

DESTINATION MICHIGAN: A MINI-UNIT ON IMMIGRATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN MICHIGAN



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OVERVIEW:

In this mini-unit, students will explore immigration and cultural diversity in Michigan by exploring several different immigrant communities in Southeast Michigan. They will engage with background readings, data analysis, and map work. Students then explore different immigration narratives in a jigsaw group format to introduce them to the diversity of immigrant communities in Michigan and deepen their understanding of push and pull factors for immigration.

Note: We're calling this a "mini-unit" because it is longer than a single lesson, but shorter than a full unit. There are many opportunities for adaptation and customization to make it "fit" your schedule and context.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to define push and pull factors for immigration and provide examples of each.
- Students will be able to analyze data to identify basic trends in immigration in Michigan in the 20th century, and also to compare the demographics of different communities.
- Students will be able to identify and label relevant locations on maps of different scales.
- Students will be able to read immigration narratives and identify examples of push and pull factors, and also analyze different narratives to compare and contrast factors for immigration to Michigan.

DRIVING QUESTIONS:

- Why do people leave their homes and immigrate (move from one country to another) to new places?
- How has immigration shaped different communities in Michigan?

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS:

- What are push and pull factors?
- What is cultural diversity?
- What are some cities in Michigan that immigrants choose to live in?
- How have these cities benefited from immigration?

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- People leave their homes for many reasons, but often these reasons are related to finding new opportunities for a better life.
- People leave their homes because of push factors, things that push them to leave a place. Push factors might include war, natural disasters, or not enough jobs. People choose a place to go because of pull factors, things that pull them to a new place like family, job opportunities, or opportunities for education.
- Many immigrants from all over the world who leave their homes for many different reasons choose to come to Michigan. Michigan has several cities with large immigrant communities.
- Immigrants bring many benefits to their new communities, like cultural diversity and new businesses that bring jobs.

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS / STANDARDS*4th Grade Social Studies:*

- 4 – H3.0.2 Use primary and secondary sources to explain how migration and immigration affected and continue to affect the growth of Michigan.
 - 4 – G4.0.1 Use a case study or story about migration within or to the United States to identify push and pull factors (why they left, why they came) that influenced the migration.
 - 4 – G4.0.2 Describe the impact of immigration to the United States on the cultural development of different places or regions of the United States.
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KEY CONCEPTS

- immigration
 - immigrant
 - community
 - push and pull factors
 - population
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TEACHER PREPARATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- This mini-unit is adaptable to your needs and time. The initial readings, Activities 1 and 2, and also the Jigsaw group work, are the foundation of the materials. The data analysis and map work add important skill building and content to the mini-unit, but can be omitted or cut down to save time if needed. In addition, the jigsaw can be adapted and shortened.
 - These lessons require a range of handouts that can be provided to students either as electronic documents or hard copies. Teachers should review the handouts and plan for the most appropriate form of delivery depending upon their context. Some activities require individual handouts whereas others require group packets.
 - These lessons also involve collaborative group work, so teachers should plan ahead to divide students into cooperative groups with clear roles.
 - This entire mini-unit deals with the experience of immigration. Students who are immigrants themselves should be encouraged to share personal insights and experiences only at their comfort level and should not be positioned as spokespersons for their communities. At the same time, these activities provide a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate their experiences and to educate their classmates, and also for their families to share their knowledge and cultural resources. Immigrant students and their families should be given the space to choose their own level of sharing and participation. At a time in our society with increased discrimination towards many immigrant communities, it is of
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the utmost importance that we create safe spaces in our classrooms where all students and families feel welcome and valued, and the strengths-based approach in these materials is intended to help foster this dynamic.

- Learning for Justice (formerly Teaching Tolerance) has a wonderful collection of resources related to teaching about immigration. If you are interested in learning more, visit their site here:
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/topics/immigration>
- Additional University of Michigan National Resource Center Resources for K-12 Educators:
 - Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies: <https://ii.umich.edu/cmenas/outreach.html>
 - Center for South Asian Studies: <https://ii.umich.edu/csas/k-14-educators.html>
 - Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies: <https://ii.umich.edu/lacs/outreach.html>
 - Center for Southeast Asian Studies: <https://ii.umich.edu/cseas/outreach.html>

LESSON SEQUENCE

OPENING:

- 1) Ask students to respond individually to the following prompts by writing or drawing:
 - o What do you like about your community?*
 - o What might make you want to leave your community and live somewhere else?*
 - o What would you look for in a new home community? What would you want it to be like?*

After giving them a few minutes to respond, take some time and invite different students to share their responses and initiate a discussion. If any of your students have ever moved to a new home and want to talk about it, you can ask them to talk about what made moving hard and also about what they like about their new home.

