A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

FOCUS QUESTIONS
1. What were the push and pull factors of Irish immigration?
2. How did Irish immigrants come to the United States?
3. What did Irish immigrants face when they got to the United States?

DOCUMENTS
B: “Here and There; or Emigration a Remedy” “Punch,” July 15, 1848
C: William Smith, “An Emigrant’s Narrative; or a Voice from the Steerage” (New York: W. Smith, 1850)
D: Passengers’ Contract Ticket
F: Political Cartoon: The American River Ganges
G: Examiner’s questions for admittance to the American Party (Know-Nothings) July 7, 1854: http://memory.loc.gov/mss/mcc/062/0001.jpg

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES
Irish American Solidarity
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/irish_am_solidarity.cfm

Destination America: When did they come? Immigration map with information on the Famine.
http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/usim WN_noflash.html

Big Apple History
http://pbskids.org/bigapplehistory/immigration/topic2.html (click on video link)
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

INTRODUCTION

Hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrants came to America in the 1840s and 1850s to escape a famine in their homeland that claimed almost one and a half million lives. The famine was caused by a disease that destroyed the potato crop, which was Ireland’s main source of food at the time. The British, who had ruled Ireland for centuries, made the situation worse by failing to send adequate aid. Furthermore, the Irish rented their land from English landlords, who evicted hundreds of thousands of them when they were unable to pay the rent. Homeless and weakened from hunger, many fell ill with “famine fever.” The ships that carried the Irish immigrants were sometimes called “coffin ships,” because so many of them died on the journey. Between 1845 and 1860, almost half the population of Ireland either died or emigrated.

For detailed information on the famine go to:
http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/index.html

I. Why did people leave Ireland and come to the United States?

A. Class activity/discussion questions: Read Documents A and B. The teachers should make a list on the board of push factors and pull factors
   1. What were factors pushing the Irish to leave Ireland?
   2. What were factors pulling the Irish to America?
   3. What was the relationship between England and Ireland?
   4. According to the cartoon from the illustrated London News, what were the effects of the famine on the Village of Killard? (The Famine had ravaged Ireland for three years when this cartoon was drawn).

B. Questions for group discussion
   Political cartoon “Here and There; or Emigration a Remedy” from Punch, July 15, 1848
   1. How does the cartoon portray “Here”?
   2. How does the cartoon portray “There”? 
   3. Is the cartoon advocating a position or action? If so, what is it advocating?
   4. Considered with the previous document, to what extent would this cartoon convince you to leave Ireland for America?
   5. Ireland was a colony of Great Britain, which prevented the Irish from owning land, practicing their religion, voting, speaking their language or governing themselves. Both cartoons came from British sources. How might that affect the viewpoints of the artists?

HOMEWORK/EXTENSION ACTIVITY: In his letter to his cousin John Curtis, William Dunne says, “I would like to go out to the land of Liberty where you are now and I hope with the help of God I will soon be there my dear cousin.” With all of the information you know about Irish immigration, write a response letter back to William Dunne from John Curtis about what he can expect when he gets to the United States.
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

II. What conditions did the Irish face coming from Ireland to the United States? See Documents C, D and E.

**PROCEDURE:** Ask students if they have ever taken a long trip or immigrated to another country. Have them write down the things they packed and how they felt during the trip. What did they do and how did they feel in the car, the boat or the airplane? How long did they travel before they arrived at their destination?

Alternatively, ask students if any of them have ever moved and to where. Have them describe the moving process. How long did it take to pack up? How did they feel about the move? How long did it take to get from the old residence to the new residence? (In both cases, discover if there are students who have moved or traveled from a different country to the United States. Ask them to tell their stories. If there are students who traveled from a different country (or state), use map to show the point of origin.)

Using either scenario, ask students how they would feel if they were only allowed to take one suitcase with them? What type of things would they take in the suitcase? Write responses on the board.

Segue into reading William Smith’s “An Emigrant’s Narrative; or a Voice from the Steerage” (Document C) by reminding students that immigrants have been traveling to the United States for hundreds of years. Underline the problems Smith faced on his long trip from Ireland to the United States during the Famine.

