



# Understanding Migration

Curriculum Resources for the Classroom  
*Revised Edition*



Hemispheres is a partnership of:

Center for European Studies  
Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies  
Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies  
South Asia Institute

in the College of Liberal Arts  
at the University of Texas at Austin



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**Understanding Migration**  
**Curriculum Resources for the Classroom**

Revised Edition  
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## Introduction

Why do people move? Simple as it may seem, this question raises complex questions about the causes of individual versus large-scale migration as well as the global effects of migration. This curriculum unit was conceived in response to numerous requests from educators concerning the discussion of issues related to human migration in the social studies classroom. Our goal was to present this fluid and nebulous concept in an easy-to-follow manner, with clear lesson objectives and outcomes.

Given our own strength as content providers for world studies courses (in Texas, this consists of the 6th grade Contemporary World Cultures course, 9th grade World Geography course, and 10th grade World History course, in addition to AP-level courses and other electives), we chose to address these essential questions by using a case-study approach looking at the phenomenon of migration in a global context.

The unit is aligned to middle and high school standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, as well as National Geography Standards) and so the activities have been designed for Grades 6–12, although some suggestions for use at lower levels are included below.

In 2011, following the revision of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS—the state-mandated educational standards) for social studies, we created the revised edition of this unit. It incorporates feedback from field testers and educators who have offered constructive comments on the unit since its first publication. We hope that this unit, which has been used in classrooms nationwide, will be even more useful in this revised edition.

We welcome any feedback or comments you may have.

### How to use this unit effectively in the classroom

The unit allows maximum flexibility on the part of the classroom teacher: modular in design, any section (or case study within a section) can be used individually or in combination with other sections. Based on previous coverage of the topic and the academic level of your students, you may incorporate as many or as few activities as support your learning goals. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the entire unit so as to select the activities/topics that best suit your needs.

## Section Overview

### Section 1

A brief PowerPoint introduction to migration theory incorporates key vocabulary (e.g., push-pull factors) and real world examples. The original document can be downloaded from the Hemispheres website at: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/orgs/hemispheres/>.

### Section 2: Introductory Activities

Once students have a basic understanding of the forces that affect migration, we offer two classroom activities to generate a general discussion. Although these activities are intended to be used before Sections 3 or 4, they can also be used individually (or not at all). They should be implemented insofar as they facilitate learning goals and enrich your students' understanding of migration. **Student Activity 1** examines migration trends in your community through a series of interviews. This activity can easily be modified for use at the elementary level, by either interviewing one person as a class or using a story or video; you can discuss migration stories without conducting the spectrum graph activity. **Student Activity 2** examines film, asking students to think critically about the film and plot elements relating to migration. Since most films dealing with this topic are for more mature audiences, we suggest using this activity at the high school level. There are some films, such as the animated picture *An American Tail*, that could be used with younger audiences.

### **Section 3: Using T-Charts and Writing Prompts to Explore Migration**

Intended for a middle school audience, the T-chart case studies may also be used with older students in place of the advocate/decision-making activity. The five topics, which are simplified versions of real world issues from Section 4, include background information for the teacher, short readings for students, and four variations of an analysis activity.

For a high school audience, a writing prompt is provided in the instructions as Variation 4 to use the documents in the T-chart case studies to write a DBQ essay. A grading rubric for the essay can be found on page 68.

### **Section 4: Using an Advocate/Decision-Making Activity to Discuss Migration**

This “controlled debate” activity requires students to argue one side of a real migration issue. Two to three pages of essential reading are included for each topic; supplemental materials are provided if time allows or if you feel that the issue needs additional coverage. We have made a conscious effort to use as many primary document sources as possible in order to help build critical reading and interpretation skills; reading levels vary according to the documents selected.

A writing prompt is provided in the instructions (p. 65) to use the documents provided in each case study to write a persuasive DBQ essay. The essay exercise can be done as an assessment piece for the Advocate/Decision-Making Activity. A grading rubric for the essay can be found on page 68.

### **Appendix: Glossary of Terms**

We have provided a list of terms defined in footnotes in the glossary for handy reference.

### **Additional Resources**

Each case study in Section 4 also includes a list of Web and print resources for learning more about the topic it covers. *ABC-CLIO*, *History Alive!*, and other content providers may have additional materials that will help facilitate the coverage of migration in your classroom.

