

# Immigrant Interviews

by Margaret Weber

## Standards

- IL.1 GOAL: Read with understanding and fluency.
- IL.1.C STANDARD: Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.
- IL.1.C.2c > Compare and contrast the content and organization of selections.
- IL.1.C.3c > Compare, contrast and evaluate ideas and information from various sources and genres.
- IL.3 GOAL: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
- IL.3.B STANDARD: Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.
- IL.3.B.2a > Generate and organize ideas using a variety of planning strategies (e.g., mapping, outlining, drafting).
- IRA.1 Theoretical Base
- IRA.1.4 ...illustrate that literacy can be a means for transmitting moral and cultural values

## Resources

### [Immigrant Interviews](#)

## Overview and Rationale

The students will learn about culture as well as what it means to be an immigrant. This is important because it will help students to appreciate people from cultures different than their own. In particular students will learn details of the Mexican culture. This is especially significant since Mexico borders our country and there are many immigrants from Mexico living in America. Students will also gain an appreciation for the country they live in and the privileges they enjoy as Americans. When students read the challenges that some of the immigrants had to and are still overcoming, they will see examples of people who have had to work

very hard. Hopefully these people's testimonies will be inspirational to the students.

Students will also learn about comparing and contrasting two pieces of writing. This activity will help students to understand what they are reading as well as give them practice at picking out main points. Students will learn how to create a Venn Diagram, which is a useful comparison tool.

## **Objectives**

1. The students will be able to compare two separate interviews and determine the similarities and differences between them.
2. The students will be able to create a Venn Diagram to use as a comparison tool.
3. The students will gain an appreciation and understanding of immigrants in America.
4. The students will learn some of the components of the Mexican culture.

## **Materials**

1. Access to the internet: The Library of Congress Website
2. Paper and pencil
3. Kalman, B. (1993). *Mexico: The culture*. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co.

## **Procedure**

1. Conduct a class discussion about what culture means. Talk about why it is important to study and how we can study it. Relate the discussion of culture to the concept of immigration. Go over the process, possible reasons for, and what challenges might be faced during immigration.
  2. Read sections from the book "Mexico: The Culture" (Suggested sections include: old and new, arts and crafts, Mexicans at play, just for children, fiesta, and musical Mexico). Talk with the class how the Mexican culture is similar and different from their culture. Talk about the large number of Mexican people that have immigrated to America and how it changes our culture.
2. Help students go to the web address <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/interv/toc.php> (In the

Library of Congress.)

3. From here students are able to look at interviews from immigrants of different areas of the world. The interviews were done by middle school students.

4. Each student will choose two different interviews to compare to one another.

5. Using the two interviews each student will make a Venn Diagram to show the similarities and differences of the two immigrants' lives.

6. Once the student has completed their Venn Diagram they will share with a small group the information they have learned about the two people's lives that they read about.

### **Remediation for Special Needs**

1. An adult or another student reads the interview aloud to a student who struggles with reading.

2. Print off the interview for the student so that they may have a hard copy to highlight and underline.

3. Use a Venn Diagram that is color coded to match a hard copy of the interviews. (ex. Interview of Jose is on green paper, and Jose has a green circle for the Venn Diagram).

### **Enrichment**

1. Have students write a list of further questions they would ask each immigrant if they had the opportunity.

2. Find a person who has immigrated to the United States who is willing to be interviewed by a student(s). Have a student or group of students interview that person.

### **Assessment**

Each student's Venn Diagram should have a minimum of three separate facts in each category of the diagram. The facts should represent the aspects related in the interviews.