After several students have had a chance to share, explain that this lesson will explore the experience of immigration, when people leave their homeland and go to live in a new country, and will look in particular at immigration to Michigan. Explain that they will learn about immigration to Michigan in general, and then learn about a few particular cities in the state that have larger numbers of immigrant people living there. They will explore the stories of immigrant people to learn more about their experiences.

GUIDED INQUIRY:

- 2) Provide students with the handout for **Activity 1: Immigration to the United States - An Introduction**. This activity has a 1 page reading and a graphic organizer. You should approach the reading in a way that best aligns with students' needs, your instructional style, and classroom context. You can engage students with a teacher read-aloud, have different students read different sections out loud, have them read together in small groups or pairs, or have them read independently. After a first read, have students work with a partner or in small groups to talk about what they read and then complete the graphic organizer on push and pull factors. You might use a Gradual Release of Responsibility approach with the organizer and tackle the first question with the whole class by engaging in a Think-Aloud, then have students help you answer the second question,
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and then have them complete the rest in pairs or small groups. Alternatively, students may be able to complete the graphic organizer independently. Use your knowledge of your students to develop the most effective approach.

When students have completed the graphic organizer, take the time to check for understanding by having different students share their thoughts, and asking other students to support, add to, or politely question the thinking being shared.

- 3) Next, pass out the handout for **Activity 2: Immigration to Michigan**. Explain to the students that they will now be thinking about immigration to Michigan and learning about how many people come to Michigan from other countries and what benefits that has for the state. This activity also has a 1 page reading with a graphic organizer. Approach Activity 2 similarly to how you approached Activity 1, making sure to support students to think and develop their own responses. As needed, answer the first question with a think-aloud for the whole class to model what you would consider an important fact, then have students work independently or in small groups or pairs to come up with two additional important facts.

Have several students share their responses, and also ask them to talk about why they think the facts they shared are important. Use your whiteboard or screen to compile a list of key facts from the article as students share, and then ask different students or groups to try to share something not yet on the list. Close this discussion out by asking students if they found any of the facts surprising or very interesting.

- 4) Now move students into **Activity 3: Data Analysis**. In this activity, students will first analyze a line graph, and then move onto a series of pie charts. Depending upon your students' experience with graphs, you can provide more or less scaffolding and instructional support. With each graph, students are asked to look for and summarize broad patterns related to immigration to Michigan over time. Your goal is to help them focus in on the larger, basic patterns in the data.

As with other activities, you can approach the different parts of this activity through whole class instruction, small group or pairs work, individual work, or combinations of these structures. A gradual release approach is again a good idea. Depending upon how you want to structure this activity, you might provide students with the activity handouts as a packet for individual or group work, or you might decide to project them on your screen/board and approach this as a whole class activity.

With the first graph, have students begin by focusing on the title and revoicing what the graph is about based on the title. Then call their attention to the y-axis, and have them look at the numbers on the y-axis in relation to the title, and ask them what these numbers mean. As needed, use questions, examples, and models to help students understand the concept of

percentage, and how we use percentage to talk about the makeup of different populations of people. For example, you might quickly identify a characteristic of the class (students wearing a blue shirt), count that number, and show students out loud and on the board how you can turn that into a percentage.

Then make sure that students understand that the y-axis shows the percentage of people in different years who are not US citizens at birth, meaning they were born in a different country, in the US and Michigan. Then ask students to explain out loud the numbers on the x-axis (years), and also what the yellow (United States) and blue (Michigan) lines represent. Talk through the process of reading a graph as a whole and make sure students understand the different components of the graph. Now have students work in pairs or small groups to answer questions 1-6 that come after this first graph. Check in with different students as they work to monitor comprehension.

When most groups have completed their work, have different students share their thinking for each question, and use open prompts and questions to help clarify any misunderstandings or errors. Help students understand the larger trends shown in the data and understand that although immigration decreased between 1900 and 1970, that it has steadily increased since then, meaning that more people are coming each year to the US and Michigan from other nations.

