

Chinese Exclusion & Angel Island

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Unit Overview

This unit was created in Fall 2014 as a means to introduce Asian immigration to elementary and middle school students. Most elementary lessons on immigration begin (and end) with Ellis Island, which focuses solely on European immigrants. Left out from this narrow telling of history are other groups such as Asians, Mexicans and South Americans - many of whom arrived in the United States in the early 1900s by way of Angel Island.

This unit focuses on early Chinese immigration to the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the first major group of Asians to arrive in America. The Chinese have a long, complicated history in the United States that is rarely detailed in K-12. The elementary lessons focus on the Angel Island Immigration Station experience and are integrated heavily with language arts through the use of picture books and poetry. The middle school lessons utilize a variety of primary sources to build student understanding about the negative attitudes and stereotypes associated with Chinese laborers that led to the Chinese Exclusion Act. After examining the act itself, students explore how the immigration station at Angel Island enforced exclusion by learning about the experiences of different individual immigrants.

A surprising amount of children's literature has emerged in the last twenty years that gives students access to the experiences of early Chinese immigrants; while not every relevant book is used in these lessons, many are listed as additional resources for further study or project extensions. In 2009, the Angel Island Immigration Station was reopened as a museum. Its website and various videos related to Angel Island are referenced throughout these lessons. Learn more about the Angel Island Immigration Station Museum at www.aiisf.org.

Teacher Background

The Ellis Island of the West?

As Ellis Island is perhaps the most famous emblem of American immigration in the early 20th century, Angel Island is frequently referred to as “the Ellis Island of the West.” However, Angel Island had several characteristics that were distinctly different from Ellis Island. Ellis Island mostly processed European immigrants; one of the immigration station’s goals was to begin the process of turning these immigrants into naturalized Americans. Angel Island was designed in 1907 to enact newly established immigration inspection procedures resulting from Chinese exclusion, thus serving as a primary entryway for Chinese and other Asian immigrants but also receiving up to a third of new arrivals from Europe and Latin America from its opening in 1910 until a fire resulted in its 1940 closing.

At Ellis Island, the majority of European immigrants underwent a “six-second physical” while fully clothed, but Asian immigrants at Angel Island were subjected to invasive and sometimes humiliating group examinations. Chinese immigrant Jann Mon Fong recounted, “The physicians had us stripped to the skin and exposed to the chilly sea breeze for several hours before he routinely tapped our chest and spine and ordered us to jump up and down like monkeys.” European immigrants were typically processed through Ellis Island in a matter of hours or, at most, a few days. At Angel Island, 70% of alien arrivals were detained; Asians, Chinese immigrants in particular, stayed in racially segregated detention for days, weeks, and, for some, upwards of a year. Quock Shee, a Chinese woman who immigrated to America to join her merchant husband, had the longest known detention at Angel Island of nearly 600 nights. Race was the determining factor in how immigrants were treated on Angel Island, but preferential treatment was also given to those in higher economic standing traveling in first-class cabins. These significant contrasts between Angel and Ellis Island reflect the differences in attitude toward various groups of immigrants and reveal the often untold story of America’s early immigration policies.

Early Chinese Immigration to America & Angel Island

The mid-19th century witnessed large-scale American recruitment of Chinese laborers for industrial development of the West. Chinese immigration to America began during the California Gold Rush(1848-1858), and early Chinese immigrants, almost exclusively young males from the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province, were recruited to work as miners and railroad and farm laborers. Between 1850 and 1880, the Chinese population in the United States increased fifteen fold from 7,520 to 105,465; in 1870, the Chinese composed 8.6% of California’s total population and a quarter of the state’s wage-earning force.

But when the economy faltered and the gold ran out, Chinese immigrants headed to cities like San Francisco and worked for wages lower than their White counterparts, sometimes serving as scabs during labor strikes. They became the targets of racist stereotypes, discriminatory

laws and taxes, and racial violence. Viewed as an unassimilable moral and racial threat, Chinese workers became known as the “yellow peril,” and anti-Chinese sentiment spread across the country, culminating in America’s first federal regulation of immigration via the Page Law in 1875. The Page Law classified any individual coming to America from Asia as a forced laborer “undesirable,” and also applied to Asian prostitutes and convicts. The Chinese Exclusion Act followed in 1882, barring all Chinese laborers from entering the U.S. for ten years and prohibiting all Chinese immigrants (including those already in America) from naturalization. Only Chinese students, teachers, diplomats, merchants, and travelers were permitted to immigrate to the United States. The act was renewed two more times before becoming permanent in 1904.

