



America's Future Culture

Curriculum Unit 99.03.10
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Think of this study as a skill-based unit aimed at the art of debating. Think of it, if you will, as a course in language appreciation that was designed for students who are interested in oral speaking, in the passion of persuasion, in the logic of the law; or as a course for those who are interested in free-thinking and learning. If you prefer, you can think of this study simply as an idea/plan for some part of the year's curriculum. For myself, along with my seventh grade students, who have been identified for New Haven's TAG Program, this study is a combination of all of the above. The overall objectives of this six-week study are to invite students and teachers to investigate America's past immigration practices, analyze its present policies toward bilingual education for minority immigrants and forecast a possible future America with its ever-increasing immigrant population and their different languages.

Based on the changing and varied ethnic populations of New Haven's classrooms, the need for early language intervention is clearly drawn. Early language training will benefit all young children regardless of their native tongues and open worlds of communication among them. As teacher in a resource room program for gifted children, I am exposed to students of various ethnic backgrounds and skill abilities, many of whom would likely be affected by immigration policies that relate to bilingual education and civil rights issues. My interest in exploring this topic of "America's Future Culture" is directly related to the changing needs of the educational system as it is affected by immigration policies.

Overview

What is America's Future Culture? Is it likely to be the seventeenth century America that was intended as a free thinking republic for northern and western European immigrants in search of a better life? Is it likely to be the twentieth century America that we have come to know as a nation of immigrants divided by economic, religious, linguistic, political and social principles- with ethnic and racial loyalties to one's own culture? Or will the twenty-first century America likely be one that is multiethnic, multilingual and able to coexist as a national culture that is distinctly American?

In projecting a future America, we concern ourselves with today's events and extrapolate from those trends a possible tomorrow. Today's America wrestles with policies and practices of immigration in an attempt to remain true to its founding ideas and ideology: "All are Welcome!" For many, the ideology has been altered by

the definition of the word "All" that has broadened to include immigrant groups from around the world with different cultural practices and languages. This new definition of the word "All" fuels the current debate over immigration.

This study addresses some parts of that debate. It focuses on California's call to abandon bilingual education programs in some of its public school districts. In the Los Angeles district where sixty seven percent of the total school population is of Latino origin, the school board aims to replace the method of instruction, known as bilingual education with English-only classes for immigrant children whose native language is Spanish. This call for action by California sets a pace for other districts that will likely follow with similar restrictions. That brings me to the point of the argument set forth in this paper and prompts me to ask, "Will tomorrow's America be one that we want?"

Strategies for teaching and learning

This study suggests the idea of bilingual education as an integral part of the process of learning for legal immigrant children. It uses as its premise the idea that learning is fundamental to the moral, social and economic growth of America- and language is fundamental to that learning. It argues that immigrant children who are not provided necessary bilingual education are not being adequately socialized.

The unit is based around necessary skills for holding a formal debate. Segment One examines some of the policies and practices of American immigration and the issue of providing bilingual programs as a form of equality in Education aimed at strengthening students' skills of critical thinking and oral communication. Segment Two analyzes the bilingual issue and reinforces skills in research and writing. Segment Three culminates ideas through the use of skills for a formal debate. A Sample lesson idea appears at the end of the study.

Begin the study by surveying the children on their positions about bilingual programs in the public schools. Chances are many of them have encountered students whose native language is one other than English. Be mindful that the idea is to help the children acquire a respect for differences among themselves.

Next you would want to introduce the study by discussing its overview and engaging the children in a free thinking activity about a possible future based on their knowledge of today's events and feelings toward immigrant minorities.

At this point, it would be a good idea to involve children in a vocabulary search for definitions of the words listed in the section entitled "Look it up, dear!" The user may decide to employ a competitive approach among small groups for this activity.

Segment I

After having done this and the user is fairly confident that the students have a clear understanding of the study idea, have each student read the introduction to the unit. Follow with a whole group discussion of the points outlined in the introduction. (see Discussion 1.0)

Next you will want to hold a general reading and discussion of the "Immigration Timeline" (precedes the Bibliography.) The emphasis here is placed on the link between practices of immigration that signaled the

feelings about ethnic groups who came to this country and the debate over providing bilingual programs for immigrant children, throughout the country's history. (see Discussion 1.1)

Here is a good opportunity to have students write a short essay after making the links between accepting certain ethnic groups and educating those same groups. Let this essay serve as a prewriting assignment.

