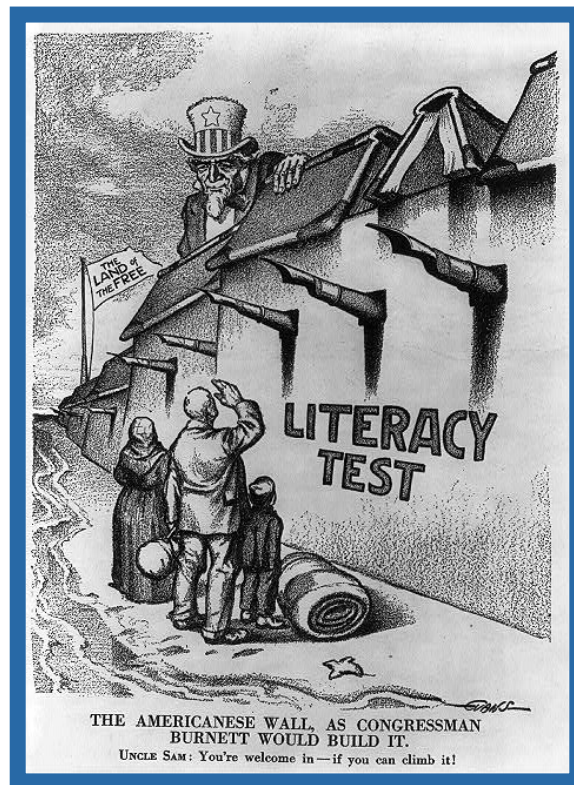


## 11th Grade Immigration Inquiry

# Is Anything New about Today's Immigration Policy Debate?



Raymond O. Evans, cartoon about immigration, "The Americanese Wall—as Congressman (John Lawson] Burnett Would Build It," *Puck*, March 25, 1916. Public domain.

### Supporting Questions

1. What is the current debate about immigration policy?
2. What factors have shaped US immigration policy arguments over time?
3. How has the US immigration system changed over time?
4. How has US immigration policy been criticized over time?



## 11th Grade Immigration Inquiry

## Is Anything New about Today's Immigration Policy Debate?

<b>New York State Social Studies Framework Key Idea &amp; Practices</b>	<p><b>11.4 POST-CIVIL WAR ERA (1865–1900):</b> Reconstruction resulted in political reunion and expanded constitutional rights. However, those rights were undermined, and issues of inequality continued for African Americans, women, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and Chinese immigrants.</p> <p>✔ Chronological Reasoning and Causation ✔ Comparison and Contextualization ✔ Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence</p>
<b>Staging the Question</b>	Examine political cartoons that address the current debate about immigration policy.

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
What is the current debate about immigration policy?	What factors have shaped US immigration policy arguments over time?	How has the US immigration system changed over time?	How has US immigration policy been criticized over time?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>
Research the current debate about immigration policy and create a T-chart listing different arguments on two sides of an immigration policy issue.	Write a paragraph using evidence from the sources that compares and contrasts the arguments made in support of three historical approaches to immigration policy.	Write a paragraph using evidence from the sources that compares and contrasts the systems created by three historical approaches to immigration policy.	Write a paragraph using evidence from the sources that compares and contrasts the arguments made in opposition to three historical approaches to immigration policy.
<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>
<p><b>Source A:</b> Suggested websites for student research</p>	<p><b>Source A:</b> Excerpt from a speech by Horace Davis</p> <p><b>Source B:</b> “America of the Melting Pot Comes to an End”</p> <p><b>Source C:</b> Excerpt from a speech by President Lyndon Johnson</p>	<p><b>Source A:</b> Excerpt from “Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)”</p> <p><b>Source B:</b> Excerpt from “The Immigration Act of 1924 (the Johnson-Reed Act)”</p> <p><b>Source C:</b> Excerpt from “Effects of the Immigration Act of 1965 on Selected Population Characteristics of Immigrants to the United States”</p>	<p><b>Source A:</b> Political cartoon, “The Americanese Wall—as Congressman Burnett Would Build It”</p> <p><b>Source B:</b> Excerpt from a speech by Meyer Jacobstein</p> <p><b>Source C:</b> “1965 Immigration Law Changed Face of America”</p>

<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	<p><b>ARGUMENT</b> Is there anything new about today's immigration policy debates? Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical sources while acknowledging competing views.</p> <p><b>EXTENSION</b> Assemble a series of political cartoons that represent the similarities and/or differences in arguments that are made about immigration policy and how those arguments are presented.</p>
<b>Taking Informed Action</b>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND</b> Survey the local community's views of current immigration policy.</p> <p><b>ASSESS</b> Compile the survey results and discuss the community's views of current immigration policy.</p> <p><b>ACT</b> Publish the survey results and commentary along with a list of resources that community members can access to learn more about the current immigration policy debate.</p>



## Overview

### Inquiry Description

The goal of this inquiry is to help students develop their thinking in terms of continuity and change through learning about US immigration policy actions and their effects over time. By examining whether there is anything new about current immigration policy debates, students compare and contrast the discourse around immigration at three key moments in US history—the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Immigration Act of 1924, and the Immigration Act of 1965—with the current immigration policy. Students need to develop a deep understanding of each of the three policies in order to write a thoughtful argument that analyzes continuities and changes in perceptions of and policies regarding immigration throughout the post-Civil War period of US history.

