



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2013 Volume II: Immigration and Migration and the Making of a Modern American City

Voilà Ma Famille: A French-Language Unit on Family and French-Canadian Immigration Cycles to the United States

Guide for Curriculum Unit 13.02.02
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But Miss (or Madame as the case may be)... Why do we even have to learn French? France is so far away and nobody speaks French here. What's the point? Outside of all the standard language teacher responses, there is also the fact that in Connecticut we are so relatively close to a rich French-speaking culture in Québec province, Canada. As we seek to open up possibilities to our young barely-teenaged students, it is imperative that we help them develop a sense of the larger world around them, and how that world is and has been shaped by others over time. It is my hope that this unit will do that in some small way, as we explore the linguistic skills of talking about family within the context of French-Canadian immigration to the United States.

Students will look back in history, starting with a very basic understanding of the period of exploration occurring in the 1500-1600s, moving through the settlement of New France in the 1700s and the Acadian Expulsion in 1755, then to the early twentieth century immigration to the United States, New England in particular. Linguistically, students will revisit aspects of how to introduce oneself in order to then talk about others, making the switch from first to third person language. In order to help students develop a sense of time and change over time, as well as to solidify their working application of forming large numbers, all information and activities will be placed within the context of a particular year or span of years. So students will speak as explorers and immigrants, declaring their roles in space and time.

(Recommended for French, grade 7)

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