

Lesson Overview

How many days are needed to teach this lesson?	3
Grade Level(s)	9-12
Subject(s)	English Literature
Lesson Summary	After exploring local reporting about immigration, students lean into dialectic journaling and then lean into the 'lost art' of letter writing as a way of building historical context, global understanding, compassionate empathy, and rhetorical skills.
Standards	The New Illinois Learning Standards for English Language Arts: Threading the Common Core CC.11-12.W.4 Production and Distribution of Writing: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience CC.11-12.R.I.6 Craft and Structure: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text CC.11-12.R.I.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem
Pulitzer Center News Stories	"Walking to the United States" by Chip Mitchell and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for the Chicago Sun-Times "The Venezuelan Migrant Experience — in Colombia, in Chicago," by Chip Mitchell, Meha Ahmad, Sasha-Ann Simmons, and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for WBEZ

	"What Colombia Can Teach Chicago About Managing a Migrant Wave." by Chip Mitchell and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for WBEZ
Theme/idea/issue connecting the Pulitzer Center article to your community	Immigration, Intercultural Cooperation, and Empathy
What additional news outlet(s) in your city/state/region will students learn about in the learning experience?	WTTW <i>Block Club Chicago</i>
Preparation & Content Advisory	In preparation for lesson delivery, instructors should: • Preview Media and abridge as necessary • Read all texts, abridging or extending as necessary • Prepare direct instruction lessons • Ensure students have access to all instructions, texts, and media It should also be noted that all student tasks can be modified to account for learning differences (e.g., the required number of Dialectical Journal readings/postings can be adjusted for developing, proficient, and gifted readers; readings may be completed independently, in small groups, or teacher-led). Lastly, given the difficult nature of this subject matter, <i>Ink and Empathy: Bridging Borders Through Letters</i> inevitably broaches the uncomfortable. As an instructor, please be mindful of your social-emotional capacity to carry out any given lesson component, as well as your students' social-emotional capacity to engage. Again, it is appropriate to abridge this unit plan as necessary.

Lesson Plan

Essential Questions

- What socio-political factors drive human migration?
- What environmental factors drive human migration?
- What economic factors drive human migration?
- How do different government institutions (local and national) handle migration waves?
- What parallels can we make between various historic and contemporary migratory waves?
- In what healthy and humane ways can a general populous (the people) welcome migrant/refugee/immigrant populations?

Focus Pulitzer Center News Story/Stories

["Walking to the United States"](#) by Chip Mitchell and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for the Chicago Sun-Times

["The Venezuelan Migrant Experience – in Colombia, in Chicago,"](#) by Chip Mitchell, Meha Ahmad, Sasha-Ann Simmons, and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for WBEZ

["What Colombia Can Teach Chicago About Managing a Migrant Wave,"](#) by Chip Mitchell and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for WBEZ

Introducing the Lesson

In early spring of 2022, Texas Governor Greg Abbott began shipping busloads of asylum-seeking people to self-identified sanctuary cities such as Chicago, New York, Denver, and Philadelphia. With this bold political act, Abbott made one point clear—if border towns must be made to grapple with a surging population, then the rest of the country would grapple as well. Aside from legal and humanitarian concerns, this maneuver begged a more pressing question—how would sanctuary cities respond to waves of newcomers, both bureaucratically and amongst the people? As with most governmental business, the solutions have been varied in both scope and effectiveness. As for the community conversation, there are a myriad of perspectives. Nonetheless, for the students that sit before us, issues of migration are not simply political or abstract. Be they Caribbean, of Latin American descent, from the continent of Africa, or Europe, young people deserve to engage in scholarly discourse that centers their lived reality, broadens their lens, and shapes solution-minded thinking.

Concerning the broader issue of immigration, this lesson does not purport to have an answer, but rather seeks to build critical context, empathy, and rhetorical comprehension/ skills (e.g. Ethos/Pathos/Logos, Author's Purpose, Analysis). Toward this end, students will compose Open Letters to migrating peers after exploring the work of [Chip Mitchell](#) and [Anthony Vazquez](#).

Warm-up/Opening

Have students respond to each of the following media texts with the 3&3 method detailed below.

- "[Chicago warns of humanitarian crisis as city struggles to house migrants](#)" from PBS NewsHour (5:56)
- "[Johnson: 51,000 migrants in Chicago stem from buses sent from Texas governor](#)" from FOX 32 Chicago (3:24)
- "[Texas has bused over 119,700 illegal immigrants to sanctuary cities across the country](#)" from Greg Abbott (0:39)
- "[Chicago struggles to house thousands of incoming migrants](#)" from PBS News Weekend, PBS NewsHour (5:56)
- "[Colombia - President Addresses United Nations General Debate, 77th Session \(English\) | #UNGA](#)" from United Nations (21:07) ***Note about resource: Excerpts from this speech will give context to the socio-political and economic reasons for Latin America's current migration wave. It also makes space for students to consider Author's Purpose/Perspective (an ELA standard)...They'll consider this as they read the Pulitzer Center focus text (per the articles, the Colombian president has humanely accommodated Venezuelan migration...This tracks with his UN speech)*

1. Introduce the media collection by outlining the theme of migration in the United States.
2. 3&3: Students should compose 3 sentences detailing facts learned while viewing media and 3 researchable questions sparked while viewing media
3. Extension Task: Students can research/compose an informative paragraph that responds to a student-composed question (on 3&3 from either section)

Supplemental Media

Excerpts that feature Hugo Chavez from "[South of the Border](#)," a documentary by Oliver Stone.

