

Teacher Curriculum Guide  
For



# Our Voices

*Refugee and Immigrant Women Tell Their Stories*

A new exhibit at the State Museum of Pennsylvania  
Created by

*The Institute for Cultural Partnerships  
Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network  
and  
The State Museum of Pennsylvania*



**“If you have an education, rather than people choosing you, you’ll get to choose others. I did not want to be chosen by someone else. I wanted to have more options. I knew that, if I did not have an education, I would be limited in terms of where I can go, where I can work.”**

*Source?*

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## About the Institute for Cultural Partnerships

The Institute for Cultural Partnerships grew out of the work of the Pennsylvania Heritage Affairs Commission and was founded in October of 1995 as a non-profit organization based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Institute's mission is to help individuals and communities successfully live, learn and work in our increasingly diverse society. The Institute focuses on helping people understand their own culture, understand others, develop positive inter-group relations and build strong communities.

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## About the Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network

The Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network, or PAIRWN, began in May of 2001 as a way to honor and enhance the lives of refugee women in Pennsylvania. The organization helps refer, advocate, network and empower these women to live life to their fullest potential while striving to educate others about their cultures and contributions to American society.

**Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network**  
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Enola, PA 17025  
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## *Credits*

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## A Message to the Teacher

### *Our Voices Refugee and Immigrant Women Tell Their Stories*

Pennsylvania's history is the history of immigration in the U.S. Pennsylvania has always opened its arms to the peoples of the world seeking economic betterment, political asylum or religious freedom. In the past twenty years alone, we have seen a dramatic demographic shift; racial and ethnic diversity has increased in some communities by as much as 40%. Since 1992, nearly 30,000 refugees and immigrants have made Pennsylvania their home. Members of these groups bring with them a rich cultural heritage which has shaped the history of the state and contributed to Pennsylvania's growth and development.

Yet, the recent attacks on our country have given rise to unprecedented levels of prejudice and hate crimes. Today, Pennsylvania is home to numerous hate groups feeding on a fear of the unknown - especially the unknown neighbor across the street.

This exhibit, filled with the stories and portraits of real people, puts a face on these newcomers - a face with the same dreams for freedom, prosperity and safety we all share. Here you will read excerpts from oral history interviews collected over the past three years.

Just by listening, oral history interviews lend validity to our experiences. Many refugee and immigrant women, especially elders, arrive without the language or work skills required to adapt comfortably in their new world. Many remain isolated at home, often relying upon their children and grandchildren to connect them to the outside world. Others come seeking an education that will advance them beyond the expectations for women in their homeland. Some have come to support husbands and provide a better future for their children. Paying attention to these women's stories and their traditions can give them the confidence to participate fully in our society. These are often the untold stories of immigration and exodus - powerful stories of courage, survival and adaptation to a new land. As a result of the wars in the Middle East, much attention has been brought to the experiences of women living in other countries, under other social circumstances. This attention is long overdue. Through this exhibit we hope to build awareness and tolerance among the general public for our newly arriving neighbors.

- Amy Skillman, Exhibit Curator  
The Institute for Cultural Partnerships

## About the Exhibit

When you arrive at the museum you will find the *Our Voices* exhibit in the Loggia Gallery and Gallery D off the main entrance. Please allow at least twenty minutes for your class to tour the space and complete the activities in their student workbooks. The exhibit opens on September 11th, 2005 and runs through January 2nd, 2006. You may contact the museum's reservation line at 717-772-6997 to schedule your visit or for further questions.

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## About the Teacher Resource Materials and Curriculum Guide

The Teacher Curriculum Guide you are holding in your hands is constructed in two distinct sections. The first section contains a detailed guide, including discussion questions, that will deepen and enrich your students' experiences before, during and after their visit to the museum. You will find lesson plans linked to Pennsylvania State Standards combined with quick activities and fast facts - enough for an entire unit or simply to enrich your visit. Lessons are broadly written for use in 4th - 8th grade classrooms; please feel free to modify assignments accordingly. The second section of the Teacher Curriculum Guide consists of a Student Workbook containing all materials needed to support the lessons and designed for use the day of your visit. It is our hope that these materials will be both flexible and comprehensive enough to meet your needs.

This guide has been carefully planned to take you and your class on a journey through the various components of the museum exhibit. Your students will be creating portrait galleries, recording and writing oral histories, thinking about food and cultural connections and finding objects that define themselves - just as the women from the Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network did. In fact, by the time you are done with the lessons and activities, you and your class will have created a museum exhibit of your own that celebrates the diversity in your classroom. The chart below will help guide you through the activities and the ways in which they connect to what you will experience in the museum.

Exhibit Feature	Corresponding Lesson
<i>Portrait Gallery:</i> The gallery showcases beautiful portraits of the women with excerpts from their real life tales of courage and joy, as well as a life size mural of the entire group.	<i>Me in a Box</i> Lesson 1 <i>Everybody Comes from Somewhere</i> Lesson 3
<i>Object Display:</i> A collection of objects which symbolize the women's old and new lives.	<i>Me In a Box</i> Lesson 1
<i>Kitchen Cupboard:</i> This display of foodstuffs explores the foods that are special to the women and bring a bit of home to their tables.	<i>What's in Your Cupboard?</i> Lesson 2
<i>Story Circle:</i> A circle of chairs, designed and painted by the women themselves, beckons all to sit and experience a multi-media display or read the women's oral histories.	<i>Me in a Box</i> Lesson 1 <i>Everybody Comes from Somewhere</i> Lesson 3
<i>Visitor's Guest Book:</i> Visitors are challenged to tell how this exhibit has impacted them. How would they welcome a newcomer after experiencing this exhibit?	<i>New Neighbors - New Friends</i> Lesson 4

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## Lesson One: Me in a Box Overview and Fast Facts

*“...by beginning with the concepts of cultural participation as students experience them, “culture” is not relegated to “others”, but becomes visible as a human characteristic. Then, when the cultural practices of others are presented, students have the skills and concepts necessary to engage with and explore them and eventually to understand them.” - Diane E. Sidener, Standards for Folklife Education - 1997*

### Connections to the Exhibit:

Display case of objects  
Story Circle

### Discussion Questions:

What is a group?  
Do you belong to any groups?  
What does it mean to belong to a group?  
If you had to fill a box with things that symbolize you, what would you choose?



