

CHALLENGES TO CHINESE IMMIGRATION AND ASSIMILATION

Organizing Questions

- What are some key features of the Chinese immigrant experience in the United States?
- What impact did exclusionary laws and practices have on the Chinese community, and how did the Chinese community respond?
- How did the experiences of early Chinese immigrants compare with those of later generations?
- What factors have contributed to the reception of Chinese in the United States over time?
- What obstacles have Chinese immigrants overcome to assimilate into American culture?

Introduction

In this lesson, students discuss the topic of racism and discrimination broadly and learn specifically about discrimination directed toward Chinese immigrants in the United States. Students learn a brief history of Chinese Americans, including various waves of immigration, push-pull factors, the impact of exclusionary laws, the reception of Chinese by other Americans, and the diversity of the Chinese-American community. Students then observe and analyze several political cartoons from the 1870s and 1880s to enrich their understanding of the social, political, and economic climate in the United States at the time and the impact it had on Chinese immigrants. They also read four short documents regarding issues of immigration, discrimination, and assimilation written by Chinese at different periods of time. Students then read satirical, fictional letters written by Mark Twain that portray the mistreatment and discrimination of Chinese in the mid- to late-1800s. On the final day, students view a documentary and trace the path to assimilation of one Chinese family in the San Francisco Bay Area as seen through generations of its family members. The lesson concludes with a discussion about how issues of immigration, discrimination, and assimilation relate to Americans today.

Objectives

In this lesson, students will

- learn about the history of the Chinese immigrant experience in the United States;
- consider the impact exclusionary laws and practices had on the Chinese community in the United States and the ways in which the Chinese community responded;
- compare the early Chinese immigrant experience with that of later generations;
- become familiar with the various factors that have shaped the reception of Chinese in the United States over time;
- understand the obstacles Chinese immigrants have overcome to

assimilate into American culture;

- recognize how issues of immigration, discrimination, and assimilation relate to us today;
- practice analyzing primary and secondary sources; and
- appreciate multiple perspectives.

Connections to Curriculum Standards

This lesson has been designed to meet certain national history, social studies, and Common Core State Standards as defined by the National Center for History in the Schools, the National Council for the Social Studies, and the Common Core State Standards Initiative. The standards relevant to this lesson are listed here.

United States History (from National Center for History in the Schools)

- Era 4, Standard 2C, Grades 5–12: Analyze the push-pull factors which led to increased immigration, for the first time from China but especially from Ireland and Germany. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]
- Era 4, Standard 2C, Grades 7–12: Explain how immigration intensified ethnic and cultural conflict and complicated the forging of a national identity. [Interrogate historical data]
- Era 4, Standard 4B, Grades 7–12: Examine how literary and artistic movements fostered a distinct American identity among different groups and in different regions. [Draw upon literary and artistic sources]
- Era 6, Standard 2A, Grades 7–12: Distinguish between the “old” and “new” immigration in terms of its volume and the immigrants’ ethnicity, religion, language, place of origin, and motives for emigrating from their homelands. [Analyze multiple causation]
- Era 6, Standard 2A, Grades 5–12: Assess the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of different immigrant groups. [Examine historical perspectives]
- Era 6, Standard 2B, Grades 5–12: Explain the rising racial conflict in different regions, including the anti-Chinese movement in the West and the rise of lynching in the South. [Explain historical continuity and change]
- Era 6, Standard 2B, Grades 9–12: Analyze the role of new laws and the federal judiciary in instituting racial inequality and in disfranchising various racial groups. [Evaluate the implementation of a decision]
- Era 6, Standard 3A, Grades 9–12: Account for employment in different regions of the country as affected by gender, race, ethnicity, and skill. [Formulate historical questions]
- Era 10, Standard 2B, Grades 5–12: Analyze the new immigration policies after 1965 and the push-pull factors that prompted a new wave of immigrants. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

- Era 10, Standard 2B, Grades 9–12: Identify the major issues that affected immigrants and explain the conflicts these issues engendered. [Identify issues and problems in the past]

National Social Studies Standards (from the National Council for the Social Studies)

- Culture; Thematic Strand I: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.
- Time, Continuity, and Change; Thematic Strand II: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.
- People, Places, and Environments; Thematic Strand III: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.
- Individual Development and Identity; Thematic Strand IV: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Thematic Strand V: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.
- Power, Authority and Governance; Thematic Strand VI: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance.
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption, Thematic Strand VII: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people organize for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.
- Science, Technology, and Society; Thematic Strand VIII: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of relationships among science, technology, and society.
- Global Connections and Interdependence; Thematic Strand IX: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies (from the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

- Standard 1, Grades 9–10: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- Standard 2, Grades 11–12: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- Standard 3, Grades 9–10: Analyze in detail a series of events described

in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

- Standard 4, Grades 9–10: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history / social science.
- Standard 7, Grades 11–12: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Standard 9, Grades 11–12: Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (from the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

- Standard 4, Grades 6–12: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Standard 6, Grades 9–12: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically.
- Standard 9, Grades 6–12: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Materials

- Handout 1, *An Introduction to Chinese-American History*, 30 copies
- Handout 2, *Analyzing Political Cartoons*, 15 copies
- Handout 3, *Chinese-American Experiences*, 30 copies
- Handout 4, *Mark Twain Letters*, 30 copies
- Handout 5, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*, 30 copies
- Answer Key 1, *An Introduction to Chinese-American History*
- Answer Key 2, *Analyzing Political Cartoons*
- Answer Key 3, *Chinese-American Experiences*
- Answer Key 4, *Mark Twain Letters*
- Answer Key 5, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*
- Digital Images, *Political Cartoons* (put images in a folder or as a link to accompany lesson)

Equipment

- Computer with Internet access and a Flash-enabled or HTML5-supported web browser
- Computer projector and screen
- Computer speakers

Teacher Preparation	<p>Instructions and materials are based on a class size of 30 students. Adjust accordingly for different class sizes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make the appropriate number of copies of handouts. 2. Become familiar with the content of all handouts and answer keys. 3. Place the digital images of the three political cartoons in Handout 2 into a digital folder or a link accessible to the class so that you can project them during the lesson. 4. View <i>Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family</i>, a documentary by Glen Robert Lym at http://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/wordpress/dogpatch-ranch-the-origins-of-a-chinese-american-family (approximately 1 hour and 10 minutes). 5. Set up and test computer, projector, and speakers. Confirm ability to play audio and video and project sound audibly to students.
Time	Three 50-minute class periods
Procedures Before Day One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As preparation for the lesson, instruct students to locate a news article about racism and discrimination and bring it to the next class period for discussion.
Day One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instruct students to get out the news articles they located for homework. Ask several students to share what they found. With the class, keep a running list of the groups or types of people mentioned in the news articles. After each story is shared, ask the class to summarize a) who was discriminated against, b) by whom, and c) why. 2. Explain that throughout U.S. history, groups of people have been excluded or discriminated against due to their race, gender, nationality, ethnic or religious background, religious or political beliefs, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, etc. Ask students to share their thoughts on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What fears or attitudes can cause people to exclude and/or mistreat others? • What impact does this kind of behavior have on its victims? 3. Inform students that although other immigrant groups experienced discrimination in the United States, the Chinese were the first group to be formally excluded by U.S. law based on their nationality. Explain that students will learn about the Chinese experience of exclusion and about how Chinese immigrants overcame discrimination and assimilated into American culture. 4. Distribute one copy of Handout 1, <i>An Introduction to Chinese-American History</i>, to each student. Instruct students to read the handout and respond to the questions on a separate sheet of paper. Allow 20

minutes or so for students to complete the task. Collect student responses for assessment, then use Answer Key 1, *An Introduction to Chinese-American History*, to review the answers with the class.

5. Inform the class that they will now examine political cartoons from the 1870s and 1880s that portray the negative attitudes and actions towards the Chinese that were prevalent at the time.
6. Explain that political cartoons are an interesting and poignant primary source that can shed light on the relevant issues, concerns, attitudes, and events in a particular time in history.
7. Divide the class into student pairs. Distribute one copy of Handout 2, *Analyzing Political Cartoons*, to each pair. Display the digital images of the political cartoons one at a time for students to see in more detail. Allow students to look at the screen of images up closer if helpful.
8. Examine Cartoon 1, “The Chinese Question,” as a whole class. Ask students to carefully observe the cartoon for at least one minute. Then direct students to work with their partner to respond to the questions for Cartoon 1 on Handout 2 to the best of their ability.
9. Facilitate a whole-class discussion of the cartoon, asking students to share their initial responses and their caption. Repeat this process for the other two cartoons. Use the following information to help students in their analysis.
 - **Cartoon 1, entitled “The Chinese Question,” published February 18, 1871:**
The caption reads: “Hands off, gentlemen! America means fair play for all men.” The feminine symbol for America, Columbia, represents America’s values and defends the Chinese immigrant against the gang of men. Stereotypes of Irish Americans and German Americans are part of the armed group behind them. The epithets and accusations on the wall include: “barbarian,” “vile,” “heathen,” “rat-eater,” and “vicious.” The “Chinese Question” refers to the issue of whether Chinese immigrants should be allowed in the United States. It was answered by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which effectively banned Chinese immigration to the United States for about 60 years until 1943.
 - **Cartoon 2, entitled “The New Comet—A Phenomenon Now Visible in All Parts of the U.S.,” published August 6, 1870:**
Since China was called the Celestial Empire, Chinese were sometimes referred to as Celestials. This cartoon uses the celestial imagery with a Chinese face as a comet. At this time, larger numbers of Chinese were immigrating to New York, and this cartoon depicts the various reactions from New Yorkers—some are welcoming and curious, others appear afraid and agitated. In the cartoon, the spectators are divided. On the left side near the factory are pro-capitalists, who seem optimistic about the contribution of Chinese laborers to the workforce. On the right side, the spectators represent a fearful, skeptical attitude toward the “Cheap Labor” with which they will have to compete for jobs. The head of the comet is a Chinese face with the traditional ponytail or queue as the

comet's tail. The comet symbolizes how New Yorkers perceived the Chinese as being strange and from another world.

- **Cartoon 3, entitled “E Pluribus Unum (Except the Chinese),” published April 1, 1882:**

This cartoon was published in *Harpers Weekly* a month before the Chinese Exclusion Act was enacted. “E Pluribus Unum” means “out of many we are one.” It is ironic that the entrance to the United States looks like a fortress, is heavily guarded, and is called “The Temple of Liberty.” This cartoon is a statement about the hypocrisy of the Chinese Exclusion Act in the United States, a country made up of immigrants from many different backgrounds and intended to be a refuge from European imperialism.

10. After the class discussion has ended, collect Handout 2 for assessment.
11. Distribute one copy of Handout 3, *Chinese-American Experiences*, to each student. As homework, instruct students to read the four short documents written by Chinese regarding issues of immigration, discrimination, and assimilation at different points in history. Students should respond to the questions on a separate sheet of paper and bring this to the next class period.

Day Two

1. Divide the class into groups of three students and instruct groups to discuss their responses to the questions at the end of Handout 3, *Chinese-American Experiences*.
2. Collect Handout 3 for assessment.
3. Distribute one copy of Handout 4, *Mark Twain Letters*, to each student. Explain that among his other publications, Mark Twain wrote about the oppression he saw directed toward the Chinese in San Francisco. Several of his writings defend the Chinese and present scenarios from their perspective. Inform students that these are three installments of fictitious letters written by Mark Twain and published in late 1870 and early 1871 in *The Galaxy*, a popular monthly magazine in the 19th century. The “author” of the letters is a Chinese immigrant, Ah Song Hi, writing to his friend in China, Ching-Foo, about his experiences immigrating to the United States. In these satires, Twain sheds light on racism and oppression in America through the fictitious voice of a Chinese immigrant.
4. Instruct students to read through Handout 4 and respond to the questions on a separate sheet of paper. Allow 15–25 minutes for them to complete their responses. Then review student responses and collect them for assessment.
5. Inform students they will learn the story of a multi-generational Chinese family living in the San Francisco Bay Area since the 1860s—how they responded to discrimination, the connections and contributions they made in the Bay Area, and how they assimilated and evolved through the generations. Explain that students will begin viewing an hour-long documentary about the family and respond to

questions while they watch.

6. Distribute one copy of Handout 5, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*, to each student. Review the questions with the class. Instruct them to respond to the questions on the handout while watching the video.
7. View the one hour, 11 minute documentary, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*, until the end of the class period. Stop the video as necessary for students to record their responses on Handout 5. Note the point at which you stop the video so you can show the remainder of the video during the next class period.

Day Three

1. Discuss any questions students may have about the portion of the documentary they viewed in the previous class period. Instruct them to get out Handout 5, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*, and their responses and complete them while watching the remainder of the video.
2. Debrief the documentary by reviewing the questions from Handout 5 with the class and asking students to share their thoughts and observations about the history of Lim Lip Hong's family, the obstacles they overcame, and the attributes that helped them assimilate into American culture.
3. Conclude the lesson with a class discussion about immigration, discrimination, and assimilation today, using the following questions as a guide.
 - What facts and/or concepts interest you most/least about this topic?
 - What key concepts have you learned throughout this lesson?
 - Which issues would you like to learn about further?
 - How do issues of immigration, discrimination, and assimilation relate to Americans now?
 - What is the current U.S. government's stance on immigration? How has it changed over time?
 - What position do other countries take on the issue of immigration?
 - How do you feel about immigration? Explain.
 - What do you think can be done to help eliminate discrimination and racism in the world today?

Assessment

- The following are suggestions for assessing student work in this lesson:
1. Informally assess news articles that students collected for Day One, based on relevance and timeliness.
 2. Evaluate student responses to Handout 1, *An Introduction to Chinese-American History*, based on Answer Key 1, *An Introduction to Chinese-American History*.
 3. Assess student responses to Handout 2, *Analyzing Political Cartoons*, based on Answer Key 2, *Analyzing Political Cartoons*.

4. Evaluate student responses to Handout 3, *Chinese-American Experiences*, based on Answer Key 3, *Chinese-American Experiences*.
5. Assess student responses to Handout 4, *Mark Twain Letters*, based on Answer Key 4, *Mark Twain Letters*.
6. Evaluate student responses to Handout 5, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*, based on Answer Key 5, *Dogpatch Ranch: The Origins of a Chinese-American Family*.
7. Assess student participation in group and class discussions evaluating students' ability to
 - clearly state their opinions, questions, and/or answers;
 - provide thoughtful answers;
 - exhibit sensitivity toward different cultures and ideas;
 - respect and acknowledge other students' comments; and
 - ask relevant and insightful questions.

INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE-AMERICAN HISTORY*

assimilate—to bring into conformity with the customs, attitudes, etc., of a group, nation, or the like; adapt or adjust

Chinese-American history has not followed a simple, linear path. It has often been a story of contradictions—of isolation and assimilation, of rejection and acceptance—and their status and experiences have fluctuated according to political, economic, and social conditions both in the United States and abroad. At worst, Chinese Americans have been perceived to be culturally and physically inferior human beings, threats to the American labor force, and spies for their native countries. At best, Chinese immigrants have been regarded as a welcome addition to the melting pot of America, refugees who deserve to live in a democracy, and valuable assets to American academia and technology. At best, the Chinese laborers of the past are hailed for their enormous contributions in building the railroads and working in the mines, suffering through extremely adverse conditions—physically, socially, and economically. And at best, Chinese Americans today are recognized for their strong presence and influence in business, politics, academia, professional sports, and the entertainment industry.

Chinese-American history is often narrowly portrayed as a brief episode during which Chinese laborers worked in the gold mines and helped build the railroads in the mid-1800s. Historians estimate that by 1867 between 10,000 and 15,000 Chinese laborers were employed as railroad workers at any given time—comprising 90 percent of the railroads' labor force.¹ Their work was arduous and dangerous and was instrumental to the construction of the nation's first Transcontinental Railroad and development of the American West. Yet the story of Chinese Americans is much more than that. It may have begun with those laborers and even earlier with the Chinese miners, but it did not end there. For the most part, these early immigrants settled in the United States, laid roots, and built their families, communities, businesses, and even new identities. Over the course of 150 years, they evolved into a vibrant and dynamic segment of today's American population.

Who are Chinese Americans?

According to the 2015 U.S. Census population estimate, nearly five million Chinese Americans live in the United States, defined as those having Chinese or part-Chinese heritage. No longer just an immigrant population, Chinese Americans are a diverse and ever-changing demographic that includes many generations of native-born Chinese Americans and growing numbers of Chinese Americans of mixed descent.

The earliest Chinese Americans were a small immigrant population coming from the coast of southern China in the mid 1800s. Later immigrants came from all areas of China, as well as from Hong Kong,

* Adapted from *Chinese-American Voices From the Gold Rush to the Present Teacher's Guide*. Jonas Edman and Selena Lai. Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE), Stanford University, 2012.

* <http://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/wordpress/faqs/>

Taiwan, and Singapore. Changes in immigration policy in 1965 led to an increase of Chinese immigrants, and unlike the early wave, they were more often skilled employees or students. Today, the United States is the most popular destination for Chinese immigrants, comprising 22 percent of all Chinese immigration worldwide.* Today's Chinese immigrants are a diverse group, coming from all over the world and bringing varied cultural practices, languages, and experiences. They arrive legally and illegally; they are wealthy and poor; they are professionals and wage laborers; they are highly educated and illiterate. Some of the immigrants become naturalized citizens, while others do not; some are refugees, and some are adopted by American parents.

naturalize—admit to the citizenship of a country

The native-born population of Chinese Americans dates back many generations, to the earliest immigrants. As a demographic, this group was slow to take shape, at first because the earliest immigrants were mostly men, and then later because exclusion laws halted immigration almost entirely. By 1880, there were roughly 100,000 Chinese in America. However, widespread discrimination and anti-miscegenation laws kept the Chinese socially isolated from the rest of the population. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years, allowed only a limited number of temporary visas for merchants and scholars, and forbade Chinese residents from becoming citizens. Chinese already living in the United States were allowed to stay, but many left due to the hostility and racism they experienced. By 1920, the Chinese-American population had dwindled down to approximately 60,000. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first major U.S. legislation to restrict immigration of a group based on nationality. The Exclusion Act also made Chinese ineligible for citizenship and thus the right to vote. It was largely a result of anti-Chinese sentiment in California, where the Chinese were blamed for decreased wages and unwanted competition in the labor force. Subsequent laws extended Chinese exclusion until 1943 when the Magnuson Act repealed it while China was a U.S. ally fighting Japan in World War II. After 1943, the native-born population began to grow more rapidly. Large-scale Chinese immigration began after the Immigration Act of 1965.

miscegenation—marriage or cohabitation between people of different races

Magnuson Act—legislation signed into law in December 1943 that repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act

Immigration Act of 1965—abolished the immigration quota system based on national origin; established a new policy allowing immigrant families to be reunited and attracting skilled laborers to the United States

Drawing upon its roots in both China and the United States, the Chinese-American community has created a new culture and identity for itself. This movement continues today, as many Americans of Chinese descent regard their Chinese heritage with pride and feel an emotional connection to China as their ancestral homeland.

At the same time, intermarriage between ethnic groups and steady cultural “fading” have changed the composition of the Chinese-American community. Some Chinese-American youth today reportedly feel little or no connection to the Chinese community or homeland, whether for lack of interest or lack of exposure. Some report feeling torn between being Chinese and American. While some reject everything Chinese, others

* https://www.migrationpolicy.org/print/15992#Immigration_Pathways_and_Naturalization

wholly embrace their Chinese identity. Others strive to find a balance, showing aspects of their Chinese identity at times and aspects of their American identity at other times, depending on the situation and context.

With such diversity, the Chinese-American community is in a state of constant evolution. Each generation and successive wave of immigration adds a new dimension, a new layer of complexity, and a new twist on the already diverse make-up of the group.

Historical Context

History is portrayed most accurately when viewed in broader context, and Chinese-American history is no exception. Every aspect of this history—migration, immigration, status, and experience—has been largely dependent upon and shaped by contemporary politics, economy, and society, both domestically and internationally.

While the earliest Chinese immigrants arrived in the mid-19th century looking for gold, subsequent waves of immigration have been driven by a host of reasons. Scholars who study migration examine the reasons people move. They categorize the reasons into “push” factors—circumstances that push an individual away from his or her home; and “pull” factors—circumstances that pull an individual toward another place. Usually it is a combination of push-pull factors that leads to migration, and for the Chinese, these push-pull factors have varied dramatically according to the times. For example, most Chinese laborers who immigrated in the 1860s from Guangdong Province were pushed by the devastation from multiple natural disasters, social upheaval and war, poverty, and a destroyed economy. They were in turn pulled to America by hopes of finding freedom, accumulating wealth, and/or supporting their families back in China. The reception of Chinese in the United States has ranged from negative (e.g., Gold Rush miners and Chinese laborers) to positive (e.g., political refugees and academic scholars fleeing Communist China).