So that students are clear on the idea, outline "The Issue" through oral discussion and note taking.

(see 1.2)

Segment II

Move now to "Educational Equity." Read aloud as a whole group. Then have the students form small groups to formulate their positions on whether there is educational equity in this country for immigrant minorities. Have students make notes on their positions offering support for their arguments. (see Discussion 2.0)

Next you'll want to further discuss the idea of education by reading "Educating America." As an independent effort, you may assign some library time for students to find additional information about some of the ethnic groups who have struggled for equal rights in education.

Read "A model of success" ask students to employ some creative thinking skills to design a model program that replaces the current bilingual program methods used here in the U.S. Refer to notes made in Segment I "The Issue" and use in conjunction with the program model described in this segment. Students may work independently or with other students in a small group.

Segment III

Read and discuss the section on "Language as a symbol of Culture." Have students choose one of the "Ideas for Independent thinking" and work through it either as a classroom assignment or as homework. Share finished products with classmates before the study is completed. Use your discretion about sharing time.

You are ready to debate the issue of supporting bilingual education for immigrant children. Familiarize yourself with the Debate process (the information is readily available at your school library.) Locate the articles listed for "Current Events" study and combine them with the contents of this study to help students support their arguments.

Now return to the informal essay written in the beginning of the study and rewrite it to include new information and any change in students' position as a result of this study.

Lastly have students write a future scenario about America with a number of different ethnic immigrants, who speak different languages. It is the writer's choice whether the society is a workable one or a divided society.

SEGMENT I

Introduction

Let us for the sake of argument agree that the current debate over whether to continue or deny public support for bilingual education is without exception a valid debate with strong argument on both sides. It is an argument that is rooted in the heart of the larger debate on immigration. That is " Should immigrant citizens receive the same rights and privileges that are guaranteed to native born Americans?" The answer to that question has been central to the shifting immigration policies in America throughout its history. And it is central to the policies that will guide the future of bilingual education programs in this country.

America has come to witness a bitter/sweet tale of its immigration policies and practices as they impact upon current social conditions. We need only to look at present education statistics, income levels and the general health and welfare of some immigrant populations (e.g. Mexicans, Haitian, some Asian and African groups) to recognize the bitter side of this tale. The sweet side of the tale is equally easy to recognize. We can look at the economic prosperity of America, partly due to the work of immigrants as a source of cheap labor. We can look at the cultural richness of America, partly due to the ethnic influences of immigrant groups. We can also see the "sweet side of this tale when we examine patterns of wealth and power attained by a selected few and protected by a number of legal practices in the U.S. government.

These ideas signal a need to look toward what will be the future of America with its immigrant population. While some Americans indulge in the debate over the effectiveness of bilingual education, immigrant children are left behind their peers academically. Eventually they are left out economically and socially as well. That increases the chances that many will become a part of the problem, rather than part of the solution to the American ideology.

If the country fails to provide quality public school education, in this case, bilingual education programs for immigrant children, their chances of succeeding at competitive rates are greatly diminished, as are the chances of native children who are educated in those same classrooms. I understand the call for immersion into English-only classes, but I fail to see how that is most useful to the child who does not yet speak the language or understand its structure. In this situation both immigrant and native children are hindered in the levels of their academic achievement. I am suggesting that individual levels of achievement will determine their collective input to society. Despite the claim that all are welcome, the bitter/sweet tale of American immigration is more accurately all who fit a particular profile are welcome to the riches of America, particularly a quality public education.

The Issue: California's Los Angeles school district makes the claim that current bilingual education programs are not effective. They argue that students who are taught major subjects in their native tongues are not learning the English language rapidly and adequately enough to become proficient speakers. Although these students are being taught English, their levels of achievement are extremely low. Even with the passage of Proposition 227 which requires that non-English speaking students be taught English as rapidly as possible, Los Angeles' school district is refusing to teach as many as 100,000 children how to read. An article which appeared in Forbes Magazine credits bureaucrats with the idea that children should not be taught reading until they have become "fully fluent" in English. Teachers were encouraged to concentrate on oral language and not even show students the written language.

