up 20 percent of the mining population in the United States, making them the largest non-White group. Many quickly became disillusioned. Mining was difficult and uncertain, and locals were hostile. Lacking money to bring over their families or return to China, many Chinese immigrants were stranded. Faced with language barriers and racial discrimination, they opened businesses in mining towns in professions that were typically looked down on by locals as "women's work," such as laundry and cooking.

During this time, U.S. railroad companies were vying to expand across the country as quickly and cheaply as possible. In 1863, the Central Pacific Railroad Company broke ground on the first transcontinental railroad, a pivotal piece of infrastructure that shortened the coast to coast travel time from several months to about a week. Faced with a labor shortage, the company increased their recruitment of Chinese immigrants, who worked for lower pay and were less likely to transpire than most other workers. It was dangerous work and the pay was low, but it gave many Chinese immigrants with little work experience or English ability a means to enter the workforce. By the mid-1860s, the company was recruiting laborers directly from China. By 1867, almost 90 percent of the Central Pacific workforce was Chinese. It's estimated that as many as 20,000 Chinese immigrants worked on the Transcontinental Railroad.
Agenda

• Introduction to The ILC educational resources
• **Opening activity**
• The Chinese Exclusion Act: Historical Context
• Jigsaw Activity: Laws and Rulings
• Discussion and Q&A
Type in the chat box:

1. What do you notice?
2. What questions do you have?

Title: A street in Chinatown
Contributor: Detroit Photographic Co.
Created between 1898 and 1905
https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.17898/
Type in the chat box:

1. What do you notice?
2. What questions do you have?

Title: Which color is to be tabooed next?
Contributor: Nast, Thomas
Created 1882
https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3e02195/
Post in Padlet:

1. What do you already know about Chinese immigration in the 19th century?
2. What questions do you have?
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Schema Map

Post in Padlet:

1. New information

2. Did you expand on prior knowledge? Revise your understanding?
Schema Map

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2. Did you expand on prior knowledge? Revise your understanding?
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### Jigsaw Activity

1. Home groups of five students/group

2. Distribute graphic organizer. Each student chooses one ruling/law.

3. Rearrange into expert groups and research the ruling/law.

4. Return to home group. Share out research.

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<td><strong>AIDS and HIV</strong></td>
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<td><strong>China's War on Drugs</strong></td>
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*Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages*
Jigsaw Technique Benefits

- Cooperative learning structure
- Students are directly engaged with the material
- Practice self-teaching and peer-teaching
- Students as experts
- Everyone's contribution is valuable

Adapted from https://serc.carleton.edu/nagtworkshops/teaching_methods/jigsaws/why.html
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Jigsaw Activity

- People v. Hall (1854)
- Act to Prohibit the "Coolie Trade" (1862)
- Page Act (1875)
- In re Ah Yup (1878)

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1. Choose a law/ruling and click on the link in the chat box.

2. You have **five minutes** to fill out the Padlet. Comment and like other posts!

3. Be ready to share out to the whole group!
Jigsaw Activity

### Anti-Chinese Legislation and Rulings

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• Discussion and Q&A
How is the law used, in history and present-day, to keep power structures in place? What does it take to overcome this?

Any questions or comments
Post in Padlet:

1. New information

2. Did you expand on prior knowledge? Revise your understanding?
Thank you!