

Tar Heel Immigrant Footprints

by Mindy Passe

Introduction

Isaac Asimov said it best perhaps when he said "The only constant is change...".¹ The more that the world changes, the truer this seems to be. As an educator, I believe that understanding change needs to be a cornerstone of our curriculum. There is so much that we do not know about the world in which our students will live. Understanding change, problem solving and working collaboratively are central to understanding our world today and preparing our students for the world of tomorrow. It is interesting when we realize that we are in the midst of change though we hadn't even recognized it nor acknowledged it.

I have to admit that I was both shocked and excited when I was told at my first CTI class, *All Immigration is Local*, that North Carolina was the number one state in immigration growth between 1990 and 2000.² Shocked, because it broke all of the stereotypes in my mind about where immigrants enter and live in our country and excited, since I am a 4th grade teacher and our Social Studies curriculum is the study of our state. The magnet school in which I teach has an increasingly diverse population which is reflected in my classroom each year. I knew that this would be a good hook to get my students to study North Carolina with new eyes. I knew that that this study would fit in well with my philosophy of inquiry based learning.

" The inquiry approach is more focused on using and learning content as a means to develop information-processing and problem-solving skills. The system is more student centered, with the teacher as a facilitator of learning. There is more emphasis on "how we come to know" and less on "what we know." Students are more involved in the construction of knowledge through active involvement."³

Studying immigration would give my students the opportunity to be researchers, analysts and disseminators of information. As a long time teacher of gifted students, I saw that through the topic of immigration, I could differentiate my teaching and curriculum based on my students' academic skills, knowledge base and interests. Students could develop and conduct a research study of our student population, analyze the data and make comparisons to the data of our city, county and state. I saw how well this topic could be interdisciplinary and thematic in that it focused on *change* and how it has impacted and continues to impact so many aspects of our city, county and state. The five

generalizations about change, which the students are already familiar with are, and are central to our classroom studies are: 1) Change is everywhere. 2) Change is be man-made or natural. 3)Change may appear to be random or orderly. 4) Change can be positive or negative. 5) Change is linked to time.

Character Education is an important part of our school focus, as it is nationwide, due to the imperative to address the growing issues of bullying in our schools. This focus weaves well into our study of immigration, particularly with regard to children who are immigrants or the children of immigrants. The big question that we will seek to answer is: How does immigration impact the immigrant, the children of immigrants and the place that the people immigrate to? We will look at the changing demographics of Charlotte and North Carolina and the impact that immigration has had on our city and state, economically, culturally and historically. Students will develop a data base about the students at our school with regard to immigration. The students' data collection is key to their understanding of immigration and significant since it should be noted that:

"A major drawback of the census data (1980 and 1990) is that a critical variable-the birthplace of parents-has been dropped from the decennial census since 1980, making it impossible to identify directly the children of immigrants ." ⁴

In addition, we will look at individual children who are immigrants or children of immigrants through literature and personal interviews as we try to understand how it feels to be an immigrant and/or the child of immigrants. Ultimately, after reviewing the research collected about our school community, analysis of our quantitative and qualitative data with regard to the impact that immigration has had on both immigrants and/or the children of immigrants and the place that they have immigrated to; the students will be challenged to develop their ideas about how, we, as a school community can fully benefit from our rich diversity while at the same time, create an environment that is welcoming and comfortable for all immigrants and children of immigrants to our school. In other words, how can we mine the global knowledge that our immigrant families bring to our school while at the same time create a more inclusive school environment for our immigrant families? When we create an environment that appreciates and celebrates being different, we will create an environment that will reduce the likelihood of bullying. Jennifer Hudson says, in her article in *Teaching Tolerance, Want To Stop Bullies? Deal With The Differences* , we need to teach students to respect the many ways in which we are all different.⁵

Lastly, the social and emotional needs of gifted students, according to the literature⁶ and my personal experience as a teacher of gifted students for over 30 years, need to be addressed in classrooms with gifted students. Depression, anxiety and isolation are among the common difficulties with gifted students. Adding to that, to be a gifted

minority is an added challenge to some gifted students. As a fourth grade teacher, it is important to be particularly sensitive to these needs as my students approach adolescence. I need to be intentional about addressing these issues since I am aware that some gifted students mature emotionally earlier than their peers and the teenage years are the most difficult socially for gifted students. It makes sense to include this aspect in our studies, perhaps not as explicitly as the aforementioned objectives but more a part of the process. In my classroom, when we are focused on an interdisciplinary thematic unit such as this, I invite students to make connections in all aspects of our curriculum as well as their personal lives. These connections often become central to our study in that they come from the students, who are leading us in our educational journey when inquiry based learning is effectively happening. Sometimes, of course, I plant seeds that lend themselves to connections but more often than not, I follow the connections and questions that my students add. I continue to learn from and with my students every day.