In addition to the Key Idea listed earlier, this inquiry highlights the following Conceptual Understandings:

- (11.4d) Racial and economic motives contributed to long-standing discrimination against Mexican Americans and opposition to Chinese immigration
- (11.5b) Rapid industrialization and urbanization created significant challenges and societal problems that were addressed by a variety of reform efforts.
- (11.7a) The 1920s was a time of cultural change in the country, characterized by clashes between modern and traditional values.
- (11.10b) Individuals, diverse groups, and organizations have sought to bring about change in American society through a variety of methods.

NOTE: This inquiry is expected to take eight to ten 40-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries in order to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

### Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “Is anything new about today’s immigration policy debate?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument with evidence while acknowledging competing perspectives.

## Staging the Compelling Question

This inquiry opens with the compelling question “Is anything new about today’s immigration policy debate?” To engage students in considering the question, teachers can ask them to examine political cartoons that address the current immigration debate. Teachers may use this experience to introduce some of the arguments that surround the issue and enable students to consider the possibility that today’s debate about immigration policy mirrors those that have occurred in the past.



## Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question—“What is the current debate about immigration policy?”—establishes the context of the inquiry. Students should research a current national immigration policy issue. After doing so, students create a T-chart contrasting the arguments of policy supporters and opponents in order to have clear criteria to compare with the historical debates that make up the rest of the inquiry. The featured sources for this question are websites students can use to locate sources for their research.

## Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question—“What factors have shaped US immigration policy over time?”—introduces historical immigration debates by encouraging students to consider why people believed particular approaches to immigration policy were necessary. The formative performance task for this supporting question calls on students to compare and contrast arguments made by government officials in defense of particular approaches to immigration policy. Teachers might choose to have students, before writing their paragraph, first create lists, a Venn diagram, or another organizer that highlights the specific pieces of the arguments made by government officials. By examining the beliefs and events that shaped the policies’ development, students are able recognize patterns across time as well as elements unique to each policy. Featured Source A is a speech by Representative Horace Davis about the exclusion of Chinese workers, Featured Source B is a *New York Times* editorial by Senator David Reed speaking to the issues around the Immigration Act of 1924, and Featured Source C is a speech by President Lyndon Johnson on the Immigration Act of 1965.

## Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question—“How has the US immigration system changed over time?”—continues the inquiry by directing students to examine the actual legislation behind the three actions taken around immigration. The formative performance task requires students to write a paragraph that compares and contrasts the immigration systems created by each policy. (Teachers might have students list the key elements of each immigration system before writing their paragraphs.) The featured sources for this inquiry include descriptions of two legislative acts, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Immigration Act of 1924, as well as an article by Charles Keely on the Immigration Act of 1965.

## Supporting Question 4

The final supporting question—“How has US immigration policy been criticized over time?”—directs students to consider public challenges to immigration policy. The formative performance task calls on students to write a paragraph that compares and contrasts arguments made in opposition to particular immigration policies. (Again,

teachers might choose to have students list the criticisms of immigration policy and explain what is being criticized before moving on to write their paragraphs.) Unlike the previous two supporting questions, the featured sources are more diverse (e.g., a political cartoon, congressional testimony, and a news report), illustrating the various corners from which criticism of government policy emerged.

## Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined three key immigration acts from US history and have looked at the current debate about immigration. Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understanding and their ability to use evidence from multiple sources to support their distinct claims. In this task, students construct an evidence-based argument responding to the compelling question “Is anything new about today’s immigration policy debate?” It is important to note that students’ arguments could take a variety of forms, including a detailed outline, poster, or essay.

Students’ arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- Although often framed as an economic issue, the immigration policy debate has always been driven primarily by social concerns.
- Today’s policy debate is more focused on how to respond to immigrants who are already in the country than on people who have yet to immigrate.
- Over time, immigration policy in the United States has become more inclusive, and today’s debate is about whether to continue down that path or return to a more restricted approach.

Students could extend these arguments by assembling a series of historical and current political cartoons that serve as evidence for the continuity of or change in the immigration debate over time. Students’ analyses of the cartoons can focus on the arguments made about immigration policy and how those arguments are presented through this medium.

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by developing a survey that measures their community’s opinions about current immigration policy. Students *understand* the issue by surveying adults they know—family members, guardians, teachers, and family friends. They *assess* the information they have gathered by compiling the survey results and drawing conclusions about the community’s attitude toward immigration. Students can then *act* by making these results available along with resources community members can access to learn more about the immigration policy debate. For teachers wanting more instruction on building surveys with their students, see an explanation of Survey Monkey by the National History Education Clearinghouse at the Teaching History website: <http://teachinghistory.org/digital-classroom/tech-for-teachers/25029>.



