VOCABULARY

**Citizenship:** the status of being a citizen, usually associated with a legal identification that allows an individual recognized as a citizen certain rights and duties. These may include the right to vote, work, and live in the country as well as duties to follow the country's laws, pay taxes, or serve in the military.

**Coolie:** term used in the 19th and 20th century to describe Asian laborers (usually of Chinese, south Asian, Filipino, or Indonesian descent) engaged in a slavery-like trade. Some coolies were indentured servants, some willingly signed misleading contracts, some sold themselves to pay off debts, and some were victims of kidnapping or violence who were forced into labor against their will. Today the term is used as a racial slur, particularly in South Africa.

**Naturalization:** the legal process by which a non-citizen is allowed to become a citizen of a country. This can occur through an application process, legislation, marriage, or parental action.

Lesson Plan Reading List

*The Road to Exclusion: Coolies, Railroads, and Gold Mountain*
Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror for Young People* (2012, adapted by Rebecca Stefoff)
Yin, *Coolies* (2001)

*Related Student Reading*
The author’s reflections on the book process: [http://www.shauntan.net/books/the-arrival.html](http://www.shauntan.net/books/the-arrival.html)
Timeline of 19th-Century Events & Legislation affecting the Chinese in America

1848  Gold discovered in California

1842-1852  China defeated by the British in the first Opium War
             Series of floods and crop failures in southern China lead to poverty and threats of famine among peasant farmers

1850  California imposes Foreign Miner’s Tax – enforced mainly against Chinese

1852  20,000 Chinese enter San Francisco, CA as part of the gold rush

1854  *People v. Hall* rules that Chinese cannot give testimony in court against Whites

1857  San Francisco, CA opens a school for Chinese children

1859  Chinese excluded from San Francisco public schools

1862  California imposes a “police tax” of $2.50 a month on every Chinese

       Coolie Act prohibits American participation in the coolie trade

1865  Central Pacific Railroad Co. recruits Chinese for the transcontinental railroad

1867  2,000 Chinese railroad workers strike for a week

       Southern planters in Louisiana and the Deep South recruit Chinese workers from California, China, and Cuba to work on sugar and cotton plantations.

1868  U.S. and China sign Burlingame-Seward Treaty recognizing the right of citizens to emigrate

1869  Completion of transcontinental railroad

1870  Chinese railroad workers in Texas sue company for failing to pay wages

       75 Chinese workers from California hired to work at a North Adams, MA shoe factory to break a strike by White laborers

1872  California’s Civil Procedure Code drops law barring Chinese court testimony

1875  Congress passes the Page Law, barring entry of Chinese, Japanese, and "Mongolian" prostitutes, felons, and contract laborers (coolies)
1877 Anti-Chinese violence in Chico, CA

1878 \textit{In re Ah Yup} rules that residents of Asian descent are not eligible for naturalization (only Whites and people of African descent)

1879 California’s second constitution prevents municipalities and corporations from employing Chinese

1880 U.S. and China sign treaty giving the U.S. the right to limit but "not absolutely prohibit" Chinese immigration. Section 69 of California's Civil Code prohibits issuing of licenses for marriages between whites and "Mongolians, Negroes, mulattoes and persons of mixed blood"

1882 Chinese Exclusion Act suspends U.S. immigration of laborers for ten years

1885 Chinese American family successfully sues the San Francisco School District for access to public schools, resulting in a segregated Oriental School
Anti-Chinese riot in Rock Springs, Wyoming where white coal miners attack Chinese workers

1886 Residents of Tacoma, Seattle, and many places in the American West forcibly expel the Chinese
Chinese laundry owners win when \textit{Yick Wo v. Hopkins} rules that a law with unequal impact on different groups is discriminatory

1888 Scott Act renders 20,000 Chinese reentry certificates null and void


1892 Geary Law renews exclusion of Chinese laborers for another ten years and requires all Chinese to register.

1898 \textit{Wong Kim Ark v. U.S.} rules that Chinese born in the U.S. cannot be stripped of their citizenship

1904 Chinese exclusion is extended without a time limit

1906 San Francisco fire after an earthquake destroys city birth records, providing an opportunity for Chinese to claim U.S. birth and to allow “paper sons” to enter
Immigrant Accounts Note-Taking Guide

- What is the immigrant’s name and country of origin?
- Describe the immigrant’s experience traveling for her/his home to America.
- What challenges did the immigrant encounter?
- Describe the immigrant's work in America.
- Describe the immigrant’s family.
- What information was of particular interest to you?
- If you could ask the immigrant two questions, what would they be?

Credits

Ancestors in the Americas Asian American History Timeline ([http://www.cetel.org/timeline.html](http://www.cetel.org/timeline.html))