

Document Based Question ~ IMMIGRATION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM ESSAY

During the Gilded Age, U.S. industrial development was growing at an unprecedented rate. To fuel the increased demand for unskilled workers there was also an increase in immigration from southern and eastern Europe, Asia, and elsewhere. These immigrants became known as “New Immigrants” as they were from different regions than the western European immigrants of “Old Immigration”.

Many immigrants during the waves of “new immigration” of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries were leaving home in an effort to find work. The growing U.S. economy and the rise of the machine age were creating large amounts of factory jobs in the urban centers of the northeast. Many immigrants entered into cities such as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, found work and settled there.

There are two major ideas on the integration of immigrants into American society, cultural pluralism and assimilation. Cultural pluralism calls for the immigrant to retain his or her ethnic identity within American society. They may live in ethnic neighborhoods (like Chinatown in New York or San Francisco) and continue to speak their native language, continue traditions and retain a clearly identifiable way of life. Assimilation is the concept of shedding traditional practices and language for a more “American” way of life, as well as the adoption of the English language and other American customs.

Most immigrants to America have viewed it as the “Land of Opportunity” and have come here seeking economic opportunities. Many sought access to land or jobs or an escape from the rigid socioeconomic class structure of their homelands.

DBQ PROMPT: ANALYZE THE MOTIVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES FROM THE MID 19TH CENTURY TO THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY (1840 – 1920)

TOPICS TO POSSIBLY INCLUDE:

- Industrialization
- Working Conditions
- Immigrant Motivations: Push and Pull Factors
- Old vs New Immigrants
- Settlement and Experiences
- Urbanization / Living Conditions
- Anti-Immigrant Sentiments / Discrimination
- U.S. Immigration Policy / Restrictions
- Social Reform / Support



Document A**The New Colossus**

Source: America Poet Emma Lazarus wrote this sonnet in 1883. In 1903, the poem was engraved on a bronze plaque and mounted inside the lower level of the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
 With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
 Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
 A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
 Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
 Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
 Glows world wide welcome; her mild eyes command
 The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
 "Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
 With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
 Your huddled masses yearning to breath free,
 The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
 Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
 I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Document B

Source: Leland Stanford, President of the Central Pacific Railroad, 1865

As a class, they [Chinese laborers] are quiet, peaceful, patient, industrious, and economical. More prudent and economical [than white laborers], they are content with less wages. We find them organized for mutual aid and assistance. Without them, it would be impossible to complete the western portion of this great national enterprise [transcontinental railroad] within the time required by the Act of Congress.

Document C

Source: James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, 1888

"A certain part of this recent immigration is transitory. Italians and Slovaks, for instance, after they have by thrift accumulated a sum which is large for them, return to their native villages and carry back with them new notions and habits which set up a ferment among the simple rustics of a Calabrian or North Hungarian Valley. For the United States the practice has the double advantage of supplying the volume of cheap unskilled labour when employment is brisk and of removing it when employment becomes slack, so that the number of unemployed, often very larger when a financial crisis has brought bad times, is rapidly reduced, and there is more work for the permanently settled part of the laboring class. It is the easier to go backwards and forwards, because two thirds among all the races except the Jews, are men, either unmarried youths or persons who have left their wives behind."

Document D**Source: Cartoon "Ark of the Refuge"****Document E****Source: Chinese Exclusion Act****May 6, 1882. CHAP. 126.-An act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese.**

WHEREAS, IN THE OPINION OF THE Government of the United States the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof: Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the expiration of ninety days next after the passage of this act, and until the expiration of ten years next after the passage of this act, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States be, and the same is hereby, suspended; and during such suspension it shall not be lawful for any Chinese laborer to come, or, having so come after the expiration of said ninety days, to remain within the United States.

Document F

Source: Historical Statistics of the United States

Immigration Before and After quotas laws	From Northern and Western Europe	From Southern and Eastern Europe and Asia
Average annual number of immigrants before quotas (1907-1914)	176,983	685,531
Emergency Quota Act of 1921	198,082	158,367
Emergency Quota Act Amended 1924	140,999	21,847
National Origins Act of 1929	132,323	20,251

Document G

Source: *Excerpt from Jane Addams' book, Twenty Years at Hull-House, (1910). This passage comes from a chapter called "Immigrants and Their Children."*

[A]n Italian girl who has had lessons in cooking at the public school will help her mother to connect the entire family with American food and household habits. That the mother has never baked bread in Italy—only mixed it in her own house and then taken it out to the village oven—makes all the more valuable her daughter's understanding of the complicated cooking stove. The same thing is true of the girl who learns to sew in the public school, and more than anything else, perhaps, of the girl who receives the first simple instruction in the care of little children—that skillful care which every tenement-house baby requires if he is to be pulled through his second summer....

Thus through civic instruction in the public schools, the Italian woman slowly became urbanized in the sense in which the word was used by her own Latin ancestors, and thus the habits of her entire family were modified. The public schools in the immigrant colonies deserve all the praise as Americanizing agencies which can be bestowed upon them, and there is little doubt that the fast-changing curriculum in the direction of the vacation-school experiments will react more directly upon such households.