What is often recommended in California and in other school districts is total immersion into English-only classes. The idea is that they will more quickly learn to speak English. What is seldom discussed is that for the sixty-seven percent Latino student population, there is only thirteen percent Latino teachers in the Los Angeles Unified school district. In many other districts, across the country non-English speaking or limited English proficient students outnumber the qualified bilingual staff.

SEGMENT II

Educational Equity?

Although we'd like to believe that life in these United States is based on principles of equality, we have come to know differently. Throughout America's history, various groups have had to fight for rights that were offered as guarantees in the Bill of Rights. Too often that struggle involved a fair and equal opportunity to be educated. If education is considered a fundamental right and is a tool for socializing the citizens of the country, then on what grounds should any citizen be denied access to it?

Educational equity is aimed at providing "every" student with equality of educational opportunity regardless of race, national origin, gender or economic status. Studies show that these factors (over which a child has no control) are often used to determine how that child is educated. The goal of educational equity is to reduce, eventually eliminate the use of these factors as determinants. It appears that the debate over bilingual education does not recognize this goal.

The Bilingual Education Act (TitleVII) defines bilingual education as " a program of instruction, designed for children of limited English speaking ability in elementary and secondary schools, in which there is instruction given in, and the study of, English, and to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through the educational system the native language is used, and such instruction is given with appreciation for the cultural heritage of such children, in the case of elementary school children such instruction shall , to the extent necessary be in all courses or subjects of study ..."1

Bilingual instruction, as we know it in America, involves using the native language of non- English speaking students as a bridge until the child is able to move into a program in which English is the exclusive language of instruction. The student is exposed to the English language while receiving instruction in his/her native language.

The two methods of instruction employed in this country are native language method and English as a second language (ESL). The first "native language method" involves teaching of reading and writing by bilingual teachers, in the student's native language. The transfer to English is made after the child has mastered native language skills. The second, ESL involves the assignment of students to regular English classes. Intensive English instruction is offered by a resource teacher at some point during the day, away from the child's regular classroom.

The debate over the effectiveness of bilingual education appears to give strength to the argument offered by its opponents. The current debate is reminiscent of past debates over equal rights for women and ethnic minorities. It also echoes debate over multicultural education and early immigration. Perhaps it is time to evaluate such programs from the view of those who are most affected by them rather than from the views of

politicians and proficiency test scores.

Educating America

One argument against bilingual programs takes shape from a misconception that they are designed to maintain a child's native language without any real intent of making the transition to English. Quite the opposite is true. Historically, bilingual programs began as early as 1840 in the public schools as an attempt at ensuring that German children also learned English. At that time, German immigrants in Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York protested that their children were not learning in the English-only schools. Protest from the communities and school officials centered around the idea that children would be Germanized if taught in their native language. Parents on the other hand thought their children could better learn in schools where they could understand what was being taught. After some political pressure from ethnic communities, school districts decided to include some German instruction. Bilingual programs however were not welcome by the English-speaking citizens who saw them as an instrument for luring German children into public schools.

"Between 1840 and 1880, bilingual programs (for various ethnic groups) were offered in the public schools. In addition to German bilingual education, there were French-English schools in Louisiana and Spanish-English schools in New Mexico. After 1880, only one group successfully maintained bilingual programs in the public schools- the Germans, who did so until 1917." 2

Not very much has changed in the struggle for the existence of bilingual education programs, or in the nature of protest against them. As a part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, schools across the country had to reckon with the idea that immigrant children were being denied a quality education because they were unable to grasp concepts offered through English-only instruction. I am inclined to agree with a Supreme Court ruling that concluded that providing an equal facility, same teachers and same instruction does not constitute an equal education when students are unable to understand the language in which they are being taught.

In Latino communities, both Chicanos and Mexicans petitioned public school districts in the Southwest to better educate their children. The age-old debate over bilingual education had again crept to the forefront. Again the same arguments: children were underachieving in English-only classes due to poor language skills; School districts were unwilling to provide non-English based instruction for fear that these students would cling to their native languages and fail to learn the English language, would threaten the cohesion of the community and delay assimilation into the larger American society.