We hope you find this unit useful and that you feel free to select and modify activities as they fit your classroom needs.

**THIS CURRICULUM UNIT ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS  
IN THE TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS (TEKS), 2010 REVISION:**

**113.18 Social Studies, Grade 6**

**GEOGRAPHY**

4) The student understands the factors that influence the locations and characteristics of locations of various contemporary societies on maps and globes and uses latitude and longitude to determine absolute locations.

The student is expected to:

- B) identify and explain the geographic factors responsible for patterns of population in places and regions;
- C) explain ways in which human migration influences the character of places and regions.

**ECONOMICS**

8) The student understands the factors of production in a society's economy.

The student is expected to:

- A) describe ways in which the factors of production (natural resources, labor, capital, and entrepreneurs) influence the economies of various contemporary societies;
- B) identify problems and issues that may arise when one or more of the factors of production is in relatively short supply; and
- C) explain the impact of relative scarcity of resources on international trade and economic interdependence among and within societies.

**HISTORY**

1) The student understands that historical events influence contemporary events.

The student is expected to:

- A) trace characteristics of various contemporary societies in regions that resulted from historical events or factors such as invasion, conquests, colonization, immigration, and trade; and
- B) analyze the historical background of various contemporary societies to evaluate relationships between past conflicts and current conditions.

**SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS**

21) The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology.

The student is expected to:

- A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; and artifacts to acquire information about various world cultures;
- B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;
- C) organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;
- D) identify different points of view about an issue or current topic;
- E) identify the elements of frame of reference that influenced participants in an event.

### **113.33 World History Studies**

#### **CULTURE**

18) The student understands the ways in which cultures change and maintain continuity.

The student is expected to:

A) analyze cultural changes in specific regions caused by migration, war, trade, innovations, and diffusion.

#### **GEOGRAPHY**

7) The student understands the growth, distribution, movement, and characteristics of world population.

The student is expected to:

B) explain the political, economic, social, and environmental factors that contribute to human migration such as how national and international migrations are shaped by push-and-pull factors and how physical geography affects the routes, flows, and destinations of migration.

#### **HISTORY**

13) The student understands the impact of major events associated with the Cold War and independence movements.

The student is expected to:

F) explain how Arab rejection of the State of Israel has led to ongoing conflict.

#### **SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS**

31) The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

The student is expected to:

A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

### **113.34 World Geography Studies**

#### **HISTORY**

1) The student understands how geography and processes of spatial exchange (diffusion) influenced events in the past and helped to shape the present.

The student is expected to:

A) analyze the effects of physical and human geographic patterns and processes on the past and describe their impact on the present, including significant physical features and environmental conditions that influenced migration patterns and shaped the distribution of culture groups today.

#### **GEOGRAPHY**

7) The student understands the growth, distribution, movement, and characteristics of world population.

The student is expected to:

B) explain the political, economic, social, and environmental factors that contribute to human migration such as how national and international migrations are shaped by push-and-pull factors and how physical geography affects the routes, flows, and destinations of migration.

8) The student understands how people, places, and environments are connected and interdependent.

The student is expected to:

A) compare ways that humans depend on, adapt to, and modify the physical environment, including the influences of culture and technology;

- B) describe the interaction between humans and the physical environment and analyze the consequences of extreme weather and other natural disasters such as El Niño, floods, tsunamis, and volcanoes; and
- C) evaluate the economic and political relationships between settlements and the environment, including sustainable development and renewable/non-renewable resources.

#### GOVERNMENT

- 14) The student understands the processes that influence political divisions, relationships, and policies.

The student is expected to:

- C) analyze the human and physical factors that influence the power to control territory and resources, create conflict/war, and impact international political relations of sovereign nations such as China, the United States, Japan, and Russia and organized nation groups such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU).

#### CITIZENSHIP

- 15) Citizenship. The student understands how different points of view influence the development of public policies and decision-making processes on local, state, national, and international levels.

The student is expected to:

- A) identify and give examples of different points of view that influence the development of public policies and decision-making processes on local, state, national, and international levels; and
- B) explain how citizenship practices, public policies, and decision making may be influenced by cultural beliefs, including nationalism and patriotism.

#### SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

- 31) The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

The student is expected to:

- A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and
- B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

#### THIS UNIT ALSO ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS:

**Standard 9, Human Systems:** The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.

#### GRADES 5–8

By the end of the eighth grade, the student knows and understands:

- 3. the types and historical patterns of human migration and;
- 4. the effects of migration on the characteristics of places.

#### GRADES 9–12

By the end of the twelfth grade, the student knows and understands:

- 1. trends in world population numbers and patterns and;
- 2. the impact of human migration on physical and human systems.

## Student Activity: Israel & The Palestinians: The “Right of Return”

### Time needed:

1 class period (45 min.–1 hour) should be sufficient to complete the reading and T-Chart or writing prompt activities. The writing prompt may be done in class or assigned as homework. (Although the T-Chart and writing prompt activities complement each other, it is not necessary—and may be redundant—to assign both to your students.)

### Supplies for this activity:

- Map of the world (not included)
- Reading: *Israel & The Palestinians: The “Right of Return”* (p. 46)
- The *T-Chart: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet (p. 47) or the *Writing Prompt: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet (p. 48)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board

### Preparation:

Have students identify Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip on a map of the world. You may also wish to use the map on page 111 to identify the location of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian refugee camps in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Have students compare the size of Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

You may wish to go over the following term with your students:

- **Refugee:** a person who seeks shelter from war, disaster, or persecution by leaving their home.

### Class activities:

Distribute the *Israel & The Palestinians: “The Right of Return”* reading to all students. Have them read quietly.

### **Variation 1:**

Distribute the *T-Chart: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet and have students complete the chart individually or in small groups. When finished, draw a T-Chart on the board and have each student or group offer one point and write it in the appropriate place on the board. Continue until all of the unique points offered by students are included. Discuss the results with the class. Ask students to compare the answers they gave with the answers that others gave. Are there any similarities? Are there any differences? Why? Or why not? Ask for a show of hands to determine which side the students feel has a stronger argument. Ask one or two students to explain their reasons.

### **Variation 2:**

After students have finished reading, replicate the T-Chart on the *T-Chart: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet on the board. Complete the T-Chart by having students suggest points in favor of and opposition to the right of return and write them in the appropriate column. As a follow-up to this activity, you may wish to assign the *Writing Prompt: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet as homework or an in-class activity.

### **Variation 3:**

Assign both the *Israel & The Palestinians: “The Right of Return”* reading and the *Writing Prompt: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet as homework. In class the next day, replicate the T-Chart on the *T-Chart: Israel/Palestinians* worksheet on the board. Complete the T-Chart by having students suggest points in favor of and opposition to the right of return and write them in the appropriate column. Continue until all of the unique points offered by students are included. Discuss the results with the class. Ask students to compare the answers they gave with the answers that others gave. Are there any similarities? Are there any differences? Why? Or why not? Ask for a show of hands to determine which side students supported in their writing, and have some of the students read the conclusion from their writing prompt out loud to the class.

**Variation 4:**

Use the readings as primary documents for an introductory DBQ exercise. Students should identify the push and pull factors given in the readings, explaining why each factor is either a push factor or a pull factor. Students should also discuss the reason(s) for the migration issue, whether they are economic, social, political, or environmental in nature, and defend their analysis (note that there may be more than one correct answer). Finally, students should identify the argument that they find more persuasive, and explain their position using information either cited in the documents or found elsewhere.

You may wish to use the following prompt:

*Read the introduction and the two documents provided. In each document, identify the push and pull factors given. Consider the overall issue. Are the causes economic, social, political, or environmental (or more than one of these) in nature?*

*Write an essay in which you describe the issue presented. Identify the major push and pull factors that advocate for migration, as well as the factors that can be used to argue against migration. Explain the causes behind the factors. Cite specific passages and examples from the documents to support your answers. Remember to consider the perspective of the author of each document.*

*Finally, explain which argument you find more persuasive, based on the reasons given by the authors. Explain your answer citing information from the documents or from additional research.*

A grading rubric may be found on page 68.

## Israel & The Palestinians: The “Right of Return”

One of the most difficult issues that Israelis and Palestinians must solve in order to work out a peace agreement is the issue of the “Palestinian right of return.” When the state of Israel was established in 1947, a war broke out between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Many of the Arab residents who lived in what became Israel fled their homes during the war. Many more fled during the 1967 war. Now, many Palestinians want the right to return to their homes in Israel. This is an issue that is very emotional for people on both sides. Read the following passages, and then discuss the arguments for and against the right of return.

