Mini-Unit Plan: Exploring Canada’s Immigration Policy
(with Supplementary Worksheets and PowerPoint Calculator)

Submitted by: Carol Gnojewski (Monroe, WA)

Date: August 1, 2011

Description:
In this mini-unit, students will be introduced to aspects of both Canadian and United States immigration application policies such as the US Green Card lottery and the Canadian point system. They will synthesize the information they have learned by creating their own point system based upon comparison and group research.

Grade Level(s):
Grades 6-9 (Middle School)

Subject(s):
Secondary Social Studies (World History and Geography or US Government)

Duration:
Five 55-minute classes

Goal:
The goal is to develop an understanding of present-day immigration policies in the United States and Canada and of the Canadian point system and to consider global issues regarding immigration.

Objectives:
Students will:

- Reflect upon the reasons individuals emigrate and immigrate to North America.
- Create profiles of possible immigrants to Canada.
- Complete immigration applications based on the Canadian point system.
- Investigate and compare US and Canadian immigration policies.
- Develop a point system for immigration to the United States.

Standards:
- This lesson meets Washington State Social Studies EALRS (Grades 7 and 8) in the following categories:

  1. CIVICS - The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation's fundamental documents to make decisions about local, national, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.

    1.1 Understands key ideals and principles of the United States, including those in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other fundamental documents.
    1.2 Understands the purposes, organization, and function of governments, laws, and political systems
    1.3 Understands the purposes and organization of international relationships and US foreign policy
5. SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS - The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, form, and evaluate positions through the processes of reading, writing, and communicating.

5.4 Creates a product that uses social studies content to support a thesis and presents the product in an appropriate manner to a meaningful audience

**Background Information:**

A helpful precursor to this unit would be a general overview of movement of people as one of the five themes of geography and of contemporary world immigration patterns. Lessons on 19th Century US immigration, including some background on Ellis and Angel Island points of entry, would help to provide context as would student exploration of family origins. Also useful would be prior knowledge of the 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act in the United States and of Canadian immigration before passage of the 1987 Multiculturalism Act in Canada, especially the highly prohibitive Immigration Acts of 1952 and 1956 in Canada.

**Materials:**

- LCD projector and screen
- Teacher computer
- Art materials including colored pencils, markers, magazines, glue or paste, poster board
- Canadian Point System Powerpoint
- Immigration ID and Immigration Application worksheets
- Devising a United States Point System assignment sheet
- Library and/or computer lab resources; Internet
- Encyclopedias and almanacs
- US and world history or geography textbooks (optional)

**Procedures:**

**Day One:**

1. Play the song and video “Colour me Canadian” by Yukon poet P.J. Johnson at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wt-17HBMRmM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wt-17HBMRmM). As they watch, ask students to identify the various ethnic groups, ages, and occupations described in the song and depicted in the video.

2. Explain that just as in the United States, Canadians (apart from native bands) consider themselves a country of immigrants. Both countries value immigration as a vital component of nation building. Nearly 550,360 people were granted immigration visas to Canada in 2010. (Note: Over one million visas or green cards were issued in the United States in 2010.)

3. Distribute an Immigration ID worksheet to each student (Page 4). Go over the directions as a class and field any questions. Make it clear that each student is to create a fictional person and not to draw a self-portrait or fill out the worksheet as him or herself. Set out art and drawing materials such as colored pencils, markers, magazines and glue or paste.

4. Provide encyclopedias or almanac resources so that students can be accurate about languages spoken in the nationalities that they select.

5. Before students begin working, point out that the Canadian government posts a list of occupations that are in demand in Canada. Display the current list of desirable skilled worker occupations as of June 2010 – See [http://www.canadaimmigrationvisa.com/occp.html](http://www.canadaimmigrationvisa.com/occp.html).

6. Discuss reasons for leaving a country such as religious or political persecution, economic downturns or unemployment, wanting a new start, family strife, lack of opportunity, natural disasters, and war. Also review reasons for moving to Canada such as reuniting with family there, economic opportunity, experience living or studying there, having a job waiting for you.

7. Allow time for students to complete their worksheets individually.
**Day Two:**

1. Inform students that there are many pathways to legal immigration in both the USA and Canada. In Canada, one popular pathway involves a point system. Eligibility for immigration is based on a set of categories or selection factors. Applicants receive points based on how they meet these requirements. 67 out of a possible 100 points are needed.

2. Distribute an Immigrant Application worksheet to each student (Page 5). Read through the directions as a class.

3. Ask students to take out their completed Immigrant ID worksheets from the day before. Each student will then use the Canadian Point System PowerPoint Calculator (see supplement to this lesson plan saved separately online), responding as if he or she was the fictional person from this worksheet.

4. Provide students with computer time in a lab or school library to individually interact with the Canadian Point System PowerPoint and complete their Immigrant Application Worksheets.

5. Analyze the experience as a whole group. How many people developed profiles of immigrants who met the 67-point requirement? What prevented some people from reaching the point requirement? Which selection factors seem most important and why might this be?