**Discussion questions (Documents C)**
1. How long did William Smith’s journey from Ireland to the United States last? What effect would this have on the passengers on the ship?
2. What problems did William Smith have to deal with during his voyage?
3. Which was the worst problem the people on the ship had to endure? Discuss.
4. Smith writes of shortages of food and water. Why do you think the owner of the ship did not provide adequate food and water?
5. If a person were planning to emigrate from Ireland in 1850, what do you think the effect of reading this narrative would have on his or her decision?

**Discussion questions (Documents D)**
1. What was the date of Samuel Farrell’s trip and where was he going?
2. Look at the Passengers Contract Ticket and find the section of the ticket that lists the food provided to each passenger. (These minimum rations were required by law in 1849.) Based on William Smith’s journey, why was this legislation required?

See http://www.theshipslist.com/Forms/passengeract1849.htm for the regulations regarding immigration from Britain, passed during the Famine.
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

PROCEDURE: Cut out and distribute the individual ads from The Catholic Herald’s “Information Wanted” ads; have each student read their ad aloud.

Discussion questions (Document E)
1. What do these ads say about the Irish immigrant experience?
2. Based on these ads, what was the level of communication between Irish immigrants and their families? Discuss.
3. Why do you think these ads were in The Catholic Herald?
4. Make a list of family members seeking the information and who is being sought (e.g., wife, brother, sister)
5. Why do you think that some of those seeking information ask that answers be sent to priests?

EXTENSION/ARTISTIC ACTIVITY
Passengers’ Contract Ticket

PROCEDURE: Distribute to each student a blank “Passengers’ Contract Ticket,” based on Document D. Students will work in groups and fill out the contract ticket. They will plan an imaginary trip by ship to a place of their choice. Students will also decide on a name of their ship as well as the cost of the trip. They will decide what types of food they will take (this will be dependent on how far they travel). After each group fills out its ticket, a reporter from the group will share with the class their ship name, destination and the food they took. Students can then draw a poster for the shipping company promoting the idea of immigrating to the United States.

After creating their own tickets, the teacher will ask the students why tickets are necessary when taking a trip. Ask for their thoughts about including food information on the ticket.

III. What did Irish immigrants face when they got to the United States? (Documents F, G, H)

A. Class activity
Have students work in groups to fill out the political cartoon Document Analysis Worksheet for “The Harpers” cartoon (Document F) and the Puck cartoon (Document H). http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet.pdf

To learn more about “The American River Ganges” cartoon, go to Harper’s Weekly: http://www.harpweek.com/09Cartoon/BrowseByDateCartoon.asp?Month=May&cDate=8

1. From whom is the man trying to protect the children and who do the crocodiles represent?
2. Why is it called the River Ganges?
3. Describe the building with the flag in the middle of the cartoon and does it really look like it’s falling down?
4. Tammany Hall as seen in the building in the back of the cartoon was the political machine that dominated New York City politics in 1871. Its base of support was Irish-Americans. How does that relate to the anti-Catholic nature of the cartoon?
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS


Teachers should give background information on the American Party, also known as the Know-Nothing Party. See: http://ap.grolier.com/article?assetid=0233110-00&templatename=/art for more information.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER
1. Why was the American Party called the Know-Nothings?
2. Why do you think the Know-Nothings became popular in the early 1850s?
3. How would Irish immigration have increased the popularity of the Know-Nothings?
4. Why do you think the American Party wanted to exclude all foreign-born from elected office? What might they have been afraid of?

HOMEWORK
1. Compare anti-immigrant attitudes today to anti-Irish sentiments in the 1850s.
2. Famines are a recurring catastrophe in many parts of the world. Research a recent famine (i.e., North Korea, Darfur, Niger and Ethiopia). Why did it occur? How did people respond to the famine? Were people able to emigrate? Are there similarities to the Irish famine?
ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

