



LESSON 13

THEME

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

FAMILY FOCUS

THE SAEZ VELEZES im/migration year: 1955

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Migration happens in many different ways (immigration, forced migration, voluntary migration, arrival as a refugee) and is core to the shared human experience. Immigration is one type of migration. Immigration is usually done by choice and is always a move from one country to another.

There are many common myths about immigrants and immigration. Among them are: that immigrants are taking jobs from American citizens, that certain immigrant groups have negative characteristics based on their cultural or religious identity.

Neighborhoods with many immigrants and their children develop because they provide work, support, access to culture, less racism and discrimination, and friendship. While adult immigrants often spend time with people who speak their home language, children often make friends across difference.

Cities like New York, and neighborhoods like the Lower East Side, have many jobs for newcomers and immigrants. Many of these jobs are difficult, but work can be a place where people find community to continue their cultural or religious practices, and also where they influence and impact American society, culture(s), and economy.

It takes many different people, sometimes with different interests, to create change. Immigrants work to make individual and community changes that benefit their lives but also others' lives.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do immigrant and migrant families' efforts to improve their own lives end up helping all people?

AIM

How do we do history detective work with an oral history and a video to learn about a family?

CONNECTION QUESTION

What are some different ways that you help out in the communities you are a part of? (For example, home, neighborhood, school, or other organizations).



STANDARDS	NEW YORK STATE SOCIAL STUDIES FRAMEWORK PRACTICES	A.1	A.2	A.3									
		A.6	C.2	E.1	E.3	F.4	F.6						
	NEW YORK STATE NEXT GENERATION ELA LEARNING STANDARDS	4R1	4R3	4R6	4R7	4R8	4R9	4W1	4W3	4W4	4W5	4SL1	4SL1C
	COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY	RI.4.1	RI.4.3	RI.4.6	RI.4.7	RI.4.9	W.4.1	W.4.1.B	W.4.3	W.4.3.A	SL.4.1	SL.4.1.C	SL.4.3

PROCEDURE

Historians can learn from interviews

Use an empathy interviewing approach and asking 5 Whys? to learn from interviews with José Velez.

- 1 Listen to the Oral History: Memory from José About Helping His Mom.**

 - Gather students together and set the purpose for this work. You might say: *“Historians often learn about history by using interviews of a person who actually lived through an experience. The information that the person shares is not written down but is said out loud. Historians gain information by paying attention to what the interviewee says (person being interviewed) but they also pay attention to how they say it. Both of these can help us build an understanding of what a person’s experience was like and why certain memories of experiences are important to them.”*
 - **Listen to the oral history** to gain information about his migrant experience and life on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.
- 2 Clarify the listening task.**

Explain to the class that they will first listen for **WHAT** José says that tells us facts and information from his life experience. They will then think about what **SEEMS IMPORTANT** to him.



PROCEDURE

3 Share the listening template.

Share the large chart that the class will fill out together after listening to the oral history. Give students their own version of the chart on 8.5"x11" paper.

<i>Information and Facts from José's life</i>	<i>Why might this memory be important to him?</i>

4 Clarify the first listening task.

Ask students to first collect information about his life as they listen to the oral history and fill in the first column on their individual note taking sheet.

5 Share information gathered and chart it.

After listening, have students quickly share information they gathered from the oral history (e.g. mother worked many hours, he and his brother came home after school and began cooking the beans, etc.).

NOTE Explain to students that when taking notes, complete sentences and punctuation are not necessary, as you are trying to write information down quickly.

<i>Information and Facts from José's life</i>	<i>Why might this memory be important to him?</i>
<i>Mom worked many hours</i>	
<i>Cooked beans after school</i> <i>Got in trouble if they burned beans</i>	

6 Discuss the idea that memories carry meaning for individuals.

→ In a whole group meeting, you might start the conversation by saying: *“José seems to be at least 60 years old. He could have shared so many memories from his 60 years of life. But he shared these memories. Let’s talk about the memories we heard him share and then let’s think about why he shared those memories when he could have shared so many others. People often remember experiences and talk about experiences because they were important to them. Of all of José’s experiences and memories, why do you think he shared these when he was being interviewed?”*

OPTION Listen again and ask the children to think about why certain memories, like cooking beans after school, are important to José.



PROCEDURE

→ Thinking about why certain memories might be important: Either independently or in partnerships, have students think about why certain memories of José's might be important to him. Ask students to fill out their sheet to prepare for discussion. Give them a few minutes to talk together before coming to the whole-group discussion.

7 Ask Why? 5 times to dig deeper into what José said in order to try and understand it deeply.

→ Start by having students identify a memory and have them share why they think it was important to the interviewee, in this case José.