## Supporting Question 1

### Featured Source

**Source A:** Suggested websites for student research

For teachers interested in a comprehensive resource, students can be directed to the immigration debate on the ProCon website, “What Are the Solutions to Illegal Immigration in America” (<http://immigration.procon.org/>), which should be updated as the current immigration debate evolves.

Teachers focusing on President Obama’s 2014 executive actions regarding immigration policy might direct students to the following sources:

- *Fixing the System: President Obama Is Taking Action on Immigration*, a 2014 video explaining the executive actions on immigration available at the official White House website (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/immigration/immigration-action>)
- “Executive Actions on Immigration,” description of the initiatives undertaken by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services, updated April 15, 2015 (<http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction>)
- Max Ehrenfreund, “Your Complete Guide to Obama’s Immigration Executive Actions,” *Washington Post*, November 20, 2014 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/11/19/your-complete-guide-to-obamas-immigration-order/>)



## Supporting Question 2

### Featured Source

**Source A:** Representative Horace Davis, speech in the House of Representatives on the dangers of Chinese immigration, “Chinese Immigration” (excerpt), 1878

In the beginning of these remarks I tried to give you some picture of the Chinese population of the Pacific States, an army of nomads having neither allegiance to our Government nor sympathy with our people. I showed you how dangerous to a republic must be this hostile element in its midst, like a foreign army encamped among its people.

I warned you of the rise of a power like the secret societies of the Middle Ages, working within our own Government and defying its laws. I pointed out the discredit, peril, and distress this element of population has brought to free labor.

And lastly, I appealed to the experience of other nations who have permitted Chinese immigration and showed you that wherever it has been allowed the same unvarying features mark their presence, and that after centuries of contact with other people in the islands of the East Indies their race peculiarities are just as distinct as they are today in California; so that our only hope lies in a law restricting their coming.

We earnestly entreat you not to disappoint us in this hope. Our State is torn asunder with discontent and agitation over this all absorbing question. Assure the anxious hearts of our people that your sympathies are with us, and let us have peace. You republicans and you democrats make good the promises of your party leaders, over and over again pledging us your aid in Congress. Men of all parties who hate the memory of slavery relieve our young State from the blight of contract labor.

Champions of industry, as you would maintain the dignity, the self-respect, and the independence of labor, help the workingman buffeting against this flood which threatens to sweep him under. Soldiers, fresh from the horrors of civil war, avert from us the specter, however distant, of intestine strife, of a State divided against itself, and of a war of races.

The safety of the Republic lies in a contented people, loving their country and respecting its laws. No material prosperity can atone for the want of that allegiance. As we cherish the traditions of one flag, one Constitution, and one common country, so we can only work out one common destiny as a united and harmonious people.

Public domain. The full speech is available at the National Archives:

[https://archive.org/stream/chineseimmigrat00davigoog/chineseimmigrat00davigoog\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/chineseimmigrat00davigoog/chineseimmigrat00davigoog_djvu.txt).



## Supporting Question 2

### Featured Source

**Source B:** Senator David A. Reed, newspaper editorial, “America of the Melting Pot Comes to an End,” *New York Times*, April 27, 1924

### **AMERICA OF THE MELTING POT COMES TO END: Effects of New Immigration Legislation Described by Senate Sponsor of Bill—Chief Aim, He States, Is to Preserve Racial Type as It Exists Here Today**

#### HOW NEW LEGISLATION WILL CHANGE THE FLOW OF IMMIGRATION FROM EUROPE TO THE UNITED STATES

The immigration policy upon which the two houses of Congress have now substantially agreed marks a new departure in the American attitude on this subject. Until now we have proceeded upon the theory that America was “the refuge of the oppressed of all nations,” and we have indulged the belief that upon their arrival here all immigrants were fused by the “melting pot” into a distinctive American type. During the last forty years we have, it is true, established certain physical and moral standards with which our immigrants must comply in order to be permitted to enter the country; but these tests have operated only to exclude the cases of gross unfitness, such as those with contagious diseases and the insane and the notorious criminal.

Until the years 1853–85 the sources from which the greater number of our immigrants came were the same sources from which our country was originally colonized, and as result of this fact the immigrants were easily assimilated in our population upon their arrival here. Beginning about 1885, new types of people began to come. For the first time in our history men began to come in large numbers from Italy, Greece, Poland, Turkey in Europe, the Balkan States and from Russia. As these new sources of immigration began to pour out their masses of humanity upon our shores the old sources in Northwestern Europe seemed to dry up, and whereas in 1890 the natives of Southern and eastern Europe constituted about 8 per cent of our foreign-born population, in 1910 they constituted 39 per cent.

This change brought new difficulties in the problem of assimilation. These new peoples spoke strange languages. It was not to be expected that they would readily fuse into the population that they found here. It was natural that they should not understand our institutions, since they came from lands in which popular government is a myth...