### Fast Facts and Ideas

- today in our schools, one in every five students is the child of an immigrant (Fix & Passel p.15). U.S. schools are more culturally and ethnically diverse today than they have ever been.

### Ten Minute Activities

- Ask for a show of hands - how many in the class belong to a club like the Girl or Boy Scouts? How many play on a sports team? How many jump rope at recess with a group of friends? Count the number of people in each category.
- Ask another classroom to do the same activity using the same categories and compare results. How were the two groups alike? How were they different?
- Point out that the flag is a symbol for the United States. Discuss the meaning of the stars and stripes in the flag. Ask each student to bring in an object that they would consider a symbol of themselves. Display the objects in the classroom and choose one or two objects daily to view and discuss.



# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## *Me in a Box - Lesson Plan*

Grade Levels: 4th - 8th

### Subjects:

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening - Mathematics - Visual Arts



### Background:

We all live, work and play within groups of people who spend time together and share a common set of understandings - within folk groups. Folk groups in many ways create our experiences and shape our identities. When we have mastered the traditions and codes of our group, we feel a sense of familiarity and belonging. We often define ourselves in relationship to the folk groups to which we belong. The lessons in this guide begin by introducing the concept of a folk group as a starting point for learning about and appreciating America's increasing diversity. In order to understand and appreciate cultures and customs that are different from our own, we must first understand and appreciate ourselves.

### Focus:

The focus of this lesson is to encourage students to explore their own cultural identity as a jumping off point for the exploration and appreciation of other cultures.

### Assessment:

*Folk Group Worksheet, Oral Presentation Chart, Writing Chart*

### Materials:

Shoe box or other sturdy cardboard box - Photo of each student - Items from home - lined paper - *Folk Group Worksheet* and *Checklist - Oral Presentation Chart* - Sample "Me in a Box" - *Writing Chart - Story Circle Chair Worksheet* - paint, glue, wire as needed for assemblages

### Vocabulary:

*folk group* - a group of people who regularly meet together and share at least one thing in common, such as ethnicity, language, occupation, age, family, gender, region or religion. Examples include: Scouts, choir, cousins, gangs, groups of friends, sports team, Sunday school class and a local union. (Source: Standards for Folklife Education)

*symbol* - something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance; *especially* a visible sign of something invisible. Ex: the lion is a *symbol* of courage. (Source: Merriam Webster Unabridged Dictionary)

*assemblage* - an artistic composition made from scraps, junk, and odds and ends, as of paper, cloth, wood, stone, or metal. (Source: Merriam Webster Unabridged Dictionary)

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Pennsylvania Standard	Content (know)	Process (do)
<b>Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing Standards</b> 1.6.5.C & 1.6.8.C Speak using skills appropriate to formal speech situations. 1.4.5.B & 1.4.8.B Write multi-paragraph informational pieces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal speech vs. informal speech.</li> <li>Beginning, middle and end structure.</li> <li>Speaking loudly and clearly when in front of groups.</li> <li>Narrative Writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give an oral presentation to an audience of their peers.</li> <li>Write a narrative describing themselves.</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematics Standards 2.6.5.B</b> Organize and display data using pictures, tallies, tables, charts, bar graphs and circle graphs. 2.6.8.F Use computer spreadsheets to organize and analyze data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bar graphs.</li> <li>Excel or other computer spreadsheet program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4th grade: analyze folk groups within the classroom and create bar graphs with the data.</li> <li>8th grade: analyze folk group trends within the classroom and create spreadsheets.</li> </ul>
<b>Arts and Humanities Standards</b> 9.1.5.B & 9.1.8.B Recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Found object assemblage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect ordinary items that have personal meaning and create an assemblage for display.</li> </ul>

## Procedures:

- 1 - Introduce the term *folk group* with a discussion of the classroom as a folk group. Give the students a few minutes to brainstorm other types of folk groups. Collect ideas and write them on the board. Have each student create a list of the groups they belong to using the "Me in a Box" worksheet.
- 2 - Discuss the ways in which objects can become symbols of something important to us. (Ex: flag as a symbol for our country) Ask the students to think of other types of symbols. Give the students the *Story Circle Chair* page and ask them to decorate their chairs with symbols of things that are important to them, then attach their chair to several blank pages to create a journal for reflections.
- 3 - Share a sample "Me in a Box" created by the teacher and talk about the meaning of each object. Discuss the ways in which the objects tell a story about the person. Ask students to revisit their lists of folk groups and begin planning what they might put in their "Me in a Box".
- 4 - Share the *Folk Group Worksheet* checklist and the *Oral Presentation Chart* with the students. Ask each student to bring in a shoe box or other sturdy box with a lid filled with objects that symbolize the groups to which they belong.
- 5 - Have each student present their box and discuss the items inside of it. Use the presentation rubric to assess student oral presentations or allow students to share informally in a story circle.
- 6 - Review the individual student lists of folk groups. Create a master list of all of the folk groups represented within the class. Indicate the number of students who belong to each group. Fourth and fifth grade students can translate these numbers to a bar graph and display the data. Sixth through eighth grade students can transfer this data into a computer spreadsheet, analyze the data and calculate percentages. Ex: 20% of our class belongs to Boy Scouts.
- 7 - Ask the students to bring in pictures of themselves or take a picture of each student with a digital camera. Ask the students to write a narrative of three to five paragraphs describing themselves to go along with the pictures and create your own classroom Portrait Gallery.
- 8 - At the museum examine the objects chosen by the women of the exhibit; sit in the chairs and discuss the symbols painted on them.

