Immigration from all parts of the world has been a major source of population growth and cultural change in American History. When analyzing immigration we are better able to evaluate who we are as individuals in American Society and cast an objective eye on our shared history.

Between 1890 to the mid1950’s there was an influx of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe to the United States. There were several factors influencing the immigration of these groups of individuals. In general, the primary factors were economic and political. There were several similarities between the Greek and Polish experience regarding where they settled, push-pull factors, what they did for work and the challenges posed by the process of assimilation to the established American culture. According to Paul Spickard, in general, both groups intended to earn as much money as they could and eventually return to their land of origin.

The Greek Experience

Many Greeks came to the United States beginning in the 1890’s. The “push factors” were relatively the same for most willing and needing to leave their homelands—jobs were available in America’s Northeast. The first wave came to America mainly for employment and to escape the restrictive rule of Ottoman Turks. The Turkish rule created a tax system that helped to destroy many small businesses throughout the “Ellas” (country). Most Greek immigrants eventually settled within the urban cities of East such as New York, Baltimore and Boston. Greek immigrants worked in the textile mills and factories in these and other major eastern cities. Immigrants also found employment as farm laborers in the rural districts near the larger urban areas. Like that of other immigrant groups, the family and relationship with the church (Greek Orthodox) was central for Greek Americans alike.

The process of assimilation was a difficult one for Greek immigrants. Like that of other immigrant groups from Eastern and Southern Europe, Greeks had to overcome “culture shock.” Greeks had to overcome the “language barrier” and learn the English language. Some endured different sorts of bigotry and discrimination. For example, in Rhode Island in 1909, Greek fishermen became the targets of state legislation that attempted to ban all “non-citizens” from fishing for lobsters. This legislation was targeting the Greek population of Rhode Island. Another example, from the October 2, 1921 New York
Times, an article supporting the expulsion of Greek Immigrants because of exceeding the Federal Immigration Act that restricted the number of each immigrant group to no more than 3 percent. Another situation occurred in 1909 in Omaha, Nebraska involving a Greek immigrant and the city’s police officer. An entire Greek community had been burned to the ground and its inhabitants had been driven out. Conversely, many of the Greeks that were expelled from Omaha ended up in Mountain View, Idaho where they were pursued by the same angry mob (Monos, *The Greek Americans*, 1988 pgs. 51-52).

**The Polish Experience**

One of the largest periods of Polish immigration to the United States occurred between 1880 and 1930. The greatest numbers came between 1899 and 1909, close to one million. The Poles were one of the largest East European groups to immigrate at this time. There were specific reasons for this migration that provided the “push” to leave their homeland and travel to America. Depending on what province of Poland they came from, the push factors were different. Landlords, pushing peasants off of their lands, reduced farming land allotments. A rapidly growing population increased land shortages. Heavy taxes placed on the peasants, cholera and typhus epidemics, and even a “potato blight” similar to that of Ireland, led Poles to seek relief in America. Others fled political persecution, while Russian Poles fled to avoid conscription into the Russian Army. Most of the Poles who arrived were agrarian, hoping to find a plot of land, but instead were forced into urban areas of the Midwest and Middle Atlantic states. They quickly went to work in the steel mills, coalmines, meatpacking plants, and oil refineries in Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Pittsburg. The majority of Polish immigrants did not plan to stay in America, so they isolated themselves to ethnic communities, with little intention to assimilate. They thought there stay was temporary, they felt they did not need to learn English to work the labor intensive jobs they held, and they held a general inferiority complex due to the decades of political oppression from Russia, Prussia and Austria.

**A Shared Experience**

Like that of Greek Immigrants the church (Roman Catholic) was central to the Polish experience. According to Spickard, the Church for the Polish immigrants led to the rise of Polish nationalism because it offered an avenue in which Polish immigrants could come together to “nurture a common ethnic identity.”

Here in America, wages for Polish and Greek immigrants were low. For instance, in 1910, average annual income was only $325. Poles also fell victim to racist attitudes in the workplace. The belief was held that Poles lacked the ability to work at jobs that required complex thought, and excelled at dangerous, labor-intensive jobs that suited their silent obedience. These racist hiring attitudes severely hindered Polish immigrants chances of advancement in the workplace. They live in isolated communities with friends and family members and built communities around ethnic centered Roman Catholic Churches and saloons. They continued their isolation by creating Polish-language newspapers, parochial schools, and community societies. These communities led to a slow assimilation of the Polish immigrants.
Conclusion
Our Immigrant Group Resource Guide will provide educators a Timeline chronology of specific and important dates in immigration history. We will also provide questions and ideas for learning activities within the classroom and a complete listing of the many annotated primary, bibliographical, and web resource utilized for this group project.