As a result of stricter governmental enforcement of exclusion laws, many Chinese sought alternative paths to immigration. The most common migration strategy was to falsely claim membership in one of the classes exempt from exclusion. Another strategy for children was to falsely claim parentage from someone of a class that was allowed to immigrate; these children were known as “paper sons” because, on paper, they claimed to be the offspring of exempt-class Chinese. However, when the Angel Island immigration station opened in 1910, officials were already well aware of these methods to evade exclusion laws and subjected Chinese family members to long, detailed interrogations. In one extreme case, an applicant was asked nearly 900 questions.

From 1910 to 1940, over 178,000 Chinese men and women were admitted as new immigrants, returning residents, and U.S. citizens. The majority came through San Francisco and Angel Island, approximately 100,000 of whom were detained – the highest rates compared to other immigrant groups. Comprising 70% of Angel Island’s detainee population, Chinese immigrants were subjected to longer examinations, interrogations, and detentions than other groups. These stricter enforcement measures reflect the continued discrimination against Chinese immigrants and the progressive expanse of exclusion over time. Despite the tremendous contributions of Chinese laborers to the development of the American West, the Chinese Exclusion Act remained in place for sixty years. Its Congressional repeal in 1943 occurred in the midst of World War II as a way to keep the wavering National Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek in the war against Japan.

Grades 2-5: Angel Island Immigration

Materials Needed: Computer/projector with internet access, literature listed below

Lesson Objective(s): Students will be able to compare and contrast Angel Island and its immigrants to Ellis Island.

Lesson Duration: 2-4 days; this lesson can be limited to days 1 and 4 or further extended through an in-depth comparison/contrast with Ellis Island and/or integration with language arts via poetry.

Day 1: Exploring Immigration - Ellis Island vs. Angel Island

What do students know about immigration? Use a concept map, web, KWL, or other graphic organizer to record students' existing knowledge about what immigration is, who immigrants are, why immigrants might choose to come to America and how they can travel from one country to another. If time allows, consider discussing the difference between migrant and immigrant. Today students will be learning about people – many of whom were children – that immigrated to America over 100 years ago.

Ask students if they have heard of Ellis Island. What do they know about it? Using the social studies textbook or a tradebook about Ellis Island (see list under *Additional Resources*), provide students with an overview of immigration at Ellis Island. Alternatively, you could provide background by visiting Scholastic's immigration website¹ or through the brief video *Deconstructing History: Ellis Island*². With student assistance, list some general statements about who came to Ellis Island and what immigrants experienced while there.

Ask students if they have heard of Angel Island, which is most likely not included in the textbook. To provide background information, use Scholastic's Angel Island website³, the *Angel Island Immigration Station Virtual Tour*, and/or the first portion of KQED's *Discovering Angel Island* video⁴. If time allows, create a Venn diagram or other graphic organizer to compare/contrast Ellis and Angel Islands in terms of where immigrants came from and the kinds of conditions they experienced at the immigration stations.

¹ teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/

² History Channel, *Deconstructing History: Ellis Island*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3wJpIRRaxk#t=25>

³ http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/asian-american/angel_island/index.htm

⁴ <http://www.kqed.org/w/pacificlink/history/angelisland/video/>

Day 2: The Angel Island Experience – Chinese Exclusion (*may take 2 days with younger students*)

Introduce the lesson with a short quiz – you can conduct this on notebook paper, dry erase boards, or using the included form. The quiz only includes questions about students' homes and family. Ask students to answer the following questions:

- What is your full name?
- How many people live in your home?
- What is your address?
- How tall are you?
- How many sinks are in your home?
- How many windows are in your living room/home?
- What direction (N/S/E/W) does your front door face?
- How many steps is it from your bathroom to your bed?

Students will likely struggle with the second half of the quiz. Ask them what made some of the questions difficult to answer. Reassure them that this is not for a grade, but it will help them understand the point of view in a book they will read today.