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## Arts Connections: Found Object Assemblages

Assemblages transform objects into artwork by combining everyday items to express a theme or an idea. Often the items are painted all one color as a study in texture, light and shadow. Ask students to create an assemblage entitled "Parts of Me" by gluing together and displaying items from their "Me in a Box" project. Students can paint the lids of their shoeboxes to use as a shadow box for displaying their finished products. Speak with your school's Visual Arts instructor to see what connections can be made with the Arts Curriculum. (Possible connections: composition, negative space, bas relief, Picasso's collages, DuChamps "ready made" art) If you have Internet access for your students, allow them to view the assemblages by artist Leo Kaplan on-line at the International Museum of Collage and Construction by pointing your browser to the following address: [http://collagemuseum.com/assemblage\\_exhibit/kaplan.htm](http://collagemuseum.com/assemblage_exhibit/kaplan.htm)

## Discussion Questions for Your Museum Visit: Precious Objects Display

The women of the exhibit were asked to provide one or two objects to create this display - one that symbolizes their life in their native country and/or one that symbolizes their life in America. What would your students choose to symbolize their life in America? If any of your students are natives of another country encourage them to share symbols of their lives in their native country as well.

What is a symbol?

How can a special object tell us something about the person who loves it?

What would you choose to go in this display that would tell us something about you?

## Discussion Questions for Your Museum Visit: Story Circle Chairs

The women of the exhibit were asked to consider symbols as visual ways to communicate; for example: a heart as a symbol for love. They also considered color and the ways in which color communicates messages. Then they decorated their chairs with colors and symbols important to their lives. If any of your students were born in another country, this is a wonderful opportunity for sharing cultural differences.

Who can think of a color that sends a message? (example - red for stop)

Who can think of a picture that is a symbol we all recognize?

What would you paint on your chair?

## Companion Books:

Aliki, *Painted Words*. Greenwillow Books, 1998

A young girl who can not speak English learns to share her story using paintings. Grades 4 & 5

Juan Felipe Herrea, *Laughing Out Loud I Fly*. Harper's Collins, 1998

In this collection of bi-lingual poems about childhood, place and identity, poet Juan Felipe Herrea uses sound and rhythm to explore life. Grades 6 and up

## Resources for further study:

Bartis, Peter and Paddy Bowman, ed. *A Teacher's Guide to Folklife Resources for K-12 Classrooms*. Washington D.C.: American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, 1993.

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## *Lesson Two: What's in Your Cupboard?* *Overview and Fast Facts*

*"Always try to show what you are like in your culture in a gentle way. The food you serve, the music."  
- Alawia, Our Voices oral history*

**Connections to the Exhibit:**  
Kitchen Cupboard display

### **Discussion Questions:**

What foods do you eat at your house to celebrate special occasions or holidays?  
What foods can you think of that are special to your family?

### **Fast Facts and Ideas**

- 40% of our population can trace their ancestry back to someone who came here as an immigrant through Ellis Island. (Ashabrammer p. 15)
- over 30 million Americans can trace their ancestry back to the African continent; their ancestors were brought here under the forced immigration of slavery. (Ashabrammer, p. 15)



### **Ten Minute Activities:**

- Read the school cafeteria menu and identify foods being served that came to us from other cultures. Note how diversity has enhanced our everyday lives.
- Designate each of the four corners of the room as a different type of food. Ask the students to get up and move to the corner that represents their favorite. Count the students in each group. Repeat with a different set of foods. Record the results and ask the students to express them as a percentage of the entire class.

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## *What's In Your Cupboard?* *Lesson Plan*



Grade Levels: 4th - 8th

### Subjects:

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening - Mathematics - Visual Arts

### Background:

Food is an essential element of life. Food is also an expression of the culture that produces it - a folk art created by folk groups. The foods we prepare and serve to mark holidays and special occasions often are an important clue to our cultural identity. The women of the *Our Voices* exhibit have retained their cultural identity with the foods they prepare; some of them going to great lengths in the pursuit of difficult-to-find ingredients needed to reproduce the authentic cuisine of their homeland. This lesson asks the students to consider the foods that they eat, as a reflection of their own culture; and then conduct simple ethnographic research by interviewing family members and collecting favorite recipes along with the memories that make these foods special.

### Focus:

The focus of this lesson is to encourage students to explore their own cultural identity and that of their families using family interviews and collecting and sharing the data.

