



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2026 Volume III: Asian American History and the Making of the U.S. Immigration System

Oral Histories and Stories of Immigration

Guide for Curriculum Unit 26.03.04, published September 2026

by Wendy Dane

This unit on the history of Asian immigration to the U.S. offers students a clear lens through which to understand how past immigration policies and citizenship laws directly shape our modern system. By examining discriminatory practices, landmark court cases, and evolving laws from 1790 to the present day, students will uncover the systemic factors that have historically biased the path to American citizenship and its social, economic, and political impacts.

To make this complex history vivid and accessible, the curriculum integrates historical maps, primary sources, interactive vocabulary and evidence-based exercises. The unit culminates in a personal oral history assignment where students conduct an interview to uncover their own family's migration story – empowering them to directly answer the fundamental questions: *Why am I here, and how did I get here?*

(Developed for English, grade 10; recommended for English and History, grades 9-11)

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