Nor has America allowed herself to be disturbed by the cries of alien groups who are already here. The objections that these groups have put forward to the new immigration law have doubtless been put forward in good faith, but with a complete misunderstanding of the purposes of the new law. These purposes are three:

First—America realizes that she is no longer a desert country in need of reinforcements to her population. She realizes that her present numbers and their descendants are amply sufficient to bring out her natural resources at a reasonable rate of progress. She knows that her prosperity at this moment far exceeds that of any other land in the world. She realizes that unless immigration is numerically restrained she will be overwhelmed by a vast migration of people from the war-stricken countries of Europe. Such a migration could not fail to have a baleful effect upon American wages and standards of living and it would increase mightily our problem of assimilating the foreign born who are already here. Out of these thoughts have risen the general demands for limitation of the number of immigrants who may enter this country.

Second—There has come about a general realization of the fact that the races of men who have been coming to us in recent years are wholly dissimilar to the native-born Americans, that they are untrained in self-government—a faculty that it has taken the Northwestern Europeans many centuries to acquire. Thoughtful Americans have been despondent for the future of our country when the suffrage should be exercised by men whose inexperience in



popular forms of government would lead them to demand too much of their Government, and to rely too heavily upon it, and too little upon their own initiative.

America was beginning also to smart under the irritation of her “foreign colonies”—those groups of aliens, either in city slums or in country districts, who speak a foreign language and live a foreign life, and who want neither to learn our common speech nor to share our common life. From all this has grown the conviction that it was best for America that our incoming immigrants should hereafter be of the same races as those of us who are already here, so that each year’s immigration should so far as possible be a miniature America, resembling in national origins the persons who are already settled in our country.

The third, and last, factor in bringing about the new law has been the conviction that we were handling the business badly and were causing unnecessary suffering in allowing the immigrant to sever his home ties and cross the ocean before his admissibility was decided. It was obvious that much distress and suffering could be avoided if the selection of immigrants and the determination of their admissibility could be done at the source. Obviously, it is impracticable to locate immigration officials abroad; but the idea has gained ground that our Consuls could make a preliminary decision about each immigrant before giving him a visa of his passport.

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## Supporting Question 2

### Featured Source

**Source C:** President Lyndon B. Johnson, speech about the immigration law basing admission on skills and family relationships, “Remarks at the Signing of the Immigration Bill, Liberty Island, New York “ (excerpt), October 3, 1965

This bill says simply that from this day forth those wishing to immigrate to America shall be admitted on the basis of their skills and their close relationship to those already here.

This is a simple test, and it is a fair test. Those who can contribute most to this country—to its growth, to its strength, to its spirit—will be the first that are admitted to this land.

The fairness of this standard is so self-evident that we may well wonder that it has not always been applied. Yet the fact is that for over four decades the immigration policy of the United States has been twisted and has been distorted by the harsh injustice of the national origins quota system.

Under that system the ability of new immigrants to come to America depended upon the country of their birth. Only 3 countries were allowed to supply 70 percent of all the immigrants.

Families were kept apart because a husband or a wife or a child had been born in the wrong place.

Men of needed skill and talent were denied entrance because they came from southern or eastern Europe or from one of the developing continents.

This system violated the basic principle of American democracy—the principle that values and rewards each man on the basis of his merit as a man.

It has been un-American in the highest sense, because it has been untrue to the faith that brought thousands to these shores even before we were a country.

Today, with my signature, this system is abolished.

Public domain. The full text is available at the website for the LBJ Presidential Library:

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/651003.asp>.



## Supporting Question 3

### Featured Source

**Source A:** OurDocuments.gov, description of the 1882 law restricting immigrants from China, “Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)” (excerpt), 1989

The Chinese Exclusion Act was approved on May 6, 1882. It was the first significant law restricting immigration into the United States.

In the spring of 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Chester A. Arthur. This act provided an absolute 10-year moratorium on Chinese labor immigration. For the first time, Federal law proscribed entry of an ethnic working group on the premise that it endangered the good order of certain localities.

The Chinese Exclusion Act required the few nonlaborers who sought entry to obtain certification from the Chinese government that they were qualified to immigrate. But this group found it increasingly difficult to prove that they were not laborers because the 1882 act defined excludables as “skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining.” Thus very few Chinese could enter the country under the 1882 law.

The 1882 exclusion act also placed new requirements on Chinese who had already entered the country. If they left the United States, they had to obtain certifications to re-enter. Congress, moreover, refused State and Federal courts the right to grant citizenship to Chinese resident aliens, although these courts could still deport them.

When the exclusion act expired in 1892, Congress extended it for 10 years in the form of the Geary Act. This extension, made permanent in 1902, added restrictions by requiring each Chinese resident to register and obtain a certificate of residence. Without a certificate, she or he faced deportation.

