



Yale-New Haven
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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

New Haven History: Block by Block

Guide for Curriculum Unit 13.02.10
by Jesus Tirado

"Why are there so many buildings here?" one student asked me as we walked by the New Haven Green. This was an interesting question, one that reminded me that with all the hours we spend discussing American history, New Haven seems to be relatively forgotten or ignored. While the anecdote could be taken in several ways, it is an opportunity to bring history alive in our classrooms. The limitations of the classroom often mean that students miss out on learning their own local history. The goal of this project is simple, even if the execution might seem a little daunting. In order to understand their city and their neighborhoods better, this project aims to teach our students how to become oral historians and write the histories of their blocks. Students will learn how to conduct interviews, read maps, both current and historical, and how to compile their data to tell a story about their block. In short, students will, through learning skills and doing work, become the historians of their block. In principle, if done well, this project can be added to throughout the years as students build their own history of New Haven and find the parallels that shape the national trends and stories in their textbooks.

(Recommended for U.S. History and Civics, grades 11 and 12)

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