### Assessment:

Teacher observation and class meetings

### Materials:

*Parent Letter - Interview Release Form - Recipe Collection Worksheet - Recipe Book Page* - access to library or computer lab - samples of folk art from different regions

### Vocabulary:

*culture* - the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought typical of a population or community at a given time. (Source: *Merriam Webster Unabridged Dictionary*)

*ethnography* - the study and description of individual cultures base on interviews and documentation. (Source: *Standards for Folklife Education*)

*folk arts* - traditional forms of cultural expression that reflect the group's sense of beauty, identity and values. Examples include Appalachian Jack tales, Mennonite quilting patterns, African kente cloth patterns. (Source: New York State Council on the Arts)

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Pennsylvania Standard	Content (know)	Process (do)
<p><b>Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing Standards</b></p> <p>1.2.5.A &amp; 1.2.8.A Read and understand essential content of informational texts and documents in all academic areas.</p> <p>1.6.5.A Listen to others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ask pertinent questions</li> <li>- distinguish relevant information, ideas and opinions from those that are irrelevant.</li> <li>- take notes when prompted</li> </ul> <p>1.6.8.A Listen to Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ask probing questions</li> <li>- analyze information, ideas and opinions to determine relevancy</li> <li>- take notes when needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard recipe formats.</li> <li>• Library research skills.</li> <li>• Interview techniques.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview family members and collect favorite recipes along with memories or stories linked to that recipe.</li> <li>• Choose a quote from your notes to include with the recipe.</li> <li>• Research regional Folk Art to illustrate the class cookbook.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mathematics Standards</b></p> <p>2.5.5.A Develop a plan to analyze a problem, identify the information needed to solve the problem, carry out the plan, check whether an answer makes sense and explain how the problem was solved.</p> <p>2.5.8.A Invent, select, use and justify the appropriate methods, materials and strategies to solve problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiplication of whole numbers and fractions.</li> <li>• Conversion of measurement units.</li> <li>• Working with calculators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect recipes from their family members and convert these recipes into quantities large enough to feed the entire class.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Arts and Humanities Standards</b></p> <p>9.1.5.K Apply traditional and contemporary technology in furthering knowledge and understanding in the humanities.</p> <p>9.1.8.K Incorporate specific uses of traditional and contemporary technologies in furthering knowledge and understanding in the arts and humanities.</p> <p>9.2.5.G &amp; 9.2.8.G Relate works in the arts to geographic regions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify country of origin for each recipe and research the folk art of that area. Choose a representative sampling of the folk art to illustrate the recipe.</li> </ul>

## Procedures:

- 1 - In a story circle, ask the students to share what they had for dinner last evening. Create a list on the board and brainstorm together the origins of these foods. (ex: pizza/Italy - tacos/Mexico - hot dogs/Germany) Ask student to reflect on the ways in which these foods are a part of their family's culture. Discuss the ways in which many different cultures have contributed to the foods we eat in America.
- 2 - Look at the school lunch menu or schedule a visit to the school cafeteria to search through their cupboards. What foods do you find? What cultures have influenced these food choices?
- 3 - Explain the concept of ethnographic research. Review the interview permission slips, the *Recipe Collection Worksheet* and the *Parent Letter*. Practice interviewing each other.

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- 4 - Ask the students to interview their parents or grandparents and collect a favorite recipe for a traditional holiday food along with memory associations. Research the resulting recipes to discover country of origin.
- 5 - Guide students through the process of creating a final copy of the recipe using the Recipe Book Page provided. Remind them to choose only one or two sentences from the memory interview to include with the recipe. Bind the final copies together to create a classroom cookbook.
- 6 - Ask each student to analyze a recipe. How many people will it serve? How many people are in the class? How would you convert the recipe in order to serve the entire class?
- 7 - At the museum, examine the contents of the kitchen cupboard and remind the students of their own recipes.

## Arts Connections: Folk Arts of a Region

Folk Arts are the traditional forms of expression of a given group, community or culture. Pennsylvania is home to many cultural traditions and a rich heritage of Folk Art influences from all over the world. Ask your students to use internet or library resources to research Folk Art traditions of various cultural groups within Pennsylvania, with a focus on the cultural groups reflected in their recipe collections. The goal is to find appropriate illustrations for the class recipe book using reproducible images from library books or internet sites. Touch base with the building Visual Arts teacher as a source of information and research suggestions.

## Discussion Questions for Your Museum Visit: Kitchen Cupboard Display

As you read the detailed oral histories of the women, a common theme emerges. Many of the women spoke of their native foods as a strong symbol of home and identity. The Kitchen Cupboard exhibit highlights some of these foods.

Does anyone see some foods that are familiar in this cupboard?

Does anyone see some foods that are new and different?

## Resources for Further Study:

D'Amico, Joan and Eich Drummond, Karen, *The Coming to America Cookbook: Delicious Recipes and Fascinating Stories from America's Many Cultures*. John Wiley and Sons Inc., 2005.

This well thought-out cookbook includes delicious recipes and stories from many cultures. Grades 4-8

Gomez, Aurelia, *Crafts of Many Cultures*. Scholastic Inc., 1992.

These thirty authentic craft projects from around the world all come with cultural background information and extension activities. Grades 1-6

Merrill, Yvonne, *Hands on Asia*. Kits Publishing, 1999.

A beautifully illustrated book that offers art projects mixed with detailed background information on the region and the culture. One of a series of books exploring a culture through its arts. Grades 4-8

Merrill, Yvonne, *Hands on Africa*. Kits Publishing, 2000.

Merrill, Yvonne, *Hands on Latin America*. Kits Publishing, 1997.

*Flavors Around the World*. The Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network, 2002.

