



TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
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A Nation of Immigrants?

Textbook Assessment Worksheet

Respond to the following questions as you review the textbook.

PART 1 First Arrival of White Europeans

When do white Europeans first appear in your American history textbook?

What examples does your text provide of the positive and negative effects of white arrival on American shores?

PART 2 Nineteenth Century Immigration, Civil War and the Building of a Nation

What does your textbook say about the immigration of white Europeans to the U.S.? Is there discussion of their nation of origin, language abilities, culture, ethnicity, religion, or ability to assimilate?

What does your textbook say about the immigration of other non-white ethnic groups?

What groups are credited for the building of national political, economic, and physical infrastructure such as banks, railroads, courts and schools?

PART 3 Early Twentieth Century Immigration, World Wars and the Rise of Superpowers

What does your textbook say about the influx of immigrants in the early 20th century? What are their reasons for immigrating?

How is the ethnicity of the immigrant groups discussed? Are there new distinctions drawn among white immigrant groups? If so, what are they?

What is the reaction of Americans already here to this new influx of immigrants? Are there barriers erected to their entry and assimilation into American culture and political and economic life?

Does the discussion of the different white European immigrant groups change after World War II? Look for references to specific white ethnic groups post-WWII. How are they grouped and labeled by nation of origin, religion or culture?

PART 4 Civil Rights Movement to Present

Are white immigrant or ethnic groups mentioned in your textbook’s discussion of the civil rights movement, or are whites mentioned only as a monolithic racial group?

What 1970s and 1980s immigration or refugee movements are discussed in your text? What adjectives are used to describe people immigrating or seeking refuge in the U.S. at this time?

What does your textbook say about “amnesty, “assimilation” and “affirmative action?” Where and in what contexts do these words appear?