Public domain. Reprinted from OurDocuments.gov: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=47>. The passage originally appeared in *Teaching with Documents: Using Primary Sources from the National Archives*. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989: pp. 82–85.



## Supporting Question 3

### Featured Source

**Source B:** United States Department of State, Office of the Historian, description of the immigration law introducing quotas, “The Immigration Act of 1924 (the Johnson-Reed Act)” (excerpts), no date

The Immigration Act of 1924 limited the number of immigrants allowed entry into the United States through a national origins quota. The quota provided immigration visas to two percent of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States as of the 1890 national census. It completely excluded immigrants from Asia....

[In 1921], immigration expert and Republican Senator from Vermont William P. Dillingham introduced a measure to create immigration quotas, which he set at three percent of the total population of the foreign-born of each nationality in the United States as recorded in the 1910 census. This put the total number of visas available each year to new immigrants at 350,000. It did not, however, establish quotas of any kind for residents of the Western Hemisphere....

When the congressional debate over immigration began in 1924, the quota system was so well-established that no one questioned whether to maintain it, but rather discussed how to adjust it. Though there were advocates for raising quotas and allowing more people to enter, the champions of restriction triumphed. They created a plan that lowered the existing quota from three to two percent of the foreign born population. They also pushed back the year on which quota calculations were based from 1910 to 1890.

Another change to the quota altered the basis of the quota calculations. The quota had been based on the number of people born outside of the United States, or the number of immigrants in the United States. The new law traced the origins of the whole of the U.S. population, including natural-born citizens. The new quota calculations included large numbers of people of British descent whose families were long resident in the United States. As a result, the percentage of visas available to individuals from the British Isles and Western Europe increased, but newer immigration from other areas like Southern and Eastern Europe was limited.

Public domain. The full document is available at the US Department of State, Office of the Historian:  
<http://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/immigration-act>.



## Supporting Question 3

### Featured Source

**Source C:** Charles B. Keely, article describing effects of the 1965 immigration law, “Effects of the Immigration Act of 1965 on Selected Population Characteristics of Immigrants to the United States” (excerpts), *Demography*, May 1971

The basic policy change in the 1965 Act was the abolition of the national origins quota system.... All future immigrants would compete on a first-come, first-served basis for the limited immigrant visas without regard to country of origin.

An annual ceiling of 170,000 immigrant visas (exclusive of parents, spouses, and unmarried children of United States citizens) was established for all countries outside the Western Hemisphere. After July 1, 1968, immigrants from these non-Western Hemisphere countries would enter on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of place of birth or racial ancestry within a system of preference categories. Provision was also made that no more than 20,000 immigrants from any one non-Western Hemisphere country could enter during each fiscal year. An annual ceiling of 120,000 visas was imposed on the Western Hemisphere. The preference system would not be applied to immigrants from this part of the world....

A second important change in immigration policy contained in the 1965 Act was the placing of greater emphasis on family relationships as a basis for selection of immigrants. This change was accomplished in two ways. First, parents of United States citizens over the age of 21 were added to the list of immigrants not subject to numerical limitations of any sort. Second, the order and size of preference categories was altered so that family reunification was emphasized....Another difference is the system distinguishes between levels of skills giving precedence to the professional and higher level skills.