Subsequent shifts in Chinese Americans’ status and experience have been tied to World War II, the outbreak of the Cold War, the founding of Communist China, the McCarthy Era, the civil rights movement, the 1989 pro-democracy movement in Tiananmen Square, economic recessions, the return of Hong Kong to Chinese rule, China’s recent booming economy, and the U.S. trade deficit with China.

Understanding the broader context helps explain many of the contradictions and fluctuations that have occurred and continue to occur in terms of the public perception of and regard for Chinese Americans. It also allows one to see that Chinese-American history is not a discrete, isolated period, but one that is fully enmeshed in U.S. history.

Communism—a system of government in which the state plans and controls the economy and a single, often authoritarian party holds power, claiming to make progress toward a higher social order in which all goods are equally shared by the people

Cold War—a term used to describe the state of tension between the non-Communist and communist blocs after World War II; the two great superpowers engaged in this war were the United States and the Soviet Union. The Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

McCarthy Era—a period in U.S. history, roughly 1950 to 1954, characterized by heightened fears of communist influence on American institutions; thousands of Americans were accused of being Communists or communist sympathizers and subject to aggressive investigations

discrete—individually separate and distinct

Questions

1. In what ways can Chinese-American history be considered a story of contradictions?
2. Who were the earliest Chinese Americans? What distinguishes them from later generations of Chinese Americans?
3. Why was the native-born population of Chinese Americans slow to take shape?
4. What were the push-pull factors that led to early Chinese immigration to the United States?
5. How have these push-pull factors changed over subsequent generations?
6. Describe in your own words what impact the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 had on the Chinese-American community. What does it mean for a population to not be able to vote or wield political power?

ANALYZING POLITICAL CARTOONS

The political cartoons below were published in the 1870s and 1880s in *Harpers Weekly*, a political magazine published in New York from 1857 until 1916. Observe each cartoon carefully for at least one minute. Then respond to the following prompts on a separate sheet of paper.

Cartoon 1, entitled “The Chinese Question,” published Feb 18, 1871



Source: “Illustrating Chinese Exclusion,” <https://thomasnastcartoons.com/2014/01/03/the-chinese-question/>

1. Who is the female figure in the image?
2. What does she represent?
3. Describe her expression.
4. Describe how the Chinese man is portrayed.
5. What does he represent?
6. Describe the men in the background.
7. What do the men represent?
8. Write your own caption for this cartoon.

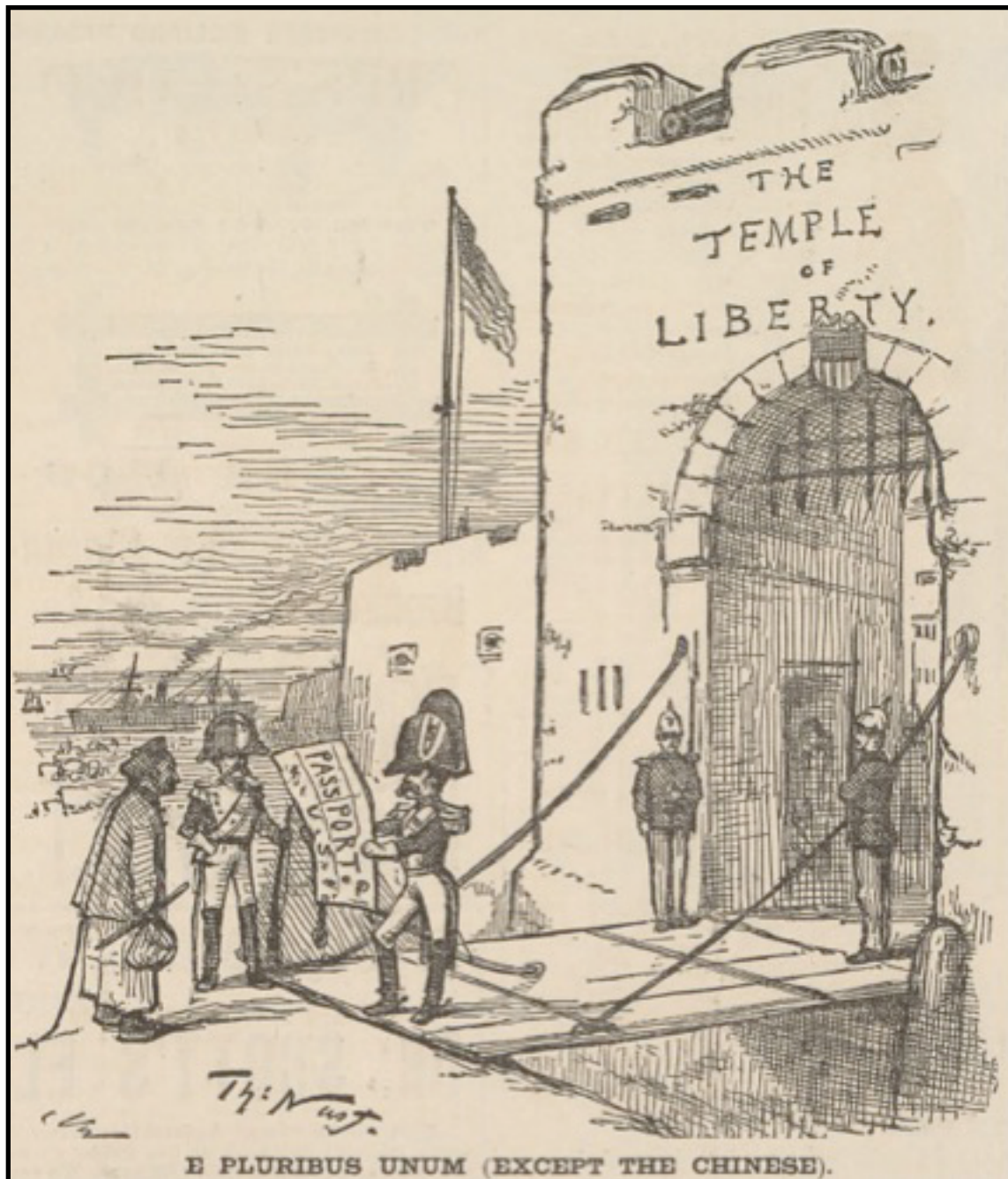
Cartoon 2, entitled "The New Comet—A Phenomenon Now in All Parts of the U.S.," published August 6, 1870



Source: "Illustrating Chinese Exclusion," <https://thomasnastcartoons.com/2014/04/01/the-new-comet-a-phenomenon-now-visible-in-all-parts-of-the-us-6-august-1870/>

9. Describe the crowd of onlookers.
10. What are the people doing?
11. What do you notice about the left side of the cartoon?
12. What do you notice about the right side?
13. Why do you think the Chinese face and hair are represented as a comet?
14. Write your own caption for this cartoon.

Cartoon 3, entitled "E Pluribus Unum (Except the Chinese)," published April 1, 1882



Source: "Illustrating Chinese Exclusion," <https://thomasnastcartoons.com/2014/02/03/e-pluribus-unum-except-the-chinese-1-april-1882/>

15. Describe how the Chinese man is portrayed.
16. Describe the guards.
17. What do you think is happening in this image?
18. Identify any irony you notice.
19. What is the cartoonist's purpose?
20. Write your own caption for this cartoon.