**Days Three and Four**

1. Students will be assigned partners or small groups of three to four.

2. Review the terms quota and lottery. Perhaps bring in a lottery ticket and discuss the odds of winning the lottery in your state. Has anyone in class ever purchased a lottery ticket or known someone who has?

3. Each group will then receive a *Devising a United States Point System* assignment handout (Page 7). Read the assignment as a class and check for understanding of the expected product and presentation, and of the attached rubric. Students will have two days to develop a point system using print and internet resources in the library or computer lab.

4. Provide the following as a resource table for the Canadian point system.
   
   [http://www.canadaimmigrationvisa.com/morevisa.html#ind](http://www.canadaimmigrationvisa.com/morevisa.html#ind)

**Day Five:**

1. Allow groups time to practice their presentations.

2. Students will share their group projects with the class. A peer assessment may be utilized as a reflective piece.

**Evaluation/Assessment:**

Students may be assessed on individual and group participation, worksheet completion, group work and presentation (see the rubric on the *Devising a United States Point System* assignment handout). A quiz or a test on US and Canadian immigration policies is also a possibility.

**Possible Extension/Wrap-Up/Additional Notes:**

Additional Resources for the Unit and Extensions:

Under the Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration (signed in 1991), Quebec was granted the right to establish its own immigration requirements and to sponsor immigrants who might adapt well to living in this province. Why might provinces such as Quebec, BC and Manitoba have separate guidelines for immigration?

The Canada-Quebec Accord also provided federal funding for settlement assistance to new immigrants. In Quebec, some of this money is spent administering free language training programs. What types of settlement assistance do new immigrants to the United States receive?

Montreal raised essayist Adam Gopnik recently wrote that “the belief that the right of the community can trump the rights of the individual really is a distinctively Canadian insight.” How does this philosophy apply to both the US and Canadian immigration policies?
Immigration ID

**Directions:**
Create a personal profile for an individual who has decided to immigrate to Canada by filling in the information below. Draw a portrait or paste in a photo in the space provided.

Name:

Age/Date of Birth:

Gender:

Nationality:

Language(s) spoken:

Highest Education Level:

Occupation:

Reason(s) for leaving your country (in complete sentences):

Reason(s) for moving to Canada (in complete sentences):
Directions:

Using the Canadian Point System Powerpoint calculator, respond to each slide based on your Immigrant ID profile. Add up the points on this sheet as you go. Then, answer the questions below the table in complete sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration Selection Factors</th>
<th># of Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Question:

Did your fictional immigrant qualify? Please explain why or why not.

Reflection Question:

Based on the selection factors in the Canadian point system and the amount of points possible for each factor, what are the qualities (or qualifications) of an ideal immigrant according to the Canadian government?

Note: Please use the back of this sheet or a separate sheet of paper to answer the reflection question above in paragraph form. Be sure to consider funds, criminal record, and health factors in your answer.

Please also provide an example of a bias towards a certain factor. Are any of the factors that prevent eligibility discriminatory? Please explain why or why not.
Devising a United States Point System

Currently, immigration in the United States includes a lottery rather than a point system. In 1952, the Immigration and Naturalization Act established a quota system limiting the amount of people that can enter the country from different parts of the world. In addition to other permanent visa programs, the Diversity Immigrant Visa (DV) program, nicknamed the Green Card Lottery, randomly grants approximately 50,000 visas each year to immigrants from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States. Since 2005, there have been several attempts by Congress to amend or to eliminate the immigration lottery.

Assignment:

What if the lottery was eliminated and the United States adopted a non-quota based point system for immigration similar to Canada’s? In partners or small groups, create a point system for immigration to the United States using websites, books, and other resource materials. Your point system will need to have at least eight selection factors and a minimum number of points needed for immigration eligibility. Develop selection factors that reflect the priorities of the United States government regarding immigration and keep these priorities in mind when assigning points. Be sure to include factors that are similar between Canadian and United States immigration policies, such as personal funds, health, criminal record, and adaptability because of family or arranged employment.

Product Choices:

The point system can be developed as a PowerPoint slideshow, a poster, or in a table format using Microsoft Word or Excel. Groups are expected to present their point system to the group, justifying their choice of selection factors and points.

Rubric:

- **Eligibility #** (5 points) for a set amount of points required for visa eligibility
- **Selection factors** (20 points)—eight or more selection factors and points awarded for each
- **Content** (15 points)—for originality of thinking and an understanding of US immigration priorities
- **Neatness** (10 points)—for a well-organized and legible table or slideshow
- **Presentation** (15 points)—for a clear and thoughtful explanation of your point system choices

Web Resources:

- [http://www.ehow.com/about_5142857_usa-immigration-requirements.html](http://www.ehow.com/about_5142857_usa-immigration-requirements.html)
- [http://www.ehow.com/list_7671197_requirements-usa-diversity-visa-application.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_7671197_requirements-usa-diversity-visa-application.html)
- [http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243f6d1a/?vgnextoid=2df93a4107083210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnextchannel=2df93a4107083210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD](http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243f6d1a/?vgnextoid=2df93a4107083210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnextchannel=2df93a4107083210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD)