

New Immigration in the U.S.

1. Fill in the blanks: Between 1805 and 1915, some 25 million immigrants entered the United States- more than the population of the entire country in 1850!
2. Provide at least four different reasons why so many people chose to migrate to the United States during this time:
 - Farmland was shrinking as populations in Europe grew
 - Machines were replacing farm hands, forcing many people from the land
 - The U.S. looked to many immigrants like the "land of opportunity"
 - Religious freedom (some religions had become the targets of attacks in Europe)
 - Political unrest (revolutions)
 - Jobs in the US pulled immigrants to the U.S.
 - Promise of freedom drew immigrants to the U.S.
3. Compare and contrast the "old" immigrants to the "new" immigrants.
 - Old immigrants - mostly Protestant from Northern & Western Europe. Most spoke English & had experience with Democracies
 - New immigrants - mostly from Southern Europe, some from Asia & the Pacific. Few understood English or had experience with Democracies
4. Based on the information you read, do you think that the old immigrants or the new immigrants were more easily accepted in the U.S.? Why? Answers will vary, but... Old immigrants were usually more easily accepted by the U.S. population because of their similarities to American culture.
5. Describe what most immigrants experienced on their journey to the U.S.: Most immigrants left their homes to never see their families again. Immigrants traveled to U.S. in the steerage of boats - it was dirty & cramped (designed to hold cattle). Immigrants faced rigorous physical examination when they entered the U.S. If sick they might get sent home.
6. Most immigrants settled in U.S. cities. What kind of neighborhoods developed in American cities? Why?
2/3 of immigrants settled in cities near other people from their same country (ethnic neighborhoods). It made immigrants feel less isolated.
7. What does "assimilation" mean?
The process of becoming part of another culture.
8. Describe at least four different contributions of immigrants:
Immigrants were essential to the U.S. economy. Immigrants opened small businesses.
9. What were the goals and beliefs of "Nativists"? They wanted to preserve the U.S. for native-born Americans only. They thought the new immigrants would not assimilate because their languages, customs & religion were too different. Thought immigrants took away jobs & were involved in crimes, violence & anarchy.
10. Describe the attempts made by Nativists to decrease the levels of immigration to the U.S.:
 - Mobs drove Chinese from west coast cities
 - Chinese exclusion Act limited immigration based on race
 - Law denying entry to immigrants that could not read their own languages - law barred most of the world's poor people from immigrating