

**LESSON 2:
“THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT”****Focus Question**

How did the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 affect Chinese immigration to the United States?

Objectives

Students will read an excerpt of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to understand how the act relates to the establishment of Angel Island Immigration Station and the experiences of Chinese immigrants in the United States. Students will complete a matrix to demonstrate their understanding of the document.

Key Themes

The Exclusion Act was a result of attitudes driven by fear and racism to exclude Chinese from the mainstream of American life. Some of the same ideas and sentiments that underlay the Exclusion Act were responsible for the discrimination experienced by other groups.

Grades

6 – 12

Time

One fifty-minute class period

Materials

Copies of student handouts: the Chinese Exclusion Act Matrix and the “U.S. Immigration History” timeline.

Standards

California History Social Science Content Standards, National History Standards

Procedure**Anticipatory Set/Hook**

1. Students answer the preview questions out loud, written or projected by the teacher, “What does it mean to be excluded or left out? Have you ever been in a situation where you felt unwanted or left out? How did it make you feel? Why do people sometimes exclude other people?” These questions can be modified by the teacher as needed to fit grade and skill level of students.
2. Have students share their responses with a partner, cooperative groups, and/or the whole class. Explain to students that although the United States is a “nation of immigrants,” over the course of U.S. history, the government has passed laws to keep immigrants out of the country.

3. To illustrate this point, pass out copies of “U.S. Immigration History.” Ask students as individuals, pairs or groups to circle or mark the paper whenever they notice government actions that have excluded or kept out immigrant groups. Review responses with the class, and discuss possible reasons why restrictions are put in place or lessened over time.

Guided Practice

1. Introduction: Explain to students that they will now analyze in-depth one such piece of legislation, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Explain that in order to understand the Angel Island Immigration Station, one must first understand the historical climate in which it was built.
2. Project on an overhead projector and/or copy for students Section 1 of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 Matrix. Read the section out loud to students. Students respond to the Act with comments or questions in the “Response” box on the matrix. Emphasize that for the “Response” section of the matrix, there are no right or wrong answers, and that it is acceptable to express confusion with language, ask questions, etc. This question might help their response, “What strikes you about this act?”
3. Read the Act a second time (silently or read out loud to the class), telling students that as they read they will underline or circle any vocabulary words in the text that they do not understand. Next, in the “New or Unknown Vocabulary” box on the matrix, have students copy down the words that they have underlined. Have students use dictionaries, each other, or the teacher to define the unknown vocabulary words. Finding definitions can be done as individuals, in pairs or in cooperative groups.
4. Independent Practice: In the “Summary” box on the matrix, students translate the passage into modern English (their own words). Ask students to share their responses with the class.

Assessment

Each student’s matrix should be complete. Depending on the age or skill level of the students, teachers can set exact requirements for the vocabulary matrix box (such as, at least three new words must be defined) or a certain number of sentences for the summary box (such as, every summary must include four sentences).

Adaptations

- Special Education students can divide the task of finding vocabulary from the exclusion act, each student being responsible for a word to share with the class.
- Accelerated Learners: See “*Extensions*” below.
- Teachers/students may prefer to use the primary source document, Chinese Exclusion Act, with the matrix, rather than the text in the matrix itself to show students the passage as it appeared in the act as a whole, rather than fragmented as it appears on the matrix.

- Students may skip or include the “Immigration History” document as needed. Some teachers may be able to bring out ideas of government legislated exclusion as part of the initial discussion on exclusion.
- Students’ responses on the matrix should not be limited to the size of the boxes provided; the matrix can be replaced with any format, based on the judgment of the teacher, as well as the skill and grade level of the class.

Extensions

- Have students make a rhyming poem or song from their re-written version of the Chinese Exclusion Act from the Exclusion Act Matrix, and perform it for the class.
- In the assessment step, ask students to vote on the clearest or best stated summary from their group or the whole class. Have students copy the winner on the back of their matrix. Students can also combine their summaries, taking the clearest lines, or best stated line from each student to create a group summary.

Prepared by Barnaby O. Payne with the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation.