In the late 1960's California, Texas and New York had high concentrations of children who would benefit from bilingual instruction. By 1968, the country was persuaded to recognize "special education" needs for children whose native language was one other than English. This legislation culminated in the passage of the Bilingual Education Act. Although provisions were made for bilingual education through Title VII of the Education Act, school systems were under no obligation to comply. It was not until a class action lawsuit against San Francisco's unified School District was brought to the federal district court, wherein Chinese students felt that they were not receiving a meaningful education.

These students (the plaintiffs) argued that no special programs were available to meet their linguistic or cultural needs. The district court dismissed their protest as simply that and the case was taken up in the U.S. Supreme Court in which the decision of the lower court was overturned. The 1974 decision in *Lau v. Nichols* was translated into federal policy, later known as the Lau Remedies and was used as criteria for judging bilingual programs in other districts- although the court recommended no specific method of instruction for dealing with the position of the Chinese students.

The decision rendered by the Court was based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. "It seems obvious that the Chinese-speaking minority receives fewer benefits than the English-speaking majority from respondents' school system which denies them a meaningful opportunity to participate in the educational program- all earmarks of discrimination banned by the regulation."³ This decision did not require use of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment although it was cited in the argument set forth by the Chinese students.

A 1978 survey overseen by the office of Bilingual and Minority Language Affairs found that 1.7 million students qualified as Limited English-Proficient across the country. Of that number only 2.3% were receiving instruction in traditional bilingual programs. Another 11% were in English classrooms with some ESL instruction time. Yet a whopping 58% were in English medium instruction with remedial English. What became of the other 27% of the 1.7 million is a mystery to me. My guess is they are struggling through English-only classes and being left behind their academic peers. Or maybe they are among the few whom are able to quickly acquire a second language

Why has the country returned to the same arguments that were offered for more than a century against bilingual education programs? We might look to the idea that bilingual programs are considered a financial burden on districts with high concentrations of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Use for example San Francisco whose school population is eighty percent Spanish-speaking, Filipino and Chinese for whom a bilingual-bicultural program was instituted. For an additional twenty percent who were classified as limited-English proficient, ESL was offered. This school district would certainly qualify for special financial assistance. That assistance would come through a funding source aptly called "Bilingual Desegregation Support Program." The program "provides financial assistance to local school systems to help meet educational needs of children from non-English-speaking homes and who lack educational opportunities because of language and culture." ⁴

We might also look at the drastic increase in the number of limited English-speaking students who now enroll in the nation's public schools. Naturally, the increase in the number of adult immigrants with limited English is reflected in the school populations. If school districts have found that it is too costly to educate the children of non-English-speaking immigrants, perhaps that is a necessary consideration to be made at the time of creating immigration policy. It is certainly more democratic to keep non-English speakers out of the country, rather than accept them and refuse to educate them.

It's not that there is a lack of funds, the numbers simply have grown too great and the cost for funding these programs has kept economic pace. There are many who feel that those funds would be better spent on other language programs. Since the results of bilingual programs are often reported as ineffective-meaning that children are remaining in bilingual programs too long with too little positive growth, it is suggested that other methods of instruction replace the current programs. Will we as a nation seek alternative ways to educate non-English-speaking immigrants or will we simply withdraw the support that is currently there and opt for the "Sink or Swim" method of English only immersion?

A model of success

Federal regulation of bilingual education was likely inevitable, as the late 1950's and early sixties brought an influx of Cuban immigrants, refugees and migrant workers into Florida's counties. The overwhelming need to promote racial harmony in the communities, advance cultural assimilation and provide a useful education to all of the children prompted Dade County officials armed with the Ford Foundation funding to pilot a Bilingual-Bicultural education program. The experimental program would bring together both English and Spanish speaking children with the expressed intent of making both groups into functioning bilinguals. The general aim was to move toward linguistic and cultural enrichment for the total school population and the school's immediate communities, while experiencing the least amount of disruption to the already existing culture.