Example of a discussion on the oral history that is deepened through the use of asking 5 Whys

TEACHER	<i>We heard José talk about cooking the beans after school. Why do you think that was that important to him?</i>
ALISA	<i>Because his mother made beans every night for dinner.</i>
MANNY	<i>That's just what he remembers eating all the time.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why did she cook beans for dinner every night and not some other food?</i>
TONY	<i>Maybe that's all they could afford.</i>
ARI	<i>...or it's kinda' easy to make?</i>
NATE	<i>I don't think that's it. I think it's because that's what they ate in Puerto Rico.</i>
TEACHER	<i>What do others think about that?</i>
MARIBEL	<i>Maybe that's just the only food she knew how to make.</i>
CECI	<i>I agree with Nate. Maybe they ate beans because it was what they ate in Puerto Rico and it reminded them of their home.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why might their mom want to make food that reminded them of Puerto Rico? They were adjusting to life in a new country with lots of different foods, so why would she make food that reminded them of their home in PR?</i>
MARCUS	<i>Sometimes when I go to someone's house or a restaurant and I eat foods that I'm used to, I just feel like I'm at home.</i>
ARI	<i>Yeah, maybe eating beans is like the thing their family does and it keeps them feeling connected to their home in PR.</i>
TONY	<i>I want to add on to what Ari said. I think it's a way to feel connected.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why would their mom want them to feel connected to the home they left?</i>
SASHA	<i>Because they were in a new place where they had to learn a totally new language and go to a new school.</i>
CECI	<i>Yeah, like they were around people all day who did not understand them or their culture, so having the food they liked made them feel at home.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why would their mom not just make some food from other cultures that she was learning about in New York City to help them feel connected to their new home?</i>
MARIBEL	<i>I think she probably really wanted them to feel comfortable in their new home in NYC. But maybe she was also trying to keep them connected to Puerto Rico because she doesn't want them to forget their culture.</i>
TEACHER	<i>I'm hearing you all say that for José the memory of cooking beans might be more than just remembering a meal they had all the time. It was about holding onto a sense of their old home while they adjusted to the new one. So now we might understand why that was important to Jose, and maybe also why many immigrants and migrants also keep cooking the foods they loved from home when they move to a new place. The foods we eat are important to us and often connect us to our family's culture and traditions. Do you think that's it?</i>

Chart it! Ask the group to think of their discussion and suggest a way of filling in the cell on the chart about José cooking beans and why that might have been important to him.



PROCEDURE

- 8 **Ask 5 Whys to discuss other information that they found in José’s video interview.**
Follow the same process, asking them to go deeper in their thinking by continually asking them “Why?” Chart their final thoughts about the meaning of the information, as you did above.
- 9 **Watch the video: José discusses Spanish channels on TV.**
Group children into twos and threes to watch the other video clip. Repeat the process:
 - **Restate the viewing task.** Students should collect information about José’s life and record it in the first column. Have them use the same recording template you gave them earlier.
 - **Think about why certain memories are important:** After viewing, students think about why certain memories might be important and record their thoughts in the second column of the chart. Give them a few minutes to discuss their thoughts with a partner or small group.
 - **Ask 5 Whys to dig deeper into what José said in order to try and understand it deeply.** Start a whole-group discussion, using the 5 Whys to probe their thinking and help them delve deeper into understanding José’s story.

Example of a discussion on the video that is deepened through the use of asking 5 Whys

TEACHER	<i>Why was it so important for them to have TV channels that broadcast in Spanish?</i>
STUDENT	<i>So the parents could watch TV in their first language.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why would the parents want to do that?</i>
STUDENT A	<i>Because the kids were learning English at school, but the parents weren’t, so they appreciated having the shows in Spanish.</i>
STUDENT B	<i>Also, they needed to learn English but maybe it just felt comfortable for them to watch TV in the language they knew so well.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why would the parents have their kids watch TV in Spanish when they knew their children needed to learn English?</i>
STUDENT	<i>Because it kept them speaking both languages and not having to give up Spanish now that they weren’t in Puerto Rico.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why not give up the language from the country they left?</i>
STUDENT	<i>Because then their children would have 2 languages. They would be bilingual.</i>
TEACHER	<i>Why would it be important to parents that their children know both languages?</i>
STUDENT A	<i>So they could be both Puerto Rican and American. They didn’t have to give up their Puerto Rican culture. This way they could have both cultures.</i>
STUDENT B	<i>And it would make it easier to talk with their parents in Spanish but also their teachers and other people in English. Maybe they could get a job if they spoke English.</i>
STUDENT C	<i>Yeah, and it would make it easier to talk with people back in Puerto Rico when they traveled there.</i>

Chart it! Ask the group to think of their discussion about José mentioning that they had didn’t have cable TV but eventually they had two channels in Spanish. Ask them to suggest a way of filling in the cell on the chart and why that might have been important to him.