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## Lesson Three: Everybody Comes from Somewhere Overview and Fast Facts

*"A major factor in effective education is the integration of what is learned in the school with the experiences children have in their homes and communities. An equal challenge is the integration of the culture of the community into the curriculum." - Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Professor of Folklore, Tish School of the Arts, NYC*

### Connections to the Exhibit:

Portrait Gallery and Story Circle

### Discussion Questions:

- What was William Penn's dream for Pennsylvania?
- Why do you think America is often called a nation of immigrants?
- What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee?
- Who belongs here?

### Fast Facts and Ideas

- As of the 2000 census 11.1% of our population consisted of new immigrants to our country - more than double the 4.7% number of new immigrants from the 1970 census.
- The new immigrants to the United States are predominantly of Latino or Asian heritage: 38% of the new immigrants and refugees were from Mexico, 20% were from Latin America, 23% were from Asia, 16% were from Europe or Canada and 3% were from other countries.

### Ten Minute Activities:

- Take an informal poll of the classroom. How many people in the class have relatives who have moved here from another country? What countries are represented? Make a pie chart of the data.
- Place a world map on the classroom wall. Place a pin or a dot on the map for each country of origin represented by the class. Ask each class member to informally interview a friend, neighbor, grandparent or someone from school and collect more dots. Make it a class goal to circle the globe.





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## *Everybody Comes from Somewhere* *Lesson Plan*



Grade Levels: 4th - 8th

### **Subjects:**

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening - Mathematics - Theatre Arts

### **Background:**

Currently we are undergoing a surge in the number of new immigrants to our country, second only to the last great wave of immigration in the late 19th century. The face of immigration is changing as well. Prior to the 1960's our country had restrictive immigration policies that effectively barred entry to immigrants from all but a few Northern European countries and established quotas to limit numbers of people arriving. The Nationality Act (1965), the Refugee Act (1980), and the Reform Act (1986) ended this discrimination and opened up our country to many more peoples. The largest numbers of new immigrants to our country in the last decade have come from a Latino or Asian heritage, rather than a European heritage.

As a country we remain ambivalent in our feelings about new immigrants. Although most Americans recognize the contributions new immigrants bring, some Americans fear that these newcomers will take jobs and resources from those who were born here. In fact, studies have proven just the opposite - new immigrants bring with them a pioneer spirit and work ethic that creates jobs, revitalizes urban neighborhoods and fuels our economy.

Most new immigrants leave their homes voluntarily and come here seeking a better life; but some come as refugees forced from their homes by war or persecution. Often they have spent time in refugee camps before arriving in our country, escaping with few belongings and fewer resources. Many of these refugees were well educated professionals in their home country who must now take unskilled, low paying jobs. They suffer from traumas inflicted by the conditions they have left, and also from the culture shock of rapid and dramatic change.

### **Focus:**

The focus of this lesson is to examine the dynamics of immigration using first person interviews and primary source materials to create empathy for the newcomer by increasing student understanding of the immigrant and refugee experience.

### **Assessment:**

Teacher observation and class meetings

### **Materials:**

*Parent Letter - Interview Release Form - Oral History Interview Sheet - Samples of Oral Histories - immigrant pictures - Museum Treasure Hunt Activity Page - student created journals - foreign language tapes*

### **Vocabulary:**

*census* - a formal count of a country's population taken periodically. (The United States census has been taken every ten years since 1790)

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*immigrant* - a person who moves from his or her country of birth to become a permanent resident of another country.

*refugee* - a person who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or belonging to a particular social group, is forced to leave the country of his or her nationality. (Source: United Nations High Commission on Refugees)

*tableau* - a group of people frozen in a pose together meant to simulate stop action- as if a picture were just snapped of a moment from real life - a freeze frame.

*image theatre* - a creative dramatics technique that asks the actors to set up several tableaux to create a complete story in frozen pictures.

Pennsylvania Standard	Content (know)	Process (do)
<b>Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing Standards</b> 1.6.5.A & 1.6.8.A Listen to others. 1.1.5.H & 1.1.8.H Demonstrate fluency and comprehension in reading 1.4.5.B & 1.4.8.B Write multi-paragraph informational pieces. 1.5.5.D & 1.5.8.D Write with an understanding of the stylistic aspects of composition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral History Interview techniques.</li> <li>• Reading fluency and comprehension.</li> <li>• Narrative writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview family and community members and collect stories about the immigration experience; then read the oral histories to the class.</li> <li>• Write a reflection in response to the oral history you collected.</li> <li>• Research immigrant oral histories and write a journal entry as a fictional newcomer to your community.</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematics Standards</b> 2.4.5.B Use models, number facts, properties and relationships to check and verify predictions and explain reasoning. 2.4.8.B Combine numeric relationships to arrive at a conclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and interpreting graphs and charts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study census data indicating current and past trends in immigration, compare to data and draw conclusions.</li> </ul>
<b>Arts and Humanities Standards</b> 9.1.5.E Know and demonstrate how arts can communicate experiences, stories or emotions through productions of works in the arts 9.1.8.E Communicate a unifying theme or point of view through a production of works in the arts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Image theatre and the use of tableaux.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using photographs of immigrants arriving in the United States, create frozen tableaux that tell a story.</li> </ul>

## Procedures:

1 - Ask the students if they have ever experienced a major change in their lives. Can they describe what happened and how they felt about it? Next ask them to imagine leaving their country and moving to a foreign country where they could not speak the language. For several minutes play foreign language tapes in a language unfamiliar to all in the group. If a student asks for something during this time period they may only use gestures to get their message across - just as a new immigrant may have to do when faced with language barriers. Ask students to write a reflection in their journal while this experience is happening. Encourage any students who speak English as their second language to share their real life experiences in a story circle.

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2 - Put the students in small groups of 5 or 6. Tell them you are going to ask them to make a tableau together. Explain that a tableau is a frozen picture. Share the picture of immigrants provided in the Student Workbook and ask the students to create tableaux using this picture. Interview the students in the tableau - how do they think each person feels? Ask the students to create a tableau showing what may have happened before this photograph was snapped. Ask the students to create a tableau showing what may have happened just after the photograph was snapped. Share the series of all three as an image theatre telling a story of the people and their experience.

3 - Read samples from the oral histories of the *Our Voices* exhibit (provided in the student workbook) together with the class.

4 - Using library and internet sources, access data from the 2000 census. Compare the total number of foreign born people living in the United States in the year 2000 with the number of foreign born people living in the United States in the year 1990. How has this number changed? Determine the rate of growth and predict what the numbers might be in 2010, using bar graphs.

5 - Review the concept of ethnographic research. Go over the parent letter and permission slips with the students. Practice interviewing each other using the Oral History worksheet. Tips for interviewing are contained in the *Student Fieldwork Guide* provided as an addendum to this lesson. You may decide to copy this and read it together as a class.

6 - Ask the students to interview their classmates, relatives, friends or a member of their community who has moved here from another country. It may also be possible to interview High School students from the English as a Second Language program in your school district. Remind the students to take careful notes. If possible, have the students record the interviews.

7 - After the interviews have been completed allow one or two of the students to share with the class. Ask each student to write a two or three paragraph reflection about what they have learned from this interview in their journals. Did anything surprise them?

8 - Read excerpts from first person accounts of a young immigrant's experiences with your students, or ask students in your class who have recently moved here to share their experiences. You can find newcomer teens discussing their first day at school in the wonderful book *Newcomers to America* by Judith E. Greenberg. If this book is unavailable in your school library you can find an excellent resource on the internet at the website maintained by Scholastic Incorporated; where three newly arrived immigrant teenagers tell their stories and answer questions. You can find this resource by typing the following address into your internet browser:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/recent/index.htm>

9 - Ask your students to write a journal entry as a new immigrant, either based on their own real experiences or a fictional account based on what they have read. In the journal, they will write about their experiences as a new immigrant on the first day of school. When the journal entries are completed, gather the students into a story circle and encourage them to share their stories.

10 - Visit the *Our Voices* exhibit at the State Museum and have your students complete the exhibit treasure hunt found in the Student Workbook. When you come back, ask your students to create a tableau based on some of the images they saw. What does this tableau look like and why?

## Arts Connections: Reader's Theatre

Reader's Theatre scripts are created to be read by several characters seated in chairs with a narrator to keep the plot line moving. Dialogue is simple and narrative and the emphasis is on reading fluently with expression. Using their journal entries and working in small groups, ask your students to create a Reader's Theatre script that tells the story of a newcomer's first day in school. There is a wonderful Reader's Theatre script entitled "*Soo Hoo Lim Kong's Interview to Enter the United States*" available for free from the History Now website which can be accessed by pointing your browser to: [http://www.historynow.org/03\\_2005/pdf/Readers\\_theater.pdf](http://www.historynow.org/03_2005/pdf/Readers_theater.pdf).

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## Discussion Questions for Your Museum Visit: Portrait Gallery

Look at each picture carefully. What details do you notice? What do you see?  
Do any of the pictures have clues that tell us about the person?

## Discussion Questions for Your Museum Visit: Story Circle

Watch the video and listen to the voices. What three new things did you learn?

## Companion Books:

Bode, Janet, *New Kids in Town: Oral Histories of Immigrant Teens*. Scholastic Press.  
Eleven teenage immigrants talk about their experiences. Grades 4-8

Carlson, Lo, *Cool Salsa*. Henry Holt and Company, 1994.  
Bilingual poems about growing up Latino in the United States. All ages

Glasscock, Sarah J., *Read Aloud Plays about Immigration*. Scholastic Press.  
Five short fact based plays for the classroom with background information, writing prompts and creative activities.  
Fully reproducible. Grades 4-8

Greenberg, Judith E., *Newcomers to America, Stories of Today's Young Immigrants*. Franklin Watts Publishers, 1996.  
Personal interviews and oral histories of immigrant teens who discuss the immigrant experience from a teen perspective. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED - Grades 6-8

O'Brien, Anne Sibley, *Who Belongs Here? An American Story*. Tillbury House Publishers, 1993.  
This children's book follows the story of a small boy who comes to the United States as a Cambodian refugee.  
Sensitive writing combined with historical fact asks the reader to consider immigration and issues of prejudice.  
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED - Grades 4-5

## Resources for Further Study:

Ashabranner, Brent, *Still a Nation of Immigrants*. Cobblehill Books/Dutton, 1993.  
This book is an excellent overview of immigration today including an unbiased discussion of the challenges of being a nation of many cultures. Grades 6-8

Davis, Amy and Jill Rossiter, comp. Kate Modic and Amy Skillman, ed. *What's Your Name? Rhymes and Rhythms from Pennsylvania's Neighborhoods*, 1999.

This curricular unit uses music and folk life studies to teach children about our diverse Pennsylvania. A comprehensive and well written resource that models using student experiences as text for learning.