Letter from William Dunne to John Curtis

Belfast Ireland April 2nd 1851 AD

My Dear Cousin John,

. . . I would like to go out to the land of Liberty where you now are and I hope with the help of god I will soon be there my dear Cousin as I never had the pleasure of seeing you or my aunt or cousins I still have the same feeling for you and all of yous as if you and I had spent our childhood together when I look over at my aunts dear letters it reminds me of when you were all at home we never get any letters from that part now my cousin Hanna never wrote to my da since she went out to youss he expected you would have wrote let who like not write Dear cousin there is great changes in Ireland a present and in England on a account of our religion [Catholicism] the Pope sent a Cardinal to England and one to Ireland the [English] government is striving to put down our religion but it is to strong to be touched they cannot do us any harm and the are going to put penal laws on our Bishops and fine them for everything they call themselves by the name of Bishop in @ L100 they also want to break the emancipation that was so long struggled for but it is past there power to do so; the great and the small are rising out against the prime minister Lord John Russel and they are burning his Effigy they mean to gain their liberty without his leave there is no such work in America – there was a synod in munster last year and all the Bishops of Ireland attended it was held in Thurles three weekes they marched in publick procession through the streets to the cathedral My dear Cousin I would with when you get this letter you would write an answer and let us know how yous all are and how all my aunts and my uncle Timothy is and if the be all living and well I hope the are with the help of god my da send you letters by several persons that was going out toe philedelphia but we never received any answer whithe they found you or not and he send one to my uncle Timothy . . .

Dear Cousin this poor Island is in poverty there is nothing going to keep it up only hunger and hardship which with everyone you might come over again summer and see the exhibition that is going to be in London for all nations if I thought you would come over with the rest of your fellow country men I would gladly go and meet you My Dear Cousin when you do get this do not delay but write as soon as this comes to hand I now conclude with my father mother Brother and sisters and my self joining in one and sending you all our kind Love and Blessings may the Blessings of god desend upon you and all my aunts uncles and Cousins,

No more from your ever dear Cousin

Mr Dunne junior till death –

You can direct your letters William Dunne. 35. Friendly Street Belfast [Ireland]

http://www.hsp.org/default.aspx?id=578
From the Historical Society of Pennsylvania
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

“Here and There; or Emigration a Remedy”
*Punch Magazine*, July 15, 1848

“Here and There; or Emigration a Remedy”

“Here”

“There”

“The Village of Killard,” c. 1850
*Illustrated London News*

http://adminstaff.vassar.edu/sttaylor/FAMINE/ILN/Condition/Killard.gif
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

Excerpt from, “An Emigrant’s Narrative; or a Voice from the Steerage” by William Smith
(New York: W. Smith, 1850)

The day advertised for sailing was the 12th of [November 1847], but in consequence of not having got in the cargo, which consisted of pig iron and earthen-ware, we were detained ten days...and one day to stop a leak.... The immigrants...having left Ireland a week, some a fortnight, before the day fixed for sailing, this detention of eleven days was severely felt by those poor creatures, many of them having consumed half of their provisions, without the means of obtaining more.... On Friday, November 26, 1847, we set sail....

[A] storm commenced [...]; it rained so heavily the whole day we could not make a fire on deck to cook our victuals with....

About midnight, a number of boxes and barrels broke loose...breaking the water cans and destroying everything capable of being destroyed by them.... In a few minutes the boxes and barrels broke to atoms, scattering the contents in all directions — tea, coffee, sugar, potatoes, pork, shorts, trowsers, vests, coats, handkerchiefs &c., &c. were mingled in one confused mass. The cries of the women and children was heart-rending; some praying, others weeping bitterly, as they saw their provisions and clothes (the only property they possessed) destroyed. The passengers being sea sick, were vomiting in all parts of the vessel....

We had been at sea four weeks.... I felt sure...that however good the motives were which induced the captain to take a southerly passage, that the dreadful scourge, the ship fever, (which was already on board our ship) would be increased by it; an opinion...verified by the number of cases and deaths increasing....

Most of those who died of ship-fever were delirious, some a day, others only a few hours previous to death....

When we had been at sea a month, the steward discovered the four hogsheads [for water], by oversight or neglect, had not been [filled]. On the following morning...our water was reduced from two quarts to one quart per day for an adult and one pint for a child.... My provisions were consumed, and I had nothing but ship allowance to subsist upon, which was scarcely sufficient to keep us from perishing, being only a bound of sea-biscuit (full of maggots) and a pint of water.... I was seized with the ship-fever; at first I was so dizzy that I could not walk without danger of falling; I was suffering from a violent pain in my head, my brains felt as if they were on fire, my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth and my lips were parched with excessive thirst....

