

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 3

Waiting in Line Game

1. Prepare. In this game, students role play the experiences of people attempting to immigrate to the United States. Some of the students will be border agents who decide who can enter the country or lawyers who provide assistance to immigrants. The remaining students will be prospective immigrants from different countries. Print four to six copies of *Immigration Rules* to give to the border agents and lawyers. Cut out story cards for the rest of the students from *Immigrant Identities*. Set up the classroom so that there is a large open space in the middle. Lay down a long piece of masking tape or set up four or five chairs down the middle of the room to serve as the “border” for the game.

2. Explain. Tell students that they will now be taking on the identity of someone in the immigration system. Choose three or four students to be border agents, and one or two students to be lawyers. Give them each *Immigration Rules* and ask them to read the instructions silently. They can gather in a group and discuss the rules in order to understand them better, but they should talk quietly so that the other students cannot overhear.

Give each of the remaining students a story card and explain that they will be playing the role of people hoping to immigrate to the United States. Ask them to familiarize themselves with their story. Although their story cards contain several facts about their character’s life, they must choose just one fact to tell the border agent. They must decide which part of their story is the most likely to grant them access to the United States. Explain that some students have identities that will allow them to immigrate very easily, while others will have to wait a few minutes before entering the country, and others may not have a way to immigrate legally at all. Answer any questions that the students have about their roles or the rules of the system before moving on with the simulation.

3. Play the game. Have the border agents stand or sit on the border in the middle of the room. Students who want to immigrate can go to any of the agents and tell them **one** fact from their card. If the fact does not fit with the rules the border agents were given, the person is not allowed to immigrate and must go to the back of the line and try again with a different fact from their card. Students who are given waiting times should stand to one side of the border agents until their time is up.

Students wanting to immigrate can ask the lawyers for assistance with their case. The immigrants should read their story cards to a lawyer, who can tell them what fact to use with the border agents. The immigrant cannot talk to the lawyer while waiting in line – the consultation must happen first, and then the immigrant can get in line. If students are having difficulty with a particular identity or rule, consult the answer key on page 56 for who is eligible to enter and why.

Stop the activity after 5-10 minutes (once some, but not all, of the students have managed to immigrate). Some students may find that they could not cross during the activity, either because their

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wait was too long or because they were not eligible to enter the country. Remind students that this is a reality in the immigration system: the wait time for certain visas is so long that people from certain countries must wait for decades before they have a chance of entering the United States, and many people cannot immigrate at all.

Before students leave their places in the game, ask a few of the immigrant students to read their country and a statement or two from their card. Choose students in all the stages of the process: successful immigrants, those serving wait periods, those in line with immigration, and those denied entry.

4. Debrief. Discuss the game as a class using the following questions:

Questions for Discussion

- ? Was it difficult to decide how to tell your story to the border agent?
- ? Which reasons for entering the country did the border agents accept? Which reasons did they reject?
- ? Which countries had a long wait time? Why might that be?
- ? Did the border agents ever feel uncomfortable rejecting someone who wanted to immigrate? Which stories were hard to reject?
- ? For those of you with a long wait time, how did it feel when people from other countries were able to enter the country much faster than you?
- ? For those of you who could not enter the United States during the time allowed for the activity, how did that make you feel? What would you do if you were in that position in real life?
- ? Based on this game, do you think the process of immigrating to the United States is fair to everyone?

IMMIGRATION RULES

Border agents: Your job is to enforce the rules below. When you are interviewing someone wanting to immigrate, ask them for ONE fact that shows why they should be admitted to the United States. If their fact does not fall into the categories below, they MUST return to the end of the line. If they are eligible to come into the United States, your next job is to ask them what country they are from. If they are from one of the four countries listed below, let them know that they have a waiting time, and direct them to stand to one side until their waiting period is over.

Lawyers: Your job is to help immigrants navigate the system. If someone approaches you for legal help, ask them to tell you ALL the facts on their story card. Choose the fact that most closely fits one of the categories below – this is what they should tell the border agent. You can do nothing about the wait times.

