

Migrant Workers in Iowa*

Worksheet: [PDF]

Grade Level: Secondary (grades 7-12)

Time Required: One forty-five to fifty minute class period

Standards (National):

NSS-USH.9-12.10 Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the present): Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary United States

Standard 2A: The student understands economic patterns since 1968.

- Analyze the economic and social effects of the sharp increase in the labor force participation of women and new immigrants (7-12).

Standard 2B: The Student understands the new immigration and demographic shifts.

- Analyze the new immigration policies after 1965 and the push-pull factors that prompted a new wave of immigrants (5-12).
- Identify the major issues that affected immigrants and explain the conflicts these issues engendered (9-12).

Source: [UCLA National Center for History in the Schools](#)

Standards (State):

[Iowa Core Curriculum](#)

Behavioral Sciences

- Understand how social status, social groups, social change, and social institutions influence individual and group behaviors
- Understand the local, state, regional, national, and international factors that create patterns of interdependence in the global economy

Geography

- Understand how human factors and the distribution of resources affect the development of society and the movement of populations

History

- Understand the effect of economic needs and wants on individual and group decisions
- Understand cause and effect relationships and other historical thinking skills in order to interpret events and issues

[NCSS Curriculum Standards Themes](#)

Culture

People, places, and Environments

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

Global Connections

Inquiry Questions:

- What is a “migrant worker”? How does it differ from “immigrant”?
- Why did migrant workers come to Iowa in the 1960s?
- How has the migrant worker population changed since the 1960s?
- What struggles do migrant workers face?
- How are children of migrant workers affected?
- How do the problems of migrant workers compare to those of laborers in the nineteenth century?
- What has been done to assist migrant worker populations in Iowa?

Objectives: Students will

- Understand the difference between migrant workers and immigrants.
- Read and analyze newspaper articles about migrant workers in Iowa.
- Examine and analyze photographs of migrant workers in Iowa.
- Compare migrant worker populations of the 1960s to those of today and to nineteenth century laborers.
- Compare migrant population statistics of Iowa to other U.S. states.
- Analyze why certain states have higher foreign-born populations than others.

Materials Required:

1. Products for introduction activity (clothing, oranges, soybeans, packaging from a pork product, toy car, radio or flash drive, toy tractor, etc.)
2. Online or print access to the following **articles** from the [Iowa Digital Library](#)
 - [“\\$80,716 for N. Iowa Migrants,” 1967](#)
 - [“Iowa Improves the Lot of the Migratory Worker,” 1968](#)
 - [“Migrant housing improves,” 1960s](#)
 - [“New Mexican Recreational Center,” 1949](#)
 - [“Newspaper clippings from migrant worker scrapbook,” 1967](#)
 - [“Protecting Migrant Children,” 1967](#)
 - [“The Onion Harvest,” 1980s](#)
 - [“Exploitation of Children,” 1967](#)
 - [“‘Catch-up’ aids youths,” 1960s](#)
3. Online or print access to the following **images** from the [Iowa Digital Library](#)
 - [Children participating in migrant education program, Mason City, Iowa, 1960s](#)
 - [Virginia and Julia Guzman in kitchen, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa, 1960s](#)
 - [Mason City \(Iowa\) Public Library Annual Report, 1965](#)
4. [The Immigrant Population of the United States in 2006: A Report by the Federation for American Immigration Reform.](#)
5. *Migrant Workers in Iowa: 1960s to Today* worksheet

Prerequisite Knowledge:

1. United States geography
2. Iowa's economy, industry, and resources
3. Labor issues of the nineteenth century

Procedure:

A. Introduction

1. Have an array of products on a table, such as clothing, oranges, soybeans (or soy products), packaging from a pork product, toy car (as representation of the auto industry), radio or flash drive, toy tractor, etc.
2. Briefly introduce each item to the students and then have students gather around the table and write down which items they think involve migrant or immigrant labor. Students should further specify which items likely come from Iowa.
3. Discuss students' conclusions.
 - a. Oranges- likely use migrant or immigrant labor, not from Iowa
 - b. Clothing- most clothing comes from outside the U.S. (China, Vietnam, India, etc.)
 - c. Soybeans- likely use migrant or immigrant labor, from Iowa
 - d. Pork products- likely use migrant or immigrant labor, from Iowa
 - e. Toy car- cars produced in U.S. do not often use migrant or immigrant labor
 - f. Electronics- often designed in the U.S. but manufactured in foreign countries like China, not uncommon for immigrants to be involved in the design aspect
 - g. Tractors- from Iowa, but do not often employ migrant or immigrant workers