This disastrous voyage...[came] to an end, after an absence of exactly weeks from the shores of my native land, (the day we arrived at Staten Island being Friday, the 21st of January, 1848). My whole lifetime did not seem so long as the last two months appeared to me....
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

Passengers' Contract Ticket — From Liverpool to New York
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

The Catholic Herald

July 25, 1833: Information Wanted. Of James Hacket, who emigrated from County Cork, Ireland, about eight years since. Since his arrival in this country, he was said to have resided principally in this city. Any information concerning him will be thankfully received by a distressed sister, who has lately come to this country in search of him. Address Miss Hacket, care of the Editor of the Catholic Herald, Philadelphia.

Jan. 30, 1834: Information Wanted. Of James Healy, a native of Lestimore Co. Tyrone, who left Ireland about 18 months ago for New Brunswick. His mother is now in this city, and is anxious to see him. When last heard of he had departed from Philadelphia for the State of New York. Any information respecting him may be left at this office.

March 6, 1834: Information Wanted. Of Thomas Smyth, a native of the Parish of Banagha, Londonderry county, Ireland -- who emigrated to this country in the year 1823. The last account from him was about five years ago; he then lived at No. 24 Essence street, New York. Any information respecting him will be thankfully received by his sister, Matilda Ann Smyth, or D. Fitzpatrick, Peru, Clinton Co., New York. The New York Truth Teller is requested to give the above an insertion.

Nov, 6, 1834: Information Wanted. Of James King from the city of Limerick but lately residing in Cork. He arrived in America about sixteen or seventeen years ago, and resided some time in Philadelphia. Any information respecting him will be thankfully received by his son lately arrived in Philadelphia addressed to the Office of the Catholic Herald of said city.

May 7, 1835: Information wanted. Of John Smith, who emigrated to this country from the county of Kess, Ireland, about 8 years ago. His wife who is at present in this city, has not heard from him since the latter end of July, when he left her at Carbondale in this state.

April 7, 1836: Information Wanted: Of Con. Cox, from the County of Leitrim, Ireland. He was a contractor on the Washington rail-road, near Baltimore last summer. Any information of his present residence will be thankfully received by his niece Mary Golding, at No. 28 South Water street, Philadelphia.

Sept. 22, 1836: Information Wanted: Of Terence Gray, of County Cavan, Ireland, who came from New York last Fall, to this city, but it is supposed he went into the interior of the State of Pennsylvania. Any information of him will be thankfully received by post or otherwise by his wife. Mary Gray, No. 29 Mulberry Alley, Phila.
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

Information Wanted: Of Nancy McGonegal, a girl of 14 years of age. She is said to have left her native place, Ballymagrath, in the County of Donegal, Ireland, about three monts ago, with the intention of emigrating to some part of North America, probably St. Johns, New Brunswick. Any information respecting her, directed to Rev. P. Reilly, Wilmington, Delaware, will be thankfully received by her mother Mary Doherty.

Jan. 9, 1840: Information Wanted: Of Timothy Hogan, a native of Tipperary, Ireland. He left Philadelphia about three years since, where his wife is still living; when last heard of, about last June 12 months, he was in Easton, and is supposed to have gone to Indiana. Any knowledge regarding him will be thankfully received by his wife - if addressed to the Editor of this paper.

Jan. 23, 1840: Information Wanted: Of Mary Langan, late Gunnelly. She sailed from Sligo in June, 1834, in the ship Old Countryman, Capt. Douglass. Any information respecting her will be thankfully received by her husband, James Langan, Carbondale, Luzerne Co., Pa.

Feb. 11, 1841: Information Wanted - Of Martin O’Neil, who left his residence at Julian Furnace, near Bellefonte, on the 29th November last, since when he has not been heard from by his family. Any information of him will relieve his distressed wife, in Bellefonte, Centre Co., Pa.

April 22, 1841: Information Wanted - Of James, son of Patrick O’Neil who left his father at the Black Rock Tunnel, in the year 1837 - then about 15 years old. Any intelligence of him will be thankfully received by letter addressed to Rev. H. Fitsirnons, Carbondale, Luzerne Co., Pa.

Of William Condron, when last heard of by his brother, James, he worked at the tunnel on the Genesee Canal, in New York State. He is supposed to have gone to Pittsburg. Should this meet his eye, he will please to write to his brother James, Carbondale, Luzerne Co., Pa. as he feels very desirous of hearing from him.