Rules for admittance:

Applicants can enter the country...











1. If they have a **citizen relative** who is a:
 - Parent
 - Child
 - Spouse
 - Sibling
2. If they have a **permanent resident relative** who is a:
 - Spouse
 - Parent
3. If they have a **job offer** AND at least a college degree
4. If they are **extremely famous** or rich
5. If they are being **personally threatened** with death or physical violence for their race, religion, or politics (a generally unsafe or violent environment does **not** count)

Wait times:











People who meet one of these criteria but are from the following countries **must wait five minutes** before entering:

- Mexico
- China
- India
- Philippines











IMMIGRANT IDENTITIES

<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Guatemala</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My mom is a U.S. citizen. 2. I'm excited to go to the United States, because I can get a better education there. 3. I am fluent in English. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: India</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My aunt and uncle live in the United States. 2. I have a PhD in chemistry and a job offer to be a college professor in Boston. 3. I went to college in the United States.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Morocco</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am a lawyer in my home country. 2. I know all about the U.S. Constitution and laws. 3. I want to come to the U.S. because I believe in democracy and freedom. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Honduras</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have three children, and I'm worried about their safety because our city has a lot of violent crime. 2. I am in training to be an electrician. 3. I am a lay minister in my local church.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Mexico</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am not earning enough money to support my family. 2. I have a college degree, so I found a job as a teacher in the United States. 3. I have two uncles who are U.S. citizens. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Bangladesh</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My dad is a citizen of the United States. 2. I love soccer and want to play for the U.S. national team. 3. I just graduated from college and am looking for a job.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Philippines</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My mother is a citizen of the United States. 2. My mother is sick, and she needs me to come live with her and take care of her. 3. I am trained as a nurse. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: South Africa</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My brother is a citizen of the United States. 2. I work as a computer technician in my home country, and this skill will be helpful in the United States. 3. I plan to open a computer repair business.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Ukraine</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have five cousins living in the U.S. 2. I am a nurse with a college degree, and I found a job at a U.S. hospital. 3. I want to bring my family to the United States so that my children can have more opportunities. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Cambodia</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am a high school student who wants to serve in the U.S. military. 2. My mom is a U.S. permanent resident. 3. I have an uncle and two cousins who are U.S. citizens.

IMMIGRANT IDENTITIES

<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: China</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have a PhD in engineering and have been offered a job in the United States. 2. I am sick of living in a country with no free speech, so I want to come to the U.S. 3. I have patented several inventions. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Mexico</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am a corn farmer and could easily find a job as a farm worker in the United States. 2. My brother and sister are both U.S. citizens. 3. I have visited the United States many times and I love the country.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Russia</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am an Olympic medalist in figure skating. 2. I am very famous all over the world for my figure skating. 3. I already have a job lined up as a figure skating coach in the United States. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Lebanon</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My grandparents are permanent residents. 2. My grandparents own a successful restaurant and have offered me a job. 3. My parents died recently, so I want to move to be with the rest of my family.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Jamaica</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My wife is a permanent resident of the United States. 2. My wife is pregnant with our first child, so I want to be there for her. 3. I have a college degree in accounting, and I plan to find a job as an accountant. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Ecuador</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My mother lives in the U.S. but doesn't have legal status. 2. I plan to open my own store in the United States, which will create jobs. 3. I have trouble earning enough money to feed my family because my town is so poor.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Spain</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am one of the most famous film directors in the world. 2. My film won an Oscar for Best Foreign Film at last year's Academy Awards. 3. I have a contract to direct a new film in the United States. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Senegal</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My daughter is a U.S. citizen. 2. My husband just died, and I can't take care of our house by myself. 3. My daughter thinks I will like the United States and offered to let me move in with her.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Philippines</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have been accepted to a U.S. college. 2. I did a high school student exchange program with an American family, and they will let me live with them during college. 3. They live in the same state as my sister, who is a citizen of the United States. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Japan</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I love American culture, and have always wanted to move to the United States. 2. I am fluent in English and graduated in the top 5% of my college class. 3. I want to live with my father, who is a U.S. citizen.

