

5.3 ENTERING THE UNITED STATES

Essential Question(s): What are ways to enter the United States with documentation? What are the experiences of those with Green Cards?

Overview

Against the backdrop of the recent refugee crisis and the overall increase in immigration, people have asked how one enters the United States with documentation. One way is to apply for a Green Card which leads to formal naturalization and citizenship in the United States if the application is approved. Gaining Green Card status depends on a number of different factors.

Teacher Note: When talking about gaining citizenship in the United States, it's important to recognize that some of your students may have positive and/or negative experiences with the topic. Be sensitive to those students. Avoid disclosing information about your students' documentation status; that information should come directly from the student. Be prepared to provide a brave space for your students, watch for signs that the conversation is becoming too heavy and provide an alternative if it does.

Snapshot

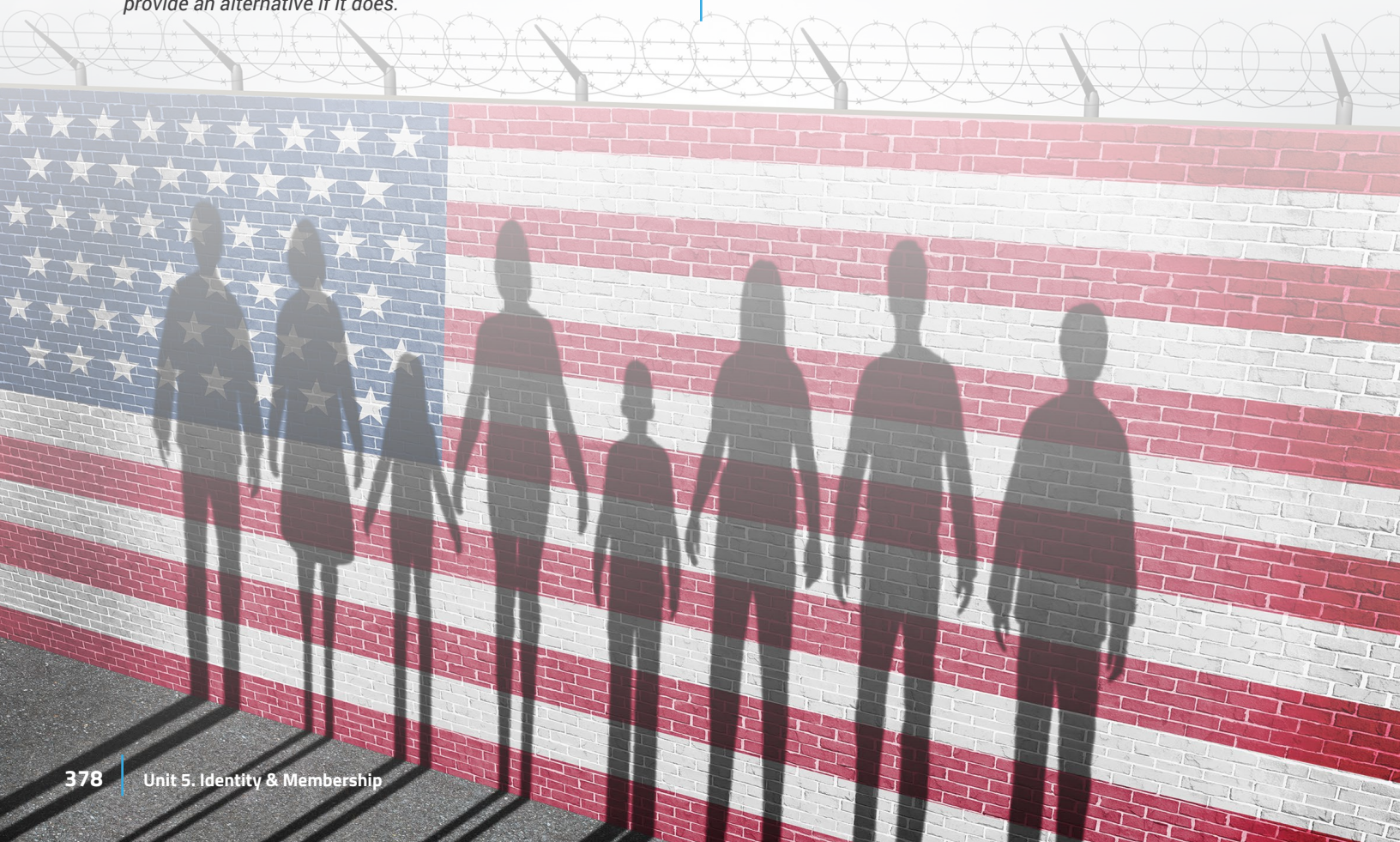
What Students Will Learn:

In this lesson, students will learn the various ways people enter the U.S. and will hear first-hand accounts of those with Green Card status.

Standard(s):

D2.Civ.13.9-12

Time: 50 minutes



Objectives

- Explain visas, refugees, asylum seekers, naturalization to citizenship and Green Cards.
- Analyze different experiences of people in the United States with Green Cards.

Differentiation

Students can work in partners or in small groups. Consider assigning partners or groups in advance.