Background

I teach fourth grade in a large urban magnet elementary school in the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. My school is part of Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and is unique in that it has three distinct programs: neighborhood students who are almost all economically disadvantaged and primarily African American, a gifted magnet program with a very diverse group of students bused in from middle to upper class suburbs of our county and a very selective program for highly gifted students from the entire county. On my grade level, for example, there is one highly gifted class, 2 gifted classrooms and 3 classrooms of neighborhood students. Although we are 3 distinct programs, we continuously work to develop our school-wide program through integration of curriculum, special activities, field trips, etc. My class has 25 students that remain in a self-contained classroom, in which I teach all subjects. My classroom is made of 25 students who are identified as gifted. There are 9 Caucasians, 3 African Americans, 11 Asian Americans (India, China, Korea, Philippines, Laos) and 2 Hispanic students. Being a magnet program, only 2 students have been at Barringer since Kindergarten. Ten students are new to our school this year and the remaining 13 joined our school last year as third graders. Two students are immigrants from India and 14 students are the children of immigrants, from India, Canada, the Philippines, Laos, Korea, Germany and Honduras.

North Carolina Social Studies goals⁷ for fourth grade include analysis of how people, events and developments brought about changes to communities in various regions of NC. Students are expected to assess changes in ways of living over time and determine whether the changes are primarily political, economic, or social as well as assess and evaluate the importance of regional diversity on the development of economic, social, and political institutions in North Carolina. Students should be able to describe how

different ethnic groups have influenced culture, customs and history of North Carolina. This immigration unit will do all of these through our examination of immigration and the impact it has had and continues to have on North Carolina.

Objectives

This interdisciplinary thematic unit is designed to be taught over an 10 week period with a focus on mathematics, literacy and social studies. It will tie in with the ongoing theme of change and be inquiry based and student centered. It reflects the Common Core⁸ structure of incorporating the reading skills needed to understand informational text as the foundation of the Social Studies curriculum. Fourth grade students are expected to interpret information presented visually, orally and quantitatively (e.g. in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines or interactive elements on timelines) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears. As gifted students, who are generally working above grade level, they will also be expected to draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question or to solve a problem efficiently. In addition, as students learn through novel study, they are expected to be able to explore the meaning of texts, explaining what the text says explicitly as well as draw inferences from the text. Students are also expected to explain events, procedures, ideas or concepts in a historical context including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

The first focus is directly related to mathematical skills. After three introductory lessons related to immigration designed to interest students in the topic, I will lead students in a study of the demographics of our school with regard to immigration. This process easily lends itself to many of the basic tenets of the Common Core curriculum⁹ for math in that it will require students to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. Students will think sequentially as they determine how to survey classrooms in order to collect, tally and organize the data. Students will need to reason abstractly and quantitatively as they gather data and then analyze and compare data. Inherent in the process is attention to precision as well as reasoning abstractly and quantitatively. Students, working in small groups, will share their results and critique the reasoning of others.

This initial surveying project will automatically create differentiated learning opportunities. My linguistic students will write the survey questions, as well as the script for students to use to gather the data that will be collected in classrooms throughout the school. Logical mathematical students will develop a systematic plan to collect, combine and disaggregate the data for analysis by each team. Differentiation in math will be

included as the more capable students will create pie graphs, which require skill in the use of fractions and percentages while my on grade level students will create bar graphs. Spatial students will be involved in locating and marking origination points in North Carolina, the United States and the world. Collection of the data will include information not only about immigration but migration within North Carolina and the United States to see if/how these trends parallel each other and to involve more students in the surveying process. Groups will be expected to create a graphic representation, identify points of origin on maps and then summarize the information they have collected. Included in their analysis will be the determination of further questions to survey, paralleling the process of urban geographers. For example, upon noting the large number of immigrant families from India, students may choose to find out specifically which states in India the families have immigrated from or perhaps students will be interested in finding more information from immigrant students from a specific country. Eventually, all students will be involved in describing the data as well as developing a way to effectively communicate this information to our student body on a bulletin board in our main entrance hallway.

The second focus will be the development of an understanding of the immigrant experience through reading and analyzing fiction and informational text, informal and formal conversations as well as writing to demonstrate their understanding of what they have learned. Students will make inferences, summarize, draw conclusions and make comparisons of text related to immigration. Students will be reading the novel, *Esperanza Rising* by Pam, Munoz Ryan¹⁰, with a combination of teacher led discussion and student led analysis of literary elements including making connections to issues related to past and current immigration. Students will read independently, be read aloud books and interview immigrants to develop a better understanding of the immigrant experience; particularly that of children. Differentiation will occur as students self select literature that fits their reading level. Student writing, in the form of an immigrant's diary, will help students to synthesize their knowledge and understanding of the immigrants' experience, through the eyes of children.