The next four questions, 7-10, have students make basic comparisons between pie charts that show the percentage of immigrants in different locations, including the US and Michigan; the city of Detroit and the community of Southwest Detroit (or at least the largest zip code in Southwest Detroit, 48209); and the cities of Dearborn and Hamtramck. Again, make sure students understand how to read and interpret pie charts before asking them to answer the questions, and follow similar scaffolding and grouping procedures as you have used with other activities. Students should note that the 48209 zip code in Detroit, for example, has a larger proportion of immigrants than the city as a whole, and that Hamtramck has a larger proportion of immigrants than Dearborn.

- 5) In the next part of the mini-unit, students engage with a series of map activities to provide some geographic context for the immigration stories they are going to read. For this activity, you again have several options. You can do some of the work as a whole class, projecting maps on your screen and having students come up to find places, or you can structure this as group work in which students have a map activity packet and work together to complete the different mapping tasks. Students will need access to maps either through an atlas or online.

Feel free to omit certain map activities if they duplicate work students have already done. In the first map, students find and label Michigan, then they look at Michigan and find Wayne County. Then in a regional map of SE Michigan, they find and highlight the borders of Detroit, Dearborn, and Hamtramck. Finally, using a list of 10 nations and a world map, have students find and label countries that have large immigrant communities in Michigan. **This is a great activity to change up and adapt.** Feel free to add countries, especially countries that might correspond to the homelands of students' and their families. Also feel free to turn this into a wall map and push-pin activity in which students use thread or yarn to connect these nations to Michigan. Or, consider having students work in small groups to just find one of the countries on a world map (you assign each group a country), and then have each group label their country on a collective class map. We definitely encourage you to get creative with this map work! You might also consider using technology tools and digital maps and turn this into a whole class activity where different students help find and label places on a shared digital map.

- 6) To transition students into learning about specific communities with large immigrant populations in Michigan, ask them to make some predictions about why many people from other countries end up in cities like Detroit, Hamtramck, and Dearborn. Have students Think, Pair, Share and then engage the class in discussion and idea sharing.

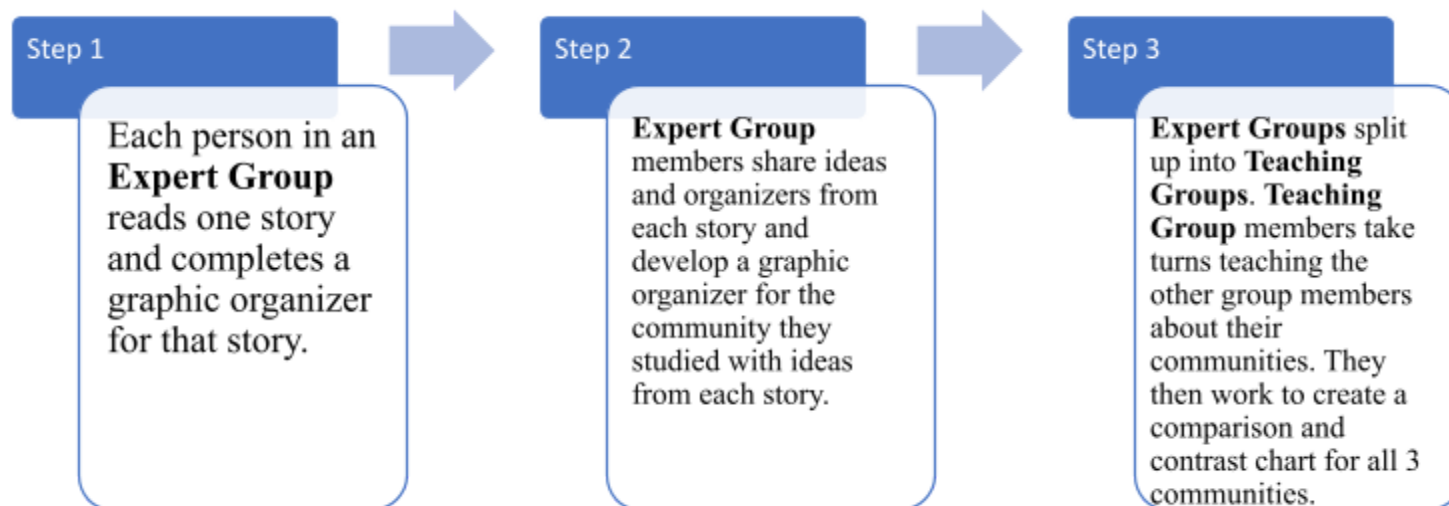
To model the type of reading that students will do in their jigsaw groups, engage the whole class in reading and discussion of the article **Hamtramck: Michigan's Melting Pot**. Read it out loud to your students, and if feasible, have student volunteers help you read sections of it out loud. Discuss the reading questions with the class and have them help you identify the push and pull factors mentioned in the article. Then, project the graphic organizer on your screen or board, and have students help you fill it out based on the information in the article. Explain to students that they will use the same graphic organizer in groups with different readings.

