

TRACING

THEMES

# Immigration and Migration

Immigrants to the United States have been part of a worldwide movement pushing people away from traditional means of support and pulling them toward better opportunities. Most immigrants have left their homelands because of economic problems, though some have fled oppressive governments or political turmoil.

War has often been the deciding factor for people to immigrate to the United States or to migrate within the country. Others have migrated to escape poverty, religious persecution, and racial violence. But the chief lure in coming to the United States or migrating within its borders continues to be the opportunity to earn a living.

## 1840s

### MIGRATING TO THE WEST ►

Throughout the 19th century, Americans continued their movement westward to the Pacific Ocean. Victory in the War with Mexico in 1848 greatly increased the amount of land under American control, and thousands of Americans moved out West to take advantage of it.

Two important consequences emerged from this movement. First, following the discovery of gold in California, hundreds of thousands of people from around the world rushed in to strike it rich. Within a year, there were enough residents in California to qualify it for statehood. Second, Americans disagreed over whether the new lands should be open to slavery. That disagreement fueled the fires that led to the Civil War.



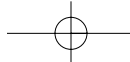
## 1910–1920

### ◀ ADAPTING TO AMERICAN WAYS

With hope and apprehension, millions of foreign immigrants poured into America's pulsing cities during the early 20th century. Bringing with them values, habits, and attire from the Old World, they faced a multitude of new experiences, expectations, and products in the New World.

Many native-born Americans feared that the new immigrants posed a threat to American culture. Instead of the immigrants being allowed to negotiate their existence by combining the old with the new, they were pressured to forget their old cultures, languages, and customs for more "American" ways.





# 1940s

## MIGRATING FOR JOBS ►

Throughout the 20th century, African Americans migrated across the United States. In the Great Migration of the early 20th century, they left their homes in the rural South. Of the millions of African Americans who left, most moved to cities, usually in the North.

The Second Migration, sparked by World War II, allowed African Americans to take industrial jobs—many formerly held by whites—to support the war effort. This migration had lasting consequences for the civil rights movement. Many African Americans who remained in the South moved to cities, where they developed organizations that helped them fight segregation.



# 1970–2000

## ▼ IN SEARCH OF A NEW LIFE

In 1964, 603 Vietnamese lived in the United States. A decade later, as the Vietnam War ended, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese refugees fled their homeland for other nations, including the United States. Vietnamese immigration to America continued, and by 1998 there were nearly 1 million Vietnamese-born persons living in the United States.

The men and women who made this long and arduous journey from Vietnam are part of the changing face of U.S. immigration. Beginning in the 1970s, Asians and Latin Americans replaced Europeans as the two largest immigrant groups in the United States. Between 1970 and 1990, about 1.5 million Europeans journeyed to America's shores. During that same period, roughly 5.6 million Latin Americans and 3.5 million Asians arrived. This trend continued into the 1990s, as the largest immigrant groups in the United States in 1995 hailed from Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, and China. These most recent arrivals to America have come for largely the same reasons—greater freedom and economic opportunity and the chance to begin a new life.



## THINKING CRITICALLY

### CONNECT TO HISTORY

- Forming Generalizations** Based on what you have read about immigration, what generalizations can you make about the causes that led to a rise in the number of immigrants to the United States? How have wars affected the flow of immigration? How does this affect economic change?



SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R21.

### CONNECT TO TODAY

- Research** Interview family members and people in your community to find out how immigration and migration have shaped your current surroundings. Try to record specific stories and events that compare a recent immigration with one in the more distant past.



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