Florida's Dade County boasts the success of their early model program in Bilingual Education. The 1963 goal of the Dade County School District was to create functional bilinguals who would maintain both languages throughout their school years from Kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12.) Designed for both English and Spanish speaking children, the program worked well in its pilot stage and quickly grew to include a number of elementary and secondary schools in the district. Unfortunately, like past immigration policy, it too fell victim to federal funding and government regulations. Once under the influence of federal guidelines the program aimed at transition to English with no support for native language beyond merely surviving in their other courses.

Although ambitious in its aim to maintain the culture of both groups in a common public setting, (but with private funding) the original program was piloted in just one school, Coral way Elementary School whose population, like so many other schools in the county had recently changed to consist of a vast number of language minorities (LM.) For the most part, many of the new immigrants constituted a non-English speaking group. Another segment of the migrating population was classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP.) Additionally there were those for whom English was a first language.

The model program was structured to offer the children of Coral Way Elementary School an equal attempt at cultural exchange, a validation of their native cultural practices, a non-threatening environment in which to learn and a solid footing between their two worlds. The curriculum design included equal access to opportunities for transitional learning and maintenance of one's own culture.

What worked at Coral Way Elementary School in the early sixties was a combination of appealing curriculum, in both languages; a clear concept of the program's goals; thoughtful planning and competent staff. A.M. Sessions -all same first language groups (Spanish or English) received instruction in that language for all academic subjects; Midday Sessions -both student groups mixed for lunch, art, music, physical education- and both faculty groups mixed to exchange information about the group's progress and coordinate lesson plans; P.M. Sessions -both groups of students received reinforced morning lessons in second language.

Included in this successful formula is recognition of the foresight and groundwork of the project's leaders, Pauline Rojas and program director /curriculum coordinator, Ralph Robinett. Both former educators on the island of Puerto Rico thought it necessary to begin working with children from their points of strength. In this scenario children would receive instruction for learning in the language with which they were most familiar and concurrently learn a second language.

Some accolades also go to the students who were open to the idea of learning and who achieved in both language curriculums. Then there were the parents who accepted the school's plan. For English -speaking

parents there was the concern that their children would suffer by being in classes that were taught in a foreign language. They felt that students who didn't readily grasp the English language should be given some alternative provisions. That was in direct contrast to the predominantly Spanish -speaking parents who readily accepted the idea that their children would benefit from both languages.

The intent was to provide a program of instruction such that Spanish- speaking children would achieve as much success in learning as they would in a monolingual (Spanish) class and improve their command of the English language. Using the same logic, English-speaking children would gain a measurable proficiency in the use of Spanish and at the same time maintain or improve their levels of success in English classes. The district's annual evaluation showed that students in bilingual programs performed at levels that were comparable to students who were instructed in monolingual classes.

Emphasis was rightly placed on goals of achievement for all children. Because the program received no federal funding, it abided by no federal regulations. If the underlying concern was assimilation, the program worked. It appears to have been a single goal supported by a fundamental desire for cultural sharing and learning combined with an effective method of dealing with two dominant languages, in one school setting and buttressed by a general acceptance of immigrants to America. The Dade County School was able to serve as an acceptable model for other Florida districts who found themselves in similar situations with their LEP immigrant populations.

SEGMENT III

Language as a Symbol of Culture

Language represents an important role in one's thought processes and in one's social identity. Social scientists would agree that the movement of people throughout the world for reasons such as temporary labor, political unrest, religious freedom and various others all make bilingualism a necessary tool of communication. Kenji Hakuta writes, in *Mirror of Language; The Debate on Bilingualism*, "it is not enough to know the English equivalents of words in some other language, but rather it is necessary to understand the thought that is being conveyed."⁵ It is necessary to know what implications words have to a particular culture.

America's desire to remain monolingual is motivated by the same kind of desire that drives many other nations. That desire is to remain culturally pure and language is one way in which the country has tried to achieve that purity. The desire becomes problematic for America simply because it is by virtue of its own policy, a nation of immigrants. There is no cultural purity. True there is a dominant culture, but America lacked cultural purity from its early beginnings.

