

Teaching with Primary Sources Lesson Outline

Grade Level: High School (9-10)

Standard(s) or Objectives: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

Library of Congress or Morris Special Collections Resources:

Total Immigration	631,000
Percentage of females	47.5
Percentage of males	52.5
Number of females over 18 years of age	450,000
Percentage of females over 18 years of age	52.5
Number of males over 18 years of age	450,000
Percentage of males over 18 years of age	52.5
Number of females under 18 years of age	181,000
Percentage of females under 18 years of age	28.5
Number of males under 18 years of age	181,000
Percentage of males under 18 years of age	28.5
Number of females from Southern and Eastern Europe	450,000
Percentage of females from Southern and Eastern Europe	71.5
Number of males from Southern and Eastern Europe	450,000
Percentage of males from Southern and Eastern Europe	71.5
Number of females from Western Europe and North America	181,000
Percentage of females from Western Europe and North America	28.5
Number of males from Western Europe and North America	181,000
Percentage of males from Western Europe and North America	28.5

"Immigration figures for 1903."

<https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.07902500/>

Specific page used:

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbpe.07902500/?sp=2>

Topic Background:

The "new" wave of immigrants came to America between the 1870's and the 1920's. These immigrants came in large numbers from southern and eastern European countries such as Italy, Greece, Poland, and Russia as well as Asian nations like China. "New" immigrants were typically poorer and less educated than earlier immigrants. Moreover, these immigrants were very different than the typical American because they were overwhelmingly Catholic or Greek Orthodox, or Jewish, and unfamiliar with democratic government. These cultural differences prevented the "new" wave of immigrants from fully assimilating into American culture. Instead, "new" immigrants often congregated in close-knit communities that consisted only of members of their ethnicity.

Excerpted from: <http://ushistoryscene.com/article/immigrants-cities-disease/>

Source(s) Used:

The source used for this assessment includes immigration figures for 1902 and 1903. The specific page that is used focuses upon remarks by William Williams, the commissioner at Ellis Island. Additional information on this page discusses the undesirability of newer immigrants, those from eastern and southern Europe. Population numbers also depict the rise in immigration from these geographic regions.

Answer Key:

Question 1: C

Question 2: A

“Immigration figures for 1903.”

Immigrants listed as able to read and write were, in fact, illiterate. The recent agitation for an educational test for immigrants has undoubtedly made the latter more disposed to assert their ability to read and write.

NOTE 9. — “Northern and Western Europe” includes the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Belgium, Netherlands, and Switzerland.

“Southern and Eastern Europe” includes Austria-Hungary, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, and the Balkan States.

GENERAL REMARKS. — Immigration has reached the high-water mark during the past year, exceeding that of the largest previous year (1882) by nearly 70,000. It is gratifying to note an increase of over one-third in the proportion of those debarred and returned, and to testify to the great improvement in the efficiency of the service since the present Commissioner-General took office. Attempts are also being made to secure an adequate inspection on the frontiers of Canada and Mexico, and steps are being now taken to ascertain definitely the aliens in our penal and charitable institutions.

On the other hand, while there has been some increase in the immigration from Northern and Western Europe, the great proportion of immigration has come as usual from the less desirable races of Southern and Eastern Europe, and there has been a considerable influx of illiterate Japanese.

Hon. William Williams, Commissioner at New York, says in his report: “Without the proper execution of [the present laws] it is safe to say that thousands of additional aliens would have come here last year. But these laws do not reach a large body of immigrants who, while not of this class, are yet generally undesirable, because unintelligent, of low vitality, of poor physique, able to perform only the cheapest kind of manual labor, desirous of locating almost exclusively in the cities, by their competition tending to reduce the standard of living of the American wageworker, and unfitted mentally or morally for good citizenship. It would be quite impossible to accurately state what proportion of last year’s immigration should be classed as ‘undesirable.’ I believe that at least 200,000 (and probably more) aliens came here who, although they may be able to earn a living, yet are not wanted, will be of no benefit to the country, and will, on the contrary, be a detriment, because their presence will tend to lower our standards; and if these 200,000 persons could have been induced to stay at home, nobody, not even those clamoring for more labor, would have missed them. Their coming has been of benefit chiefly, if not only, to the transportation companies which brought them here.”

The largest elements in recent immigration were:

	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.
Southern Italian	68,639	84,346	115,704	152,915	196,117
Polish	28,466	46,938	43,617	69,620	82,343
Scandinavian	33,249	32,932	40,277	55,780	79,347
Hebrew	37,415	60,764	58,098	87,688	76,203
German	26,632	29,682	34,742	51,686	71,782
Irish	32,345	35,607	30,404	29,001	38,366
Slovak	15,353	29,243	29,343	36,934	34,427
Croatian and Slovenian	8,632	17,184	17,928	30,233	32,907

Questions:

- 1) Which of the following statements would be most appropriate to include in a summary of this immigration report? (CCSS-RH9-10.2)
 - a. "Immigration has reached the high water during the past year."
 - b. "It is gratifying to note an increase of over one-third in the proportion of those debarred and returned."
 - c. "The great proportion of immigration has come as usual from the less desirable races of Southern and Eastern Europe."
 - d. "Their coming has been of benefit chiefly, if not only, to the transportation companies which brought them here."

- 2) The author uses the term "undesirable" numerous times within the text. Which of the following statements best describes the meaning of "undesirable" in relation to immigrants? (CCSS-RH9-10.4)
 - a. Immigrants who are viewed as inferior, unskilled, unintelligent, and immoral.
 - b. Immigrants who are likely from the southern portion of Italy.
 - c. Immigrants who are viewed as intelligent, moral, skilled workers; and who will contribute greatly to American society.
 - d. Immigrants who are likely migrating from either Germany or Ireland.