

UNIT 4 | MEETING PEOPLE'S BASIC NEEDS

FAMILY ROOTS

METHOD

By interviewing adults they know, students learn about diverse backgrounds and consider reasons why people migrate from one place to another.

MATERIALS

- Globe or world map
- Push pins

INTRODUCTION

People move from place to place for all kinds of reasons, sometimes by choice, sometimes not. We don't usually leave our homes without a reason. Sometimes it's because our homes are destroyed by war or natural disasters. Sometimes we can't find work in our own country, state, or town and have to look elsewhere.

Sometimes members of our families have moved to other places and we want to be together. Whatever the reason for moving to a new place, it is rarely an easy process.



PROCEDURE

1. Give students the following homework assignment: "I want each of you to interview three adults you know about the different places they have lived. They could be parents or guardians, grandparents, aunts, uncles, relatives of friends, or neighbors."

"You should answer the following questions:" (Write or display these on the board.)

- a. What is his or her name?
- b. What is this person's relationship to you?
- c. Where was he or she born?



CONCEPT

To meet basic human needs and to seek a better life, people migrate from one place to another.

GRADE LEVEL

Upper elementary

SUBJECTS

Social Studies, Language Arts

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Identify reasons why people move from one place to another.
- Explain the hardships that people might face when they migrate.
- Analyze the benefits of moving to a new place.

SKILLS

Using abstract thought, interviewing, organizing and analyzing data, map skills, writing historical fiction

- d. Why did his or her family live there? (This may include both immediate family and extended family.)
- e. Where does he or she live now? If different from where he or she was born, why did they move?
- f. What other places has he or she lived?
- g. What was the hardest part of moving to a new place? What was the best part?
- h. Student's Choice: Ask something you are wondering about his/her move or his/her family's move.

Note: Students should develop a way to record and organize the necessary information.

2. Group students into pairs and allow partners to share with each other the information that they collected in their interviews. Have them pay special attention to any trends or similarities they find in the reasons why people moved from place to place.
3. While this discussion is happening, invite groups to come up to the displayed world map and use push pins to mark the locations of where their friends and relatives have lived. (Students may need some teacher help to locate places on the map.)
4. Next, come together as a class to discuss the variety of places marked on the map and launch a discussion about why people move from place to place (see the Discussion Questions below). If you have students in class who have lived other places, you might want to ask them why their families have moved and what they like best and least about their old hometowns and their new ones.
5. It will probably come up that some people move from place to place within a country, while other people move between countries. This is a good opportunity to discuss the difference between **migration**, moving from one place to another either within a country or across country borders, and **immigration**, moving into a country from another country.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the reasons that people move? Do you notice any common themes?

Answers will vary but may include: to be closer to friends or family, to follow a job or find work, for new opportunities (education, new types of work or leisure, new freedoms), to live in a better climate, to escape war or political unrest, as a result of natural disaster, etc.

2. Looking at the world map, do you notice any trends? Are there multiple people who have moved from the same region?

Answers will vary.

3. What are some things that make a move difficult?

Answers will vary but may include: making new friends, finding a home, learning a new job, learning a new language, being far away from family, getting used to new customs and traditions, etc.

4. What are some of the benefits of migrating somewhere new?

Answers will vary but may include: being closer to friends or family, meeting new people, learning new customs, more opportunities or freedoms, better employment, etc.

5. Some people move because they want to and others move because they have to. Can you think of a reason you may want to move? What about reasons that could make you need to move?

Answers will vary.

MEASURING LEARNING

Instruct each student to use either their own interview information or what they learned from peers during the class discussion to write a historical fiction account of someone who is moving to a new place, either out of necessity or the desire to seek a better life. Students should be sure to mention why the person or family in their story is leaving their home, the obstacles they face during their move to a new place, and how they benefit from migrating.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Look at your class map marked with the places that your students' collective friends and relatives have lived. Use this as a tool to introduce the topic of map scale. Tell students that actual distance between two locations on a map can be determined using a map scale. As a class or in small groups, have students use the scale on your world map to determine which push pin is the farthest away. They should determine the actual number of miles that would have to be traveled to go from this "farthest place" to your town. You may want to start by having students hypothesize the "farthest pin" and then verify their guesses by using map scale to determine which pin is the farthest distance away.
2. Compare and contrast the reasons why people immigrated to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the reasons for immigration today.
3. If possible, locate a recent immigrant who could discuss his or her move with the class and answer students' questions.