Sources:
http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Pa-Sp/Polish-Americans.html
http://www.wpunj.edu/cohss/history/immigrants.htm


Timeline Chronology
Immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe

1890-1910

1890: In an attempt to survive the economic chaos in Greece at the turn of the century, many Greek families sent their sons to the United States.

1860: Poland’s religious and economic conditions prompt immigration of approximately two million Poles by 1914.

1881: The assassination of Czar Alexander II prompts civil unrest and economic instability throughout Russia.

1882: Russia’s Mary Laws severely restrict the ability of Jewish citizens to live and work in Russia. The country’s instability prompts more than three million Russians to immigrate to the United States over three decades.

1892: The INS opens an immigration screening station at Ellis Island, New York.

1901: Polish immigrant Leon Czologsz assassinates President William McKinley in Buffalo, New York. This leads to anti-Polish sentiment throughout the United States.

1912-1913

Due to the strength of their allegiance to Greece, when the Balkan Wars between Greece and Turkey erupted in 1912 forty-five thousand Greek American immigrants returned home to fight on behalf of Greece. After the war, however, the vast majority of these young men abandoned their intentions to invest their hard earned American dollars in Greek land and instead returned to America to establish their own small businesses, such as diners, grocery stores, and confectioneries.
1914-1924

During World War I, approximately seventy thousand Greeks fought on behalf of the United States. However, these immigrants continued to feel strong political allegiances to Greece and organized several attempts to affect American foreign policy in Greece's favor.

1918: Congress passes the Anarchist Act, which expands the provisions for the exclusion of subversive aliens.

1924-1953

While early immigrants and their families worked hard to establish themselves and create Greek American communities, the number of Greeks who immigrated to America dramatically decreased in the 1920's due to a shift in American immigration laws. Those immigrants who did arrive during these years tended to be more highly skilled and professionally educated as compared to their earlier counterparts.

1921: A quota system, the maximum number of persons admitted into a nation, was first introduced. The terms prohibited no more than 3 percent of the number of foreign-born residents of that nationality living in the U.S.

1924: The Immigration Act of 1924 establishes fixed quotas of national origin.

1953: The Refugee Act of 1953 makes an additional allocation of places for the victims of the war disaster.

Key Questions and Issues

1. What were the reasons (push and pull factors) for Polish and Greeks to immigrate to the United States? What were the similarities and differences between both groups?
   First Wave-
   Second Wave-

2. What were the employment opportunities?

3. Geographically speaking, where did many of the Polish and Greek settle in America? How were these communities developed?

4. Was race central to their experiences? How did “normative whiteness” play a role in their experiences? Were their experiences similar?
Learning Activity One
A Nation of Immigrants: A Cartoonist Looks at the Times

Here are two views of immigration drawn by the same cartoonist during different time periods. The cartoon at the top was drawn in the year 1880. The cartoon on the bottom was drawn in the mid 1890’s.

Analyze both cartoons and answer the questions that follow
Questions from the political cartoons
   1. What is “Uncle Sam” doing atop the plank in the top cartoon?
   2. What do the clouds symbolize in the top cartoon?
   3. What are the men doing on the dock in the bottom cartoon? Why are they doing this?
   4. What do their shadows represent?
   5. What attitudes about immigration do these cartoons present?

Sources:  http://www.museum.msu.edu/   http://www.georgetownbookshop.com

Learning Activity Two
Immigrants and Social Activities at Hull-House, 1890’s-1930’s
Jane Addams Hull-House Museum

Instructions
• Divide students into 4 groups: A) documents about Jews, B) documents about Christmas, C) documents about Greeks, and D) documents about Italians. Students will read the appropriate material for their group.

• Give the students 20 minutes to discuss their documents in their small groups, reflecting on the discussion questions related to their readings.

• Bring together groups A) documents about Jews and B) documents about Christmas. Similarly, combine group C) documents about Greeks with D) documents about Italians. For another 20 minutes, each of the combined groups should discuss the second set of questions.

• Finally, for about 20 minutes have the groups A/B and C/D report back to the whole class.

Assessment
• Can students provide accurate information about Jews, Greeks, and Italians in the Hull-house neighborhood during the period covered in their documents?

• Can students identify differences or conflicts within these ethnic groups?

• Can students identify and critique the approach of Hull-House residents to these ethnic groups and their cultural practices?

• Can students give examples of how Jewish, Greek, and Italian neighbors did or did not take advantage of Hull-House activities and how they interacted with one another?