CHINESE-AMERICAN EXPERIENCES

Read the four short documents below regarding challenges to Chinese immigration and assimilation to four different Chinese people / groups at different time periods. Consider the social, political, and economic situation in the United States during each time period. Respond to the questions below on a separate sheet of paper.

Document 1

An editorial explaining the reasons behind establishing the first Chinese language newspaper in California in 1854

The Founding of Golden Hills' News (1854)

My goal in establishing the newspaper is to serve the business community, to broaden knowledge, to give expression to opinions and sentiments, and to inform readers about government affairs. Currently the state of California has become a gathering place for the world. Every immigrant group has its own newspaper except for the Chinese. As a result, although the Chinese merchants are many in number, they have no influence. Because they are uninformed, they have no way to exercise their freedom of choice. Even though they participate in American society, they lack real understanding and are easily manipulated and deceived by unscrupulous elements. When it comes to government affairs, their ignorance causes them to suffer abuse and mistreatment at the hands of corrupt officials. Though they have ranged far and wide, yet they labor under restrictions and cannot develop themselves. How can one not sigh with regret? Since I feel strongly about this situation, I have founded a newspaper called Golden Hills' News to record in Chinese the commercial news and government affairs happening every day. It will be published every Wednesday and Saturday for your reading pleasure. If you respected gentlemen should have business announcements, I would be pleased to publish them on your behalf. In this way, the merchants and businessmen will profit, knowledge will increase, opinions and sentiments will be shared, government affairs will be understood, and the Chinese community will, in no small means, also benefit.

unscrupulous—having or showing no moral principles; not honest or fair

Source: Yung, J., Chang, G. H., and Lai, H. M., Eds. (2006). *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 13–14.

Document 2

A letter written by a Chinese immigrant about a request from the government asking U.S. citizens to make donations to help pay for construction of a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty

A Chinese View of the Statue of Liberty (1885) [by] Saum Song Bo

Sir:

A paper was presented to me yesterday for inspection, and I found it to be specially drawn up for subscription among my countrymen toward the Pedestal Fund of the Bartholdi Statue of Liberty.* Seeing that the heading is an appeal to American citizens, to their love of country and liberty, I feel that my countrymen and myself are honored in being thus appealed to as citizens in the cause of liberty. But the word liberty makes me think of the fact that this country is the land of liberty for men of all nations except the Chinese. I consider it as an insult to us Chinese to call on us to contribute toward building in this land a pedestal for a statue of Liberty. That statue represents Liberty holding a torch which lights the passage of those of all nations who come to this country. But are the Chinese allowed to come? As for the Chinese who are here, are they allowed to enjoy liberty as men of all other nationalities enjoy it? Are they allowed to go about everywhere free from the insults, abuse, assaults, wrongs, and injuries from which men of other nationalities are free? . . .

Liberty, we Chinese do love and adore thee; but let not those who deny thee to us, make of thee a graven image and invite us to bow down to it.

* The Statue of Liberty was designed by Augustus Bartholdi and given to the United States by the French in memory of the two countries' alliance during the American Revolution. An additional US\$270,000 had to be raised among the American people to build the statue's pedestal.

Source: Yung, J., Chang, G. H., and Lai, H. M., Eds. (2006). *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 55–56.

Document 3

A pamphlet created by the Chinese-American Citizens' Alliance arguing for the natural and legal right to the companionship of wives

Admission of Wives of American Citizens of Oriental Ancestry (1926)

. . . This is a plea for relief from a hardship imposed upon a certain class of citizens of the United States by the immigration act of 1924:

The Supreme Court of the United States has recently decided that section 13 of the act excludes from admission to the United States the alien Chinese wives of American citizens. There are in the United States many American citizens of the Chinese race who are married to alien Chinese women, resident in China. Under the decision of the Supreme Court these American citizens are permanently separated from their wives, unless they abandon the country of their citizenship and take up their residence abroad in a country which will permit their wives to reside with them. The hardship of this situation is so apparent that it is felt that a mere statement of the case is all that is required to show the necessity for an amendment to the act which will permit the admission of these women...

Therefore it is from Congress that the relief must come, and it is to Congress that the American citizen of the Chinese race confidently looks for an amendment to section 13 which will give him that legal right to the companionship of his wife which is in the consonance both with the natural law and with the customs and usages of civilized society...

* The Immigration Act of 1924 set quotas on immigration based on nationality that effectively excluded Asian immigrants entirely.

Source: Yung, J., Chang, G. H., and Lai, H. M., Eds. (2006). *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 130-131.

Document 4

An excerpt of an essay written by a nineteen-year-old college student about adjusting to life in Idaho after immigrating from Hong Kong

Chinese and Proud of It (1996) [by] Jubilee Lau

. . . My family really benefited from our decision to move to Idaho [from San Francisco]. My parents not only had a steady business, but they also learned to speak English a lot better by constant practice with customers at the restaurant. I realized that not all Americans look down on the new immigrants who can't even pronounce the simplest English. Idaho made me see a completely different side to the American culture. It also made me aware of my own culture and how interesting it really is. Although I am now an American citizen who can speak English fluently, I still don't consider myself an all American. I will always be a hyphenated American because I am from Hong Kong, my ancestors are from China, and I will always be Chinese.

Source: Yung, J., Chang, G. H., and Lai, H. M., Eds. (2006). *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 366–367.

Questions

1. Compare the experiences of the Chinese authors above. Who are the authors, and when did they write these documents?
2. How are their experiences and perspectives similar?
3. How are their experiences and perspectives different?
4. In what ways do these authors demonstrate the contradictions of the Chinese-American experience mentioned in Handout 1, *Introduction to Chinese-American History*?

MARK TWAIN LETTERS

Directions:

Read the following fictitious letters that Mark Twain wrote in 1870 and then respond to the prompts at the end. Note that the language at times is written to reflect how the Chinese immigrant hears it.

THE GALAXY

October 1870

MEMORANDA.
BY MARK TWAIN.

GOLDSMITH'S FRIEND ABROAD AGAIN.

NOTE. – No experience is set down in the following letters which had to be invented. Fancy is not needed to give variety to the history of a Chinaman's sojourn in America. Plain fact is amply sufficient.

LETTER I.

SHANGHAI, 18—

DEAR CHING-FOO:

It is all settled, and I am to leave my oppressed and overburdened native land and cross the sea to that noble realm where all are free and all equal, and none reviled or abused—America! America, whose precious privilege it is to call herself the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave. We and all that are about us here look over the waves longingly, contrasting the privations of this our birthplace with the opulent comfort of that happy refuge. We know how America has welcomed the Germans and the Frenchmen and the stricken and sorrowing Irish, and we know how she has given them bread and work and liberty, and how grateful they are. And we know that America stands ready to welcome all other oppressed peoples and offer her abundance to all that come, without asking what their nationality is, or their creed or color. And, without being told it, we know that the foreign sufferers she has rescued from oppression and starvation are the most eager of her children to welcome us, because, having suffered themselves, they know what suffering is, and having been generously succored, they long to be generous to other unfortunates and thus show that magnanimity is not wasted upon them.