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## Student Fieldwork Guide

Source: *What's Your Name? Rhymes and Rhythms from Pennsylvania's Neighborhoods*  
used by permission of the Institute for Cultural Partnerships

Fieldwork is a unique kind of research that uses people as resources. Depending on the situation, the fieldworker may visit people at their home, at their place of employment, or in a more neutral setting such as a coffee shop. In an interview format or in a more informal conversation, the fieldworker will ask people questions about themselves, their lives, philosophies, art, beliefs, work, and a number of other different topics. The fieldworker usually tapes the interview session and/or takes notes during the interview. Besides interviews, fieldwork involves participation and observation. For example, a fieldworker might visit a church to take notes on the sermon, people's reaction to it, the different rituals involved, or the format of the whole service.

Fieldwork builds bridges between communities, families, schools and students. It fosters and enriches our respect and appreciation for who we are and how we are connected to the larger community. Through fieldwork, we also gain respect and appreciation for those groups or individuals who are "different" than ourselves.

### Interview Skills

An interview is a tool used to gather first-hand information from people. To be a good interviewer, you need to learn how to ask good questions and get detailed information. You also need to be a good listener. A key to asking good questions is to avoid asking questions that can be answered with either a "yes" or "no," and instead ask questions that involve explanation. These are called "open-ended" questions. Be prepared ahead of time with a list of questions, but don't feel that you need to stay with this list. Ask "follow-up" questions based on what the person actually answers, not what's next on your list. Before you interview someone, practice asking questions first with a partner. Get detailed information, listen well, and don't interrupt while they are speaking.

There are several ways to record the information you are collecting. You may take notes, use an audio tape recorder, or a video tape recorder. If you use recording equipment, practice and learn how to use it first. Use fresh batteries and new cassette tapes. Remember to place the microphone near the person you are interviewing. If you use videotape, you will need to recruit a third person to hold the camera. Taking notes is more tedious, but it is a good skill to learn. It is a good idea to write a summary from your notes while the interview is fresh in your mind, or the notes may not make sense later.

An interview is a time to be on your best behavior. Use common courtesies, such as addressing adults by their proper titles, asking politely for an interview, scheduling the interview when it is convenient for them, being punctual and prepared, and writing thank you notes the following day. It is standard procedure to ask the person to sign a release form that explains the purpose of the interview and seeks permission to use the material. For sample release forms, see the Pennsylvania Folklife Standards, pp. 37-40.

### Beginning Your Fieldwork

Once you have your research topic, how do you find people to interview? Start first with the people you know. Ask parents, relatives, friends, neighbors or your teacher for suggestions. Of course, depending on the topic, any of these people may also be good sources.

Call or visit the person to set up the interview. Explain exactly what the assignment is, and what you hope to learn from them.

Begin the interview by recording identification on the tape. A sample format is:

"This is \_\_\_\_\_ (your name), and I am speaking with \_\_\_\_\_ (their name). We are in \_\_\_\_\_ (town, state), and today's date is \_\_\_\_\_."

Remember to ask good questions and listen well. If you are having difficulty getting the person to tell detailed stories, try using photos or other mementos to help them remember an event or story relevant to your topic. Remember to thank them, and don't overstay your welcome or wear them out.

### Fieldwork Safety and Ethics

Rules of safety apply when doing fieldwork. Unless you are interviewing a family member or someone you already know well, don't go to anyone's house alone. No matter who you are interviewing, make sure that your parents or guardians know where you will be and at what times. For younger students, fieldwork can be conducted within the school community.

It's important to remember that the people you interview are giving their personal opinions and stories, and you must respect their privacy. They have the right to refuse to answer any question you ask. Make sure the people are aware of what will happen with their interview. Tell them about the release form before the interview, and ask them sign it at the end. For more in-depth discussion for legal and ethical issues, see the Pennsylvania Folklife Standards, pp. 29-30.

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## Lesson Four: New Neighbors - New Friends Overview and Fast Facts

*"If we view history objectively we remember that every new wave of immigrants has been met with suspicion and doubt and yet, ultimately every past wave of immigrants has been vindicated and saluted"*  
- National Immigration Forum, June 2003

### Connections to the Exhibit:

Guest book and underlying themes

### Discussion Questions:

Some people say that America is like a kaleidoscope that forms constantly changing patterns from many different shapes and colors. Do you agree?  
(Ashabranner p. 119)

If America is a kaleidoscope, how could you help a newcomer feel a part of the patterns?



### Fast Facts and Ideas:

- Immigrants and their businesses contribute \$162 billion in tax revenue to US federal, state and local governments. (Source: Cato Institute, Inter-American Development Bank)
- In California's Silicone Valley alone, companies begun by Chinese and Indian immigrants created nearly 73,000 jobs in 2000. (Source: Brookings Institute)
- The net benefit of immigration to the U.S. is nearly \$10 billion annually. (Source: National Academy of Sciences, Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University Reserve)
- Immigrant and refugee women famous for their contributions to our nation include names that might be familiar to your students such as Teresa Heinz Kerry, Gloria Estafan, Iman, Midori, and Madeleine Albright. (Source: American Immigration Law Foundation)

### Ten Minute Activities:

- Brainstorm a list of ways to welcome someone new.

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## *New Neighbors - New Friends Lesson Plan*

Grade Levels: 4th - 8th



### Subjects:

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening - Music

### Background:

When people immigrate they leave behind their own cultures, communities and folk groups; and thus much of what defines them. They are set adrift from a strong sense of who they are in relationship to a community. New immigrants often suffer discrimination, racial slurs or teasing because of their accents, customary dress, physical characteristics or unfamiliarity with our language. It is clear that they are newcomers - that they do not belong. How can we value their differences and welcome them? How can we, who already belong, reach out to newcomers and ease their path? In our rapidly changing America, it is vital that we teach our students to break down preconceived judgments and put a face on the people around them.