IMMIGRANT IDENTITIES

<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Brazil</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am fluent in five languages, including English. 2. I have been to the United States many times on business trips. 3. I am very wealthy and would like to invest \$10 million dollars in an American company. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Argentina</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My aunt and uncle are U.S. citizens. 2. My uncle is a lawyer, and he is helping me to apply to live in the United States. 3. I just graduated with a degree in anthropology and got a job offer from a museum in the United States.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: India</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am a very famous Bollywood actress, and I am beginning to star in American movies. 2. I have been to the United States a couple of times on press tours. 3. My manager thinks I should move to Los Angeles. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Belarus</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I went to college in the United States and have many friends there. 2. I really liked living in the United States and want to move back. 3. I plan to move in with my sister, who is a U.S. citizen.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Afghanistan</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I want to move to the U.S. to protect my son from the war and violence in my country. 2. We will move in with my brother, who is a U.S. permanent resident. 3. My brother has already found me a job at a store near his house. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Somalia</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My country has been torn apart by a violent civil war. 2. One of the rebel groups has threatened to kill me for speaking out against them. 3. Many people from my hometown already live in the United States.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: France</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I graduated from college with a degree in business. 2. I have a lot of work experience at very successful companies. 3. I plan to use my experience to start my own business in the United States. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Egypt</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have visited my uncle, who is a U.S. citizen, many times at his home in California. 2. I speak English fluently. 3. I just graduated from college, and my uncle found me a job at the bank where he works.
<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Burma</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My country is ruled by a dictatorship, so I want to move somewhere I can be free. 2. The army came to my village and tried to kill me for being from a minority ethnic group. 3. An American church group visited my village and encouraged us to move to the U.S. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Country of Origin: Canada</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am a top high school hockey player here and I want to play at a U.S. college. 2. My parents lived in Vermont for a few years before I was born. 3. My older brother is a U.S. citizen.

TEACHER GUIDE TO WAITING IN LINE

Country	Eligibility and basis for admission to the United States
Afghanistan	Not eligible
Argentina	I just graduated with a degree in anthropology and got a job offer from a museum in the United States.
Bangladesh	My dad is a citizen of the United States.
Belarus	I plan to move in with my sister, who is a U.S. citizen.
Brazil	I am very wealthy and would like to invest \$10 million dollars in an American company.
Burma	The army came to my village and tried to kill me for being from a minority ethnic group.
Cambodia	My mom is a U.S. permanent resident.
Canada	My older brother is a U.S. citizen.
China (5 minute wait)	I have a PhD in engineering and have been offered a job in the United States.
Ecuador	Not eligible
Egypt	I just graduated from college, and my uncle found me a job at the bank where he works.
France	Not eligible
Guatemala	My mom is a U.S. citizen.
Honduras	Not eligible
India 1 (5 minute wait)	I have a PhD in chemistry and a job offer to be a college professor in Boston.
India 2 (5 minute wait)	I am a very famous Bollywood actress, and I am beginning to star in American movies.
Jamaica	My wife is a permanent resident of the United States.
Japan	I want to live with my father, who is a U.S. citizen.
Lebanon	Not eligible
Mexico 1 (5 minute wait)	I have a college degree, so I found a job as a teacher in the United States.
Mexico 2 (5 minute wait)	My brother and sister are both U.S. citizens.
Morocco	Not eligible
Philippines 1 (5 minute wait)	My mother is a citizen of the United States.
Philippines 2 (5 minute wait)	They live in the same state as my sister, who is a citizen of the United States.
Russia	I am very famous all over the world for my figure skating.
Senegal	My daughter is a U.S. citizen.
Somalia	One of the rebel groups has threatened to kill me for speaking out against them.
South Africa	My brother is a citizen of the United States.
Spain	I am one of the most famous film directors in the world.
Ukraine	I am a nurse with a college degree, and I found a job at a U.S. hospital.