AH SONG HI.

revile—criticize in an abusive or angrily insulting manner

privation—a state in which things that are essential for human well-being such as food and warmth are scarce or lacking

opulent—wealthy, luxurious, or lavish

creed—a set of beliefs or aims that guide someone's actions

succor—assistance and support in times of hardship and distress

magnanimity—generosity

LETTER II.

AT SEA, 18—

DEAR CHING-FOO:

We are far away at sea now, on our way to the beautiful Land of the Free and Home of the Brave. We shall soon be where all men are alike, and where sorrow is not known. The good American who hired me to go to his country is to pay me \$12 a month, which is immense wages, you know—twenty times as much as one gets in China. My passage in the ship is a very large sum—indeed, it is a fortune and this I must pay myself eventually, but I am allowed ample time to make it good to my employer in, he [is] advancing it now. For a mere form, I have turned over my wife, my boy, and my two daughters to my employer's partner for security for the payment of the ship fare. But my employer says they are in no danger of being sold, for he knows I will be faithful to him, and that is the main security.

I thought I would have twelve dollars to begin life with in America, but the American Consul took two of them for making a certificate that I was shipped on the steamer. He has no right to do more than charge the ship two dollars for one certificate for the ship, with the number of her Chinese passengers set down in it; but he chooses to force a certificate upon each and every Chinaman and put the two dollars in his pocket. As 1,300 of my countrymen are in this vessel, the Consul received \$2,600 for certificates. My employer tells me that the Government at Washington know of this fraud, and are so bitterly opposed to the existence of such a wrong that they tried hard to have the extor*—the fee, I mean, legalized by the last Congress; but as the bill did not pass, the Consul will have to take the fee dishonestly until next Congress makes it legitimate. It is a great and good and noble country, and hates all forms of vice and chicanery.

chicanery—the use of trickery to achieve a political, financial, or legal purpose

steerage—the part of a ship providing accommodations for passengers with the cheapest tickets

We are in that part of the vessel always reserved for my countrymen. It is called the steerage. It is kept for us, my employer says, because it is not subject to changes of temperature and dangerous drafts of air. It is only another instance of the loving unselfishness of the Americans for all unfortunate foreigners. The steerage is a little crowded, and rather warm and close, but no doubt it is best for us that it should be so.

Yesterday our people got to quarrelling among themselves. and the captain turned a volume of hot steam upon a mass of them and scalded eighty or ninety of them more or less severely. Flakes and ribbons of skin came off some of them. There was wild shrieking and struggling while the vapor enveloped the great throngs and so some who were not scalded got trampled upon and hurt. We do not complain, for my employer says this is the usual way of quieting disturbances on board the ship, and that it is done in the cabins among the Americans every day or two.

* The author stopped himself from writing "extortion," which is the practice of obtaining something, especially money, through force or threats.

** Pacific and Mediterranean steamship bills

Congratulate me, Ching-Foo! In ten days more I shall step upon the shore of America, and be received by her great hearted people; and I shall straighten myself up and feel that I am a free man among freemen.

AH SONG HI.

LETTER III.

SAN FRANCISCO, 18—

DEAR CHING-FOO:

I stepped ashore jubilant! I wanted to dance, shout, sing, worship the generous Land of the Free and Home of the Brave. But as I walked from the gang-plank a man in a gray uniform* kicked me violently behind and told me to look out—so my employer translated it. As I turned, another officer of the same kind struck me with a short club and also instructed me to look out. I was about to take hold of my end of the pole which had mine and Hong-Wo's basket and things suspended from it, when a third officer hit me with his club to signify that I was to drop it, and then kicked me to signify that he was satisfied with my promptness. Another person came now, and searched all through our basket and bundles, emptying everything out on the dirty wharf. Then this person and another searched us all over. They found a little package of opium sewed into the artificial part of Hong-Wo's queue, and they took that, and also they made him prisoner and handed him over to an officer, who marched him away. They took his luggage, too, because of his crime, and as our luggage was so mixed together that they could not tell mine from his, they took it all. When I offered to help divide it, they kicked me and desired me to look out.

opium—an addictive narcotic drug made from the dried, condensed juice of a poppy

Having now no baggage and no companion, I told my employer that if he was willing, I would walk about a little and see the city and the people until he needed me. I did not like to seem disappointed with my reception in the good land of refuge for the oppressed, and so I looked and spoke as cheerily as I could. But he said, wait a minute—I must be vaccinated to prevent my taking the small pox. I smiled and said I had already had the small pox, as he could see by the marks, and so I need not wait to be “vaccinated,” as he called it. But he said it was the law, and I must be vaccinated anyhow. The doctor would never let me pass, for the law obliged him to vaccinate all Chinamen and charge them ten dollars apiece for it, and I might be sure that no doctor who would be the servant of that law would let a fee slip through his fingers to accommodate any absurd fool who had seen fit to have the disease in some other country. And presently the doctor came and did his work and took my last penny—my ten dollars which were the hard savings of nearly a year and a half of labor and privation. Ah, if the lawmakers had only known there were plenty of doctors in the city glad of a chance to vaccinate people for a dollar or two, they would never have put the price up so high against a poor friendless Irish, or Italian, or Chinese pauper fleeing to the good land to escape hunger and hard times.

privation—a state in which things that are essential for human well-being such as food and warmth are scarce or lacking

pauper—a very poor person

AH SONG HI.

* policeman

LETTER IV.

SAN FRANCISCO, 18—

DEAR CHING FOO:

I have been here about a month now, and am learning a little of the language every day. My employer was disappointed in the matter of hiring us out to service on the plantations in the far eastern portion of this continent. His enterprise was a failure, and so he set us all free, merely taking measures to secure to himself the repayment of the passage money which he paid for us. We are to make this good to him out of the first moneys we earn here. He says it is sixty dollars apiece.

We were thus set free about two weeks after we reached here. We had been massed together in some small houses up to that time, waiting. I walked forth to seek my fortune. I was to begin life a stranger in a strange land, without a friend, or a penny, or any clothes but those I had on my back. I had not any advantage on my side in the world—not one, except good health and the lack of any necessity to waste any time or anxiety on the watching of my baggage. No, I forget. I reflected that I had one prodigious advantage over paupers in other lands—I was in America! I was in the heaven-provided refuge of the oppressed and the forsaken!

prodigious—
impressively great in
extent, size, or degree

Just as that comforting thought passed through my mind, some young men set a fierce dog on me. I tried to defend myself, but could do nothing. I retreated to the recess of a closed doorway, and there the dog had me at his mercy, flying at my throat and face or any part of my body that presented itself. I shrieked for help, but the young men only jeered and laughed. Two men in gray uniforms (policemen is their official title) looked on for a minute and then walked leisurely away. But a man stopped them and brought them back and told them it was a shame to leave me in such distress. Then the two policemen beat off the dog with small clubs, and a comfort it was to be rid of him, though I was just rags and blood from head to foot. The man who brought the police men asked the young men why they abused me in that way, and they said they didn't want any of his meddling. And they said to him:

“This Ching divil comes till Ameriky to take the bread out o’ dacent intilligent white men’s mouths, and whin they try to defend their rights there’s a dale o’ fuss made about it.”

benefactor—a person
who gives money or
other help to a person or
cause

They began to threaten my benefactor, and as he saw no friendliness in the faces that had gathered meanwhile, he went on his way. He got many a curse when he was gone. The policemen now told me I was under arrest and must go with them. I asked one of them what wrong I had done to any one that I should be arrested, and he only struck me with his club and ordered me to “hold my yop.” With a jeering crowd of street boys and loafers at my heels, I was taken up an alley and into a stone-paved dungeon which had large cells all down one side of it, with iron gates to them. I stood up by a desk while a man behind it wrote down certain things about me on a slate. One of my captors said:

“Enter a charge against this Chinaman of being disorderly and disturbing the peace.”

