PUSH AND PULL FACTORS OF IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

LESSON PACKAGE FOR GRADES 9 TO 12

THEME: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION | SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY
WE Are Canada

PUSH AND PULL FACTORS OF IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

WE LEARNING FRAMEWORK SKILLS LEGEND:

THEME: Diversity and Inclusion
SUBJECT: Geography
GRADE LEVEL: Grades 9 to 12

LESSON PACKAGE OVERVIEW:

Starting with the question, “Why Canada?”, students will investigate the concept of what motivates people to immigrate to Canada. They will consider why an immigrant might choose to use measurable data to help decide where to go. Students will research information on Canada’s current standing in the world as a potential country for people to immigrate to.

As an extension activity, students are invited to select one of the countries explored through the lesson and create a welcome package for a new immigrant from their selected country. Community involvement occurs when the students deliver (or mail) pamphlets to their local community centre specializing in newcomer support.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

► Push: What are the circumstances that make a person want to leave their home country?
► Pull: What are the advantages Canada has that make a person want to live here?
► Based on an understanding of what motivates people, how does your school community and Canada benefit from newcomers?

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:

• Learn and apply new knowledge about immigration patterns in order to better understand and empathize with the needs of new Canadians.
• Research and compare different countries in order to better understand why a potential immigrant would choose to live in Canada over other countries.
• Consider the needs of new Canadians while studying the similarities and differences in individuals.
• Compare different countries’ quality of life factors.
• Evaluate the effectiveness of laws and policies that strengthen connections between individuals and their communities and that promote personal and community safety.
• Action plan and take action on a current issue to create awareness within local and national communities and practice social responsibility and respect for diversity.

WORD BANK

Child mortality—the death of children under the age of five, often expressed as a rate per 1,000 live births
Cost of living—the total expenses associated with living in an area, including housing, taxes, food, clothing, health care and day-to-day expenses
Economic—related to the global system of production and consumption of wealth, goods and services
Family class—immigration based on a sponsorship by a spouse, parent, child or other relative
Humanitarian immigrant—a person who is allowed to immigrate to a country because of danger in their current country of residence
Permanent residency—the status of a non-citizen being allowed to live in a country for as long as they choose
Pull factor—a factor that contributes to a person wanting to live in a particular country
Push factor—a factor that makes a person want to leave their country
Quality of life—the level of positive and negative well-being of a person
Undernourished—not receiving enough nutrition for proper growth and development
Work permit—an official document that allows a foreign worker to work in a particular country

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

• Computer with Internet capabilities, speakers, projector and screen
• Library or computer lab access
• Paper, poster paper
• Markers, coloured pencils
• Photos, artwork, magazines (for clippings)

Recommended Assessment for Learning:

You know your students best—their learning styles and preferences, skill levels, and knowledge. You are also best positioned to anticipate the habits of mind that will make this lesson package successful.

In this lesson package, teaching strategies include collaborative group work, class discussion and modeling, and suggestions for demonstration of learning include written reflection, exit tickets, and student-generated discussion. Please take a moment to make any accommodations or modifications that serve your students.
LESSON 1:
PUSH AND PULL: WHAT INFLUENCES IMMIGRATION

SUGGESTED TIME:
75 minutes

Investigate and Learn

EDUCATOR’S NOTE: Students should have prior knowledge about the parts of a bar graph and how to read and understand the information within a bar graph.

1. Show students the following Canadian video titled “Push and pull factors in Immigration”: goo.gl/kjp5gu. After, reiterate that a push factor is anything that drives someone to leave their home country, while a pull factor is something that attracts someone to a country. All immigrants have a combination of these push and pull factors that contribute to their decision-making process. For example, a push factor may be a war or a lack of job opportunities in a chosen field. A pull factor may be safety or a romantic relationship.

2. Based on the information from the video, ask students, “What patterns did we see that cause people to leave their country?” Discuss the answers and have students write them on the board. The teacher can organize answers by themes like economic, humanitarian or family.