Historically, the colonies of the young Americas existed under the rule of the British Crown. Northern and western Europeans were early "immigrants" to the region and considered settlers of the new world- if we ignore the fact that a thriving civilization of Native American Indians had already settled here. Putting aside that argument, pre 1776 immigrant colonists helped to shape the idea that immigrants to the new world should be those who were most like themselves- English speaking Europeans who were also law abiding. Those who were likely to disobey the laws of the land, (such that they were at that time) were not welcome by the Quakers of Pennsylvania. A 1792 statute was aimed at protecting residents from potential immigrants who were likely to become "public charges." The story in brief is that the English- speaking were most preferred as

settlers.

There were good reasons for wanting English-speaking individuals. Those same goals are in place today, only they are a bit harder to attain given the influx of non- English speaking immigrants. One goal stemmed from the idea that English-speaking immigrants would be more easily assimilated into the existing culture. The colonists were of the belief that those who did not already speak the language would very soon learn it because it was a necessary tool for their survival . Colonists believed that by learning the language immigrants were pledging their loyalty to America's system of values. It meant that the existing culture would not be disrupted and that all would work toward the same goal of forging a new nation with a new cultural identity- an American culture.

. Here are two opposing viewpoints taken from Education in America. I offer them simply because they appear to have the best interest of the children at heart, although one supports bilingual transition, the other supports English immersion. Both agree, however that English is the medium of political, cultural and social unity.

Rita Esquivel, director of the U.S. Office of Bilingual Education and Language Minority advocates bilingual education because she feels that it is necessary for helping each group appreciate its cultural heritage. Her hope is comprehension and respect for the values transmitted through language. " A new language means learning new values, new customs, adopting new ways of thinking about yourself and about the world around you. Learning a new language gives one the power to enter, literally a new world. Each language we know, according to Esquivel, "allows us access to a worldview, to particular ways of thinking, for a range of feelings, to interpretations of reality unique to that language." 6

Students of bilingual programs receive the better of two worlds. Through their native language, they learn skills of reading, writing, arithmetic and their other subjects while they are being taught English. This method decreases their chances of falling behind their anglophone peers because now they have knowledge of the subject matter, which makes it easier to transfer that information to English.

Rosalie Porter, head of bilingual programs in Newton, Massachusetts counters Esquivel's argument with the idea that students are handicapped by bilingual education and that bilingual education programs fail to prepare language minority students for high school graduation. As for jobs, she points out that educating children in their native language rather than in English severely reduces their opportunities for social and economic advancement. She advocates immersion into English-only classes.

From Porter's position, bilingual education tends to establish a limited English vocabulary and reduced language skills. A student who is taught in two languages will rely on the language that is most familiar and spoken with the greatest ease. As a result, without sensitivity to or capability in the English language, students of bilingual education will have to compete against others who have rich English vocabularies.

While the points made in both arguments are well taken, can we simply ignore the fact that immersing a child into English without an adequate period of transition from his/her native language places the child at an immediate disadvantage? Can we ignore the fact that English-only students are also handicapped because of their acquisition of one language? Because the United States is comprised of multiethnic groups, its languages, as well as its culture would reflect the same. Statistics show that there are students in American schools who speak some 152 different languages other than English. For many, the introduction to a common language - "English" will enhance their ability to communicate with others who also speak a native language different from their own. Perhaps language training should be advocated for all students.

The 1968 Bilingual Education Act was designed to remove barriers to learning. The intent was to provide access to equal education and mastery of English would be the key to that access. According to some, to date, bilingual education programs have not helped children make the transition from their native languages to English. Additionally, students of bilingual programs are segregated from their english-speaking peers at school and alienated from the larger society (with its various languages).

According to others bilingual education that is based on a period of transition is the best method for socializing children and assimilating them into the American culture.

Conclusion

America's belief in democracy is unique among world nations. Its experiment in building a freethinking republic has been realized as a working example. There are still some avenues to be explored and with time and sensitivity to the needs of all humans, regardless of their ethnic origins, the republic will continue to grow and remain a world power. The belief in assimilation that all immigrant groups will fuse with the older population is one worth believing in. We should be working toward that goal today. Supporting bilingual education for immigrant children in public schools would be one step toward that goal.