I am Israeli and I am 15 years old. My grandparents came to Israel from Europe, where they were both in concentration camps during World War II. My parents were born here, just like me, my older sister, and my younger brother. For us, Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people, and it is the place where we belong.

I know that the Palestinians say they want to come back. But I don’t understand why. They have lived in other countries for many years. Palestinians my age were born in other countries, just like their parents and their grandparents. I feel like an Israeli. Why doesn’t a Palestinian born in Jordan feel like a Jordanian?

Jews come to Israel from all over the world, and we treat them like they belong here from the moment they arrive. When the Palestinians fled to other countries, they were forced to live in refugee camps and treated like second-class citizens. If the Palestinians are mad at anyone, they should be mad at the Arabs who made them stay in refugee camps instead of letting them get on with their lives.

There are a lot of people in Israel. I don’t know where all the Palestinians would go if they did decide to come back. There aren’t enough houses to go around. And what about work? Lots of people who live here already have trouble finding jobs—what are the Palestinians supposed to do if they come back?

I think the Palestinians should get on with their lives. I don’t understand why anyone would spend their entire life trying to get the right to move to a country they’ve never even been to. I know that being forced to leave your home is hard, but my grandparents did it, and they lived long happy lives. Why can’t the Palestinians?

I am Palestinian and I am 14 years old. I live with my family in a refugee camp in southern Lebanon. My grandparents were born in a village near the city of Haifa in what is now Israel. They had a farm there. Then the Jews came from Europe and the war happened and my grandparents had to flee to Lebanon.

Life is hard here. We can’t leave the country because we’re not citizens of Lebanon, and we don’t have passports. It’s hard to get jobs, and it’s hard for us to go to college or university. For us, our best hope is that we can go home to my grandparents’ farm. Then we’d be full citizens with all the rights other people have.

This is about what’s right. No one invited the Jews to come to Palestine. They just showed up. Our land was taken away from us. Since then, we’ve been living in terrible conditions in Lebanon. I don’t blame the Lebanese. They didn’t ask for all of us to come here, but we didn’t have anywhere else to go. The Lebanese government shouldn’t have to take responsibility for a bunch of outsiders.

The Israelis say that there’s no room for us. They say that there wouldn’t be any jobs for us. But Jews come to Israel all the time. Since the early 1990s, nearly 750,000 Jews have come to Israel from Russia, and the Israelis never said, “No, you can’t come, there’s no space or jobs for you.” But that’s what they say to us. I think the Israelis are just trying to keep us out. They want Israel to be only for the Jews.

I just want the same chance for a normal life as anyone else. But I can’t have that chance when I’m living in a refugee camp. The Israelis should admit that they did something wrong and give us back what is rightfully ours.

**Refugee:** a person who seeks shelter from war, disaster, or persecution by leaving their home.

## T-CHART: ISRAEL/PALESTINIANS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment:** Read the passages on *Israel & The Palestinians: The "Right of Return."* Then complete the chart below, listing reasons why the Palestinians should be granted the right of return in the left column, and reasons why the Palestinians should not be granted the right of return in the right column.

Make as many points as you need for each side. The first three are already labeled for you.

Reasons why the Palestinians should be given the right of return	Reasons why the Palestinians should not be given the right of return
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Which side do you agree with? Cite examples from the text to support your answer:



# Essay Grading Rubric

## Essay : Understanding Migration

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards	Score
Focus or Thesis Statement	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.	
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.	
Accuracy	All supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics were inaccurately reported.	
Closing paragraph	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.	The conclusion is recognizable. The author's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.	The author's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.	There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.	
Grammar & Spelling	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	

# About Hemispheres

Hemispheres, the international outreach consortium at the University of Texas at Austin, utilizes University resources to promote and assist with world studies for K-12 and postsecondary schools, businesses, community groups, and the general public.

Hemispheres is coordinated by five independent units that receive funding from multiple sources, including the Title VI International Area Studies Program of the US Department of Education:

Center for European Studies  
Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies  
Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies  
South Asia Institute

Under the aegis of our Title VI mission, we are able to provide quality, free and low-cost resources that enhance understanding of diverse world regions to K-12 and post-secondary educators, business, the media, and civic and community groups.

For more information, visit the Hemispheres website at:  
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