• Do students see any connections or parallels between the present and the past?

Source: http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/newdesign/immlesson.htm
Learning Activity Three
Immigration: Stories of Yesterday and Today
Web Quest

Find out what it means to come to the United States as an immigrant from the early 20th Century through the early 21st century.
Click onto the Angel Island and Ellis Island pages.
Compare the experiences of immigrants arriving at Angel Island and Ellis Island.
Record the similarities and differences of both screening places.


Learning Activity Four
Lattimer Massacre

Using the details from the following website http://explorenehistory.com/viewLesson.php?id=43, Students will examine the issues of the tragedy of the Lattimer Mining Incident that occurred on September 10, 1897 in northern Pennsylvania. The website provides a detailed plan of the lesson designed for middle school students that can be adapted for length and breadth. The concepts of ethnicity, race and labor in relation to both immigrant history and American society today are explored through reading, writing and research.

Learning Activity Five
Port of Entry: Immigration Activity

The following website provides an interactive immigration activity that would be meaningful and engaging for middle school and high school students. On the list of activities at the site is the Port of Entry. Students follow and interpret clues to uncover the stories of immigrants. They are given the opportunity to evaluate and interpret primary sources and there are additional teacher resource provided. Access activity at http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/activities/

Learning Activity Six
Genogram

Create a family Genogram for three generations. Often used in counseling – a Genogram will provide a lot of family history. Your genogram should include birthdates, death dates, marriages and birth order. Students can then present their genograms to the class. Students can go back to the person who immigrated and find out the reasons why. Birth order can also be explored.
Learning Activity Seven
Compare and Contrast Responses
Practice for College Board exams

For AP students or higher-level classes. The College Board publishes previous AP exam questions on their web site. One of the questions on the 2005 exam was: Describe the patterns of immigration in TWO of the periods listed below. Compare and contrast the responses of Americans to immigrants in these periods.

1820 to 1860
1880 to 1924
1965 to 2000

Scoring guidelines and fact sheets for this question can be found at www.collegeboard.com

Learning Activity Eight
Citizenship Exam

As an introductory activity, this lesson can stimulate discussion and awareness. Students will access the Historychannel.com website and click onto the Citizenship Quiz. This comprehensive quiz engages students on topics such as American History and Civics and Government. This source provides the actual database for all immigration citizenship exams given throughout the United States.

Source: www.history.com/content/citizenquiz

Learning Activity Nine
Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?

Students are introduced to the terms and concepts of “Melting Pot” and “Salad Bowl.” Students will create their own visual representation of the concept they believe to be most valid. Students will research and provide support for their reasoning. Students will be prompted to two web resources.

Sources: www.Chnm.gmu.edu www.regentsprep.org
Annotated Primary Sources


   This is a compilation of primary sources (i.e. pictures, interviews, and news articles) about the Greek experience in the mill city of Lowell, Massachusetts from the turn of the 20th century to just prior to the Second World War.


   The author, George Steffanides, attempts to evaluate life in America as he witnessed it from the time he arrived in the United States in 1920. His observations are his alone and leave the reader to their own conclusions.


   These original letters from the Raczkowski family describe life in America as new immigrants. The letters date between the years 1904 and 1912 and are correspondence of the three siblings, Adam, Helena and Teofila. Adam and Helena immigrated to the United States in 1904, settling in Wilmington, Delaware living with extended family members. The letters describe day-to-day life, happenings, and hardships in America.

4.) The following photo was taken by a Chicago Daily News photographer and may have been published in the newspaper. The picture is of a Polish neighborhood in Chicago taken in May, 1903. The photo shows the Polska Stacya, a Polish saloon, with the neighborhood children playing in the street. In the background are men standing nearby. The photo provides a glimpse into the lives of the polish immigrants of Chicago at the turn of the century.

5.) “Greeks Must Go Back.” The New York Times, October 2, 1921

An article explaining that Greek Immigrants will be deported as a result of the Federal Immigration Act. The Article explains the quota from Greece has been exceeded and individuals are being held at Ellis Island until a decision arrives from Washington. To access the article: click onto “search” and type in “greeks must go back.” Then click onto “read full article.”

www.nytimes.com
6.) www.archives.gov/exhibits/twww

An online exhibit that uses photographs to document the experience of workers in America, the Photographs depict labor conflicts, dangerous working conditions, where people worked. It is an effective source for analyzing the influence of ethnicity on the workers experience.

