



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
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## **Using Stories and Film in the English Language Learner Classroom to Teach Immigration History**

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Immigration is a hotly debated topic in the United States, the "melting pot." It is reported in the media and discussed in legislatures and on street corners. In classrooms teachers fret about how to teach the newest immigrants. English Language Learners are a major component in the American classroom.

There is a developing area of pedagogy that makes content and language accessible to English Language Learners. This curriculum unit includes five lesson plans that are interdisciplinary and that include hands on, visual activities. Cinema and stories are powerful tools with which students can identify and learn. Along with mapping exercises and graphic organizers, they can be transferred to other content topics.

The curriculum unit also addresses equity, social justice, and accountability, for all children have the right to a rewarding education that prepares them for college and/or career. It addresses the achievement gap that leaves many students behind. A well educated populace is critical to the progress of our nation. Equity should be the third prong of content and pedagogy, though it is beyond the standards.

(Developed for History and Social Studies, grades 10-11, and Spanish Primary Language Arts, grade 9; recommended for History and Social Studies and Spanish Primary Language Arts, Middle and High School grades)

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