

ONE PAGER TEMPLATE

LESSON TITLE: A “Paper Son’s” Immigrant Journey GRADE LEVEL(S): 5

AUTHOR AFFILIATION (SCHOOL): Dekalb International Community School

SUBJECT AREAS AND STATE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

SS5H1 Describe how life changed in America at the turn of the century.

d. Describe the reasons people immigrated to the United States, from where they emigrated, and where they settled.

Relationship to text:

- Understand why Tyrus (Geng Yeo) and his father left China and came to the USA.
- Discuss the anti-immigrant laws passed in 1882 (Chinese Exclusion Act banning most new Chinese immigrants), 1917 (which included a literacy test for those over 16, increased taxes on new immigrants, and gave immigration officials more discretion), and the 1924 Immigration Act (aka Johnson-Reed Act—which drastically reduced immigration from outside the Western Hemisphere, banned immigration from Asia, and limited the annual immigration quota for the rest of the world to 165,000)

ELAGSE5R18 Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence supports which point(s).

Relationship to text:

- Discuss with the students what details and facts the author uses to create sympathy for Tyrus.
- What evidence does the author use to show how life was difficult for Asian immigrants and for Tyrus in particular?

ELAGSE5W7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

ELAGSE5W8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

ELAGSE5W1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose. b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically). d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

ELAGSE5W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful in aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. c. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially). d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Relationship to text:

- Students will study additional sources of information about immigration at the turn of the century and immigration laws passed at that time, using Paper Son as a jumping off point. They will conduct

research on how different immigrant groups were treated, compare and contrast Ellis and Angel Island, and can choose to write an explanatory essay detailing what they learned about immigration.

- They can also choose to write an opinion essay about whether or not Americans have changed the way they feel about immigrants since the 1900s.

IB FRAMEWORK CONNECTION (optional): Unit of Inquiry/Study—Who We Are or Where We Are in Place and Time

IB Learner Profile Traits:

Caring—Tyrus' father showed his love of his son through sacrifice

Knowledgeable—Tyrus learned art and applied his knowledge to many different art forms

Communicator—Tyrus had to successfully communicate his new identity to the immigration officers

Inquirer—Tyrus remained curious his entire life and was always learning new techniques.

Open-minded—Tyrus came from one cultural tradition and learned a new one in the United States.

Risk-taker—Tyrus was a risk-taker, always trying new things, learning a new language and trying new artistic forms. He also took a risk by bringing his new idea to Walt Disney.

Thinker—Tyrus was a thinker, solving animation problems and coming up with a novel solution for the background of Bambi's animation.

Balanced—Tyrus lived to be over 100 years old. He took excellent care of himself and lived a balanced life. He also found joy and goodness in times of adversity.

K-12 ASIAN AMERICAN FRAMEWORK EMPHASIS (optional): Reclamation and Joy—the accomplishments, stories, and contributions of Asian Americans to American history are often overlooked, Asian immigrants play a vital role in the formation of America as we know it. This lesson helps to pull back the curtain on the immigration experience of Asian people who came in through Angel Island and gives insight into some of their contributions to American industry and arts and culture.

GLOBAL CONNECTION (optional): Compare and contrast the treatment of Asian and European immigrants as they came to the U.S. Compare and contrast the amount of information available on the European versus the Asian immigration experience.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME OR CLASS SESSIONS REQUIRED: *Varies, depending on time and extension, but plan for a minimum of 2 class periods.*

BRIEF SUMMARY OF CONTENT BACKGROUND (Provide a detailed background information of historical event, figure, or topic that is addressed in the lesson.)

The book, Paper Son, is the story of a young boy (Tyrus—Geng Yeo) who immigrated to the United States in the early 1900s. This occurred during a time of when many anti-immigration laws were being passed such as the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), the immigration act of 1917 (which included a literacy test for those over 16, increased taxes on new immigrants, and gave immigration officials more discretion), and the 1924 Immigration Act (aka Johnson-Reed Act—which drastically reduced immigration from outside the Western Hemisphere, banned immigration from Asia, and limited the annual immigration quota for the rest of the world to 165,000).

Most people are familiar with the immigration hub of the east coast—Ellis Island, but this story begins on Angel Island, also known as the “Ellis Island of the West,” because it processed people from India, China, Japan, the Philippines, and other

countries from the far East.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES/LESSON OUTLINE:

Lesson Objective: The students will connect their learning about U.S. immigration at the turn of the century to the experiences of a Chinese immigrant artist and will be able to articulate the social and economic forces that led to the immigration acts passed in the late 1800s/early 1900s and their effects on immigrants.

Materials: Paper Son, cups for water, paintbrushes, paper, pencils, computers, large poster or whiteboard

Procedures:

- 1) Create a KWL (Know-Want to know-Learned) Chart about immigration
- 2) Take children outside and have them trace one another's feet with water on a sunny pavement. Take a photo of the footprints, then move to another area to read.
- 3) Read the story Paper Son, relating it to other events at the turn of the century, inviting students to make connections to other texts they have read, and to their own personal experience.
- 4) After reading, return to the area where children traced one another's feet, bringing cups of water and paintbrushes with you. (By this point the foot prints should have disappeared due to evaporation).
- 5) Ask the students to guess where the footprints went?
- 6) Ask students to make a connection between the disappearing footprints and Paper Son. Responses will vary and may include that
 - Tyrus' contribution to Disney animation also "disappeared."
 - The history of immigrants may be hidden.
 - Tyrus' water paintings on newspapers disappeared.
- 7) Ask students to share any connections they made between their own experiences of being new in a new place (new sports team or club, new school, new neighborhood, new country, etc.) and Tyrus' experience or the experience of other immigrants. Relate this sharing to empathy, imagining being in other people's shoes, etc.
- 8) Invite students to use water to write a welcoming message or "paint" a drawing they think an immigrant would want to see upon entering the United States.
- 9) Upon their return to the classroom, students can *reflect* about what they learned and add it to the KWL chart.
- 10) **EXTENSION:** As students extend their study of immigration at the turn of the century, they may be given time to read books about or watch videos related to immigration both through Angel and Ellis Islands. This step may occur before or after the reading of Paper Son. Students will compare and contrast the treatment of Asian and European immigrants, they will learn about the contributions of additional Asian American immigrants, and will be able to articulate what social and economic pressures led to the passing of the Immigration acts of the early 1900s. They will examine political cartoons from the past and the present to compare and contrast anti-immigrant sentiment.