B. Migrant vs. Immigrant

1. Have students define the terms "migrant worker" and "immigrant" as well as list similarities and differences. Ask volunteers to share and discuss answers. Record similarities and differences on overhead or chalkboard.
 - a. Migrant worker: "a person who moves regularly in order to find work especially in harvesting crops" (Merriam-Webster)
 - b. Immigrant: "a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence" (Merriam-Webster)
2. Brainstorm various industries that migrant workers and immigrants would be involved in (migrant workers- mostly agricultural; immigrants- almost anything).

C. Migrant workers in Iowa

1. Have student read and analyze the following articles and photographs.

Newspaper articles

["\\$80,716 for N. Iowa Migrants," 1967](#)

["Iowa Improves the Lot of the Migratory Worker," 1968](#)

["Migrant housing improves," 1960s](#)

["New Mexican Recreational Center," 1949](#)

["Newspaper clippings from migrant worker scrapbook," 1967](#)

["Protecting Migrant Children," 1967](#)

["The Onion Harvest," 1980s](#)

["Exploitation of Children," 1967](#)

["Catch-up' aids youths," 1960s](#)

Photographs

[Children participating in migrant education program, Mason City, Iowa, 1960s](#)

[Virginia and Julia Guzman in kitchen, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa, 1960s](#)

[Mason City \(Iowa\) Public Library Annual Report, 1965](#)

[“The Immigrant Population of the United States in 2006: A Report by the Federation for American Immigration Reform”](#)

Assessment:

As students are reading the articles and examining the photographs, have them fill out the *Migrant Workers in Iowa: 1960s to Today* worksheet, which will be turned in for credit.

Enrichment/Remediation:

- Provide students an outline to assist with reading the articles.
- Conclude the activity by discussing what else could or should be done to help migrant workers in Iowa.
- Students may be interested in reading [Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America](#) by Stephen G. Bloom.
- For more information on the Migrant Action Program see [Helping Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Families. Annual Report 1971 \[Migrant Action Program, Mason City, Iowa\]](#).
- For more information on current migration issues see [Migration Dialogue](#), a factual and nonpartisan information and analysis of international migration issues.

Name: _____

Migrant Workers in Iowa: 1960s to Today

Read the newspaper articles to answer the following questions.

1. Why do you think migrant workers came to Iowa in the 1960s?
2. Where did most migrant workers come from?
3. Iowa's highest concentration of migrant workers was in what two geographical areas during the 1960's? Is this still true today? Explain.
4. List three problems that migrant workers and their families faced in the 1960s.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. List two things that were done to help migrant workers in Iowa during the 1960s.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. What is MAP? How did it help migrant workers?
7. From the articles "Protecting Migrant Children" and "Exploitation of Children" explain the arguments **for and against** a child labor measure.

8. From the article “Exploitation of Children” describe House file 178. Why was it created and how would it specifically help migrant workers?

9. How are the problems migrant workers faced in the 1960s similar and different to those faced by workers in the late nineteenth century?

Examine the photographs and use the charts below to list people, objects, and activities in the photographs.

Children participating in migrant education program, Mason City, Iowa, 1960s

PEOPLE	OBJECT	ACTIVITIES

1. Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

2. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

Virginia and Julia Guzman in kitchen, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa, 1960s

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1. Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
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Mason City (Iowa) Public Library Annual Report, 1965

PEOPLE	OBJECT	ACTIVITIES

1. Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

Read the "Immigrant Population of the United States in 2006" article to answer the following questions.

1. Which three states have the largest number of immigrants?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. Give two reasons why these three states would draw immigrants.

a. _____

b. _____

3. According to the article, how has Iowa specifically been affected by immigration?