3. Explain that there are three common categories for immigration to Canada: humanitarian, family and economic. Show students the government website “Notice-Supplementary Information to the 2014 Immigration Level Plan”: goo.gl/vYY3Ck. It explains the three categories and provides statistics for the amounts as well as subgroups of each category. Reiterate:
   • Economic immigrants are people with specialized skills, or who are already employed by a business here in Canada.
   • Family immigrants are people who have a close family member already in Canada who is willing and able to support the immigrant if the need arises.
   • Humanitarian immigrants are people who would be in danger in their home countries, and need to be under the protection of the Canadian government.

4. Discuss in small groups: why does Canada seem to have a preference for immigrants coming to Canada under the “economic” class? Engage in a full class discussion with students about this. Guide them to understand that it’s about more than just money: Canada needs to ensure that supports are in place for the immigrant so that they can happily and healthily integrate into Canadian society. The government would prefer that supports come from employment or from family members, but the government is prepared to offer supports as needed.

5. Divide the class into three groups: economic class, family class and humanitarian consideration. Using the push and pull factors on the board, have groups create a fictional life story for an immigrant and their family. Why did they choose to come to Canada? What kinds of supports will they need to be healthy when they get to Canada and how will they get them?

6. Ask a representative or two from each group to introduce their hypothetical immigrant family’s story to the class. At the end, summarize similarities and differences.

EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT: As homework, ask students to speak with a parent or grandparent about their family history. Ask them to find answers to the following three questions, which will be discussed in the next class:
   • What were the push factors that led their family to leave their home country?
   • What pull factors made them choose to come to Canada?
   • Which of the three main kinds of modern immigrant would your family have most likely been categorized as?

EDUCATOR’S NOTE:
   • For students who may not be able to access their family histories and for Indigenous students whose families did not immigrate, have students consider push and pull factors that may have led them to the city or town they currently live in or the factors that have kept the family in one location.
   • As an alternative to this assignment, a student could research one particular ethnic group and find the push and pull factors for that group coming to Canada instead. The example may be current or historical. Then have students answer the above questions to the best of their ability based on that immigrant group’s experience.
LES
2:
UNDERSTANDING THE PULL FACTOR

SUGGESTED TIME:
75 minutes

1. Review three of the main categories for immigration—humanitarian, family and economic—and how there is a wide variety of reasons people might choose to leave their countries (push factors) and come to Canada (pull factors). Explain that today the class will be looking closer at pull factors to better understand what makes Canada a place that attracts newcomers.

2. **RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING:** Ask students to think about the information they learned in the previous lesson regarding “pull” factors. Ask students: What does “quality of life” mean to you? As a class, brainstorm potential answers. Encourage ideas with the following examples: health care, freedom of speech, safety/crime rates, food accessibility/availability, job security, etc. As students supply ideas, record them on the board.

3. Link students’ brainstorming efforts with their hypothetical family stories from Lesson 1: Push and Pull: What Influences Immigration, and have them think about what “pulls” their hypothetical families to Canada. Ask students to think about what their hypothetical family’s needs will be as they make Canada their new home.

4. Ask students: Will all immigrants be looking for the same qualities in a new country? Discuss. Remind students of the variety of push and pull factors and categories of immigrants. Would a refugee be looking for the same characteristics as an investor? What sorts of similar qualities would they look for? What different qualities?

5. Divide students into groups of four or five and ask them to create a list of characteristics that an immigrant might be looking for in a new country. As they discuss, draw five circles on the board. When they’ve created their lists, ask a representative to share them with the class by writing them on the board.

6. Explain that every immigrant is looking for something different and they might not be able to find everything they want to know through research on the Internet or otherwise. Religious freedom, for instance, might be hard to measure. However, safety can be measured and if people are and feel safe, they likely experience religious freedom. An immigrant may look for qualities that may be measured, use them to compare various countries and make inferences based on that information.

Some qualities that a potential immigrant might want to consider are the following:

- Food accessibility, affordability and availability: How easy is it to eat healthy food in that country? Are there food shortages? Is the food affordable? Is it easy to access? Is it culturally appropriate?

