Student Activity: Immigration Policy Timeline

Directions: In the Computer Lab, research the timeline events assigned to your group. Be prepared to present these key immigration policy events to the class at the end of the research time.

Use the list of online resources below. You may consult other websites, but be sure to assess each site according to the Source Evaluation Guidelines (also below) before deciding to use it as an authoritative source for your presentation. Each group’s presentation should explain what each policy was and how it would have affected Mexican immigrants and/or their descendants.

As the other groups present, keep the following questions in mind:

1. What trends do you notice in the policies towards Mexican immigrants?
2. What are the main reasons Mexican immigrants were restricted from entering the U.S. during certain eras?
3. What are the main reasons Mexican immigrants were encouraged to come to the U.S. during certain eras?
4. How would you describe the United States’ relationship with Mexican immigrants?

Timeline of U.S. Policy on Mexican Immigration

1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
1882 Chinese Exclusion Act
1890s-1924 Enganchistas seek Mexican workers for large-scale railroad expansion & mining boom
1924 National Origins Act
1930s Mexican Repatriation
1942-1964 Bracero Program
1954 Operation Wetback
1965 Immigration and Nationality Act
1975 Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens
1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act
1990 Immigration Act of 1990
1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and TN Status
1993-present Operation Blockade (Operation Hold the Line)
1994-present Operation Gatekeeper
2001-2003 Increased spending on Border Patrol due to 9/11 terrorist attacks
2005-present Stalled attempts to pass comprehensive immigration reform bills in U.S. House & Senate
2006 Secure Fence Act
2008 Operation Streamline

Remember to: Explain how your events would have affected Mexican immigrants.
Resources for Group Research

Mexico: Crimes at the Border (FRONTLINE/World) Immigration Timeline:
http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/mexico704/history/timeline.html#

PBS's The Border Interactive Timeline
http://www.pbs.org/kpbs/theborder/history/interactive-timeline.html

Encyclopedia Britannica (available online through CPS)
http://www2.youseemore.com/cps/linkinclude.asp

National Archives Docs Teach (use search tool or browse by era)
http://docsteach.org/documents

The Library of Congress American Memory (browse by era, material type, or region or use search tool) http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/index.html

Newspapers

US Citizenship and Immigration Services
http://www.uscis.gov/laws

Government Accountability Office
http://www.gao.gov/ (use search tool)

Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Border Patrol: Overview & History

Migration Policy Institute
www.migrationpolicy.org
Web Source Evaluation Guidelines
Use these guidelines to evaluate any additional sources you consult. This is especially important when researching controversial issues such as immigration.

What is the Domain of the Site?
Look at the site’s URL or Internet address. Make sure the domain fits the kind of information you are looking for.

.org: usually the website of a non-profit organization, though .org is no longer restricted to non-profits
.com: a business or commercial site. A site like this is less likely to contain educational information
.net: a site from a network organization or an Internet service provider
.edu: a site affiliated with a higher education institution
.gov, .us, or .mil: a government or military site

Who Wrote the Page?
Look for information about the page’s author or the authority that published the information. Look for information about the organization in “About Us,” “Philosophy,” or “Background” section to assess if the source is right for your project.

Evaluate the Quality of the Information
Remember that there are no standards or controls of accuracy for the information you find on the Internet. Anyone can present themselves as an authority. Skim the page to find out the following:

Is the information accurate? Is it up to date about time-sensitive information? Is there a “Last Updated” date on the page? Does the page cite statistics or other data? Are there working footnotes and/or links?

Is the information objective? Does it present one or both sides of an issue? Does it use persuasive language or try to convince the reader?

Is there advertising on the page? Sometimes advertising on a page can impact its content. Look to see if there is a relationship between the advertising and the information.
I can’t let you go but I can’t let you stay. You’re such an intricate part of my life, it would be so hard to live without you. I’m so confused.

La Migra Presents a United States Production, Illegal Love. Starring, Uncle Sam and Illegal Immigrants. Directed by Imperial Economics in conjunction with El Gato Gordo Pictures.