The third focus will be our study of North Carolina and the impact that immigration has had on our state. Included in our analysis of immigration will be the impact that it has had on important aspects of our history and present life in North Carolina, including farming and agriculture, industry, education, health care and banking. An important focus will be on the economy of NC since immigrants have a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Immigrants are more likely to form new businesses than United States born citizens and foreign born university graduates are important contributors to U.S. innovation.¹¹ We will look at the role that immigrants have played as Charlotte became the third largest banking city in the 1980s as detailed in *Charlotte, NC: The Global Evolution of a New South City* by William Graves and Heather A. Smith.¹² We will study

many and varied aspects of culture; with a focus on how immigrant groups have impacted and continue to impact the culture of North Carolina in areas such as cooking, ceremonies, sports, traditions, values, dance, etc. We will examine Charlotte and how it has transitioned from a small city with a textile focus to a large urban center with what Thomas Hatchett refers to as salad bowl suburbs¹³, zones of emergence on South Boulevard and Central Avenue and the international flavor that is apparent from grocery stores to billboards to our classrooms.

Finally, after study of the many aspects of immigration, with a particular focus on children, students will be asked to develop products or processes to increase understanding of culture and experiences within our school community. Students will be encouraged to make real products for real audiences to insure authentic learning and purposefulness. Through analysis, discussion and creative problem solving, students will design projects or processes that they believe will positively impact the immigrant students and enrich the whole school population; to help us develop a better understanding of our increasingly diverse community. The culminating products will include technology, the arts, writing and any medium that the students elect to use; once again providing differentiated opportunities for the varied skills, strengths and talents of the students. Possible products may include a power point of the cultures and countries represented in our school that could be added to our school website, flags on display near the entrance to our school representing all countries of our students and their families, an interactive blog, where students can share and compare information, feelings or thoughts about their culture and experiences, a photographic collage of cultural objects that represent the many cultures within our student body and the addition of school festivals paralleling festivals that currently exist for adults in our community representing different cultures and countries. (These ideas are some that my students have already come up with although we are still in the middle of the unit. It is interesting to note that the students want all students, including United States born, to be involved in the sharing of their culture, reflecting their understanding of the complex nature of culture within the United States as well as beyond our borders.)

Content Information

The unprecedented growth of the immigrant population in North Carolina has received intensive focus and study from many vantage points. In a recent article in the Charlotte Observer by Kathleen Purvis¹⁴, Gustavo Arellano, a journalist who writes a syndicated column in almost 40 newspapers, "Ask a Mexican!", said, "Raleigh is really now the Ellis Island for Mexicans in the United States." His assertion is not far from the truth although what is dramatically different from Ellis Island is the transformation that immigration has

had over the past 30 years in Charlotte. In Audrey Singer's article, "The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways"¹⁵ she labels cities as former gateways, emerging gateways and pre-emerging gateways. *Former gateways* include the historical immigration sights over the past two centuries such as New York, San Francisco, Chicago, etc. *Emerging gateways* include states that heretofore had not experienced high immigration rates but in the 1990s; cities such as Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, Utah and Idaho, in the west and North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee and Kentucky in the south. Several North Carolina cities are identified as *pre-emerging gateways*. Referring to the growth in the 1980s and 90s, she mentions Charlotte, Greensboro-Winston-Salem as cities with no less than 600% growth. And according to the Migration Policy Institute¹⁶, North Carolina ranked first among the United States with immigrant growth rising 273% between 1990 and 2000 compared to 65% in the immigrant growth between 2000 - 2011, shifting North Carolina to 15th highest immigrant growth. Overall growth of immigration in the United States has diminished dramatically from 57% growth in the last decade of the previous century compared to 30% in the first decade of the 21st century. States with the highest growth are now all in the South (from #1 - #5) with Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky and Arkansas compared to the decade before with (from #1 - #5) North Carolina, Georgia, Nevada, Arkansas and Utah. Although North Carolina is no longer among the top states, neighboring states continue the trend of the prior decade. This is relevant as an educator. Although North Carolina is not among the top 5 for total immigrant population growth between 2000 and 2010, it is second on the list of the five states with the largest immigrant percent growth of children with immigrant parents, with about 118% growth following Tennessee (about 122 %) then Alabama (about 111%) Arkansas and South Carolina (both about 108%).