Present the Chinese Exclusion Act in greater detail. In summary, as Americans began to move westward there was a sudden demand for workers to develop the land as miners, farm workers, and to build the railroad. Although the Chinese started to immigrate during the California Gold Rush around 1850, tens of thousands of mostly young Chinese men were recruited to work in the West from 1850-1880. By 1870, nearly 1 in 10 Californians were Chinese, and 1 out of 4 workers were Chinese⁵.

But after the Chinese completed construction of the transcontinental railroad, they were viewed as a threat by White workers because they were willing to work for significantly lower wages. The Chinese were discriminated against and were often the targets of racial violence. As anti-Chinese sentiment grew across the country, laborers and politicians began to push for legal restrictions on Chinese immigration. This resulted in America's first restrictions on immigration through the Page Law in 1875 and ultimately the Chinese Exclusion Act. The Chinese Exclusion Act, passed in 1882, outlawed all Chinese laborers from entering the U.S. for ten years and made it impossible for Chinese immigrants – even those already in America – to become citizens. The act was renewed two more times before it became permanent in 1904, and it remained in place until 1943 during World War II when the U.S. needed to maintain an alliance with China.

While the Chinese Exclusion Act banned Chinese laborers from entering the U.S., some groups of Chinese were still allowed to immigrate to the U.S.: students, teachers, diplomats, merchants, and travelers. The immigration station at Angel Island was built to ensure that all Chinese immigrants were legally able to enter the United States – meaning they were *not* laborers. To guarantee that all laborers were excluded, Chinese immigrants were subjected to

⁵ Takaki, R. (1979). *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America*. New York: Knopf.

interviews/interrogations that were far longer and more exhausting than any other immigrant group. They were also detained at Angel Island for longer amounts of time – weeks, months, and for some, up to two years.

Landed by Milly Lee is the story of a boy named Sun who is going to immigrate to America to be with his father and older brothers. Students will notice that Sun is coached before his journey so that he will be ready for the interviews at Angel Island. Before beginning the read aloud, ask students to attend to the different types of information that Sun was expected to know about his home and family; this should remind them of the quiz they took at the beginning of the lesson. Introduce the word *BaBa* as another word for father and *interrogation* as an interview that can sometimes be long and unfriendly; demonstrate the route from China to San Francisco on a globe, asking students how one might travel across the Pacific Ocean.

Here are some questions to ask during the read aloud:

- Why does Sun’s father (BaBa) want Sun to join his brothers in America? (More opportunities, can work in the family’s store)
- Why does Sun’s father want Sun to be coached by Mr. Chan? (So he can answer all the questions at his interrogation once he arrives in America to prove he is his father’s son)
- What could happen if Sun does not answer a question correctly during his interrogation? (He could be sent back to China)
- What surprised you about the things Sun practiced with Mr. Chan? Do you know these kinds of details about your family and where you live?
- What did people in Sun’s village call America? (*Gum Saan* or Gold Mountain)
- Describe Sun’s voyage to America. How would you feel if you were on a trip like this?
- Why did Sun’s father tear up the coaching book and throw it overboard? (Sun would not be able to use it at the interrogation)
- What did Sun experience once he arrived on Angel Island? How did he feel?
- What does Sun learn about the other Chinese boys he meets at Angel Island? (Long detention, some denied entry and filing appeals, some are paper sons)
- What is a paper son? (A boy claiming to be the son of Chinese merchants or citizens so they could enter the United States)
- Describe Sun’s interviews.
- What does the guard mean when he says Sun is “landed”? (He is able to leave Angel Island and go to the mainland U.S. to join his family)

As a closing activity, students could create a diary entry written by Sun after he is landed or compose summaries of the book with a partner. Their work should demonstrate an understanding of interrogations at Angel Island and the lengths to which Chinese immigrants had to prepare for these interviews to avoid deportation.

