INDEPENDENTLENS

THE NEW AMERICANS

Latinos in America

Overview: The United States is the hub for a large Latino community, with an increasing number of Latino immigrants arriving each year. A closer look at immigration rates and data that reflect Latino immigrant status in America gives broader perspective on this growing population.

Standards: This lesson addresses the following national content standards established at http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/

Objectives

Students will:

- List and describe the various Latino groups that emigrate to the United States
- Analyze U.S. Census data reflecting Latino immigration rates and related information
- Identify the areas in which Latino immigrant settles and determine why certain groups settle in specific communities, regions, and/or states
- Explain the labels attached to Latino immigrants and how they prefer to be identified

Materials

- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers
- Computers with Internet access
- Copy of *The New Americans* (To purchase: Home Vision Entertainment: 888-572-8918)
- Television and VCR
- "From a Child's Perspective" (PDF) www.skillmancenter.culma.wayne.edu/latino%20census%20fact%20sheet.pdf
- Varied print and online sources regarding the Latino immigrant can be found at *The New Americans* companion Web site http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/learnmore_stories.html#Immigration

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Procedure

1. Have students take two to three minutes to jot down their immediate associations with Latin American immigrants. Invite students to share their thoughts, which may be a mix of facts and myths. Engage students in discussion about the ideas raised.

2. Distribute "From a Child's Perspective," which synthesizes census information regarding "Hispanics" in America and highlights several myths about Latino immigrants in the United States. Have students read aloud or silently. Ask them to revisit some of the thoughts presented in Step 1. What misconceptions did students have? What points does the piece raise about "Hispanics" that surprised them and/or that they would like to further explore?

3. Provide additional background on Latin American immigrants in the United States. Be sure to note the diversity of Latino immigrants, the labels assigned to them (and how Latinos preferred to be identified), and basic statistics that reflect their status in the U.S. Several reference sources include:

Key Statistics on the U.S. Hispanic Market
http://www.minorityprofessionalnetwork.com/News/Hispanic-Stats.htm

2002 National Survey of Latinos (PDF)
http://www.pewhispanic.org/site/docs/pdf/LatinoSurveyReportFinal.pdf

4) Further explain to students that the percentage of the U.S. population that identifies itself as Hispanic is growing. To illustrate this, ask students to look at the following Web pages from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (if students do not have computer access, distribute the charts as handouts.):

- Region of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population: 1850 to 1930 and 1960 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab02.html

- Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population: 1960 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab03.html

- Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population, With Geographic Detail for 1930 and earlier http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab04.html

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- Race and Hispanic Origin of the Population by Nativity: 1850 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab08.html

- Race and Hispanic Origin of the Foreign-Born Population: 1850 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab09.html

- Nativity of the Population, for Regions, Divisions, and States: 1850 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab13.html

- Nativity of the Population for the 25 Largest Urban Places and for Selected Counties: 1860 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab20.html

- Nativity of the Population for Urban Places Ever Among the 50 Largest Urban Places Since 1870: 1850 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab22.html

5. Based on the above information and supplemental reading, students might undertake to learn more about Latino immigrants. Have students do one or all of the following activities (Students may be assigned activities to be completed collaboratively. They may also brainstorm other areas of interest on which they would like to focus.):

- ✓ Create a graph using data from the late 19th century to the present, showing total number of Latino immigrants in each decade. Where is the biggest jump? Can students predict what 2010 might look like?

- ✓ Calculate the Latino percentage of the overall U.S. population in different decades. Is this a more meaningful statistic than the numbers in the previous step of this lesson? Why or why not?

- ✓ Compare the number of Latino immigrants from several different countries. Students should examine the data on the U.S. Census site and determine the best type of graphic representation for their comparison.

- ✓ Compare the number of Dominican immigrants compare to the number of immigrants from other Latin American countries? Why might these figures be misleading? (Ask students to calculate the ratio of immigrants to the overall population in each country.)

Review the Nativity of the Population, for Regions, Divisions, and States: 1850 to 1990 http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab13.html

(Distribute as a handout if there is no computer access.) Note that these figures represent the overall immigrant population in each state, not just the Latin American population. Which states have the highest percentage of immigrants? Why do these areas have high numbers of immigrants? What groups tend to settle where? Additional research will be necessary to respond to these questions. Identify and research the various labels assigned to Latino immigrants. What is the common title used? How do Latinos preferred to be identified? Students may conduct a survey of Latino immigrants, or second or third generation Latinos, to find the answer to this question.

- ✓ Research and document statistical data reflecting Latino immigrant status in areas including education and the labor force, and other demographic factors, such as family or income.

- ✓ Document, analyze and demystify the various myths associated with Latino immigrants and Latino Americans. How do these myths arise and what information supports and negates them?

6. Invite students to present activity findings and products in a format of their choice. All information can be compiled into a pamphlet for distribution to other students, community groups, etc.

Assessment

Students may be evaluated on participation in class discussion, their graphs and interpretation of raw data, their ability to obtain information, and their capacity for analyzing and synthesizing information that presents varied perspectives on the Latino immigrant population.

Extensions

Students can:
- Identify the nations from which their community's Latino population has largely emigrated, and interview group representatives to learn why these groups have come to this specific community, region, and/or state.
- Conduct a survey of immigrants in their community to determine how they prefer to identify themselves. For example, Latinos in the U.S. have different labels—Latin American, Hispanic, etc.
- Research and discuss these questions:
  --In states where a large number of Latino immigrants have settled, what is the overall public reaction to the Latino presence in the community?
  --How are Latinos portrayed in the local media?
  --What kinds of government programs or laws work for them or against them?

Related Resources

Meet The New Americans: The Mexican Story
http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/mexican_intro.html

Meet The New Americans: The Dominican Story
http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/newamericans/dominican_intro.html

Newshour: Hispanic Americans
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/race_relations/jan-june01/hispanics_3-16.html

Newshour: A Cultural Identity
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/essays/june97/rodriguez_6-18.html

Newshour: Immigrant Influx
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/race_relations/jan-june98/arkansas_2-16.html

TeacherSource: September 2000: Hispanic Heritage
http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/thismonth/sept00/index2.shtm

The Sixth Section
http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2003/thesixthsection/index.html

What it Means to Be Latino?
http://www.pbs.org/americanfamily/latino3.html

LaBoda
http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2001/laboda/index.html

The New Americans: Learn More | The Dominican Republic| Recruitment of Foreign Athletes
http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/learnmore_stories.html#Baseball

U.S. Census Bureau
http://www.census.gov

Correlation to National Standards
Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

History

- Knows a variety of forms of diversity in American society (e.g., regional, linguistic, socioeconomic)

- Knows different viewpoints regarding the role and value of diversity in American life

- Knows examples of conflicts stemming from diversity, and understands how some conflicts have been managed and why some of them have not yet been successfully resolved

- Understands massive immigration after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity

- Understands the struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties

- Understands demographic shifts and the influences on recent immigration patterns

- Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns

Math

- Reads and interprets data in charts, tables, plots (e.g., stem-and-leaf, box-and-whiskers, scatter), and graphs (e.g., bar, circle, line)

- Organizes and displays data using tables, graphs (e.g., line, circle, bar), frequency distributions, and plots (e.g., stem-and-leaf, box-and-whiskers, scatter)

- Understands that the same set of data can be represented using a variety of tables, graphs and symbols and that different modes of representation often convey different messages (e.g., variation in scale can alter a visual message)