

Title: Immigration: “This I Believe” Essays

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Overview

Lesson Overview	Students will explore “This I Believe” essays, resources on the Boulder County Latino History website, and local resources in order to create their own ‘This I Believe’ essay on immigration. In a time when immigration is being hotly debated in our government and in our communities and when many of our young Dreamers’ lives are hanging in the balance, it is increasingly important to talk about immigration in the classroom. This lesson aims to support students’ ability to dialogue about these important topics. NOTE: This lesson could be broadened from immigration to any topic from the BCLHP/Latino experience.
Author(s) & School	Originally created by Rachel Hofmann, Mead High School, Longmont; modified by Marjorie McIntosh
Grade Level/ Course	High School Social Studies or Language Arts Could be modified for middle school or upper elementary
Standards	Common Core Reading Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. Common Core Writing 1. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). 2. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Time Required	3-5 Days
Topic	Immigration
Time Period	1930s - present
Tags (keywords)	immigrant, immigration, Mexico, Mexican, Latino/a/x; Guatemala

Preparation *(Links to worksheets, primary sources and other materials):*

Materials	Access to computer or mobile device for internet use and word processing. Graphic Organizer for BCLHP resources exploration This I Believe-Immigration Essay Assignment
Resources/Links	This I Believe: Power of Immigrants ● This I Believe Resources ○ This I Believe: The Right to Exist in the Country ○ This I Believe: Don't call me a Beaner ○ This I Believe: Samuel ○ This I Believe: Different but Equal ○ This I Believe: Si Se Puede! ○ Note: These are just a few of the many possible resources available on the This I Believe website ● BCLHP Resources ○ Repatriation resources ○ Immigration/deportation resources 1 ○ Immigration/deportation resources 2 ● Have your students describe their own families' migration stories and how they ended up here
	Possible ideas for finding local resources related to immigration: ● Contact local Latino groups to find speakers and resources ● Contact local colleges/universities to find speakers and resources ● Put together a panel of students' parents/grandparents/family members to speak about their immigrant experience ● Contact local library to find speakers and resources

Lesson Procedure *(Step by Step Instructions):*

Day 1:

1. Warm up: To introduce the "This I Believe" lesson to students, begin by asking them about beliefs. What is a belief? What are different types of beliefs? What do people like Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein, Peyton Manning (other figures you may have studied) believe in? What does your mom or dad believe in? What do people like Kim Kardashian or Justin Bieber believe in? What do you believe in? Make a list of things you believe in based on your life experience. Go beyond religious or political beliefs. Think about your character and the guidelines you live your life by.
2. Teacher should share a core belief and a story behind it.
3. Why is it important for us to have defined beliefs about the way the we choose to live our lives that we can articulate, reflect on, and refine? Analyze the following quote and describe how having a clear belief

system can not only be good for you but good for all.

"We hardly need to be reminded that we are living in an age of confusion. A lot of us have traded in our beliefs for bitterness and cynicism, or for a heavy package of despair...Opinions can be picked up cheap in the marketplace, while such commodities as courage and fortitude and faith are in alarmingly short supply." Edward R. Murrow, Introduction to the 1950's "This I Believe" radio series

4. Introduce students to the This I Believe: Latino Immigration assignment. Explain that they will be asked to explore resources on the This I Believe website and the BCLHP website as well as conduct interviews with locals in the town and/or in their families.
5. Students should explore the This I Believe essays linked in the resources. Teacher could assign these in small groups, do a jigsaw, do one together and then allow students to choose a second, etc. As students explore these essays, they should identify the core belief in each This I Believe essay and the story or the narrative behind it.
6. HOMEWORK: Ask students to discuss one of the This I Believe essays that they read in class with a family member. They should have a conversation about how the essay relates to their family. Possible questions:
 - a. What are your thoughts on this essay?
 - b. How can our family relate?
 - c. What were the reasons why our family has moved from one place to another historically?
 - d. How do you think discussing important issues like immigration can help us become a better country?

Day 2:

1. Warm up:
 - a. Students should share out about their homework conversations with their family members.
ALTERNATIVE WARM UP
 - b. Students should revisit one of the essays and complete the following:
 - i. This person is like me because...
 - ii. This person is not like me because...
 - iii. I am most impressed by...
2. Now that students have seen some examples of This I Believe essays, they should begin to explore their own ideas for their This I Believe essays that connect to immigration. Students should visit the Boulder County Latino History Project website and explore the resources that connect to immigration. See links in resources section. As students explore these resources, they should complete the graphic organizer.
3. Hand out the [resources exploration graphic organizer](#). Choose one or more of the following to do together as a class to model the expectation:
 - a. [Lucero on ICE/deportation](#)
 - b. [Casas Ibarra on crossing the border](#)
 - c. [Arguello family](#)
4. Students should explore many resources and complete the graphic organizer. Finish for homework.

Day 3:

1. Warm up: Review your graphic organizer from last class. Make a list of the most important lessons you have recorded from the immigrant stories you have explored on the BCLHP website.
2. This is a good place for students to work with local resources or people. Teacher should use this day to facilitate the exploration of these resources. Possible ideas: teacher brings in a guest speaker or puts together a panel of guest speakers to speak about their immigrant experience; teacher gathers local resources from community groups or library for students to explore.
3. Students complete a similar graphic organizer or, alternatively, they write a reflection about their exploration of these resources.
4. Homework: Begin to narrow your ideas about your This I Believe: Mexican Immigration essay.

Day 4:

1. Warm up: Write a thesis statement for your This I Believe: Latino Immigration essay. Share/discuss your thesis with a partner. Share out ideas for thesis statement or have students write ideas on the board to discuss as a class.
2. Teacher should introduce the This I Believe: Latino Immigration assignment. Teacher should revisit the This I Believe essays that were read on day one.
3. Teacher should provide work and workshop time for essays.

Day 5:

1. Students should share out their essays to the class or in small groups. Alternatively, students can make an audio or video recording of themselves reading their essay to be shared or posted.

Evaluation/Assessment: *(Methods for collecting evidence of student learning)*

Students will create a “This I Believe” essay about what we can learn from immigrants.

[This I Believe-Immigration Essay Assignment](#)

Suggested links for “This I Believe” Essay Guidelines:

<https://thisibelieve.org/guidelines/>

<https://thisibelieve.org/themes/>

<https://www.fcusd.org/cms/lib03/CA01001934/Centricity/Domain/1341/This%20I%20Believe%20Assignment.pdf>

Rubrics may vary depending on your overall unit and requirements. There is one included in the link to the assignment and here are some other possibilities: <https://learning.nd.edu/remix/projects/ThisIBelieveRubric2.pdf>

<http://www.plainlocal.org/userfiles/448/This%20I%20Believe%20Rubric.pdf>

Students can earn this badge for successful completion of the essay.



*Portions of this lesson have been modified from the This I Believe Website with collaboration from Kelly Corne and the Mead High School English Department.



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