### Preference System, Immigration Act of 1965

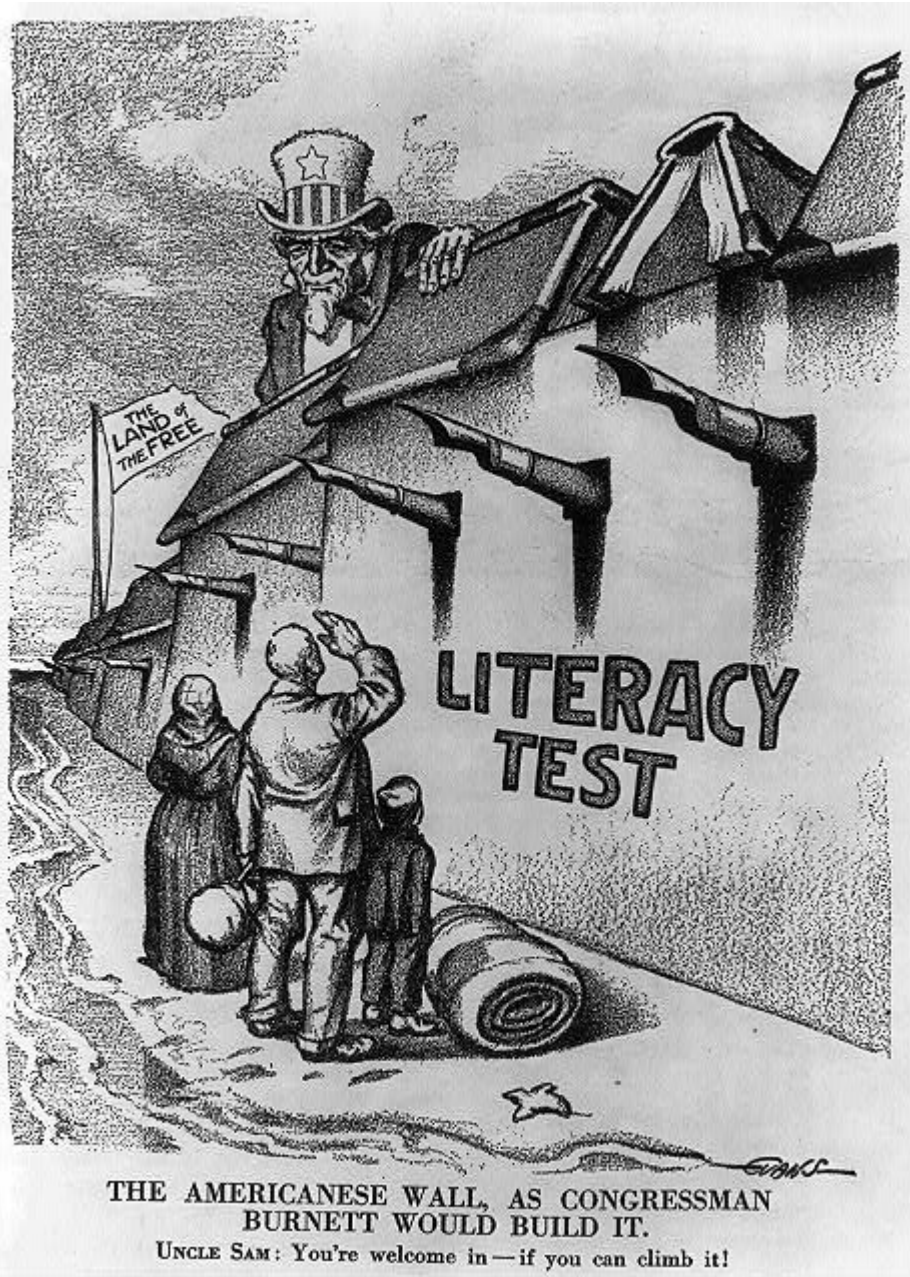
- (1) First preference: Unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens.
- (2) Second preference: Spouse and unmarried sons and daughters of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.
- (3) Third preference: Members of the professions of scientists and artists of exceptional ability.
- (4) Fourth preference: Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens.
- (5) Fifth preference: Brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens.
- (6) Sixth preference: Skilled and unskilled workers in occupations for which labor is in short supply in U.S.
- (7) Seventh preference: Refugees to whom conditional entry or adjustment of status may be granted.
- (8) Nonpreference: Any applicant not entitled to one of the above preferences.

With kind permission from Springer Science + Business Media: Charles B. Keely, “Effects of the Immigration Act of 1965 on Selected Population Characteristics of Immigrants to the United States”, *Demography*, May 1971.

## Supporting Question 4

**Featured Source**

**Source A:** Raymond O. Evans, cartoon, "The Americanese Wall—as Congressman [John Lawson] Burnett Would Build It," *Puck*, March 25, 1916



Public domain. Available from the Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3b00563/>.



## Supporting Question 4

### Featured Source

**Source B:** Senator Meyer Jacobstein of New York, congressional speech arguing against immigration restrictions, *Congressional Record* (excerpt), 1924

Perhaps the chief argument expressed or implied by those favoring the Johnson bill [the Immigration Act of 1924] is that the new immigrant is not of a type that can be assimilated or that he will not carry on the best traditions of the founders of our Nation, but, on the contrary, is likely to fill our jails, our almshouses, and other institutions that impose a great tax burden on the Nation.

Based on this prejudice and dislike, there has grown up an almost fanatical anti-immigration sentiment. But this charge against the newcomers is denied, and substantial evidence has been brought to prove that they do not furnish a disproportionate share of the inmates of these institutions.

One of the purposes in shifting to the 1890 census is to reduce the number of undesirables and defectives in our institutions. In fact, this aspect of the question must have made a very deep impression on the committee because it crops out on every occasion. The committee has unquestionably been influenced by the conclusions drawn from a study made by Dr. Laughlin.

This is not the first time in American history that such an anti-foreign hysteria has swept the country. Reread your American histories. Go back and glance through McMaster's History of the United States covering the years from 1820 to 1850. You will find there many pages devoted to the "100 per centers" of that time. So strange was the movement against the foreigner in those decades before the Civil War that a national political party, the "Know-Nothing Party," sought to ride into power on the crest of this fanatical wave.

In those early days, however, the anti-foreign movement, strangely enough, was directed against the very people whom we now seek to prefer—the English, the Irish, and the Germans. The calamity howlers of a century ago prophesied that these foreigners would drag our Nation to destruction.

The trouble is that the committee is suffering from a delusion. It is carried away with the belief that there is such a thing as a Nordic race which possesses all the virtues, and in like manner creates the fiction of an inferior group of peoples, for which no name has been invented.