A Sample lesson Idea:

Lesson 1: Debating the issue

Objective: Students will take a stand for or against funding bilingual programs

Time required: varies

Procedure: (See Guide for Debating)

Read and discuss the information found in the unit. After some initial classroom activities (see Strategies) outline the resolution and have students prepare to take a stand on the issue

Select the teams based on their positions (teacher will make decisions about teams and presentation schedule)

Outline order of speakers with information as to each speaker's purpose.

Each team will need some help in researching their position and in organizing the information. Each will also need some practice time.

Now it is time to hold the debate. Depending on the number of students, you may have more than one debate scheduled, or more than one idea being debated (based on your discretion)

Resolved: Bilingual education should be funded in the public schools.

Bilingual programs only benefit a small minority of students.

America should require all of its legal citizens to speak English.

Discussion Questions

1.0)

Should the public schools pay for limited English speaking children to learn English? Why or Why not?

What are some of the ways that students can be taught English other than in public school classes?

What do you know about living conditions in some of America's poor neighborhoods?

If you were not able to learn how to read and write in English, what are your chances of going to college?

What are your chances of getting a skilled job? What are your chances for providing for a family, in America?

1.1)

Are there any disturbing trends in the timeline? What are they and why do they disturb you?

How did the Naturalization Act affect people of color who wanted to enter the U.S.?

Would you say that the Alien and Sedition Acts were likely applied fairly or were undesirables likely falsely accused?

Are you, in any way affected by the point in America's history wherein non-whites were unable to testify against whites? What was the purpose of that action? Can you see a connection between that action and the idea that non-white immigrants were not welcome to America?

Chinese immigrants were not the only group whose entry had been suspended, other Asian groups were not welcome as well, what do you think has caused a shift in the policy, so that now they are welcome?

How do you see the heightened debate over legal and illegal immigrants? Can you relate that to the increase of Hispanic immigrants to the country?

1.2)

Is California doing its best to educate its Latino population?

If California's school districts are mostly Latinos, should the schools provide bilingual programs for them?

In America, is it fair to concern ourselves with the cost of education or is it more important to concern ourselves with the quality of education?

When will teachers be allowed to teach reading to the children? Will students lag behind if they are not allowed to read until they are fluent English speakers?

2.0)

Are all groups educated in the same way in America?

Is there any difference in funding for inner city schools and suburban schools.

Do the opportunities differ from one school to another?

What factors might account for how ethnic groups are educated versus how non-ethnic groups are educated?

Look it up, Dear! (Vocabulary)

Add more words to this list as the study progresses.

*Immigration, immigrant, migrant, emigrate, refugee, asylum, naturalization, alien, assimilation, visa

Ideas for Independent Thinking Activities;

The ideas that follow lend themselves to number of different skills and interests:

- Do some research to find how many different languages are spoken in the U.S. You might begin by checking your local Chamber of Commerce to find the countries in which those languages are spoken

- Design and create a board game in which immigrants are able to move into mainstream America. Award points for language usage, educational achievement, job qualifications etc..

- * Write an essay, story or one-act play or draw an editorial cartoon depicting immigrants who have chosen to make America their new home. Think of them as newborn babies who have to learn the English language in order to communicate, travel and work in this country. What would be their experiences?

- * It was then in the early American colonies as it is now a natural fear that those who don't speak the language of the dominant society are somehow illiterate. The fear is that these illiterate people will be of little value to an upwardly mobile society . Can you construct an argument for or against the idea that illiteracy hinders a society?

- * Control of language brings about other kinds of control, namely economic, political and social controls. Once the language of a cultural group has been removed, that group is vulnerable to dominance by the group who controls the words. Write a futuristic scenario in which earth people have been invaded by beings from another world. You are forbidden to speak your language. You

are offered no way of learning theirs and language is a guarded secret, because it is their most precious commodity. If you've read some myths in which the secret of fire was guarded by the gods of that particular culture, then you have a good understanding of what kinds of things are done to keep the power or to get it. In this case, your power is that of language.