I attempted to say a word, but he said:

“Silence! Now ye had better go slow, my good fellow. This is two or three times you’ve tried to get off some of your d___d insolence. Lip won’t do here. You’ve got to simmer down, and if you don’t take to it paceable we’ll see if we can’t make you. Fat’s your name?”

“Ah Song Hi.”

“Alias what?”

I said I did not understand, and he said what he wanted was my true name, for he guessed I picked up this one since I stole my last chickens. They all laughed loudly at that.

Then they searched me. They found nothing, of course. They seemed very angry and asked who I supposed would “go my bail or pay my fine.” When they explained these things to me, I said I had done nobody any harm, and why should I need to have bail or pay a fine? Both of them kicked me and warned me that I would find it to my advantage to try and be as civil as convenient. I protested that I had not meant anything disrespectful. Then one of them took me to one side and said:

“Now look here, Johnny, it’s no use you playing softy wid us. We mane business, ye know; and the sooner ye put us on the scent of a V the asier ye’ll save yerself from a dale of trouble. Ye can’t get out o’ this for anny less. Who’s your frinds?”

I told him I had not a single friend in all the land of America, and that I was far from home and help, and very poor. And I begged him to let me go.

He gathered the slack of my blouse collar in his grip and jerked and shoved and hauled at me across the dungeon, and then unlocking an iron cell-gate thrust me in with a kick and said:

“Rot there, ye furrin spawn, till ye lairn that there’s no room in America for the likes of ye or your nation.”

AH SONG HI.

* Reprinted from <http://www.twainquotes.com/Galaxy/187010b.html>

Directions

Respond to the following prompts on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What might be Twain's purpose in writing these letters?
2. How do you think Mark Twain felt about how the Chinese were treated? Use two examples from the text to support your answer.
3. What was Ah Song Hi hoping to achieve by immigrating to America?
4. In what ways was Ah Song Hi discriminated against? By whom?
5. Identify three ironic statements from the letters.

DOGPATCH RANCH: THE ORIGINS OF A CHINESE-AMERICAN FAMILY

Directions: Answer the following on a separate sheet of paper while viewing the documentary. Use complete sentences.

1. What is the significance of Lim Lip Hong and Chan Shee establishing their home and raising their family in Potrero, rather than in San Francisco's Chinatown?
2. Why did Britain want to sell opium from India to the Chinese?
3. Why did Lim Lip Hong immigrate to America in 1885 as a 12-year-old boy?
4. What kind of work did Lim Lip Hong do for the railroad company in his twenties?
5. What caused a rise in anti-Chinese sentiment in the American West in the 1870s?
6. This anti-Chinese sentiment resulted in hangings of Chinese, riots against them, random murders, the forceful removal from many cities such as Seattle, Tacoma, and Juneau. True or false?
7. On what grounds did the Naturalization Act of 1870 bar Chinese from becoming citizens?
8. What could happen if a Chinese (either American-born or immigrant) was caught without a certification of residence?
9. Why was San Francisco's Chinatown a safe haven for Chinese during anti-Chinese sentiment?
10. Because the Chinese were not allowed to attend public school, the sons traveled four miles each way in horse-drawn carts. On their commute, what did they do to earn some extra money for the family?
11. Why did the eldest son have to quit attending school?
12. What did Chan Shee do to help support the family?
13. After the earthquake and fires of 1906, how did the residents of Oakland react to the influx of Chinese and the growth of its Chinatown?
14. List four actions the children took to assimilate into American culture when they were adults.
15. In what ways did Lim Lip Hong and Chan Shee help pave the way for their children and future generations of Chinese in America?
16. In your own words, how has the perception of Chinese in the United States changed since 1855 when Lim Lip Hong first arrived in California?

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE-AMERICAN HISTORY

1. In what ways can Chinese-American history be considered a story of contradictions?
Chinese have been received and perceived in the United States ranging from very positive to very negative.
2. Who were the earliest Chinese Americans? What distinguishes them from later generations of Chinese Americans?
The earliest generation of Chinese Americans was a homogenous group of laborers who came from the southern coast of China. Later generations have been more diverse and have immigrated from different parts of China and other parts of the world for many different reasons.
3. Why was the native-born population of Chinese Americans slow to take shape?
The early immigrants were mostly men, and exclusion laws stopped immigration almost entirely for roughly 60 years.
4. What were the push-pull factors that led to early Chinese immigration to the United States?
The early immigrants were pushed by devastation from natural disasters, poverty, wars, etc. and were pulled by the lure of achieving wealth and freedom in America.
5. How have these push-pull factors changed over subsequent generations?
Student answers will vary.
6. Describe in your own words what impact the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 had on the Chinese-American community. What does it mean for a population to not be able to vote or wield political power?
Student answers will vary.

ANALYZING POLITICAL CARTOONS**Cartoon 1, entitled “The Chinese Question,” published Feb 18, 1871**

1. Who is the female figure in the image?
The figure is Columbia, the female symbol for America.
2. What does she represent?
Columbia represents America’s values.
3. Describe her expression.
She looks angry and disgusted.
4. Describe how the Chinese man is portrayed.
The man appears discouraged, possibly hurt, vulnerable, and victimized and is wearing a traditional Chinese ponytail or queue.
5. What does he represent?
He represents Chinese immigrants.
6. Describe the men in the background.
The men are angry, menacing, and armed with weapons.
7. What do the men represent?
They represent European immigrants and Americans with racist attitudes toward the Chinese.
8. Write your own caption for this cartoon.
Student responses will vary.

Cartoon 2, entitled “The New Comet—A Phenomenon Now in All Parts of the U.S.,” published August 6, 1870

9. Describe the crowd of onlookers.
The crowd includes men, women, and children. Some appear wealthy, while others seem poor, based on their clothing and appearance. Some people look curious and calm, while others seem agitated and/or hostile.
10. What are the people doing?
The people are looking at the comet; looking through telescopes; talking to each other; and holding signs. A group of armed men appear to be arguing or scheming.
11. What do you notice about the left side of the cartoon?
The mood of the people on the left side seems neutral and possibly supportive.
12. What do you notice about the right side?
Some people in the crowd on the right side are armed, huddled together, and possibly scheming.
13. Why do you think the Chinese face and hair are represented as a comet?
The comet is used to portray how some people perceived the Chinese as being strange and from another world. It is also a play on words, since China had been referred to as the “Celestial Empire” and Chinese as “celestials.”
14. Write your own caption for this cartoon.
Student responses will vary.

