



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1999 Volume III: Immigration and American Life

America's Future Culture

Guide for Curriculum Unit 99.03.10
by Carolyn S. Williams

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 is 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.

(Recommended for Social Studies, grade 7.)

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