Charlotte's population growth over the last decade is unprecedented. The city of Charlotte was ranked 6th in population growth and the metropolitan area was ranked 7th in domestic migration since 2000. Triple digit growth in the Hispanic and multi-racial populations along with a 70% increase in Asian population are transforming Charlotte into a global city.¹⁷ Another interesting aspect of this growth, relevant to educators is that Charlotte and Mecklenburg County's population has a median age lower than similar metropolitan areas due to the influx of younger people seeking job opportunities. Charlotte classrooms reflect the continuous influx of people. On a recent website prepared for the Democratic National Convention in August, 2012, it was noted that of the 65,000 people who moved to Mecklenburg County between 2009 and 2010, 65% came from outside of North Carolina, 1/3 from another state, 1/4 from the Northeast, 1/5 from a different country. Half were white, 1/4 African American, 11% Hispanic/Latino, and 11% Asian, with over 40% being college educated.¹⁸

These changes are mirrored in our public schools as we look at recent data in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. In an article titled, "Hispanics are the fastest-growing group in

CMS"¹⁹ Ann Doss Helms states that Hispanic enrollment has roughly tripled over the last 10 years with a current estimate of 17% of CMS students while Asian students, a steadily growing minority, topped 7,000, representing just over 5 percent of all students. Of course, the growth in immigrant students varies by schools. It was also noted that enrollment in CMS magnet schools also grew this past year, from 16,805 to 17,755. My school, Barringer Academic Center, a magnet school for gifted and highly gifted students reflects the changes in our city's population in many respects, with the exception of the increasing Hispanic population, which is disproportionately lower than the 17% representation in CMS. A school of 645 students, we have 60 % African American, 18% Asian, 16 % white and 3% Hispanic. Among the Asian population, we have an increasing number of families recently immigrated from India; estimated at about 100 families with approximately 130 students. (This data will be more accurately documented via our student surveys since this information is not a part of the current demographic information available about our schools.)

The student research will serve dual purposes. The first being the intended analysis of our student population but the second being more salient, though perhaps more significant and relevant are the issues related to the impact of immigration on children. These issues become more apparent and significant as students become adolescents and for that reason, it is important to encourage open discussions among the students, teachers and parents about how it feels to be an immigrant or the children of immigrant parents. Since children of immigrants will represent a large component of our future American school society, we need to begin to study these children's adaptation to their role as students of American public and private schools and future citizens of our country. As educators, we can play an important role in supporting these students if we study their needs, issues and concerns that Min Zhou identifies as *second generation and one and a half generation*.²⁰

Barringer Academic Center, as a magnet school, has many *second generation and one and a half generation immigrants*. Most are involved in our academic competitions including our nationally ranked chess team, Science Olympiad, Math Olympiad, the National Geographic Geography Bee, Spelling Bee and a Science Fair, to name a few. Barringer's award winners parallel what is happening in schools across America with a very high profile of immigrants attaining prominence and academic recognition. Carol Bainbridge's states:²¹

"For example, in the past 15 years, the list of top-ten award winners of the Westinghouse Science Talent Search, one of the country's most prestigious high school academic contests, has been dominated by the 1.5 - or second-generation immigrants. While immigrant children are overrepresented on lists of award-winners or on academic fast tracks, many others are extremely vulnerable to multiple high-risk behaviors, school failure, street gangs, and youth crime. Even Asian Americans, so-called "model minority," have seen a steady rise of youth

gang memberships. Some of the Asian gang members are from suburban middle-class families, attend magnet schools, and are exceptionally good students."

The issues that second generation and one and a half generation immigrant students face closely parallel issues related to the social and emotional needs of gifted students. Whereas gifted students are trying to find their identity within the culture that they are born, the immigrant students are often confused by such questions about how they fit in with American students while maintaining their identity with their own culture. At times, they feel embarrassed by their parents' "old" ways. Parents, on the other hand, are sometimes struggling to support their child's independence and academic success while allowing them freedom to grow and become independent in a culture that is foreign to them.

As a long time educator of gifted students, it is interesting to note the similarities between the needs of the immigrant students and gifted students. In Carol Bainbridge's article²², she states that immigrant students need frequent interaction with 'co-ethnics within an ethnic community' to help them develop a sense of identity that could ease the bicultural conflicts. Paralleling this recommendation in the literature²³ relating to gifted students, it is noted that gifted students need the opportunity to work and socialize with their academic peers if they are to grow towards self acceptance. Although this does not appear to be earth shattering parallels, it reaffirms the importance of creating a culture of communication, acceptance and celebration of shared differences and experiences; all key to diminishing bullying and increasing healthy self realization for many of my students, who I now see as twice susceptible in their profiles as both gifted and either second generation or one and a half generation immigrants. As teachers, the more aware we are of our students' needs, the better prepared we are for supporting them socially, emotionally and academically.

In addition to the explicit discussions that we will have, students will watch two movies that focus on spelling bees, which are often a fascination of our students, especially as the spelling bee season approaches at our school. It is my intention that after watching the films, *Akeelah and the Bee*²⁴ and *Spellbound*²⁵, classroom discussions about the family and culture of the best spellers will lead students to examine the similarities and differences in the cultures of the successful spellers. *Akeelah and the Bee* focuses on a student from a single parent, African American family, as she is drawn into a world of immigrants whose zealotry for spelling bees is in marked contrast to her upbringing, though they share a common bond. In *Spellbound*, there are a wide variety of backgrounds including a Hispanic child of immigrant parents from Mexico as well as several Indian students. The issues of giftedness, being different and immigration will be discussed in light of our unit, the students personal experiences and interests. Kidblog, an interactive, teacher supervised website, will serve as a safe forum for

students to add their comments and join in this important dialogue. Parents will be invited to read the student blogs to include them in the conversation.

