

**LESSON 11:
HOW DO PICTURES TELL THE STORY OF ANGEL ISLAND?****Objective**

Through group discussion and individual analysis, students will analyze photographs taken at Angel Island Immigration Station during its operations between 1910-1940 to learn more about the function and experience of those at the site.

Grades

3-12

Time

2 class periods

Materials

Selection of photographs taken at the Angel Island Immigration Station, overhead projector, transparencies of selected photos: "The Interrogation" and "The Barracks" and a class set of each, class set of 'Matrix: How Do Pictures Tell the Story of Angel Island?',

Procedure**Classroom Preparation**

1. Display the selection of photographs throughout the room.
2. Write the following words for inferential questions on front board (to be used with the observation column of 'Matrix: How Do Pictures Tell the Story of Angel Island?')

What do you think about...?

It seems to me that...

What if...

Perhaps...

I wonder

Why didn't...?

Maybe...

Could it be that...?

Why...?

How...?

Does it seem to you that...?

3. Give students time to look at photographs throughout the room. After they have time to carefully look (10 minutes), have them be seated at their own desks.

Group Discussion

1. Pose the question, "If we wanted to know more about how a cultural group lived in the past or the present, what kind of evidence/artifacts might we look at to get information?" Allow students to brainstorm ideas with partners or the whole class. If students have difficulty coming up with possible answers, be prepared with an old possession or artifact from your life and show it to the class.

2. Introduce the class to the idea of learning about history through primary sources. Primary sources are first hand accounts that were documented, recorded, or created by people who lived during, participating, and or/witnessing the events of the time. Primary sources may be personal accounts such as photographs, newspapers, pictures, diaries or oral histories; artifacts such as clothing and tools; and public records, like birth certificates, census papers, and church records.
3. Invite students to share questions and observations that came up for them when they looked at the photographs and list these on the board. Refer to the displayed list of Inferential Questions to help them realize that photographs contain evidence that tells about a time, place, and people.
4. Show a transparency of "The Interrogation." Guide the students in interpreting the picture using the following questions developed by the New York Historical Society from their *Teaching Local History: New York City as a National Model Teacher Resource Manual*:

What is going on in the photograph?

- Are there people in this photograph?
 - Where are they?
 - What might they be doing?
 - What are they wearing?
 - Do their clothes tell you anything about them?
(e.g. Where do you think they are from or what might they like to do)?
 - What objects do you see in the photograph?
 - Why might those objects be there?
 - Where do you think the objects might come from?
 - Based on the people, place, and objects in this photograph, what do you know about this photograph?
 - Can you guess who might have taken the photograph?
 - Why do you think it [was] taken and when?
5. Distribute to each student a copy of "The Interrogation" that they can share and 'Matrix: How Do Pictures Tell The Story of Angel Island?' (One copy of each per student). The matrix has four questions:
 - What do you see?
 - What is happening in the photograph?
 - What questions do you have after viewing the photograph?
 - What title would you give this photograph?
 6. Referring to 'Words For Inferential Questions' as a guide, model for students how to make observations using the matrix. Encourage students to share observations while using words from the inferential questions list. On the overhead transparency of the matrix, list both teacher and student observations while students list some their observations on their own matrices as well.

Group Work

This lesson plan gives two options.

- For elementary school students, teachers can select a few photographs for students to focus on.
- For older students, you may want to give students a selection of Angel Island photographs to look at.

Looking at Two Photographs

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 students. Distribute photograph "The Barracks" and 'Matrix: How Do Pictures Tell the Story of Angel Island?' from the day before. Display "Words For Inferential Questions" on board.
2. Encourage students to share what they learned, noticed, or thought was valuable from studying "The Interrogation." Allow them to volunteer new questions they now have, and how they feel about "The Interrogation." Record some of these questions and feelings on the board.
3. Distribute the photograph "The Barracks." Have students work in pairs or groups to complete the matrix as on the previous day. Allow time for groups to study, discuss, and complete the matrix. Have one person from each group report the group's observations to the class. Bring the students back together and listen to group reports. Allow discussion to happen for several minutes. Collect matrices.

