

ACTIVITY 7- Understanding Immigration – Key Activity

A number of activities, discussions, readings can be used to build background knowledge on this topic. Students talk about their own family experience of immigration and become more understanding of the stories of others.

Objectives and Activities

Teach the vocabulary, **emigration**, **migration**, and **immigration** in order for students to begin to know and understand these terms. (Meanings of these terms could be posted on large pieces of board in the classroom.)

Explore the reasons why people might choose to leave their country using resources such as the grade level Social Studies text, build background knowledge for students.

Early European immigration to Canada began with the fur trade, the harsh living conditions in Scotland and later Ireland led to many immigrants coming from those countries. The discovery of gold in British Columbia in the early 1850's led to a wave of immigration to BC.

Immigrant Experience - Central Questions for Exploration

- What does emigrate mean? Immigrate? Migrate?
- How are they alike and different?
- Can you be both an emigrant and an immigrant?

Encourage students to ask a parent or grandparent how or why their own family decided to immigrate to BC and or Canada. Students can take turns to present their findings to the class.

Brainstorm with class **Why do people emigrate?**



Students' ideas may be based on their own personal experience or gained from talking with their immediate family. Ideally this brainstorming will bring up some of the following issues.

- Politics, persecution, war
- Economic hardship in the home country
- Hope for a better life]
- Quest for adventure
- Better jobs or standard of living
- Educational opportunities for children

If immigrants are seeking a better life, is that what they find? Interview students who have come to Canada most recently. What is it like to come to a new country? What things do they miss from their old country? Note 5 problems, 5 good things, and 5 funny things.

Students can work in small groups to discuss being a newcomer in any situation. Do they recall moving to a new neighbourhood and what it felt like? Have they ever been to a different country, with customs and a language they didn't understand?

Class Activity

Create a collective timeline of family immigration dates of everyone in the class. Be sure to indicate the presence of First Nations.

- Collect data as to where students' families come from and record it on a large timeline that will be posted around the perimeter of the classroom.
- In addition data may be recorded visually on a large map of the world with pins and strings to show country of origin. Or simply mark with a pin the country of origin.

Or have students make small flags of the various countries or provinces they come from and string them with Canadian flags in the classroom.