Cartoon 3, entitled “E Pluribus Unum (Except the Chinese),” published April 1, 1882

15. Describe how the Chinese man is portrayed.
He looks poor and is carrying few belongings; is wearing traditional clothes and hairstyle; and seems discouraged.
16. Describe the guards.
The guards are standing erect and look confident and authoritative. One guard’s stance seems somewhat arrogant as he blocks the entrance.
17. What do you think is happening in this image?
The Chinese immigrant who most likely just arrived by ship is trying to gain entrance into America at the port and is being blocked because he is not an American and does not have documentation.
18. Identify any irony you notice.
The appearance of the building is ironic because it looks like a castle or a fortress and is heavily guarded and protected yet reads “The Temple of Liberty.” The building also looks European in style, suggesting that the United States is not standing by the ideals upon which it was founded.
19. What is the cartoonist’s purpose?
The purpose is to point out the hypocrisy of the Chinese Exclusion Act.
20. Write your own caption for this cartoon.
Student responses will vary.

CHINESE-AMERICAN EXPERIENCES

1. Compare the experiences of the Chinese authors above. Who are the authors, and when did they write these documents?

The authors are: a) A Chinese man who established the first Chinese language newspaper, b) A male immigrant in 1885 who resents the injustice and discrimination to which Chinese were subjected, c) Chinese-American citizens requesting an amendment to the Immigration Act of 1924, which excluded them from immigrating to the United States, and d) A female Chinese-American college student in 1996 reflecting on her experience as an immigrant from Hong Kong.

2. How are their experiences and perspectives similar?

Potential responses include: They are all from China; they either immigrated to the United States or have family members who did; they all experienced discrimination because of their race; they all responded to their situation by taking action to make a change, stand united with other Chinese, and voice their opinions; etc.

3. How are their experiences and perspectives different?

The authors' experiences are shaped by the situation in the United States at different time periods, giving them different perspectives.

4. In what ways do these authors demonstrate the contradictions of the Chinese-American experience mentioned in Handout 1, *Introduction to Chinese-American History*?

Student responses will vary.

MARK TWAIN LETTERS

1. What might be Twain's purpose in writing these letters?
His purpose is to demonstrate the racist attitudes and unfair treatment toward Chinese immigrants that he witnessed and to present a sympathetic perspective of the Chinese.
2. How do you think Mark Twain felt about how the Chinese were treated? Use two examples from the text to support your answer.
He found the treatment to be hypocritical and inconsistent with American values. Student examples from the text will vary.
3. What was Ah Song Hi hoping to achieve by immigrating to America?
He was hoping to escape oppression and poverty in China and achieve wealth and freedom.
4. In what ways was Ah Song Hi discriminated against? By whom?
Ah Song Hi was beaten, berated, taken advantage of by bureaucrats who made him pay all of his money for a certificate and vaccinations, attacked by dogs, and falsely accused and convicted of causing a disturbance. He was discriminated against by police officers and Irishmen.
5. Identify three ironic statements from the letters.
Student examples will vary.

DOGPATCH RANCH: THE ORIGINS OF A CHINESE-AMERICAN FAMILY

1. What is the significance of Lim Lip Hong and Chan Shee establishing their home and raising their family in Potrero, rather than in San Francisco's Chinatown?
The Lim family was not protected by Chinatown so they had to rely on their own resourcefulness. The family was able to make valuable and useful connections with white business owners such as the Tubbs brothers who helped them keep their ranch, may have employed them, and helped them develop other business associations and social connections. The fact that they did not have Chinese neighbors and were not immersed in Chinatown required them to immerse themselves with whites and make a living in the broader community. The children must have learned social skills and grit by living in that environment. They learned how to be open with Americans and become part of greater U.S. society rather than remaining isolated from it.
2. Why did Britain want to sell opium from India to the Chinese?
Britain wanted to balance its large trade deficit with China due to its dependence on Chinese tea and silk.
3. Why did Lim Lip Hong immigrate to America in 1885 as a 12-year-old boy?
As the eldest son, his parents had asked him to leave the economic and social turmoil of Guangdong Province in China to find work overseas to support the family.
4. What kind of work did Lim Lip Hong do for the railroad company in his twenties?
Lim Lip Hong was a supervisor during the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad, and he hired Chinese from his native village in Guangdong to work on the railroad.
5. What caused a rise in anti-Chinese sentiment in the American West in the 1870s?
The country was going through a post-Civil War depression, jobs were scarce, and Chinese laborers were seen as a threat to white workers competing for jobs.
6. This anti-Chinese sentiment resulted in hangings of Chinese, riots against them, random murders, the forceful removal from many cities such as Seattle, Tacoma, and Juneau. True or false?
True
7. On what grounds did the Naturalization Act of 1870 bar Chinese from becoming citizens?
On the grounds that Chinese could not possibly assimilate into American society. As a result, Chinese were not allowed to vote or own land or businesses.
8. What could happen if a Chinese (either American-born or immigrant) was caught without a certification of residence?
They faced the possibility of deportation.
9. Why was San Francisco's Chinatown a safe haven for Chinese during anti-Chinese sentiment?
San Francisco's Chinatown was protected by wealthy white businessmen with ties to the railroad and Pacific Ocean trade who valued the Chinese in the labor force. Chinese had protection from white violence there, but outside of Chinatown they did not.
10. Because the Chinese were not allowed to attend public school, the sons traveled four miles each way in horse-drawn carts. On their commute, what did they do to earn some extra money for the family?
The boys sold meat scraps in Chinatown that Lim Lip Hong brought home from his job.
11. Why did the eldest son have to quit attending school?
He had to get a job to help support the family.

12. What did Chan Shee do to help support the family?
Chan Shee managed the duck and chicken business from their ranch and sold the eggs.
13. After the earthquake and fires of 1906, how did the residents of Oakland react to the influx of Chinese and the growth of its Chinatown?
The public resented their activities and tried to push them out with signs that read “No Chinese.”
14. List four actions the children took to assimilate into American culture when they were adults.
Student responses will vary but may include the following:
- *Some of the sons changed the spelling of their last name to Lym.*
 - *The eldest son replaced the ranch with a multi-storied house like other homes in San Francisco.*
 - *The eldest son filed for ownership of their property when he was old enough (since his parents were not allowed to own property as immigrants).*
 - *They associated and had strong connections with other Americans.*
 - *They owned and managed their own businesses.*
 - *They inserted themselves in society with an openness to Americans rather than isolating themselves.*
 - *They asserted their rights.*
 - *They tried to counter Chinese stereotypes.*
15. In what ways did Lim Lip Hong and Chan Shee help pave the way for their children and future generations of Chinese in America?
They believed they could succeed and thrive by working hard, being open to Americans and the American way of life, embracing greater U.S. society, and embedding themselves in American society.
16. In your own words, how has the perception of Chinese in the United States changed since 1855 when Lim Lip Hong first arrived in California?
Student answers will vary.

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