Objectives

This interdisciplinary thematic unit will take 10 weeks and incorporate objectives for Social Studies, literacy and math skills in 4th grade content areas, inclusive of the Common Core approach to teaching and learning. Under the umbrella of the concept of change and within the Social Studies area, students will be able to describe how different ethnic groups have influenced culture, customs and the history of North Carolina, as well as be able to assess changes in ways of living over time to determine whether the changes are political, economic or social and assess. They will evaluate the importance of regional diversity on the development of economic, social and political institutions of North Carolina.²⁶ In literacy, students will be able to take notes and categorize information, recall relevant information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources as well as draw evidence from literary or informational texts which they will analyze and summarize. In the area of writing, students will be expected to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.²⁷ Students will use technology, including the Internet, to develop their writing and media representation, working independently and/or collaborating creatively with their academic peers. In math, students will have the opportunity to connect and explain different representations of the complex data regarding immigration in the North Carolina. Students will experiment with representing data in multiple ways, including making surveys, charts, lists and graphs. As students study the data, they will communicate precisely by engaging in discussions comparing and contrasting data. Ultimately, students will evaluate their results in the context of the situation and reflect on whether the results make sense and if/how this information can have a viable impact on their research and their response to this research. In essence, the students will be immersed in the immigration data and be expected to respond, reflect and create products that will interpret the data, communicate effectively and develop strategies to use this information in real world situations.

Strategies

Introductory Activities

Students' initial engagement with this topic will be early in the school year with an exploration of their own personal experiences as magnet school students, which closely parallels the dynamics of immigration called *push/pull*. *Push/pull* refers to the push

factors which usually drive migrants out of their countries of origin such as war, poverty, natural disasters and the pull factors that determine where the immigrant goes such as economic opportunities, family and education.²⁸ Using an oversized magnet, students will be asked to identify factors that *pulled* them to our magnet school program and write them on post it notes that will be attached to the magnet. After looking at commonalities and creating some generalizations about what attracted them to our school, students will then trace their hands and write on each hand what they felt *pushed* them to come to our school. Again, we will look for trends and common experiences. Students will be encouraged to share their experiences with regard to how they felt as both one who has recently arrived at our magnet school as well as how it feels to have additional students join our student body. Typically students come to our gifted magnet program as third graders since the gateway year for gifted identification is second grade but traditionally, we continue to have new students arrive as fourth graders as evidenced in our class this year with ten of our 25 students being new. We will revisit these ideas and make connections when we read about and interview immigrants.

Another beginning of the year activity that will serve as an introduction to our unit on immigration will be based on the book, by *The Name Jar*²⁹ by Yangsook Choi. In this book, a young child who immigrates from Korea, decides that she does not want to reveal her Korean name for fear that she will be ridiculed or laughed at due to the foreign sounding nature of it. This story illustrates one of the many issues that students who are immigrants or the children of immigrants face. To help students get more acquainted with one another and encourage self reflection and exploration, students, with help from their families, will be asked to create a foldable which will answer the following questions: 1) What is the meaning of your name?, 2) Were you named after someone? If so, tell us about that person., 3) Do you have any nicknames? 4) Do you like your name? 5) Can you write your name in another language? Through sharing the 'stories' of their names, students will get a glimpse into the varied backgrounds of their classmates and begin to build an environment of shared community and global awareness.

Students will be introduced to basic background knowledge about our city with an article recently published in the Charlotte Observer by Lawrence Toppman, *Queen City's crazy quilt of cultures*³⁰, which gives a retrospective of Charlotte's changing demographics in the past four decades. Beginning with foods that are readily available in Charlotte such as an Indian lunch buffet, an Ethiopian dinner and Chinese ginger ice cream, this article helps the reader to see the wide array of cultures that have transformed Charlotte. Using this article as a basis, students will begin their study with K/W/L (What I **K**now, **W**ant to Know, What I **L**earned). This approach is a teaching model used to encourage student-centered, inquiry based learning by (K) activating students' prior knowledge, (W) developing questions of personal interest to encourage purposeful reading and research and (L) summing up and reflecting on what was learned and if and how questions were

answered. Ideas, questions and results are recorded collectively on a chart for the whole class to serve as a guide to further study of the overarching question, how does immigration impact the immigrant, the children of immigrants and the place that the people immigrate to?