7.) Photo from www.mysteriesofhistory.net/polish showing Polish Immigrants waiting in line to present their passports. The picture was taken in Warsaw, Poland in 1927 prior to the men’s’ departure.
8.)  http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/driver.jpg

Image of a young Breaker boy coal driver. Photo taken outside of Brown Mine in Brown, West Virginia.

Annotated Bibliography


This book chronicles the reasons why more than 350,000 Greeks came to the United States between the years 1900 and 1930. While in America, the book examines the lives of Greeks and the adjustments made because of “culture shock,” and how families tried to “fit in” as best they could.


This book examines Greek emigration to the United States and the expectations, obstacles faced, and the achievements made by those that immigrated.

This book is ideal for teaching the immigration experience of Polish Americans. Combining stories and documents this book gives an interesting and educational history that focuses on the immigrant family. The book also provides sociological concepts of immigration that makes it valuable to educators.


This book details the crossing of the Atlantic made by the millions of European immigrants of the late 1800’s. Stories of emigrants handed down provide a unique look at the hardships, and sacrifices often made on these journeys. A novel of historical fiction it tells the common story of immigration and is a valid piece of cultural literature.


This is a collection of primary sources and essays that presents diverse perspectives on the experience of Immigration in America for different ethnic groups. The documents address citizenship, Nativist attitude, race and the process of assimilation.


This book provides an analysis of the Greek experience in America that compares the social, economic and religious life in Europe with that in The United States. The author pays a lot of attention to the role of Religion for European Immigrants.


This book uses the backdrop of Chicago’s famed South Side as a way to understand Polish/American communities. Pacyga traces the development of churches and the creation of a “Eastern European village” in South Chicago. The book focuses on the immigration transition and economic hardships to the development of unions in the steel and meatpacking industries.

Rosemary Chorzempa is a director of the Polish Genealogical Society of America. The book is a user’s guide to do Polish genealogical research. This work is for serious students who want to find their family roots in Poland and provides valuable research information.

**Annotated Web Sources**

www.culture.polishsite.us/smimmigration.html

This website is a link from the much larger website www.culture.polishsite.us that pertains to many aspects of Polish immigration. The site provides information on the history of Polish immigration to the US as well as current information. There are personal stories to access as well as Polish customs and traditions practiced by the immigrants. The site provides information as to the first Polish settlements as well as restrictions and sentiments of these Polish immigrants.

www.poloniatoday.com/immigrationix.htm

This website is a link from the much larger website www.poloniatoday.com that boasts that it is “*The World's Most Visited Polish American Website in the English Language.*” The home site provides vast amounts of information about Poland, Polish history and culture, as well as up to date information providing news stories. The immigration link provides information on the history, story and settlement of Polish immigration in America. It also gives detailed information on the Polish emigrants story in Chicago.

www.mysteriesofhistory.net/polish

This is a website about Polish Immigration. This website has thirteen links to other websites on the history of Polish Immigration to America. It is a great starting point for any research on this topic that will lead to further study.

www.nhs.needham.k12.ma.us

The website is titled “Polish Immigration into America”. The website is a brief history of Polish Immigration. The topics that are covered are the majors “Waves” of immigration
to the Assimilation of Polish immigrants to America. The website is more suited for middle school students and is written and presented in an easily understood manner.

www.thejourneygreekamericandream.org/historical.htm

This website examines Greek immigration to America beginning in the 1880’s. Topics include where they (the immigrants) settled, various forms of employment opportunities found in America, the assimilation process, and finally how they attempted to keep their Greek heritage and culture alive.

http://www.thehellenicvoice.com/

This comprehensive website, offers a contemporary perspective on Greek-American culture. Within the website, topic such as, news, sports, leisure and travel are addressed.

http://chnm.gmu.edu/greekam/read_frame.html

This website offers stories of Greek Immigration, visitors can choose from three stories, The story of Tom C. Korologos where he recounts his family’s immigration to the U.S. Jack Argis tells of his individual experience and service and the U.S. Military and the Parish Council of Saint Sophia which has kept Greek culture alive with special events and festivals.

Political Cartoons
http://museum.msu.edu/Exhibitions/Virtual/ImmigrationandCaricature/7572-749.html

This political cartoon is titled *Looking Backward* and the artist is Joseph Keppler. The cartoon first appeared in the political periodical, Puck in January 11, 1893. This cartoon satirizes those immigrants and their descendants who have become successful in America but would deny new immigrants the same opportunity.

http://www.georgetownbookshop.com/Georgetown/display2.asp?id=1063

This political cartoon stands in stark contrast to the sort of message published by the San Francisco Wasp of the same time period. This cartoon is titled *Welcome to All* and Joseph Keppler created it in 1880.