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**Unit of Study: Immigration and Home**

**Rationale:**

From as early as mankind exists, people travel and relocate where they live, be it alone or with their loved ones. Relocating permanently most often comes with consequences: financial struggles, separation from family, alienation from one’s culture, assimilation, reshaping one’s identity, generational immigrant status, psychological distress, and many other cons. Naturally, there are those with more positive experiences due to financial stability and/or other factors, but it is likely that even they sacrifice and deprive themselves from certain comforts or happiness to pursue a better life. But what defines a better life? There are likely as many answers as there are people, but if we take all the answers from the beginning of mankind to today, some of the key components in every answer remains largely the same; for example, home in all likelihood will always persist as one of the primary factors that create this better life. Then the next question arises: what is home? This is the one question that this unit will address and examine the intersectionality of physical environment, psychological well-being, familial circumstances, politics, culture, societal disputes, and other factors that shape the concept of home through the stories of immigrants. The takeaway of this unit, to which I would dedicate 6 weeks, is to familiarize students with different perspectives about why people immigrate and how tightly knit the aforementioned aspects are in creating a better life and home.

Before diving into the aspects that shape our lives and homes, students will explore 25 homes from around the globe presented in the website *Stacker.* The purpose of presenting these different homes from different places is to familiarize students with the diverse living conditions. The images will be presented without revealing the country they come from in order to avoid racial, cultural, and societal conflicts in the classroom. The class will discuss, based on observations, what the potential discomforts might be from each image’s home, including finances, social status, politics, and so on. Afterward, the second discussion will include the individual and familial perspectives: where do we fit living individuals within these images, if at all? Some of the places are cramped with no space even for a single individual to live comfortably, let alone an entire family of two, three, or more generations. This will establish the foundation for the students that home is largely a physical space that provides the necessary means for survival and ideally, comfort as well.

Alternatively, home can be viewed to be a person or family; indeed, many have argued that home is where family resides. However, without the aforementioned necessities for survival, neither an individual nor family can exist. For example, living in the desert or at the North Pole without access to food or water is self-explanatory; likewise, political turbulence such as wars make living in some situations impossible for many residents of the involved countries. Therefore, the two “polarized” understandings of home are in fact intertwined. If one defines home as a person, they would want the best for their cherished person; indeed, this “best” is provided by one’s physical surroundings and therefore, one aims to establish a physical home that secures survival, growth, and happiness. One of the best examples serves the play *The Tempest* by Shakespeare where Prospero and Miranda, father and daughter flee to a small island as means of survival, but Prospero acknowledges the limitations of living such a life and that better circumstances are available elsewhere. I chose this play because it is often analyzed from a colonialist, racist, feminist, and many other perspectives but rarely, if at all, from the standpoint of an “immigrant” father who seeks to secure a better life for himself and his daughter. Furthermore, this is an excellent opportunity for students to discuss similarities and differences between immigration during the Elizabethan era and today, especially in regard to refugees who leave their countries due to political reasons. It is my hope that the students will learn more about how many factors influence their well-being, to what degree individuals are in control, how the times have changed our perspectives and understandings of immigration, and what we could do as individuals to better our livelihood.

**Unit Breakdown:**

**Week 1:** Introducing immigration as a phenomenon historically and its shape in the contemporary world.

1. First day of the week, the class will be introduced to and discuss the phenomenon known as immigration and attempt to track its roots logically and the reasons behind it.

– The students will work in small groups and brainstorm how far back immigration first occurred.

– Afterward, the students will create a list of all the reasons they can think of that may cause immigration (also known as geographical relocation).

2. The second day, the class will begin with a short YouTube video showing an animated map of prehistoric human migration.

– The class will be tasked to brainstorm ideas of why humans, over 80,000 years ago, would move from one place to another; HINT: how frequently did they move?

3. The third day, the class will transition to the contemporary world and discuss similarities and differences of relocation back then and today. The key takeaway is to grasp the universal pattern.

– The students will be presented with 25 images of homes from around the world. The task will be to analyze them and brainstorm ideas of why one might consider to relocate from each home.

4. The fourth and fifth day will focus on how literature captures the human necessities in life that establish a comfortable physical and psychological home by watching a contemporary version of *The Tempest*.

– The class will be tasked to write a short 1-2 page essay about the characters’ physical appearance and psychological state throughout the play. Afterward, they will compare the changes, if any, from at the beginning and at the end of the play. Also, the students will be asked to briefly explain how these changes happened and what affected them.