Day 3: The Angel Island Experience – Paper Sons

Paper Son presents another perspective of Chinese immigration introduced in *Landed* – two boys Sun met at Angel Island, Hop Jeong and Puy Gong, confessed to being paper sons. In

the text, Hop defines paper sons as “boys who claimed to be sons of returning merchants and U.S. citizens so they could be admitted into the country” and states that it was “the only way they could come to America.” *Paper Son* is the story of Lee, whose parents bought him a paper son slot before they were killed. Lee’s grandparents send him to America for a better life, and like Sun he must prepare for the interrogation at Angel Island, only in his case he must be successful in deceiving the interviewers.

After reading *Landed*, some vocabulary and events will be familiar to students. *Paper Son* presents an alternative perspective on Chinese immigration as well as a more detailed account of life on Angel Island. During the read aloud, ask students to listen for commonalities and differences between Sun and Lee. What new information did they learn about the early Chinese immigrant experience? Students can record information in a Venn Diagram, t-chart, or other graphic organizer. As described for the previous day, the lesson could close with a diary entry written by Lee after he has landed with his “new” father.

Day 4: Angel Island Poetry

If students were able to read *Landed* and *Paper Son* on Days 2 and 3, they have already been introduced to the poetry carved into the walls of the immigration station at Angel Island. If not, show KQED’s video *Discovering Angel Island: The Story Behind the Poems*.

Students will read and discuss two poems carved in the walls at Angel Island. Most of the poems found at Angel Island were written in Chinese in the style of classical Chinese poetry with five or seven characters per line and either four or eight lines per poem. KQED’s Poetry of Angel Island website⁶ allows students to view poems in Chinese and English as well as to listen to the poems in Mandarin and Cantonese. The second and fourth poems on the KQED site are the simplest and most appropriate for elementary use; the first poem would be appropriate for advanced readers or students who excel in figurative language and sophisticated vocabulary. For each poem, ask students to identify 2-5 adjectives that describe the poet’s mood or feelings.

After studying two poems, students can be assessed by writing a reflection on why some Chinese detainees chose to express their feelings via poetry and the impact their work can have on people today. Alternatively, students can take the perspective of a detainee their own age (perhaps an acquaintance of Sun or Lee) who has been waiting for many months and compose a poem about their feelings and experiences at Angel Island.

Optional Extensions

Additional poetry resources are available from KQED. Using *Island*, students can examine more examples of Chinese poetry alongside oral histories of Angel Island detainees. *Island* also includes many photographs and more historical context and can be juxtaposed with the brief accounts in Lawlor’s collection of Ellis Island experiences in *I Was Dreaming to Come to America*.

⁶ <http://www.kqed.org/w/pacificlink/history/angelisland/poetry/>

Additional Student Resources

About Ellis Island

- Ellis Island (2002). *Kids Discover*, 12(5). New York: Kids Discover.
- Baicker, K. (1997). *Immigration: Then and Now*, pp. 10-15; 22-28. New York: Scholastic.
- Bierman, C. (1998). *Journey to Ellis Island: How My Father Came to America*. Toronto: Madison Press.
- Bunting, E. (2000). *Dreaming of America: An Ellis Island Story*. BridgeWater.
- Freedman, R. (1980). *Immigrant Kids*. New York: Scholastic.
- Jacobs, W.J. (1990). *Ellis Island: New Hope in a New Land*. New York: Scribner's.
- Lawlor, V. (1995). *I Was Dreaming to Come to America*. New York: Viking.

About Angel Island

- Baicker, K. (1997). *Immigration: Then and Now*, pp. 15-16; 29. New York: Scholastic.
- Freedman, R. (2014). *Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain*. Boston: Clarion.
- Lai, H.M., Lim, G., & Yung, J. (1980). *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

TEKS Addressed:

2.3 History. The student understands how various sources provide information about the past and present. The student is expected to: (A) identify several sources of information about a given period or event such as reference materials, biographies, newspapers, and electronic sources; and (B) describe various evidence of the same time period using primary sources such as photographs, journals, and interviews.

2.18 Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to: (A) obtain information about a topic using a variety of valid oral sources such as conversations, interviews, and music; (B) obtain information about a topic using a variety of valid visual sources such as pictures, maps, electronic sources, literature, reference sources, and artifacts.

3.2 History. The student understands common characteristics of communities, past and present. The student is expected to: (A) identify reasons people have formed communities, including a need for security, religious freedom, law, and material well-being;

3.18 Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to: (A) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences; (B) use technology to create written and visual material such as stories, poems, pictures, maps, and graphic organizers to express ideas.