### Focus:

The focus of this lesson is to encourage students to honor diversity as strength and reach out to newcomers.

### Assessment:

Journal entries, teacher observation, *Oral Presentation Chart*, *Writing Chart*

### Materials:

Student workbook - student journals - *Famous Immigrants and Refugees Worksheet* - *Oral Presentation Chart* - *Writing Chart*

### Vocabulary:

*diversity* - the condition of being diverse, variety. (Source: Merriam Webster)

*metaphor* - a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. (Source: Merriam Webster)

*tolerance* - sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from one's own. (Source: Merriam Webster)

Pennsylvania Standard	Content (know)	Process (do)
<b>Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing Standards</b> 1.5.5.B Write using well developed content appropriate for the topic 1.6.5C & 1.6.8.C Speak using skills appropriate to formal speech situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing informational pieces. write a report.</li> <li>• Formal speech vs. informal speech.</li> <li>• Beginning, middle and end structure.</li> <li>• Speaking loudly and clearly when in front of groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research a famous immigrant and</li> <li>• Give an oral presentation about your immigrant to audience of their peers.</li> </ul>
<b>Arts and Humanities Standards</b> 9.3.5.C Classify works in the arts by the forms in which they are found. 9.3.8.C Identify and classify styles, forms, types and genre within forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast.</li> <li>• Genres of music samples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast music.</li> <li>• Name the genre and tell why you like the piece.</li> </ul>

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

## Procedures:

- 1 - During your museum visit, ask your class to reflect on what they have seen. Compile the class ideas and write a note in the museum guestbook.
- 2 - Back in the classroom, discuss a metaphor. Share the metaphor of our country as a kaleidoscope. Discuss the imagery behind the idea that our country is a kaleidoscope of constantly changing patterns made by unique entities. Do the students agree or disagree that the kaleidoscope is a good metaphor? Ask the students to think of another metaphor for our country. "Our country is like a.."
- 3 - Ask the students to create a tableau as if they were the shapes in a kaleidoscope and then bring it to life with movement. What does this look like? What happens to the individual pieces? Discuss the fact that each piece remains the same and yet combines in many different ways. What does this mean about people and other cultures?
- 4 - Send your students on a search for contributions made by famous immigrants; using internet and library resources. Compile a list of these famous immigrants and post the list in your classroom. Ask your students to research and report on one of the famous immigrants.
- 5 - Role play situations in which newcomers might need help so that students can practice helpful responses. Choose three students to become the actors. Use the following method and scenario:

The scenario: A new immigrant with limited English is having difficulties finding the art room and asks two students who are standing in the hall. One of the two refuses to help and makes fun of the immigrant. The third remains silent.

The method: Practice the scene as outlined above, and then interview all of the actors. What was each character thinking or feeling? Next ask the audience for suggestions. What might the third student have done? Solicit and act out different ideas until it is obvious that one works.
- 6 - In a story circle, brainstorm a list of other interventions or helpful attitudes that would make a new immigrant feel welcomed and valued. Ask any students who have immigrated here to share what would help them.
- 7 - Ask each member of the class to reflect on their experiences at the museum and with this unit and write a journal entry. Has anyone changed any ideas, thoughts or beliefs they once held?
- 8 - Using their journal entries and notes from the museum visit, ask each member of the class to write a letter to the women of the Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Network at P.O. Box 238, Enola, PA 17025 and tell their plan for helping newcomers feel at home.
- 9 - Hold a Multicultural Day in your classroom. Display the student portraits and life stories, oral histories of community members, found object assemblages and classroom cookbook created during the course of this unit as your own Our Voices museum. Invite parents to bring in traditional foods based on some of the recipes from student cultures. Perform one of the Reader's Theatre scripts prepared by the children. Open the celebration to High School English as a Second Language Students and invite them in to a Story Circle to share their experiences. Invite newcomers to your community to share in the celebration and join the circle.
- 10 - Match students in your class with penpals from High School English as a Second Language learners to continue the dialogue and sharing.

## Arts Connections: Musical Diversity Day

Ask students to bring in a recorded piece of music (CD or tape) which is a favorite of theirs. All music must be an appropriate choice for a school environment. Prior to bringing in the music, students must submit the words of the songs on the CD to the teacher for approval. In addition, students must prepare and practice formal remarks introducing the music, including the artist's name, record company, genre or style of the music and why they have chosen the piece. When the students have presented their songs the teacher could also present a selection of songs from different genres to compare and contrast. Encourage students to bring in ethnic music whenever possible. Ask your building Music teacher for help and connections to the Music curriculum.



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## Discussion Questions for Your Museum Visit: Guest Book and Reflections

What will you do differently in the future when you meet a newcomer?

Stop at the guest book on your way out of the museum and ask your class to reflect on what they have seen. Collect the student ideas and summarize them in a note for the guest book.

## Companion Books:

Aliki, *Spoken Memories*. Greenwillow Books, 1998.

Mari is a new immigrant to America struggling to learn the language. Today it is Life Story time and she can finally speak well enough to share. Grades 4-5

Sheth, Kashmirah, *Blue Jasmine*. Hyperion Books for Children, 2004.

The heroine of the story must emigrate from a small town in India to a large American city when her father takes a job in the United States. This award winning book, inspired by the true experiences of the author, explores cultural duality, fear of being an outsider, and the difficulties of learning a new language from the perspective of an Indian teen. Grades 4-8

## Resources for further study:

*Teaching Tolerance*, website filled with teacher resources maintained by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Web page: [www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)

# Our Voices Teacher Curriculum Guide

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