* Think of what it must be like to be in a place where you don't speak the language of the native culture. Perhaps you have been a similar situation. Let's use for example, African slaves who were brought to America from various parts of the African continent and sold into slavery in various parts of the world other than the U.S.. Not only was there a loss of family members, religion and cultural practices but a loss of language, as well. Because they were placed with other African slaves and slaveholders who spoke some "foreign" language, verbal communication was virtually impossible. What would you have done if you were a member of the dominant culture? Would you offer some formal kind of language training or would you prefer that they remained illiterate?

Scenario Writing

A future scenario uses today's trends to forecast a possible tomorrow. The scenario is no more than a science fiction piece in which the author sets the story in the present time. All of the events must stem from something that is currently happening and is possible for tomorrow.

Some facts that may be pertinent to the scenario:

1. Family reunification, work, freedom and asylum are some of the main reasons for immigration.
2. The top five countries from which immigrants come to the U.S. are Mexico, China, the Philippines, Vietnam and the former Soviet Union.
3. The states with the largest foreign-born population are California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Texas.
4. Refugees come from the former Soviet Union, Laos, Haiti, Vietnam, Cuba, Ethiopia, Iran, Somalia and Liberia.

Timeline of Immigration Policies

As we follow some of policy and practices of American Immigration, the pattern reflects an obvious desire to exclude non-European and non-English speaking groups. From this we might better understand the current debate over bilingual education.

1607 One hundred English- speaking settlers imported

1790 Naturalization Act (first of series)

Provided citizenship to any "Free White Person" who resided for two years in the U.S. and for one year in the state in which he sought admission.

Racial and patriarchal features helped define components of American National Citizenship.

1799 Alien and Sedition Acts passed

*Naturalization Act - required fourteen years of U.S. residency before becoming a citizen.

*Alien Act empowered the President to deport any foreigner who was regarded as a threat to the U.S.

*Alien Enemy Act - empowered the president to detain enemy aliens in times of war.

*Sedition Act -penalized scandalous publications against government

1800 Alien & Sedition Acts repealed.

1820-1860 German States and Ireland supply most of America's immigrants

1849 Blacks and Indians were prohibited from testifying against Whites.

1851 Chinese were prohibited from testifying against Whites.

1860s Coerced immigration of African slaves was prohibited. *

1864-68 Immigration stimulated by authorizing employers to pay for passage and bind the services of migrants.

1870 European-born workers lead the protest against Chinese influx [until this time, new immigrants were people of Northern European background]

1881 Suspended entry of Chinese laborers for 10 years.

1890 Southern & Eastern European immigrants accepted

1921, 1924, 1929 National Origins Quota System laws enacted

1965 Numerical restrictions, 20,000 per country regardless of population

Immigration and Reform Act - limited number of undocumented workers to U.S. IRCA legalized two million illegals Regulated employer sanctions. U.S. Immigration grants legal status to 20,000 residents

1986 residents permitted to stay and work on immigrant Visas (Since 1965, system of preference based on 1) family relationships (primary) 2) special skills needed (domestic market, native pop don't supply) 3)born in U.S. - automatic citizen

Naturalization/citizenship was based a working knowledge of English American history and Government.

1990 Increase the nations' immigration quotas

1996 Debate heightened over legal v. illegal immigration. Call for restrictions. Welfare Reform Act and Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act

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2. Cafferty, San Juan Pastora " The Language Question: The Dilemma of Bilingual Education for Hispanic Americans".p109
3. Hakuta , Kenji. Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism. New York, p200.
4. Hakuta, Kenji . p235
5. Hakuta , Kenji. P
6. Cozic, Charles P. Education in America. P171,

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This book is useful in helping to unlock some of the mysteries often held about the cultures of other ethnic groups. It promotes the spirit of diversity and invites thoughts on the idea of seeing the planet as a global village.

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A discussion of social issues which centers around the contributions and concerns of immigrants to America.

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One book in a series of publications called "Opposing Viewpoints" relating subjects of social controversy in the society.

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Potter, Robert. *Myths and Folk Tales Around the World*. Englewood Cliffs, Globe Book Company, 1987.

A compilation of stories designed primarily for classroom use in the teaching of reading. It begins with stories from Greece and Rome, then proceeds through Northern Europe, The Middle and Far East, Africa and ends with tales from the Americas. It's a useful tool in finding stories that feature various cultures.

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