Then, ask students to think about what a community with a large immigrant population looks like and how it might look both similar and different to any other community. Have a few students share some ideas. Then share the slideshow linked below with students. Explain that these pictures were taken by young people in Dearborn, Michigan through a photography program run by the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, and show the city through the eyes of each photographer. As you show students the images, ask a volunteer to describe what they See, Think, and Wonder with each slide. [Community Spotlight: Dearborn, Michigan](#)

After you have gone through the slides, have the students share reflections about how Dearborn looks similar and different to where they live. Discuss with students the idea that every community in Michigan is unique, but that they all have similar features and resources as well, no matter where the people who live there come from.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:

- 7) In the next activity in this mini-unit, there are many opportunities for adaptation and restructuring. The activity as designed is a Jigsaw cooperative group task in which students work in *Expert Groups* to review immigration narratives related to a specific community (Detroit, Hamtramck, or Dearborn). Each student in a group gets assigned at least one specific story to read, then the group members share big ideas from each story and generate conclusions about immigration to that community. Then, students move into *Teaching Groups* made up of students who studied different communities. In their teaching groups they teach each other about the different communities and then synthesize information across the communities to develop some general conclusions about immigration, focusing in particular on push and pull factors. You can choose to differentiate by assigning the longer, more challenging readings to students who are ready for the challenge (preview the texts to assess their level of difficulty).



There are a series of graphic organizers that students can use in this process as well, or you can develop your own reading activities. In the handouts for this activity, there is a Jigsaw instruction sheet that provides an overview of the activity, shown below. There is a graphic organizer provided in the handouts for each step.

Review this process, form your students into groups of 3 to 4, and pass out the materials they will need (copies of community narratives and graphic organizers). Have the groups work to assign each member a single reading, or if helpful, do that yourself in advance. Have the students read their assigned text and work on their individual Step 1 organizer, moving around the room and helping students as needed. If the reading is challenging for students, consider options discussed below. Also consider previewing the readings and assigning the more accessible texts to students who need more support with reading.

When students have completed their Step 1 organizers, have them work as a group to share and compare accounts and complete the Step 2 organizer. Then, form students into new, mixed groups of 3 with students who studied different communities. Direct them to each share what they learned and then fill out the Step 3 organizer. There is an additional synthesis Comparison and Contrast table you can also have them complete if you prefer in which they discuss the common and unique features of each community in terms of immigration. You might also choose to project this and use it to guide a whole class discussion.

If you prefer not to use the Jigsaw activity as described, there are different ways to approach this activity. In this activity, there are several different readings about the immigration experiences of people who came to Michigan. Some of these are individual, first person accounts generated specifically for this lesson, whereas others are more general community accounts adapted from newspaper articles. You might choose to use some of these as read-alouds to model note taking and analysis with your students, and then assign different groups a more limited, selected set of narratives. Or, you might assign each individual student their own single account to read, and then put them in groups to compare and share. However you approach this activity, take advantage of the wide range of narratives provided and the broad geographic and cultural diversity represented. Be sure your students get to engage with narratives of people from different parts of the world coming to Michigan so that they can better understand the common push and pull factors that shape immigration to our state.

SHARING AND REFLECTION:

- 8) To wrap up these activities, have students complete a 3 -2 - 1 Exit Pass:
 - What are 3 new things you learned about immigration to Michigan:

- What are 2 things you learned about immigration that surprised you:
- What is 1 question you still have:

ASSESSMENT:

9) Consider engaging students in a performance assessment that has them explore push and pull factors, and/or cultural diversity, in more depth and in relationship to their own family or community. You might provide students a choice board such as the one below that has them connect concepts from the lesson to their own family or community narratives.