Nothing is more un-American. Nothing could be more dangerous, in a land the Constitution of which says that all men are created equal, than to write into our law a theory which puts one race above another, which stamps one group of people as superior and another as inferior. The fact that it is camouflaged in a maze of statistics will not protect this Nation from the evil consequences of such an unscientific, un-American, wicked philosophy.

Public domain. *Congressional Record*, 1924.



## Supporting Question 4

### Featured Source

**Source C:** Jennifer Ludden, transcript of *All Things Considered* program about immigration policy, "1965 Immigration Law Changed Face of America" National Public Radio, May 9, 2006

*NOTE: Students should listen to the piece online at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5391395>.*

Transcript:

1965 Immigration Law Changed Face of America

May 09, 2006

MICHELE NORRIS, Host:

From NPR News, this is ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. I'm Michele Norris.

ROBERT SIEGEL, Host:

And I'm Robert Siegel.

As Congress considers sweeping changes to immigration law, nearly all the debate has centered on the problem of illegal immigration. There's been very little talk about the concerns of legal immigrants, the estimated three to four million people who are, as it's often said, already standing in line.

NORRIS: Today we're going to begin a three-part series about the process of immigrating to the U.S. legally. First, we're going to step back and look at the history of our immigration law. The current system dates to 1965. It marked a radical break with previous policy and has led to profound demographic changes. As NPR's Jennifer Ludden reports, that's not how the law was seen when it was passed.

JENNIFER LUDDEN: This is the kind of rally that was taking place back then.

(SOUNDBITE OF CIVIL RIGHTS RALLY)

LUDDEN: At the height of the Civil Rights movement, equality, democracy, freedom were the ideas that seized the nation. And against them, the way the United States decided which foreigners could and could not enter the country became an increasing embarrassment.

STEPHEN KLINEBERG: I mean, the law was just unbelievable in its clarity of racism.

LUDDEN: Stephen Klineberg is a sociologist at Rice University.

KLINEBERG: It declared that Northern Europeans are a superior subspecies of the white race. The Nordics were superior to the Alpines, who in turn were superior to the Mediterraneans, and all of them were superior to the Jews and the Asians.

LUDDEN: By the 1960s, Greeks, Poles, Portuguese and Italians were complaining that immigration quotas discriminated against them in favor of Western Europeans. The Democratic Party took up their cause, led by the new president. Here's John F. Kennedy speaking to the Italian migration in June 1963.



JOHN F. KENNEDY: There are still a good many brothers and sisters of American citizens who are unable to get here, who may have preferences as members of families, but because of the maldistribution of quotas in the European area, we have this situation, which has become nearly intolerable.

LUDDEN: After Kennedy's assassination, Congress passed and President Lyndon Johnson signed the Immigration and Nationality Services Act. It leveled the immigration playing field, giving a nearly equal shot to newcomers from every corner of the world. The ceremony was held at the foot of the symbolically powerful Statue of Liberty. But if cable TV networks had been there, they probably would not have broken in live. Here's how President Johnson began his speech.

LYNDON JOHNSON: This bill that we will sign today is not a revolutionary bill. It does not affect the lives of millions. It will not reshape the structure of our daily lives or really add importantly to either our wealth or our power.

LUDDEN: Hearing that now, it is an amazing statement because it proved so wrong. So how could Johnson say that? Sociologist Klineberg says the government's newfound sense of egalitarianism only went so far. The central purpose of the new immigration law was to reunite families.

KLINEBERG: So the Congress then said, well, nothing's going to change, because we're going to give preference to people who are already, who are related to people who are already here. Then it added another provision, if you were a professional of exceptional ability, if you have skills that are in demonstrably short supply, you, too, can come to the head of the line.

Congress was saying in its debates, we need to open the door for some more British doctors, some more German engineers. It never occurred to anyone, literally, that there were going to be African doctors, Indian engineers, Chinese computer programmers who'd be able, for the first time in the 20th century, to immigrate to America.

LUDDEN: In fact, expert after expert had testified before Congress that little would change. Secretary of State Dean Rusk repeatedly stressed the issue wasn't the numbers. No more people were likely to come, it was simply the principle.

Listen to this reading of an exchange between Secretary Rusk and a skeptical Senator Sam Irvin, Democrat of North Carolina.

Unidentified Man #1: You have in India a lot of people who would like to get into this country, do you not?

Unidentified Man #2: We don't have a long waiting list.

Man #1: It is because they haven't been able to get in. Even with a bleak opportunity to get in, as they have, they have 150 applications for every visa that could be issued.

NORRIS: Yes, the present estimate, based upon the best information we can get, is there might be, say, 8,000 immigrants from India in the next five years. In other words, I don't think we have a particular picture of a world situation where everybody is just straining to move to the United States.

OTIS GRAHAM: When I first started studying this, I thought, now they're lying, because they want this thing to pass.

LUDDEN: But historian Otis Graham, professor emeritus of the University of California at Santa Barbara, changed his mind.