What's Needed

- ☐ Writing utensil and paper or 1:1 technology
- ☐ WiFi, internet, computer, screen or projector, speakers
- ☐ Prepare the “[4 Ways to Enter the U.S.](#)” to project for whole class viewing.
- ☐ Make copies of the “[Entering the U.S. Facts Sheet](#)” and “[Green Card Voices Watcher's Guide](#),” one of each for each student.
- ☐ Green Card Voices videos: [Ayan Omar](#), Somalia (2016, 5:53 min.), [Nobin Gurung](#), Nepal (2017, 4:52 min.), [Ashti Mohamed Ali](#), Iraq (2017, 5:22 min.), [Ulises Ayala](#), Mexico (2016, 4:40 min.)

Classroom Setup

Students will view video clips independently and then work with partners or small groups. Desks should be arranged to best support independent and group work.

Direct Teaching

1. Ask students to answer the following question:
How many ways are there to enter the United States with legal documentation?
2. Explain to students that to enter the United States as a resident, one must have proper documentation, specifically, a visa or green card.
3. Explain to students that there are four main ways to enter the U.S. with documentation. Display “[4 Ways to Enter the U.S.](#)” and explain to students that these ways are not exclusive from one another and sometimes people use them in combination.
4. Ask students if they are familiar with any of these terms. If so, consider using the questions below for this discussion:
 - Which of these terms have you heard before?

Key Vocabulary

asylum
citizen
green card
refugee
sponsorship
visa



- Where have you heard these terms before?
 - Have you heard these terms used in positive or negative ways?
 - What do these terms make you immediately think about?
5. Distribute the “[Entering the U.S. Facts Sheet](#)” to each student and read through it together.
 6. Ask students to write about the following prompts:
 - What are Green Cards?
 - What does someone have to do in order to obtain a Green Card?
 - What are qualities that Green Card holders have?
 7. Distribute the “[Green Card Voices Watcher’s Guide](#).” Explain to students that they are going to hear from four people with Green Cards. They are to fill out the watcher’s guide while watching the different clips.
 8. Show students, in no particular order, the following clips:
 - [Ayan Omar](#), Somalia
 - [Nobin Gurung](#), Nepal
 - [Ashti Mohamed Ali](#), Iraq
 - [Ulises Ayala](#), Mexico
 9. Have students engage in reflection with a partner or ask them to find a small group. Provide students with the following questions for discussion:
 - What did you notice about each person’s story? What stood out to you?
 - If the person described their home country, did it sound different or similar to the U.S.?
 - Was their process of obtaining Green Cards difficult or easy?
 - What other barriers did they have to overcome to get where they are today?

Closing

Ask students to write down one thing they learned and one question they still have.

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in shades of blue, red, and white.

4 WAYS TO ENTER THE U.S.

Refugee/Asylum Status

Citizenship

Green Cards

Visas

ENTERING THE U.S. FACTS SHEET

Refugees/Asylum Seekers: Refugees are people who are leaving their homes because of persecution and/or war to find safety and protection elsewhere. An asylum-seeker is also a refugee. To gain asylum, you must meet certain conditions. We will be learning more about asylum in the next lesson.

Visas: If you live outside of the U.S., you need to apply for an immigrant visa. With most visas, someone must “sponsor” you, meaning they must file a petition for you. Once that is approved, you must get a medical exam, pass an interview and then you will receive the decision on your visa status. There are a few types of visas: (1) family-based visas which means there is a family relationship with someone who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, (2) employment-based visa, which means that the person must have a job offer from a U.S. employer, (3) student visas for foreign students attending schools in the U.S. and (4) visas for people who have a fiancée who lives in the U.S. After approval, you must pay a fee to the government. The fee is \$220.

Green Cards: A Green Card, which isn't green anymore, is a permanent resident card. It means you have official immigration status in the U.S.; you have certain rights and responsibilities; and having one is a requirement for becoming naturalized as a U.S. Citizen. In order to obtain a Green Card, you must meet strict qualifications, such as being a relative of a U.S. citizen, have employment in the U.S. who are willing to sponsor you or be considered a “Special Immigrant”, participate in interviews as well as fill out many forms and pay fees of up to \$1,225 per adult. There are a limited number of Green Cards distributed each year. Families can participate in a diversity lottery for a chance to apply for a Green Card. Depending on your situation, once you obtain a Green Card you have to wait anywhere from three to five years to apply for citizenship.

Citizenship: A non-U.S. citizen must go through a naturalization process to become a full citizen. A full citizen in the U.S. has the protection to exercise their rights and responsibilities, including voting. To become a U.S. citizen, you must have a Green Card for at least five years, meet eligibility requirements including being 18 years old, able to read, write, and speak basic English, and be “a person of good moral character.” This means that you are honest, trustworthy, reliable, law-following, etc. Then, you must go through ten steps of the naturalization process. This process includes filling out forms, taking the Naturalization Test and interviewing. Afterwards, your file will go up for review and you will receive notification of whether you are going to be naturalized or not.

GREEN CARD VOICES WATCHER'S GUIDE

Name: _____ Class: _____

Directions: While watching the video clips, take notes on what you notice about each person's story, their home country, the process they went through to obtain a Green Card and any barriers they had to overcome to get where they are today.

Ayan Omar, Somalia

Nobin Gurung, Nepal

Ashti Mohamed Ali, Iraq

Ulises Ayala, Mexico