***Educator note: Early in "What Colombia Can Teach Chicago About Managing a Migrant Wave", Chip Mitchell notes that the migration began in 2014, a year after the death of President Hugo Chavez. To contextualize why Venezuelans are leaving their homeland en masse, students will need to understand a bit about Venezuela and, by extension, Hugo Chavez. "South of the Border" is a crash course in this history.*

Preparing to Engage with the Focus Resource(s)

1. Introduce the following vocabulary terms to students and hold space to lead the necessary instruction:
 - [Sanctuary City](#)

- Immigration
- Migration

2. Instruct students to read the following articles independently or in small groups that shine a local lens on the issue of migration. These articles are produced by local outlets:
 - [“No, Armed Venezuelan Migrants Did Not Take Over A Chicago Apartment Building,”](#) by Maxwell Evans for *Block Club Chicago*
 - [“Chicago’s Venezuelan Community In Limbo Amid Trump’s Push To End Deportation Protections,”](#) by Fatema Hosseini” for Borderless Magazine and Block Club Chicago
3. Encourage students to either use the 3&3 method to analyze the articles or leverage the essential questions to analyze the reporting.

Exploring the Resource(s)

Have students read and analyze the Pulitzer Center reporting independently or in small groups.

- [“Walking to the United States”](#) by Chip Mitchell and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for the Chicago Sun-Times
- [“The Venezuelan Migrant Experience — in Colombia, in Chicago,”](#) by Chip Mitchell, Meha Ahmad, Sasha-Ann Simmons, and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for WBEZ
- [“What Colombia Can Teach Chicago About Managing a Migrant Wave,”](#) by Chip Mitchell and Anthony Vazquez from Democracy Solutions for WBEZ

Questions to engage with the reporting:

- *What are some tangible ways that the Colombian government is handling Venezuelan immigration?*
- *What are some tangible ways that Chicago’s administration is handling Venezuelan immigration?*
- *How have the Colombian people responded to Venezuelan immigration?*
- *How have Chicagoans responded to Venezuelan immigration?*
- *What socio-political factors drive human migration?*
- *What environmental factors drive human migration?*
- *What economic factors drive human migration?*
- *How do different government institutions (local and national) handle migration waves?*
- *What parallels can we make between various historic and contemporary migratory waves?*
- *In what healthy and humane ways can a general populous (the people) welcome migrant/refugee/immigrant populations?*

****Educator note: share the questions *before* sharing the reporting.**

Processing the Resource(s)

1. Students should analyze the local articles and Pulitzer Center articles through dialectical journaling.
 - a. Introduce the dialectical journal strategy as a means of processing all of the resources explored.
 - b. Review the [Dialectical Journal template](#)
 - c. Hold space for students to use the dialectical journal template to process each out the resources.
2. Share Aloud: Instructors should make space for students to share their Dialectical Journal entries in a way that makes sense for their classroom community (e.g. voluntary, required, oral or written exit ticket).

Performance Task(s)

Writing Workshop: Open Letters

Each student will compose a letter to a 'newcomer' with a similar identity.

1. Begin the process with a whole class brainstorm session to compile a list of topics; possible topics include:
 - School
 - Getting around the city
 - Friendships
 - Weather
 - Food
 - Clothing
 - Neighborhoods
 - Cultural Opportunities
 - Work Opportunities
 - Learning English
 - Dealing with negativity/trauma
 - Feeling alone
 - Identity
2. Direct students to independently select three topics that they will expound upon in their letters.
3. Provide direct instruction on the mechanics of letter-writing, relevant Rhetorical Devices, and the nuances of Open Letters.
 - If students have not already explored notable/historic open letters (e.g. Letter from a Birmingham Jail by Dr. Martin Luther King, Letter to My Nephew by James Baldwin, Slavery and the Boston Riot by Angelina E. Grimke), that exploration should take place at this juncture.
4. Hold space for students to compose their letters.

Supplemental Reading: Open Letters:

- James Baldwin’s Letter to Angela Davis
- Rachel Cory’s Letters to Her Mother
- A Letter to My Son by Ta’Nehisi Coates
- Dear Woke Brown Girl
- A Letter From Young Asian-Americans To Their Families About Black Lives Matter

Assessment

Create rubrics for the following activities:

Dialectical Journal Rubric

Rhetorical Appeals
Rhetorical Context (e.g., Author’s Purpose, Setting)
Analysis

Letter Writing Rubric

Mechanics (e.g., grammar, punctuation, sentence structure)
Rhetorical Appeals