The framework for this unit will be based on Sandra Kaplan's³¹ concepts that incorporate depth and complexity into any unit of study. Sandra Kaplan's model uses simple icons to engage students in complex thinking while adding rigor and critical thinking to instruction. Using these icons is a strategy often used with gifted students but equally effective with all types of learners. To develop depth in lessons, students use icons that represent strategies to build understanding such as learning the *language of the discipline and looking for big ideas, essential details, rules, patterns, trends, unanswered questions and ethics*. Complexity is created as students look at the subject/issue *over time, from multiple points of view and across disciplines*. Initially, early on in the year, I introduce the students to this very complex approach to learning using popcorn as the topic. By initially using the concrete, fun and tasty topic of popcorn, students get to explore all aspects and use all of the icons/ways of thinking, which we incorporate into a bulletin board, popcorn and all. Focusing on a few aspects of this model at a time, in a variety of subjects enables students to get a grasp of this new vocabulary and provides an excellent way to differentiate for the varied thinking capacities and styles of my students.

Immigration is a topic that lends itself well to these concepts. To start with, students will need to learn the language of the discipline; defining immigration, immigrant, culture, etc. In our introductory reading about immigration, locally in Charlotte as well as across the state, students will create 'petals of detail' which help them to identify key ideas, facts and issues. As we look closely at the data, students will look for rules, trends, and be encouraged to pose any unanswered questions that they may have, as well as ethical concerns, given the topical and sensitive nature of current immigration concerns, such as the issue of documented vs. undocumented immigrants. Students will be constantly looking at immigration from multiple points of view, through their interviews, surveys and exploration of literature featuring immigrant children's experiences. Students will look at immigration 'through the eyes' of bankers, grocers, teachers, clergy, coaches, elected officials, real estate brokers, etc. Students will be asked to make connections and generalizations across the disciplines through this interdisciplinary approach to learning.

Another focus in this unit is to help students make inferences and draw conclusions as they read novels, picture books and informational text. One strategy that I use to help students gain insight and understanding is called frozen moments. (See Appendix 1) Frozen moments is a strategy in which students in small groups create a specific scene from literature or history and freeze that moment. Using physical poses, gestures and facial expressions, students convey the characters' feelings and ideas to represent their interpretation of the significance of a moment. Each student group is given a different moment by the teacher to interpret initially but later on students select their frozen scene. Fourth grade students delight in figuring out who each of their classmates is portraying based on their comments, gestures and facial expression. This strategy, for example, is used effectively in novel studies, such as *Esperanza Rising* by Paula Munoz³², a novel in which the main character is a 10 year old Hispanic girl who immigrates from Mexico to Southern California in the 1920s. Although her experience is markedly different from the Hispanic people who immigrated to North Carolina, there are many parallels to deepen understanding and stimulate thinking. It is interesting when more than one group has the same scene to see the different interpretations that provide students an opportunity for dialogue and deeper learning. Reflective writing following this activity extends thinking, analysis and dialogue between students and teacher.

Students will communicate with each other as they read, research, explore, analyze and reflect on immigration. There are three ways this will be achieved.

1) As a class, students will be a part of Socratic Seminars, student focused discussions in which the teacher asks guiding questions and then encourages dialogue among the students. Socratic Seminars maximize student participation, requiring students to read, think and listen critically and facilitates the clear and convincing development of ideas. We will use Socratic Seminars with all types of text, including our novel study. (See Appendix 2) The seminar places the burdens, responsibilities, and rewards of intellectual inquiry on the students' shoulders.

"Socratic Seminars are the result of Mortimer Adler, who argues that education should be rooted in three goals: the acquisition of knowledge accomplished through didactic teaching in the content area; the development of intellectual skills through coaching, exercises and practice; and the enlarged understanding of ideas and values through Socratic Questioning and Active Participation."³³

2) Students will also participate in Literacy Circles, in which they will be assigned roles that will insure shared leadership and participation of their novel study. The roles, which will rotate, throughout the novel analysis are: *Discussion Director*, *Literary Luminary* (highlighting key, interesting or puzzling passages), *Illustrator*, *Connector*, *Summarizer* and *Vocabulary Enricher*.³⁴ Students will also share their response to literature through

Kidblog, an interactive class blog that allows the teacher to direct and monitor the conversation of students. Students can not only write their own ideas but can add imported ideas, photos and videos to their responses.

3) Students will act as researchers and historians as they gather information about immigration. They will interview children and adults from our school community. Students will generate a list of questions they may want to ask or gather more information about and compose those questions on a graphic organizer where they can record the answers they hear. When students research and learn about things that are personal or specific to them, it makes learning much more relevant for them. Ultimately, the combined learning from these approaches will translate into students creating their own illustrated immigration focused book based on their reading, research and/or own family history. Their books will be modeled after *Hannah's Journey*³⁵ by Marissa Moss, and shared with our school community in our media center.