NOW PLAYING
IN A THEATRE NEAR YOU

El Corrido de Los Deportados

Background Information: Corridos

The corrido is a type of song that developed in Mexico during the 1800s. Eventually it became known as “música de la frontera” (border music) because it was most popular along both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border (in U.S. states like Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California). Corridos are still popular today with both Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. They were traditionally only in Spanish, but now there are corridos in English or corridos that mix English and Spanish.

Corridos are sung similar to the way a story is told. The music and language are usually very simple so that anyone can understand them and the singer addresses the audience very politely. Traditionally, corridos told about real historic events, such as the adventures of famous heroes or the tragic deaths of people fighting an unjust authority. Today, corridos can be fictional and they can be about almost anything.

Here are some popular subjects for corridos:

- animals (such as racehorses or roosters)
- tragic love affairs
- criminal dealings, especially with contraband and smuggling
- migration and migrant labor
- social and political events
- the struggles of everyday life along the border
- assassinations or other violent deaths
- humorous occurrences or relationships
- catastrophes
- hometowns and regions
- miraculous events
- wars and revolutions
- local or national heroes
Lyrics to El corrido de los deportados

Voy a contarles, señores
Voy a contarles, señores
Todo lo que yo sufrí,
Desde que dejé mi patria,
Desde que dejé mi patria,
Por venir a este país.

Serían las diez de la noche,
Serían las diez de la noche
Comenzó un tren a silbar;
Oí que dijo mi madre
Ahí viene ese tren ingrato
Que a mi hijo se va a llevar.

Addió mi madre querida
Addió mi madre querida
Échame su bendición
Adiós mi querido país
Adiós tu corazón
Ay, que me hacen llorar.

Al fin sonó la campana
Al fin Sonó la campana;
Dos sibilidos dio el tren
No lloren mis compañeros
No lloren mis compañeros
Que me hacen llorar también.

Pasamos pronto Jalisco
Pasamos pronto Jalisco
Ayer fuerte Corre el tren
La vía de nuevo Irapuato
Silbado nuevo La Chona
Y a Aguascalientes también.

Cuando Chihuahua pasamos
Cuando Chihuahua pasamos
Se notó gran confusión
los empleados de la aduana
los empleados de la aduana
que pasaban revisión.

Y llegamos por fin a Juárez
Y llegamos por fin a Juárez
Y ahí fue mi aparición,
Que dónde vas y dónde vienes
Cuánto dinero tienes
Para entrar a esta nación.

It must have been ten at night
It must have been ten at night
When a train’s whistle was heard
I Heard my mother say
“Here comes that hateful grain
That will take my son away.”

Goodbye, my dear mother
Goodbye, my dear mother
Give me your blessing
I’m going to a foreign land
I’m going to a foreign land
Where there is no revolution

Finally they rang the bell
Finally they rang the bell
Two whistles
Don’t cry, my companions,
Don’t cry, my companions,
You’re making me cry too.

When I remember these moments
When I remember these moments
My heart pounds
When Delicias was far behind us
When Delicias was far behind us
The infamous Torreón.

When we passed Chihuahua
When we passed Chihuahua
There was great confusion.
The customs house employees,
The customs house employees
Were having an inspection.

We finally arrived at Juárez,
We finally arrived at Juárez,
And my big worries came there
“Where are you going and where are you coming from?
How much money do you have
in order to enter this country?”

“Gentlemen, I have money,
Gentlemen I have money,
Enough to be able to emigrate.”
“Your money is worthless,
Your money is worthless,
We’ll have to give you a bath.”

The Anglos are very bad fellows
The Anglos are very bad fellows
They take advantage
And to all the Mexicans
They treat us without pity

Today they bring great disturbance
Today they bring great disturbance
And without consideration
Women, children, and the elderly
They take us to the border,
They eject us from this country

Goodbye dear countrymen
Goodbye dear countrymen
They are going to deport us
But we are not bandits
But we are not bandits
We came to work.

Those who are waiting in my country
Those who are waiting in my country,
There’s no longer a revolution,
Come along, my pals,
We will be well received in our real country.