



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1996 Volume IV: Remaking America: Contemporary U.S. Immigration

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## **Coming to America: Opportunities, Risks, and Consequences**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.04.06  
by Bethania Urena H.

This curriculum unit explores the opportunities and challenges in the immigrant experience. It involves the whole language approach to learning, with materials in many different subject areas. It includes reading, writing and other materials to be used across the curriculum, but primarily in Language Arts, Reading, and Social Studies classes. These materials will include reading passages related to immigration, the personal experiences of children who have immigrated to America with their parents. Here, the books *When I Was a Puerto Rican*, *Shadowed Lives*, and *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* will be emphasized. Through the reading and study of texts by immigrants, the students will learn more about the experiences and consequences of immigration. Through learning about their origins, heritage, values, and traditions, they will be better enabled to accept and see themselves as individuals who are important and unique. They will, then, be more able not only to face new challenges but also to participate gracefully in ongoing challenges in any area of life.

The unit draws on materials from the countries that my students and their families came from: Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, but it could be adapted to include materials from other lands as well. Moreover, it takes a very simple approach to a complicated subject, since it is designed for a learning disabled classroom; but again, the materials may be adapted for usage in many different settings.

(Recommended for all subjects using whole language approach, grades 3-5 (bilingual), Special Education, grades 6-8 (bilingual), and EASL grades 3-8)

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