4.21 Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to: (D) identify different points of view about an issue, topic, historical event, or current event.

4.22 Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to: (D) create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies.

5.4 History. The student understands political, economic, and social changes that occurred in the United States during the 19th century. The student is expected to: (G) identify the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of people from various American Indian and immigrant groups.

5.25 Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to: (D) create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies.

Grades 5-8: Chinese Exclusion & Angel Island

Materials Needed: *Coolies* by Yin (2001), *A Different Mirror for Young People* by R. Takaki (2012), *Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain* by Russell Freedman (2013), anti-Chinese/Nast primary sources, Discussion Notes

Lesson Objective(s): Students will be able to identify the causes of early Chinese immigration to the U.S. and describe complex, changing attitudes toward Chinese immigrants as well as their experience at Angel Island Immigration Station in late 19th century America.

Lesson Duration: 4 days

Day 1 - The Road to Exclusion: Coolies, Railroads, and Gold Mountain

This lesson provides students with background knowledge about Chinese immigration to America in the nineteenth century. While textbooks frequently describe an influx of Chinese immigrants during the Gold Rush and as crucial labor in the construction of the transcontinental railroad, they rarely provide further historical context for why they left China, what their experiences were upon arriving in America, and what happened once the gold ran out and the railroad was completed.

The teacher may want to activate prior knowledge through a discussion/web/KWL about Chinese immigration. Students will likely not know much, so they begin the lesson with background reading; depending on the availability of resources, all students can read the same text or could be split into multiple groups that read different texts then come back together to discuss what they learned through a jigsaw or other cooperative learning technique.

Recommended age-appropriate texts about Chinese movement to America from 1848 on are Chapter 8 of Ronald Takaki's *A Different Mirror for Young People* (2012, adapted by Rebecca Stefoff); Chapters 2 and 4 of Russell Freedman's *Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain*

(2013); and the picture book *Coolies* by Yin (2001). Alternatively, the website *On Gold Mountain*⁷ provides similar online content in Galleries 1 and 2.

Some key points/questions for students to focus on during their reading are:

- Describe the typical Chinese immigrant coming to America in 1848
- What did these early Chinese immigrants encounter when they arrived in America?
- What is Gold Mountain? How did it get this nickname?
- What is a coolie?
- What kinds of treatment/legislation were targeted specifically at the new Chinese immigrants? (Each text provides different examples: Freedman discusses the Foreign Miners' Tax, the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the Geary Act; Yin describes inequities in pay and hours between Chinese and non-Chinese railroad workers; Takaki details the Foreign Miners' Tax, the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the Civil Rights Act of 1870.)
- Describe life for Chinese immigrants after the completion of the railroad. In which industries did they work?

Assessments can be done through oral or written reflection about early Chinese immigration experiences, text summaries, adding to the KWL chart/graphic organizer, or by asking students to list and post three things they learned, two questions they have about what they learned, and one fact that surprised them.

Day 2 – Toward Chinese Exclusion

Begin by asking students to recall the reasons that Chinese immigrated to America. Aside from the promises of riches at “Gold Mountain,” what industries actively recruited Chinese laborers? Ask students how a group could be valued as cheap, effective labor while at the same time disliked by the American public. Did they encounter any possible reasons in their reading yesterday?

This lesson will investigate various reasons and manifestations of anti-Chinese sentiment. Distribute and review the timeline provided in the Discussion Notes, then begin with this quote by John Bigler, California governor from 1852-1856: *“Let us consider the vile coolies, who like craven beasts work the goldmines only to return to their native land and bring no profit to our state.”* What do students notice about Bigler’s language and attitude toward the Chinese? Do they agree with the statement? What are they unsure about? What questions do they have? Record some of these initial questions; after conducting further investigation of primary sources, they may be able to answer the questions themselves by the end of class or this unit. Gov. Bigler’s quote occurred after the Gold Rush; the remaining sources in this lesson will be presented chronologically in the time period that followed the Gold Rush.

Next, show the Chinese Railroad Workers Memorial video⁸; preface the video by describing it as a combination of narration over primary sources and scholars describing historical events.