In addition, students will communicate through the creation of choropleth maps representing the diversity of our school, city and state as well as the creation of a relief map of North Carolina, which the students will use to develop an exhibit on a topic of their choice, relevant to North Carolina and immigration. The maps will be displayed in a museum format with students from other classrooms viewing the interactive map exhibits, as the student creators of the exhibits serve as docents. Students will enhance their exhibits using photography (<http://www.photovoice.org/>), student made cartoon-like videos (<http://goanimate.com/>) and Glogs (<http://edu.glogster.com/>).

Students will be engaged and learning via the interactive resource, *Changing Places: From Black and White to Technicolor*³⁶, an exhibit created by the Levine Museum of the New South. This exhibit explores the rapid demographic and cultural change of Charlotte in the past two decades and was on exhibit from February 2009 to November 2010. Although the exhibit is no longer on display, the exhibit is available on line as well as a mobile exhibition brought to schools. I will use the teacher resources and lesson plans provided for this interactive and highly engaging exhibit, which features video, artifacts, photography and interactive activities. Through videos of varied Charlotte environments, such as an Indian kitchen, a Mexican tienda, community park and others, students will hear stories from immigrants new to Charlotte and be asked to reflect about their own bias and stereotypes in response to the exhibit. To culminate our study of this exhibit, we will have the travelling exhibit on display in our cafeteria for the week that our school participates in Mix-It Up Day³⁷, a national campaign launched by Teaching Tolerance a decade ago, that encourages students to move out of their comfort zones and connect with someone new over lunch. Students will be explore concepts such as cultural identity, communication barriers and stereotypes, using actual photographs and videos of Charlotte.

Ultimately, this exhibit will help students to develop a plan to share what they have learned about 'immigrants' in our Barringer Academic Community. Students will develop and create products or processes that will address issues pertinent to students, parents and teachers in our community and help others expand their perspective, develop empathy for the immigrants and embrace the wide array of learning opportunities that come with having a diverse school population. Included in this sharing will be an International Festival, which the students will help to create, design and participate in, for our school community in the spring of this year.

Appendix 1

Frozen Moments

Objective: To create a moment from the novel and interpret what each character is thinking/feeling. (often called 'tableau')

1. Figure out who each of the characters are (number is in parentheses)
2. Figure out what the group pose will be for THE frozen moment.
3. Talk about what each person is **thinking/feeling** and then select who will play which character.
4. Practice being 'frozen' and what you will say when you are touched. REMEMBER that you are not going to say what the person said but what they are **thinking!**

When you are ready, all members raise your hand I will check out your frozen moment before you show the class. When I come to your group, I will say 'freeze'. Once frozen, as I touch each of you (in any order I select) then you will say what you are feeling and/or thinking as that character.

Here's the fun part: The class will watch and listen to your frozen moment and guess what scene you are re-enacting from the novel based on what you say and do!

How to get started:

Select passages from the text and have them ready on a piece of paper with the following instructions:

1. Figure out who each of the characters are (number is in parentheses)
2. Figure out what the group pose will be for THE frozen moment.
3. Talk about what each person is **thinking/feeling** and then select who will play which character.
4. Practice being 'frozen' and what you will say when you are touched. REMEMBER that you are not going to say what the person said but what they are **thinking/feeling!**

When you are ready, all members raise your hand I will check out your frozen moment before you show the class.

Appendix 2

Socratic Seminar: Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan

Chapter Los Aguacates (Avocados)

Opener: What is an important sentence from this chapter?

Questions:

In the previous chapters, the title was also what was being harvested. Is that true for this chapter?

How did Esperanza feel about her hands?

Why does Miguel and Esperanza drive to Mr. Yakota's Japanese store when there are others that are closer? p. 186

What does Miguel mean when he tells Esperanza that "***people here think that all Mexicans are alike. Americans see us as one big brown group who are good for manual labor only.***" p.187 What is your response to these statements. What connections can you make?

On page 188 (bottom), what does it mean when it says, "Sometimes she felt as if she lived in a cocoon, protected from much of the indignation."?

What is the author referring to on page 193 when she says, "It was a great jumble of humanity and confusion."?

What prompted Marta to say on page 195, "Are you sure you aren't already on our side."?

What side do you think Esperanza is on? Miguel?

Why did you select the sentence you chose as the most important?

What questions do you have about this chapter? What puzzles you?

What does Esperanza mean when she says on page 197, "She thought of Mama and Abuelita and she knew there was only one thing for her to do."?

CLOSER: If you were in Esperanza's shoes, which side would you be on?