Looking at a Larger Selection of Photographs

1. Share with students that they will continue learning about Angel Island immigrants by examining copies of photographs taken from 1910-1940. Students will examine several photographs. Teachers should determine how many photographs they want students to analyze. The matrix has room to analyze four photographs. If you would like students to analyze eight photographs, make sure students receive two handouts or a double-sided one.
2. Distribute matrix and have students complete the matrix in pairs/groups. Allow students approximately 10 minutes to the selection of photographs, and choose the ones they want to analyze.
3. After students have completed the matrix and have analyzed several photographs, each group chooses a photograph that they feel begins to tell part of the story of Angel Island. In groups, students will present to the class what they think is happening in the picture and a question it made them wonder about.

Assessment

Give credit for student participation in group discussions and completed matrix with one or more questions per photograph. Teachers can assess student learning in looking at completed graphic

organizers combined with reflective writing in learning journals. Teacher should look for key ideas in the immigrants' experience.

Suggested prompts for reflective writing:

- The immigrants on Angel Island were treated fairly or unfairly because_____.
- Another example that I've seen of someone being treated differently because of their being or looking different is _____.
- I think we sometimes treat different people that way because _____.

Extension

Writing Activity – Have students imagine themselves as a person in one of the photographs. Write a journal entry from the point of view of the immigrant, describing the thoughts and feelings about being detained at Angel Island.

About the Photographs

1. Angel Island Immigration Station Site, c. 1910, Courtesy of California State Parks – This historical photograph shows the grounds of the Immigration Station site including the pier from the wharf, the Administration building (large building in the center), hospital building (above the Administration building), barracks building (behind the Administration building or to the right of it in this photograph), and employee cottages
2. Immigrants arriving at Angel Island, c. 1920, Courtesy of State Museum Resource Center, California State Parks
3. Medical Examinations, Courtesy of U.S. National Archives & Records Administration – This photograph illustrates the examination being carried on the young Asian boys. Medical inspections took place in both the Administration Building as well as the hospital.
4. Angel Island detention barracks interior, Courtesy of California State Parks – This photograph illustrates the crowded living conditions inside the barracks.
5. Angel Island interrogation, Courtesy of U.S. National Archives & Records Administration, College Park, MD
6. Japanese women at Angel Island, Courtesy of State Museum Resource Center, California State Parks – Many of the Japanese women at Angel Island were “picture brides.” These women corresponded with Japanese men in the United States through letters and photographs, and without meeting their prospective husband in person and were married in Japan. These women could then immigrate to the United States to join their husband.

7. Chinese women waiting at Angel Island, Courtesy of California Historical Society, FN-18240
8. Immigrants in mess hall, Courtesy of California Historical Society, FN-23697
9. Two poems carved on a wall at Angel Island (angled), Courtesy of Chris Huie – This photograph documents two of the best preserved poems at the Angel Island Immigration Station. Unlike the other poems that the immigration officials filled with putty and painted over, in these poems visitors can see the quality of the wood carving. Translated into English, these poems read

Detained in this wooden house for several tens of days,
It is all because of the Mexican exclusion law which implicates me.
It's a pity heroes have no way of exercising their prowess.
I can only await the word so that I can snap Zu's whip.

From now on, I am departing far from this building
All of my fellow villagers are rejoicing with me.
Don't say that everything within is Western styled.
Even if it is built of jade, it has turned into a cage.

10. Contemporary shot of interior of Barracks, Courtesy of Surrey Blackburn – This contemporary photograph illustrates what the barracks now look like today. During the operation of the Immigration Station, three tiered metal bunks would be attached to the poles.

Source: *Teaching Local History: New York City as a National Model Teacher Resource Manual*.
New York: New York Historical Society, 2000

Prepared by Jane Sheftel-Hara and Hideo Y. Kato with the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation.