

Mexico: Motive to Migrate

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Overview: Students investigate push-pull factors and other issues surrounding migration of Mexican workers to the Maquiladoras of Monterrey, and to the U.S. for seasonal work, then back home to north central Mexico.

Suggested Grade Level: 7th Grade
Class Length: Two 50-minute class periods

Connection with Curriculum Standards and Skills:

Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations

Standard 3: How to analyze the spatial organization of people places, and environments on the earth's surface

Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of Places

Standard 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human population on earth's surface

Standard 11: The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on earth's surface

Standard 12: The processes, patterns and functions of human settlement

Standard 18: How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future

Inquiry Question:

Why do people migrate?

Secondary Question:

What are the push-pull factors in Latin America?

Materials Needed: Poster board, drawing paper
Colored markers, pens, pencils
Atlases
Overhead projector (optional)

Introducing the Lesson:

Day 1: Introduce the concepts of migration and push-pull factors, asking the primary and secondary questions. Watch "Power of Place: World Regional Geography" Guatemala Case Study video. Assign homework readings, such as the article, "Mexico: One Family's Move to the City," pp. 83-88 in the *World Explorer Latin America* mini-text by Pearson Education, or other research on Latin American migration in preparation for Day 2 activities.

Developing the Lesson

Day 2: Break into groups. Groups are assigned different tasks addressing different aspects of the geographical questions regarding migration. Groups discuss among themselves based on their research and create a graphic organizer (poster, chart, list, etc.). Provide each group with reminders such as those below to keep them on task. (You can print and photocopy these reminders and cut them into strips similar to those shown in the video.)

Group 1 Make a map of Mexico to show where migration takes place. Include physical features, the two main climate zones (*Mesa del Norte* is the “Plateau of Mexico”), and a few major cities (Monterrey).

Group 2 Create a graphic organizer about the *maquiladores*. What are they? Why were they created? What products are made/assembled there? What wages do they offer? What are the working conditions? Why would someone migrate to work there?

Group 3 Moving – why bother? Create a poster or skit that shows what people experience when they migrate (seasonally or permanently). Use personal experience to consider what new challenges people might encounter. Have you ever moved? What was it like? Why are people from developing countries often willing to do farm work and assembly line jobs? Why return home?

Group 4 Create a chart showing patterns of population movement. Explain to the class what these numbers indicate.

Group 5 Create a graphic organizer listing “push” factors and “pull” factors causing people to migrate.

Concluding the lesson:

Groups then present their organizer to the class, analyzing their data and discussing their conclusions.

Assessment:

Homework in the form of an individual writing assignment which asks students to answer the questions about migration, synthesizing their own research and the material presented by their classmates, drawing conclusions and explaining their answers.