Grades: high school  
Subjects: U.S. history, English/Language Arts  
Time required: one 50-60 minute class period  
Author: Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU

OVERVIEW
In the late 1800s, thousands of immigrants came to the United States in the hopes of capitalizing on the opportunities available in the still growing nation. Some parts of the nation, especially new states in the west, aggressively marketed themselves to the new arrivals in the hopes of growing their populations and economies. Other communities became increasingly wary of immigration and advocated the ideals of nativism and protectionism to build support for legislation to limit new immigrant populations.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL
Students will understand the different attitudes toward immigration that developed toward the end of the nineteenth century. Students will write a reflection on how these different attitudes might have been perceived by newly arrived immigrants.

OBJECTIVES
The student will:
- analyze newspaper articles, illustration, and political cartoons to determine different perspectives on immigration.
- compare and contrast information from the sources to determine how and why attitudes on immigration varied.
- integrate information from the sources to write a reflection on how the different attitudes on immigration would have been perceived by new arrivals to the country.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION
How was America presented as a land of opportunity to immigrants? How did feelings of nativism and protectionism shape conversations on immigration?

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES—MTSU
Lesson Plan: The Land of Opportunity vs. Nativism

New York - Welcome to the land of freedom - An ocean steamer passing the Statue of Liberty: Scene on the steerage deck [1887]

CURRICULUM STANDARDS
U.S. History
- US.7 Describe the differences between “old” and “new” immigrants, analyze the assimilation process for “new” immigrants, and determine the impacts of increased migration on American society, including: Angel Island, Ellis Island, Push and pull factors, Ethnic clusters, Jane Addams, Competition for jobs, Rise of nativism, Jacob Riis, Chinese Exclusion Act and Gentleman’s Agreement

English/Language Arts
- 9-10.RI.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; cite the strongest, most compelling textual evidence to support conclusions.
- 9-10.RI.KID.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective or critical summary.
- 9-10.RI.KID.3 Analyze how an author presents and develops key ideas and events to impact meaning.
- 9-10.RI.CS.5 Analyze how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text.
- 9-10.RI.CS.6 Determe an author’s point of view or purpose and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.
- 9-10.RI.IKI.7 Evaluate the topic or subject in two diverse formats or media.
- 9-10.RI.IKI.9 Analyze a variety of thematically-related texts of historical and literary significance for the way they address related topics, facts, and concepts.
### Resources
- **New York - Welcome to the land of freedom - An ocean steamer passing the Statue of Liberty: Scene on the steerage deck** (1887)
- **Where the blame lies** (1891)
- **Pittsburg dispatch., May 24, 1891, SECOND PART, Page 10, Image 10**
- **Southern standard. (McMinnville, Tenn.) 1879-current, September 17, 1887, Page 7, Image 7**

### Materials
- **Graphic organizer**
- **Primary source analysis worksheet**

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#### DAY 1

**Step 1**
Begin by discussing why individuals immigrated to America in the late 1800s. What did they hope to find in the United States? Why was the United States presented as a land of opportunity?

**Step 2**
Next define the terms protectionism and nativism as they relate to immigration. Why might some people have supported protectionism and nativism during this time?

**Step 3**
Distribute a primary source analysis worksheet to each student. Ask your students to analyze Welcome to the land of freedom. Provide a few minutes for students to fill out their worksheets and then discuss their findings as a class.

**Step 4**
Next ask students to analyze Where the blame lies. What message is this political cartoon making about immigration? How does this compare with the previous image? How does this source present messages of protectionism and nativism?

**Step 5**
Provide each student a copy of the graphic organizer. Using their analysis worksheet notes and the class discussion, what perspective does each of the previous sources present on immigration? Students should record their answers in the appropriate column on the graphic organizer. You may wish to answer both of these as a class discussion to model appropriate responses.

**Step 6**
Then explain that they will be analyzing three additional sources. With each source, they will need to determine whether immigration is being presented through the lens of opportunity or protectionism and nativism. Then they will need to record details from each source to support their selection.

**Step 7**
Distribute the articles from the Pittsburg Dispatch, Southern Standard, and News-Herald. You might encourage students to underline key words or phrases to help them make determine the perspective for each article. Students can work on these individually or in pairs.
Step 8
Briefly discuss the students responses to the three newspaper articles. How does each present immigration? What common themes are presented? How does each differ on their perspective toward continued immigration?

Step 9
As an exit ticket or homework, ask each student to write a letter from the perspective of a newly arrived immigrant to a friend in their native country. The letter should address the following questions: How was America presented as a land of opportunity? How did feelings of nativism and protectionism shape conversations on immigration? The letters should cite evidence from the sources the students have analyzed.

**Evaluation**
- Primary Source Analysis Worksheet 25 pts
- Graphic Organizer 50 pts
- Letter 25 pts

**Extension**
- Using the Immigration in America primary source set, have students construct a timeline and discuss how attitudes toward immigration have changed over time.
- Have your students compare more recent newspaper articles on immigration policy to the articles they read in class. What common themes are presented? How has the public discourse changed?
- If you have students who are immigrants or who have family members who are immigrants, you might ask them to share their own experiences with the class.

*Where the blame lies* [1891]
I do not believe the time has come for the total restriction of immigration. Every able-bodied man entering this country, 20 years of age, is worth $1,500 to the country. Yet a developing country, we are in need of these people, and as long as the hardy sons of other lands, in honest purpose, seek our shores, because of the freedom of our institutions and of the opportunities in this better land, it is profitable for us to receive them.

W. D. Owen.
The Medical Record virtually endorses his statement by acknowledging that “It is very true that the numbers of our sick and defective classes are enormously swollen by the immense tide of immigration. It is safe to say that four-fifths of the infant mortality is among the children of the immigrants.”

Thirdly, it is said in favor of restricted immigration that the immigrants' opportunity for getting employment is now less than it was fifteen years ago, when there was much railroad building and great industrial expansion. This is not so easily proved as the first two statements. For it is absurd to say that a man's opportunity to obtain work is less now because fewer railroads are in process of construction, when there is plenty of capital lying idle waiting for good investments, and an immense tract of country ready to receive the plow of the sober and industrious husbandman. The reason why a laboring man has not the same chance to make a living now as he did fifteen years ago is because of the disturbances in the labor market—the strikes, the boycottings, and the attacks on others right to work, of which labor organizations have much diversity of opinion. We do not wish to exclude those industrious and sober people whose intention is to seek honest work in America. On the other hand, Uncle Sam decidedly objects to having his substance eaten up, and the safety of his house threatened by organ grinders, beggars, tramps, socialists, anarchists, and other parasites of society. We must draw the line somewhere. It
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