STUDENT HANDOUT

Name _____ Date _____

Chinese Exclusion Act Matrix

<p>From the New York Times, April 28, 1882: "The New Chinese Bill" Section 1. "AN ACT to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese. Whereas, In the opinion of the Government of the United States, the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof; therefore It is enacted, & c., That from and after the expiration of 90 days next after the passage of this act, and until the expiration of 10 years next after the passage of this act, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States be and the same is hereby suspended; and during such suspension it shall not be lawful for any Chinese laborer to come, or having so come after the expiration of said 90 days, to remain within the United States."</p>	<p>New or Unknown Vocabulary Directions: List any new or unknown vocabulary words in this box. Use a dictionary, your classmates, or your teacher to find definitions.</p>
<p>Response Directions: Write down any thoughts, you have after reading Section 1 of the "Exclusion Act."</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Summarize Directions: Rewrite and summarize the passage in your own words.</p>

STUDENT HANDOUT

Name _____ Date _____

U.S. Immigration History

- 1882** The Chinese Exclusion Act is passed suspending Chinese immigration to the United States and denying Chinese the right to become American citizens. It is the first restriction on immigration based on race and nationality, and stops large-scale Chinese immigration for 60 years.
- 1886** Statue of Liberty is unveiled.
- 1888** Scott Act prohibits the re-entry of 20,000 Chinese workers who temporarily left the U.S. to China with re-entry permits.
- 1892** Ellis Island opens as the new immigration processing center. Until its closing in 1954, Ellis Island processed more than twelve million people coming to America.
- 1892** Fong Yue-Ting v. United States; Chinese community raises money to test constitutionality of exclusion acts.
- 1902** The Exclusion Act is made a permanent ban.
- 1907** The Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan prohibits Japanese workers from entering the United States.
- 1910** Angel Island Immigration Station opens in San Francisco Bay as an entry point for Asian immigrants. The station closes in 1940.
- 1917** The Immigration Act creates the Asiatic Barred Zone. Legislation now excludes thirty-three different groups from coming to America, including prohibiting illiterate adults (16 years old or more) from immigrating.
- 1924** The Reed-Johnson Immigration Act bans Asian immigration. It establishes the national-origins system by limiting people from certain countries: as a result, 87% of the permits go to people from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, & Scandinavia.
- 1942** The Bracero Guest-Worker Program allows Mexican agricultural workers into the United States as a temporary labor force.
- 1943** The Chinese Exclusion Act is repealed and Chinese in the United States are given right to naturalize. Annual quota of 105 people is set for Chinese immigration.

- 1946** The War Brides Act allows 120,000 wives and children of American servicemen to enter the United States as immigrants.
- 1948** The Displaced Persons Act plans for the admission of more than 400,000 refugees by 1951 by lowering immigration quotas.
- 1949** The Reed-Johnson Immigration Act is amended to allow a limited number of Asian immigrants each year into the United States.
- 1952** The McCarran-Walter Act sets quotas of one hundred persons each year for previously barred groups such as Indians and Filipinos. It also establishes a four-category selection system by which 50% of immigrants must have higher education or exceptional ability and 50% must have family living in the U.S.
- 1954** Operation Wetback rounds up and deports more than one million undocumented Mexican workers.
- 1965** The Immigration and Nationality Act allows in more immigrants from Latin America. It ends the national-origins system, replacing it with a system based on family reunification and the need for skilled workers.
- 1986** The Immigration Control & Reform Act offers many illegal immigrants a chance to become legal residents. 1.7 million seek legal status by May 1989.
- 1990** A 1995 immigration target is set: 675,000 immigrants annually, of which 480,000 are family-related; 140,000 employment-based; and 55, 000 diversity (variety of reasons).
- 1993** The Golden Venture, a vessel transporting illegal Chinese immigrants, runs aground off Far Rockaway, New York. Eight people lost their lives in U.S. waters, and some 300 were detained in prisons.
- 1994** California voters pass Proposition 187, which restricts education and medical services to undocumented immigrants. Courts later found the proposition unconstitutional.
- 1994** Priority is given to unmarried children over the age of 21 of American parentage, followed by spouses and other children of American citizens, followed by people with special skills.
- 2001** The U.S. government passes the Patriot Act, an anti-terrorism measure, which significantly increased the surveillance and investigative powers of law enforcement agencies in the U.S. Hundreds of people were rounded up and detained, many for months, as the act permits indefinite detention of both citizens and non-citizens without formal charges.