- Child mortality: High mortality rates are often a sign of poor, inaccessible or unaffordable health care. Child mortality is often used as an overall measurement of health care systems, but there are also other contributing factors.

- Access to safe drinking water: In some countries, including parts of Canada, it can be difficult to obtain clean, drinkable water. Because water is vital to good health, an immigrant might want to make sure that he or she is moving to a place where access to safe water is not a problem.

- Safety: The safety index takes into account incidents like crime and war. An immigrant will want to be assured of safety, especially if they are bringing family.

- Cost of living: This measures how much provisions like food and shelter cost, compared to how much money the average person makes. If a person is looking for a place where they can be financially stable, they will look for a place with a low cost of living.

7. **RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING:** Returning to the student-generated lists of qualities an immigrant might look for, fill in the five blank circles as: “food,” “health,” “water,” “safety” and “cost of living.” Draw connections. For example, jobs and poverty may connect to cost of living, while health may connect to water, food and safety. This collection of thinking will look similar to a word web. Ample space allows for more reflection.

EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT: In the library or computer lab, instruct students to use the Canadian Geographic Human Development Index [goo.gl/ReX4DR](http://goo.gl/ReX4DR) and the Quality of Life Index [goo.gl/yjUKal](http://goo.gl/yjUKal) to compare three countries. For each of the three countries, they will use the following five measures:

- Food availability (listed as “undernourished” on the Canadian Geographic map)
- Child mortality
- Access to safe drinking water
- Safety
- Cost of living

Have students think about their hypothetical family story from the first lesson. What would be their “pull”? Ask the class, how does Canada rank as a destination for immigrants in comparison to other countries? Students should find that Canada consistently ranks near the top, if not at the top, of each list. Why is it good for Canada to rank consistently high on these issues? Were there factors that could not be measured that a potential newcomer would want to investigate further? If you were an immigrant, would Canada seem like a good place to go?
LESSON 3: HOW CAN WE SUPPORT NEWCOMERS?

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

Action Plan

1. Tell students that they will be creating a welcome message for newcomers to Canada. The target audience is a person or a family that has chosen to relocate from their homeland to apply for permanent residency in this country.

2. Students are encouraged to create their messages for newcomers with specific information that would be useful and appropriate for a person coming from a country they have previously studied in past lessons or a country with which they identify, either through personal interest or their family’s affiliation.

3. Walk students through the steps of creating an individual written letter (or video) to their intended recipient(s) to help them understand the following:
   a. Why Canada is a great “fit” for them, based upon their needs
   b. The types of immigration categories they need to understand and where you think they would fit
   c. Based on what you know about them, what they can expect during their first few months in Canada
   d. How you and your school (if applicable) will support them during this transition time

4. Write the following website on the board: kidsnewtocanada.ca/beyond/resources. Tell students that this website has useful resources and links to information to help newcomers settle comfortably into their lives here in Canada.

5. Ask students if they would like to further commit to being a part of moving toward diversity and inclusion by taking the WE Are Canada Pledge. If students are interested, visit WE.ca for more information and to take the pledge.

6. RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: Create a rubric based on depth of knowledge of push/pull factors as well as insight into why Canada is a good choice based on what they learned as a result of constructing their hypothetical family’s story.

Take Action

7. Connect with school administrators and guidance counsellors to share student work and help create a more inclusive school community.

8. Ask students to use information from their video and/or letter to help new students. Encourage students to remain open to the idea of meeting new students at their school after completing this exercise.

9. Students can also connect with community centres or social service providers in their community to share the brochures. Find a printing house that will print at a discounted rate and distribute the brochures. If possible, check in with the community centres and social service providers for feedback.

Report and Celebrate

10. RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: Encourage students to reflect by writing a response using the following questions:
   a. As a Canadian and a global thinker, what have you learned about immigration that promotes diversity and inclusion?
   b. How can you continue to apply and share what you have learned about diversity and inclusion?
   c. As a young member of society, what is your role locally, nationally and internationally to promote diversity and inclusion?