GRAHAM: I changed my mind because I've found, in the research that I've been able to do, that so many lobbyists that followed this issue, so many labor union executives that followed this issue, so many church people, so many of those involved said the same thing. So you find ignorance three feet deep. Maybe ignorance is the answer.

KAREN NARASAKI: I often wonder whether some of the people knew, but perhaps weren't sharing that with other people. Because it would scare them.

LUDDEN: Karen Narasaki heads the Asian American Justice Center. She finds the 1965 immigration overhaul all the more extraordinary because there's evidence it was not popular with the public.

NARASAKI: It was not what people were marching in the streets over in the 1960s. It was really a group of political elites who, I think, were trying to look into the future of the United States. And again, it was the issue of, are we going to be true to what we say our values are?

MARIAN SMITH: Well here you are in the CIS Historical Reference Library, our history office and library.

LUDDEN: Marian Smith is the historian for Citizenship and Immigration Services, one of the agencies that replaced the old INS. The files of documents here can be mundane, but the walls are framed with lovely older maps, population charts and demographic bar graphs.

SMITH: Apparently we had money back then to actually pay for these kind of color lithographs that would be printed each year.

LUDDEN: In 1965, the political elite on Capitol Hill may not have predicted a mass increase in immigration, but Marian Smith pulls out a little agency booklet from the 1966 that certainly did. It explains how each provision in the new law would lead to a rapid increase in applications, a big jump in workload and more and more so as word trickled out to those newly eligible to come. Smith says a lifetime of immigration backlogs had built up among America's foreign-born minorities.

SMITH: And so, they will petition for their family members and they will petition for their family members. And whether we're talking about immigrants from Asia, Latin America, Africa, all these portions of the world where there is a demand for immigration. After World War II and with the post colonial status of many of these places, the shifting populations, the ability sometimes for people now to join their family in America, that maybe the only reason wasn't the inability to get a quota visa for the United States. Maybe they had trouble getting out before.

LUDDEN: There were other things no one could have predicted, how immigration from Europe dropped off because of lower birth rates and higher standards of living. How Africa imploded and wars and famine there and elsewhere produced waves of refugees. And then the millions of illegal immigrants.

But it's the system of family-based immigration that's driven this country's profound demographic transformation. Over time, in a process critics call chain migration, entire families have reestablished themselves in the U.S. Historian Otis Graham thinks the policy has been a terrible mistake.

GRAHAM: Family reunification puts the decision as to who comes to America in the hands of foreigners. Those decisions are out of the hands of the Congress. They just set up a formula and its kinship. Frankly, it could be called nepotism.

LUDDEN: In fact, President Kennedy's original proposal made skills-based migration the priority. But Graham says a broad lobby pushed for the greater emphasis on families. It included churches, ethnic groups whose members had family in the old country and the AFL-CIO. Graham says the union worried about competition from too many highly skilled newcomers.

For Karen Narasaki of the Asian American Justice Center, the family focus makes sense.

**NARASAKI:** If you think about families and, you know, if you think about the roles that, say, your parents play when you have children. And how they help you, you know, take care of the newborns and provide support for you or how your brothers and sisters in the Asian community, what often happens is brothers and sisters get together and they buy a home together. They pool their money and they buy a business together. And so it, you know, family is very important to not just the social, emotional wellbeing, but also the economic well being of these communities.

(SOUNDBITE OF NATURALIZATION CEREMONY)

**LUDDEN:** At a recent naturalization ceremony, 32 immigrants gather for their oath in the ornate rotunda of Washington's National Archives. Of them, three are from Western Europe. The rest of those gaining citizenship here are overwhelmingly from Africa, Latin American and Asia. At a basement reception, the new citizens pose for pictures holding tiny American flags and a gift bag that includes a refrigerator magnet of the U.S. Constitution and an AT&T prepaid calling card. One older woman is radiant in her Sunday best with a broad-brimmed hat.

**HANNAH INDOVISI:** I'm from Nigeria. My name is Hannah Indovisi. And you know the meaning of Indovisi? It means life is first.

**LUDDEN:** And Indovisi was sponsored by her U.S. citizen son, Samuel.

**SAMUEL INDOVISI:** Everybody in the world — I don't know if you know this — wants to come to the United States of America. All you need to do is go to the embassy, any embassy, and see long, long, long lines of people who want to come here.

**LUDDEN:** In fact, Indovisi has a long line of relatives still in Nigeria who'd love to come. It's the same with a brand new citizen munching cookies nearby.

**AMA BALI:** My name is Ama Bali and I'm from Sudan. Yes, I have my parents. I have sisters. I have brothers. And I'm going to apply for them to come here soon. I hope so.

**LUDDEN:** Are they excited for that?

**BALI:** Definitely, definitely. I hope they will be here soon.

**LUDDEN:** It may not be soon at all though. The immigration system set up specifically to reunite families is so overwhelmed with applicants, relatives who wait their turn must endure being divided for years. That's tomorrow's story.

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