**Week 2:** Begin reading *The Tempest*. Cover Act 1 from the play and focus on the introduction of all the characters’ dynamics. Read on average 200 lines of the play per day. From Act 1, discuss the power hierarchy in class after reading:

– Prospero and Miranda’s “immigrant” status.

– Alonso and his crew as “the second wave of immigrants.”

– Caliban, Sycorax, and Ariel as “natives” of the island.

– Assessment: In 300 words, summarize what aspects contribute to the power dynamics. In other words, what makes Prospero the ruler of the land and why everyone else falls under the ruler in status?

**Week 3:** Begin and finish Act 2 and 3 of *The Tempest*. Read on average 250 lines of the play per day. Introduce allegory as a literary device and how the characters’ circumstances can be interpreted from modern lenses in regard to immigration. This week, focus on minor characters and how they operate within the play.

– Discuss Miranda’s status and circumstances as a child of an “immigrant” parent.

– Analyze the tension between Caliban and the two newcomers to the island: Trinculo and Stephano. Focus on the perspective of immigrants versus natives.

– Examine Ferdinand and Miranda’s romance. Focus on how they plan on prospering as “immigrants.”

– Assessment: A short multiple-choice quiz, 10~20 questions that tests students’ comprehension of the text and their goals as “immigrants.”

**Week 4:** Begin and finish Act 4 in the first 3 days of the week. Focus on Miranda and Ferdinand’s marriage, and Caliban’s plottings. The last 2 days of the week, read poems from *A Child’s Garden of Verses*.

– Discuss the benefits of Miranda and Ferdinand’s marriage; who and what do each party gain from the marriage? Also, analyze how power dynamics shift in this particular scene.

– Close read the spirits’ wishes for the couple and what they reveal about people’s general well-being and home.

– Caliban’s conspiracies ultimately fail and are discarded almost as a joke. Explore Caliban’s necessities to live a comfortable life and what he fights for.

– The final two days of the week, read a few poems from *A Child’s Garden of Verses* to illustrate the basic needs of humanity from children’s perspective. Connect the poems to Caliban, Miranda, Ferdinand, and Ariel who could arguably be seen as the children of the play and their views of a happy life and home.

**Week 5**: Read and finish the last Act 5 of the play. Consider the ambiguity and conventionality of the play’s ending. Then, hypothesize the outcome for each character if they were real humans.

– Utilize in the lesson COVID-19’s shut down and the freedoms that humanity has been deprived of during the pandemic.

– Considering that *The Tempest* was written in 17th century, debate whether this impacts the play’s resolution and how it might have been different if it was written today. Take into consideration capitalism, politics, and other aspects of our contemporary world.

**Beyond the Unit: Week 6**

Students will be assigned young adult short graphic novels that deal with immigration and the exploration of what defines home. The task will be to break down into groups of two or three, read the graphic novel of each group’s choice in class during the first 3 days, and in 500 words to explain/summarize one, two, or all three of the following questions:

1. The character or characters’ understanding of what home means.

2. The character or characters’ motivations and reasons to relocate.

3. How family plays a role, if at all, in the character or characters’ lives and decision making.

The young adult short graphic novels that the students will be choosing from:

1. *Illegal* by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin.

– This book follows the story of Ebo, a young 12-year old boy from Ghana who leaves his small village and travels all the way to Europe in hopes of reuniting with his brother and sister. The story explores themes of poverty, undocumented immigration, survival, home, and familial turbulence.

2. *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi.

– This book is an autobiography that follows a young girl’s story from the age of six to fourteen from Iran who is caught in the midst of political turbulence and war. As a result of the two, the protagonist flees to Austria by herself, leaving her parents behind in Iran in pursuit of education and better life.

3. *Catherine’s War* by Julia Billet.

– This book’s protagonist, a young girl who loves photography, finds herself in a world of danger during World War 2 due to her Jewish identity and missing parents. In order to survive, she changes her name and begins to move from place to place within France.

4. *Manuelito* by Elisa Amado.

– This book captures the story of a thirteen-year-old boy from Guatemala, Manuelito, whose future appears dim due to the country’s war on drugs. His parents foresee this appalling future for him if he continues to residue in Guatemala; therefore, they sent him to live with his aunt in America in hopes of living a better life.

5. *Everything Is Beautiful, and I’m Not Afraid* by Yao Xiao.

– This book explores the life of a China-born queer protagonist who searches for their belonging as an immigrant in America.

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