

## Celebrating American Culture and Heritage

**THEMES:** Immigration, Entrepreneurship, U.S. History and Culture

**SUMMARY:** This program module encourages participants to think about and engage with themes and stories of U.S. immigration by highlighting the impacts of well-known inventions or entrepreneurial endeavors by U.S. immigrants.

### LESSON SNAPSHOT:

| TIME          | SKILLS  | TECHNOLOGY  | MATERIALS  | PROJECT  |
|---------------|---|---|--|--|
| 1 - 1.5 hours | <p>Reading comprehension, conversation, analytical and critical thinking.</p> <p>Understanding and appreciation of the immigration experience and the entrepreneurial spirit.</p> | <p>None required for the program.</p> <p>The facilitator will need to access and print some content from the internet prior to conducting this program.</p> | <p><b><i>Provided in this packet:</i></b> Images of American inventions invented by immigrants; vocabulary list; <i>Family of Voices</i> handout with questions.</p> | <p><i>Family of Voices</i> Stories and accompanying worksheet.</p> |

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

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| <b>LESSON OUTCOMES</b>         | Participants should demonstrate an understanding of the immigrant experience in the U.S. and the entrepreneurial spirit of immigrants.  |
| <b>FACILITATOR PREPARATION</b> | Facilitators should prepare to lead this program by printing the Iconic American Inventions handout, the vocabulary list, and the <i>Family of Voices stories</i> . Facilitators should also familiarize themselves with the iconic American inventions and the <i>Family of Voices stories</i> . |



**VOCABULARY**

**Diversity:** an instance of being composed of different elements or qualities; the quality or state of having many different forms, types, ideas, etc.; the state of having people who have different cultures in a group or organization

**Entrepreneur:** a person who undertakes an enterprise or owns and manages a business

**Immigrant:** a person who comes to a new country to live there

**Immigration:** an act or instance of coming into a foreign country to live

**Inclusion:** accepting the diversity of different individuals or perspectives

**Invention:** an original device or process

**Inventor:** a person who created or developed a particular process or device

**Spirit:** the inner quality or nature of a person

*Definitions provided by: Merriam-Webster and Oxford English Dictionary.*

**DETAILED LESSON PLAN:**

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| <p><b>1. Introduction to Immigration</b><br/>(15 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Divide participants into groups of three to four, and provide each group with a printed copy of the Iconic American Inventions handout provided in the packet.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>American invention images</b> include: blue jeans, the yo-yo, Google, and YouTube</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Ask each group to identify and discuss the four inventions on the page with their group. Suggested questions include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is an invention?</li> <li>○ Do you consider any of these inventions?</li> <li>○ Have you ever used or come into contact with any of these inventions?</li> <li>○ Do these four inventions have anything in common?</li> <li>○ Where do you think each was invented?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Give groups five minutes to discuss these images, and then bring the whole group back together to review what each small group discussed.</li> <li>● Explain to the whole group that these inventions were all created in the United States. Read aloud the following about each invention:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Levi Strauss founded <b>the first company to manufacture blue jeans</b>, called Levi Strauss &amp; Co., in 1853 in San Francisco, California. In 1873, Strauss and his business partner developed a patent for riveted* pants, after a customer was interested in buying a pair of pants that wouldn't wear out so quickly. Although denim pants had been worn as workwear for many years, it was the act of placing rivets in the traditional pants for the first time that created the blue jeans that we know today. Strauss was originally from Buttenheim, Germany.<br/><i>*A rivet is a special kind of metal bolt or pin that is used to hold pieces of material together.</i></li> <li>● Pedro Flores <b>popularized the yo-yo in the United States</b> after he patented an innovation in 1928 that allows the yo-yo to do tricks, such as the ability to "sleep." Yo-yos were introduced to the Philippines in the 1800s and the word "yo-yo" was a Tagalog word that means "come and go" or "come back." Flores saw a good market opportunity to introduce the yo-yo to the United States, as well as a chance to go into business for himself. Flores was originally from Vintar, Ilocos Norte, Philippines.</li> <li>● Sergey Brin <b>cofounded Google</b> in 1998 as part of a research project during his studies at Stanford University in California. Brin and his cofounder wanted to develop a better search engine that analyzed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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|  | <p>the relationship between websites to produce the most relevant web results. Brin is originally from Moscow, Russia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim <b>co-founded YouTube</b>, a video-sharing website where users can upload, share, and view content, in 2005 in San Francisco, California. The three were interested in developing a way to more easily share videos between friends, as well as search for videos of events or stories on the internet. Steve Chen is originally from Taipei, Taiwan, and Jawed Karim is originally from Merseburg, Germany.</li> <li>● Ask the group: <b>What do the creators of these inventions have in common?</b> The group should recognize that each inventor or entrepreneur is not originally from the U.S. Explain to the group that these inventors or entrepreneurs are all immigrants. Immigrants are individuals who have left their home country, often seeking out increased opportunity. These inventors brought their ideas and entrepreneurial spirit to the U.S. These inventions that are so closely associated with U.S. culture and entertainment were invented by immigrants.</li> <li>● Encourage the group to share their reactions – was anyone surprised by learning this? What are other ways immigrants contribute to a society or a community?</li> </ul> <p><b>TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Optional lesson extension:</i> Research a few inventions/objects that were created by an immigrant in your country to complement and localize this activity.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>3. Family of Voices Stories Activity</b><br/>(25-30 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To continue the discussion about immigration and the valuable contributions of immigrants, divide participants into three groups and assign each group with a <i>Family of Voices</i> story to read, accessible by the links below. Provide every group with a copy of their assigned story and the handout with the list of questions (page 8 of this packet), and ask them to read the story in their group. Individuals can read independently or take turns reading the text aloud. You may also choose to provide the vocabulary list included in this packet to each participant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Family of Voices</i> features contemporary Americans whose global origins and connections influence how they make their life, career, and community in the United States. While each person’s point of departure and moment of arrival is distinctive, they all share similar experiences as immigrants and entrepreneurs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |

- The facilitator can begin this portion of the activity by providing some context for the stories that the group will be reading by sharing the follow aloud with the group:  
*The United States experienced a renewed growth in immigration after passing the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Hart-Celler Act). Improved transportation and communication technologies allowed people to live in the United States while still staying connected to their country of origin. Ne immigrants have a lot in common with those who came before them: they seek better economic and job opportunities, greater freedoms, and safe lives. Unfortunately, these immigrants face issues of inequality and inclusion as they settle in to their new homes and lives in the U.S.*
- Review the questions on the handout together and explain that each group should answer these questions after reading their assigned story. Each group will be asked to share a summary of their story and answers to the questions with the whole group.
- To encourage conversation, ask each group to spend time discussing answers to the questions on the handout, found on page 8 of this packet. Participants may also choose to write their answers on the handout to aid their presentation to the whole group.

**TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:**

- The facilitator can choose to use more than the three stories suggested in this packet depending on the size of the group or duration of the program. Twenty-two stories can be found on the *Family of Voices* website: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/family-of-voices>
- During the activity, circulate around the room to see if participants have any questions and to assist with reading comprehension.
- If participants encounter an unfamiliar vocabulary term, encourage them to refer to the Vocabulary List in this packet or find the definition in a dictionary or online.
- Ask each group to spend about five minutes sharing a summary of their story, as well as their answers to the questions on the handout.
- Lead a brief discussion on the value of immigrants to American culture. Select two (or more) of the questions below to ask the group:
  - What about the U.S. fosters an entrepreneurial spirit?
  - Why might some immigrants have a strong entrepreneurial spirit?
  - If you immigrated to a different country, do you think you would become an entrepreneur? If so, what idea might you pursue?
  - Do you need to be an immigrant to be an entrepreneur?



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| <p><b>4. Share Out and Conclusion</b><br/>(15-20 minutes)</p>       | <p><b>TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If these questions are difficult for the group to answer, you may wish to invite an individual from the Mission who is an immigrant or has insights/experiences on the immigrant experience to lead this portion of the activity.</li></ul>  |
| <p><b>Additional Resources &amp; Optional Lesson Extensions</b></p> | <p><b><i>Community Engagement Challenge:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask participants to identify an immigrant in their local community and conduct an interview asking where he/she came from, why he/she came to this specific country, what traditions he/she has from his/her home country, and how these traditions have contributed to his/her experiences in his/her new country. Work with the participant to develop a list of questions based on the additional resource video and the stories in this lesson. Invite participants back to discuss their experiences and the stories of the people they interviewed.</li><li>• Encourage participants to engage in dialogue with their family about various family traditions (e.g., food, music, dance, celebrations, holidays, etc.) to understand their origins and the value of the traditions to their family or community.</li><li>• For both of the Community Engagement Challenges listed above, consider inviting participants back for a follow-up discussion about their experiences, the experiences of the individuals they interviewed, or their research. You could also ask each participant to write a short essay about what he/she learned from this research.</li></ul> <p><b><i>Smithsonian Resources on Immigration/Migration and Diversity:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Smithsonian Immigration/Migration Initiative video developed by a team of ARTLAB+ teens. (Run Time: 6 mins. 30 secs.):<br/>Link: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYEVQbg8Avg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYEVQbg8Avg</a></li></ul> |



- Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center’s video, “America Is In The Heart” (Run Time: 2 mins, 12 secs):  
Link: <http://smithsonianapa.org/heart/>
- Smithsonian Folklife Festival Blog  
Link: <https://festival.si.edu/search?query=immigration+migration>  
Suggested posts:
  - “Ted’s Talk: A Conversation on Chinese Immigration History”  
<https://festival.si.edu/blog/ted-gong-talk-conversation-on-chinese-immigration-history>
  - “What Does It Mean to Be American Muslim?” (video and blog)  
<https://festival.si.edu/blog/what-does-it-mean-to-be-american-muslim>
- Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History exhibition, “Many Voices, One Nation”  
Link: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/many-voices-one-nation>
- “The Statue of Liberty Was Originally a Muslim Woman” Article  
Link: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/statue-liberty-was-originally-muslim-woman-180957377/>
- “The Origin of the Coney Island Hot Dog Is a Uniquely American Story” Article  
Link: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/origins-coney-island-hot-dog-uniquely-american-story-180959659/>

## **FAMILY OF VOICES STORIES: QUESTIONS**

1. Who is the subject of the story? Where are they originally from?
2. What was their greatest challenge in coming to the United States and/or adapting to U.S. culture?
3. Overall, how was their experience immigrating to the United States? Was it mostly positive or negative? Why / how?
4. How did their experience from their home country contribute to their entrepreneurial spirit?
5. What have they accomplished since immigrating to the U.S.?



## **ICONIC AMERICAN INVENTIONS**





1

2



3



4

**Photo credits:**

(1) Photo Courtesy of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History <http://newsdesk.si.edu/snapshot/levi-strauss-jeans>

(2) No known copyright restrictions. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro\\_Flores\\_\(inventor\)#/media/File:Flores\\_1.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Flores_(inventor)#/media/File:Flores_1.JPG)

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