Student Resources

<http://www.photovoice.org/> - students can add sound to their photographic exhibits

<http://goanimate.com/> - students can create short animations to accompany their exhibits

<http://edu.glogster.com/> - students can create posters to share information

<http://kidblog.org/> - students interact with one another supervised by their teacher

Teacher Resources

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/> - NC Essential Standards

<http://www.corestandards.org/> - Common Core Site

<http://www.changingplacesproject.org/> - Museum of the New South Exhibit and teacher resources

<http://www.byrdseed.com/introducing-depth-and-complexity/> - Sandra Kaplan's Depth and Complexity introductory popcorn lesson, icons and additional resources

<http://giftedkids.about.com/od/giftedminorities> -Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted website

<http://www.historysouth.org/saladbowl.html> - Tom Hatchett information about salad bowl suburbs, immigration patterns, etc.

¹Isaac Asimov. "Quotes: Isaac Asimov - The only constant is change...." *The Phoenix Principle*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Oct. 2012.

² Audrey Singer. " The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways Brookings Institution." *Brookings - Quality. Independence. Impact..* N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Nov. 2012.

³ "Inquiry-based Learning: Explanation." *THIRTEEN - New York Public Media*. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 Nov. 2012. <<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class>

⁴ Charles Hirschman. 1994. Problems and prospects of studying immigrant adaptation from the 1990 Population Census: from generation comparison to the process of 'becoming American'. *Int. Migrat. Rev.* 28(4):690-713

⁵ Jennifer Hudson, "Want To Stop Bullies? Deal With The Differences | Teaching Tolerance." *Teaching Tolerance*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Nov. 2012

⁶ "The "me" behind the mask: Intellectually gifted students and the search for identity « SENG." *SENG*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Nov. 2012.

⁷ <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/>

⁸ <http://www.corestandards.org/>

⁹ See note 8 above.

¹⁰ Pam Muñoz Ryan. *Esperanza rising*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2000. Print

¹¹ [//www.brookings.edu/research/topics/immigration](http://www.brookings.edu/research/topics/immigration)

¹² William Graves and Heather A. Smith. *Charlotte, NC: the global evolution of a new South city*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010. Print

¹³ Thomas Hatchett. <http://www.historysouth.org/saladbowl.html>

¹⁴ Kathleen Purvis. "Southerners, Mexicans find shared tastes." *Charlotte Observer* 31 Oct. 2012, sec. Carolina Living: 1D. Print

¹⁵ See note 2 above.

¹⁶ Ralph Espach and Daniel Haering. "Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Home Page." *Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Home Page*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Nov. 2012

¹⁷ Urban Institute <http://ui.uncc.edu/story/charlottes-rapid-growth-brings-demographic-changes>

¹⁸ <http://charlottein2012.com/charlotte/>

¹⁹ Ann Doss Helms. "Hispanics are fastest-growing group in CMS." *Charlotte Observer* 9 Oct. 2012, sec. Local and State: 1B, 4B. Print.

²⁰ Min Zhou. Growing Up American: The Challenge Confronting Immigrant Children and Children of Immigrants, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 23. (1997), pp. 63-95.

²¹ Carol Bainbridge. "Challenges of Identifying and Serving Recent Immigrant Children." *Gifted Children*. ERIC EC Digest #E520, n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2012.

²² See note 21 above.

²³ See note 6 above.

²⁴ *Akeelah and the bee*. Dir. Laurence Fishburne. Perf. Laurence Fishburne. Lions Gate Home Entertainment, 2006. DVD.

²⁵ *Spellbound*. Dir. Jeffrey Blitz. Perf. Unknowns. Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, 2002/2003. DVD.

²⁶ See note 7 above.

²⁷ See note 8 above.

²⁸ "Pull Factors in Migration Globalization101." *Globalization101.org*. Globalization 101.org, n.d. Web. 12 Nov. 2012

²⁹ Yangsook Choi. *The name jar*. New York: Knopf, 2001. Print

³⁰ Lawrence Toppman. "Queen City's crazy quilt of cultures | CharlotteObserver.com." *Charlotte News Panthers Bobcats Sports Banking | CharlotteObserver.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Nov. 2012.

³¹ "Incorporating Depth and Complexity Icons Into Gifted Lessons." *Byrdseed Gifted Classroom Ideas*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Sept. 2012.

³² See note 10 above.

³³ "Socratic method." *LEARN NC*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Nov. 2012.

³⁴ Daniels, Harvey. *Literature circles: voice and choice in the student-centered classroom*. York, Me.: Stenhouse Publishers, 1994. Print.

³⁵ Marissa Moss. *Hannah's journal: the story of an immigrant girl*. San Diego: Silver Whistle/Harcourt, 2000. Print.

³⁶ "Changing Places: From Black and White to Technicolor®." *Changing Places: From Black and White to Technicolor®*. Web. 25 Sept. 2012.

³⁷ "What is Mix It Up at Lunch Day? | Teaching Tolerance." *Teaching Tolerance*. Web. 25 Sept. 2012.

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