

Timeline Activity: U.S. Immigration History

Description:

This lesson uses key information from the exhibit timeline to address the history of the U.S. Immigration policy. Students work together as a class to build a timeline of events. Each card includes an event from the exhibit, as well as the date it occurred. Building this timeline allows students to understand *how* and *why* the U.S. responded to the Holocaust—particularly in relation to the events of WWII and the rise of totalitarianism in Europe. It demonstrates how isolation and human rights violations in the Nazi-occupied territories occurred incrementally, across time and place.

Objectives:

1. Students will investigate the progression of U.S. Immigration history to understand the steps taken against the Jews and whether possible intervention could have saved lives or had some other positive effect.

TEKS:

US History:

(7) History. The student understands the domestic and international impact of U.S. participation in World War II. The student is expected to:

(A) identify reasons for U.S. involvement in World War II, including the aggression of Italian, German, and Japanese dictatorships, especially the attack on Pearl Harbor;

(C) analyze major issues of World War II, including the Holocaust, the internment of Japanese Americans as a result of Executive Order 9066, and the development of atomic weapons;

(D) analyze major military events of World War II, including fighting the war on multiple fronts, the Bataan Death March, the U.S. military advancement through the Pacific Islands, the Battle of Midway, the invasion of Normandy, and the liberation of concentration camps;

(28) Social studies skills. The student understands how historians use historiography to interpret the past and applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology. The student is expected to:

(A) analyze primary and secondary sources such as maps, graphs, speeches, political cartoons, and artifacts to acquire information to answer historical questions;

- (B) analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing and contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations, making predictions, drawing inferences, and drawing conclusions;
- (29) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:
 - (A) create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information using effective communication skills, including proper citations and avoiding plagiarism; and
 - (B) use social studies terminology correctly.

World History:

- (12) History. The student understands the causes and impact of World War II. The student is expected to:
 - (A) describe the emergence and characteristics of totalitarianism;
 - (B) explain the roles of various world leaders, including Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, Hideki Tojo, Joseph Stalin, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill, prior to and during World War II; and
 - (C) explain the major causes and events of World War II, including the German invasions of Poland and the Soviet Union, the Holocaust, the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Normandy landings, and the dropping of the atomic bombs.
- (21) Citizenship. The student understands the historical development of significant legal and political concepts related to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The student is expected to:
 - (D) identify examples of genocide, including the Holocaust and genocide in Armenia, the Balkans, Rwanda, and Darfur;
- (28) Social studies skills. The student understands how historians use historiography to interpret the past and applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology. The student is expected to:
 - (E) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, drawing inferences and conclusions, and developing connections between historical events over time;
 - (F) construct a thesis on a social studies issue or event supported by evidence.
- (30) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.
 - (A) use social studies terminology correctly;

- (B) use effective written communication skills, including proper citations and avoiding plagiarism;
- (C) interpret and create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.

Essential Questions:

How did U.S. Immigration history impact the response to the Holocaust?
Why didn't the Jewish people leave Europe during the Holocaust?

Materials:

Note: All documents are included in this lesson for use in the classroom.

- Tape
- Timeline Cards
 - o Years, 1933 – 1945
 - o U.S. Immigration Events
- 8x11 Cardstock or Paper for student-made timeline cards
- Markers or colored pencils
 - o [Digital Timeline of the Holocaust](#)

Preparation:

1. Access the digital Timeline of the Holocaust and select events between 1933-45 for this activity. You can assign events to pairs or small student groups. The number of events you select will vary.
2. Print out all year cards and timeline cards. If possible, consider printing the U.S. Immigration Event cards on color paper to differentiate them from the Timeline of the Holocaust cards students will make.
3. Before students arrive, place year cards around the classroom in chronological order. You may wish to space them out, as all the event cards will be placed in chronological order within the timeline.

Lesson:

Pre-Activity:

1. Asks students to make a timeline of their past year and identify any causation in their timeline. How did one event impact another?
2. Have students share their timelines with their peers.

Timeline Activity: Part 1

1. Divide students into pairs or small groups.
2. Assign each a different event from the Timeline of the Holocaust for the years 1933-1945. (These events should have been pre-selected before the lesson)
3. Instruct students to research their assigned event using the timeline and prepare a summary to share with the class.
4. Students should use 8x11 cardstock or paper to write the date and event title along with the summary. The summary should answer the following questions:
 - (1) What happened in your event?
 - (2) What was its impact at the time and on whom?
5. Come back together and have students share their summaries. Have students place their event on the wall with the year cards.

Timeline Activity: Part 2

1. Divide students into pairs or small groups.
2. Assign each a different event from the U.S. Immigration Timeline cards. (These cards will begin before 1933)
3. Have students prepare a summary of how the event might have impacted the American response to the Holocaust and European Jewish refugees. They can write this down on a separate page to turn in if desired.
4. Come back together and have students share their summaries.
5. Have students place their event on the wall with the year cards and Timeline of the Holocaust cards.

Wrap-Up Activity

1. Review the timeline and explain that each event impacted the American Response to the Holocaust and the ability of Jewish people to leave Europe.
2. Direct students to respond to the following questions:
 - (1) What did you learn about the impact of U.S. immigration history on the American Response to the Holocaust?
 - (2) What did you learn about the opportunity for Jewish people to emigrate before and during the Holocaust?
3. **Exit Ticket:** Have students respond to one of the questions below in a short single-paragraph response:
 - (1) How did U.S. Immigration history impact the response to the Holocaust?
 - (2) Why didn't the Jewish people leave Europe during the Holocaust?