May 20, 1841: Information Wanted - Of John Early of the County Mayo, Ireland. Any person knowing any thing of the said John Early, will oblige his destressed wife by sending information to the office of this paper or to the Clergy of St. John’s Church, 13th St., Phila.

July 18, 1844: Information Wanted - of Patrick Lynch, a native of the Parish of Kilberry, County Meath, Ireland. He was in Carthage, N. Y. about a year ago, which place he left for Philadelphia. His wife, Jane Lynch, has arrived in Philadelphia and stops at the house of his nephew, Christopher Nevin, Pearl Street above 13th st., where she would be glad to hear from him.

June 11, 1846: Information Wanted of Thomas Ready, a native of Co. Limerick, Ireland, who came to this city from New York, about seven weeks ago, and went to Pottsville. His wife and four children are now in this city, without means of subsistence. Any information of him will be thankfully received at No. 10 Spruce St.

Historical Society of Pennsylvania
http://www.hsp.org/default.aspx?id=579
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

Examiner’s questions for admittance to the American (Know-Nothing) Party, July, 1854
Newburg, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania

Examiner’s Duty

Examiner to Candidate. Are you a candidate for membership to our order? (I am)

You will place your right hand on this holy Emblem.

Obligation. You do solemnly promise declare and swear upon that sacred and Holy Emblems before Almighty God, and these witnesses, that you will not divulge or make known to any person whatever, the nature of the questions I may ask you here, the names of the persons you may see here or that you know that such an organization going on as such, whether you become a member of our organization or not!

Will you promise me this? (I will)

And that you will true and faithful answers give to all the questions I may ask you, (So help you God.)

Are you by religious faith a Roman Catholic? (I am not.)

Were you born into this country? (I was)

Were either of your parents? Any of your grandparents? Were any of your ancestors in this country during the Revolutionary War?

If so, when:

Are you willing to use your influences to elect to all offices of Honor, Profit, or Trust, none but native born citizens of America, of this country to the exclusion of all Foreigners, and to all Roman Catholics, whether he be of native or Foreign Birth, regardless of all party predilections whatever!

(Answer I am.)
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

“The American River Ganges: The Priests and the Children”
Harper’s Weekly, September 30, 1871
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

ARRIVAL
The Irish Come to America

“Our Self Made ‘Cooks’ – From Paupers to Potentates”
by Frank Opper, Puck Magazine
January 30, 1881
A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

DISCOVERING HISTORY IN TODAY’S NEW YORK TIMES

1. Immigrants encountered severe hardships traveling to America, as evidenced by the documents in this lesson’s packet. Present day visitors to America usually must obtain a visa requiring specific information about the purpose of the visit, the itinerary of the visitor and contact information. Research the U.S. government Web site at: http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_html to learn about visa requirements. What additional questions might be posed to the visitor? Would William Smith (Document C in your packet) be able to complete this form? Over several days, search articles and/or photographs in The New York Times that present information on entry into this or any other country. (Immigrants attempt entry into other countries due to natural disasters, wars, famine or other difficult conditions.) Discuss the articles you selected with the class.

2. On Mondays, the Community Affairs department of The New York Times runs “This Week in the Community” in the New York section. Review the offerings and comment on the variety, diversity and intermingling of cultures listed in this calendar of events. Does the list offer any surprises? Would a list such as this have been possible in the 1850s? Why or why not? Examples of events listed during the last week of May 2008: a professor of Afro-American Studies and an editorial writer for The New York Times will hold a discussion on the career of a woman who led “the nation’s first campaign against lynching”; Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks will present a performance that is part of the Mississippi Delta Heritage Project; Turkish state artist and pianist Meral Guneyman will present a recital dedicated to the works of Ilhan Mimaroglu; a performance by the Chen Dance Theater; and in Brooklyn, story time for children in English and Spanish. These are only a few of the many happenings in the city.

3. The Irish came to America in the 1840s and 1850s to escape the potato famine. Famine is a blight on civilization to this day. Many organizations and community groups offer aid not only to impoverished countries, but to families and individuals in America who suffer from malnutrition. Find three articles in The New York Times that relate to shortages of food and the efforts made by agencies and people who volunteer to relieve the devastation of famine and malnutrition worldwide.