⁷ <http://apa.si.edu/ongoldmountain/>

⁸ Chinese Railroad Workers Memorial video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoXVq2aLn4M>

As students view the primary sources, they should take notes about the images that stand out and surprise them. They should also be able to describe who Phil Choy is and why his inclusion in the video is significant, as well as justify the need for a memorial to Chinese railroad workers.

Lastly, students will examine covers from two popular weekly periodicals from the late nineteenth century: San Francisco's *The Wasp* and New York's *Harper's Weekly*. These periodicals provided the public with commentary on political, economic, and social events and will provide students with historical evidence of attitudes toward Chinese immigrants during the 1870s. Both covers are illustrated and focus on "the Chinese question": What to do with immigrants from China? Split students into partners or small groups to compare, contrast, and discuss the two covers. Their analysis may include commenting on sticky notes or recording questions and common themes. Supporting information about each cover and questions for students to consider during their analysis are included in Discussion Notes.

Once analyses are completed, students should discuss as a whole group the evolution of attitudes toward Chinese immigrants in the 1800s. After examining the quote from the California governor after Chinese first arrived during the Gold Rush from 1848-1852; watching the video about the recruitment, contributions, and treatment of Chinese railroad workers in the 1860s; and analyzing weekly magazine covers from the 1870s, what did students learn about the attitudes, (mis)perceptions, and treatment of Chinese immigrants during this period of American history? Return to their initial set of questions to see if they are able to answer them based on their work with primary sources in this lesson. Do students have any new questions after viewing the sources today? Can they make any comparisons between Chinese immigrants in the 1800s to contemporary immigrant groups?

Day 3 – The Chinese Exclusion Act

Allow students to work in pairs to examine the transcript of the Chinese Exclusion Act. You may want students to follow existing class guidelines for note-taking or use the suggestions at that precede the transcript. If time is limited, consider assigning pairs of students to paraphrase assigned sections of the act (2-14) in 1-2 sentences using simpler, everyday language; section 4 is significantly longer than the rest and 9-14 are the shortest. Share student work via note-taking or discussion, then work together as a class to determine the purpose of the act and its intended consequences – namely, what groups are being targeted for exclusion and how will this exclusion be enforced? What were the likely effects for Chinese of all backgrounds who were already living in the United States in 1882?

As an assessment, show students the *Wasp's Hard Pushing* cover. Ask them to record what they see in the illustration and what is its likely intended message. The cover was published almost exactly one year prior to the approval of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Do students think it accurately depicts the realities of Chinese Exclusion? What might they change or add to the illustration to make it more accurately demonstrate the key points of the act?

After students share their work, describe the concept of paper sons (see Discussion Notes) and watch the CNN video, “Paper Sons: Chinese American Illegal Immigrants.”⁹ This will provide context for the experience of some Chinese immigrants after the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Day 4 – The Angel Island Experience

Introduce the lesson by playing the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation’s Video Tour¹⁰. The video presents contemporary images from Angel Island juxtaposed with photographs of the station while it was in use; students will recognize Daniel Quan, the museum’s designer and video tour guide, from yesterday’s CNN video. Ask students to reflect on what they viewed – how were immigrants organized, what was daily life like, and what did immigrants do to pass the time? Then distribute video-capable technology (laptops, iPads, tablets, etc) and assign one of the following videos for students to view and take notes on in pairs or small groups; each is a firsthand account of an immigrant who passed through Angel Island (the second bullet is a double interview). Each video is between 5-8 minutes long.

- Tyrus Wong¹¹, Chinese immigrant
- Li Keng Wong and Ed Chun¹², Chinese immigrants*
- Dalip Singh Samra¹³, Indian immigrant
- Eliseo Felipe¹⁴, Filipino immigrant (Angel Island detention experience begins at 3:42)
- Nick Friesen¹⁵, Siberian immigrant
- Robert Hong¹⁶, Chinese immigrant

After students have viewed their videos and completed their notes, each pair/group should compare and contrast their immigrant’s experience with that of another student pair/group. Do they notice similarities or differences among the various ethnicities? If time permits, conduct another rotation where students can share with their peers. Ask students to share out what they’ve learned about the Angel Island immigrant experience. What surprised them? Did they learn anything that differs from what they perceive of the contemporary immigrant experience?

An assessment for this lesson can be a written reflection or journal entry composed from the point of view of the immigrant whose account the student viewed.

⁹ CNN, “Paper Sons: Chinese American Illegal Immigrants”<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhc-om3SXXKw>

¹⁰ Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation’s Video Tour
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtQYhNuIXxQ>

¹¹ Tyrus Wong profile <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rz5whByOts>

¹² Li Keng Wong and Ed Chun profiles <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyInvGhkJTM>

¹³ Dalip Singh Samra profile

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYgz6t_H93Q&list=PLA1EE73C88713096D

¹⁴ Eliseo Felipe profile <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJ3Q9GpDqr4>

¹⁵ Nick Friesen profile

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zqwq0wlkS-k&index=6&list=PLA1EE73C88713096D>

¹⁶ Robert Hong profile

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42kRfovnVeE&index=5&list=PLA1EE73C88713096D>

*Li Keng Wong's story is also found via transcript and an online activity at http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/asian-american/angel_island/index.htm

Additional Resources

- Image of the Chinese Exclusion Act from Our Documents¹⁷
- The Civil Rights Suite by the Chinese Historical Society of America (<http://www.civilrightssuite.org/crs/>)
- Remembering 1882: Fighting for Civil Rights in the Shadow of the Chinese Exclusion Act by the Chinese Historical Society of America (<http://www.civilrightssuite.org/1882/index.php/iID/174>)

Optional Extensions

5th-8th Grade Children's Literature

- *Escape to Gold Mountain* by David Wong (2012) is a graphic history of the Chinese in North America and includes Canadian history as well as American history.
- *Staking a Claim: The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung* by Laurence Yep (2000) is a fictional account by a Chinese miner during the Gold Rush.
- *Sugar* by Jewell Parker Rhodes (2013) describes the interaction of a former slave girl with a group of Chinese laborers recruited to work at a sugar plantation in the South.
- *The Dragon's Child* (2008) is the story of a Chinese boy who travels with his father to America and arrives at Angel Island.
- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan (2006) is a wordless graphic novel about immigration; while not specific to Asians/Chinese, it gives the reader a sense of the challenges of immigration.

More Primary Sources

- The National Archives has a collection of historical documents about Chinese immigration and the Chinese in the United States¹⁸
- The National Archives has a collection of historical documents¹⁹ and accompanying teaching activities²⁰ for *Hum Lay, et al. v. Baldwin*, also known as the Chinese Boycott Case.
- The Library of Congress has several collections of historical documents about Chinese immigration; one focuses on the rise of industrial America²¹, one on the Chinese in California from 1850-1925²², and another on Chinese immigration over time²³

¹⁷ <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=47>

¹⁸ <http://www.archives.gov/research/chinese-americans/guide.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/chinese-boycott/#documents>

²⁰ <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/chinese-boycott/activities.html>

²¹ <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/ri/seind/chinimms/>

²² <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/cubhtml/theme1.html>

²³ <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/immigration/chinese.html>

TEKS Addressed:

5.4 History. The student understands political, economic, and social changes that occurred in the United States during the 19th century. The student is expected to: (G) identify the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of people from various American Indian and immigrant groups.

5.25 Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to: (D) create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies.

6.1 History. The student understands that historical events influence contemporary events. The student is expected to: (A) trace characteristics of various contemporary societies in regions that resulted from historical events or factors such as invasion, conquests, colonization, immigration, and trade.

6.8 Economics. The student understands the factors of production in a society's economy. The student is expected to: (A) describe ways in which the factors of production (natural resources, labor, capital, and entrepreneurs) influence the economies of various contemporary societies.

6.21 Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to: (D) identify different points of view about an issue or current topic.

8.23 Culture. The student understands the relationships between and among people from various groups, including racial, ethnic, and religious groups, during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The student is expected to: (A) identify selected racial, ethnic, and religious groups that settled in the United States and explain their reasons for immigration; (C) identify ways conflicts between people from various racial, ethnic, and religious groups were resolved; (D) analyze the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to our national identity.

**Seventh grade was not included in this series of lessons as its social studies focus is on Texas history*

References

Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (2010)

Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages* (1979)

Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, www.aiisf.org