Write a short family history that explores your family’s story of immigration, including push and pull factors.	Write a fictional short story about someone your age who has to leave a different country and come to Michigan. Use the stories you read as inspiration, and be sure to include push and pull factors.	Celebrate your community by creating a photo essay (pictures with captions that explain each picture, along with a short written introduction) that shows the diversity of your community.
Interview someone who came to Michigan from another country and share their story. Be sure to discuss push and pull factors.	Create a short graphic novel about someone your age who has to leave a different country and come to Michigan. Use the stories you read as inspiration, and be sure to include push and pull factors.	Develop a basic infographic that shares key data and information, including push and pull factors, about immigration to Michigan.

Potential grading criteria:

- Final product identifies and explores multiple push and pull factors for immigration.
- Final product is creative and thoughtful, and shows time and effort.
- Final product is polished and shows evidence of appropriate review and editing.
- Final product connects conceptually to content learned in the lesson and shows appropriate understanding of immigration as a human experience.

EXTENSION OPPORTUNITIES:

There are many ways to extend the learning in this mini-unit. You might choose to engage students in learning more about some of the regions from which people come to Michigan, including South Asia, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa. Students can work in different groups to select a country from one of these regions and learn about a specific aspect of the culture that people might bring with them when they immigrate (e.g. language, music, food, clothing). National Geographic for Kids has resources that might be useful in this process: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries>.

Alternatively, consider having students develop “I am from” poems to help them talk about their own communities. See these resources for more ideas:

https://cli.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/I-am-from_Poems.pdf
<https://freeology.com/worksheet-creator/poetry/i-am-from-poem/>

You might also be able to connect with guest speakers from your community who can talk about immigration and cultural diversity where your students live.

HANDOUTS:

Handout 1: Immigration to the United States – An Introduction

Immigration is when someone moves from their home country to a new country. **Immigrants** are the people who move and live in a country where they were not born. People become immigrants for many different reasons. These reasons are often grouped into two categories: push and pull factors. **Push factors** are things that make a person want to leave a place, like war, or natural disasters, or when there are no jobs. **Pull factors** are things about a place that make people want to go there, like jobs, good schools, or having family that already live there.



The United States has a long history of immigration that began over 400 years ago when people came from different countries in Europe to settle here in the early 1600s. When these first immigrants arrived, they encountered Native American people. Native Americans were the first peoples who lived on these lands, so they were not immigrants. There are many Native American people still living here today carrying on their proud history of being the first people in these lands.

As people from Europe settled here, people from other parts of the world also came over time. In 1619, the first group of people from Africa were brought to what is now the United States, but they did not come because they wanted to. Starting in 1619, and for about the next 200 years, people were kidnapped from different countries in Africa, enslaved in America, and forced to work. Because they were stolen from their homes, these people from Africa were not considered immigrants either.

Over the last four hundred years, people from all over the world have come to this land as immigrants. They have contributed a great deal to the country in this time. The process of moving to a new land was difficult, and it still is, and not all immigrants have been treated fairly. People from countries with more money, particularly those from certain parts of Europe, have often been treated better than people from other areas of the world. This is not fair and it is a problem we are still working on. One thing is clear though, the United States is a country shaped by immigration, and immigrants are important members of our communities.

PUSH FACTORS



In your own words, explain what push factors for immigration are by completing the sentence below:

A push factor is...

Why do you think some people choose to leave their homes? What do you think some common push factors are?

PULL FACTORS



In your own words, explain what pull factors for immigration are by completing the sentence below:

A pull factor is...

Why do you think people choose to go to a new place? What pulls people to a country or city?

Handout 2: Immigration to Michigan

In the United States today, about 13% of the **population**, or 13 out of every 100 people, were born in another country. In Michigan, about 7% of the people living here were born in a different country. People from countries like China, India, Bangladesh, Iraq, and Yemen are part of a wave of immigration bringing new people to our state. India and Mexico are the two countries with the largest immigrant populations in Michigan.



Michigan has a long history with immigration. About 100 years ago, in the early 1900s, more than 20% of the people (that's 1 out of every 5 people) living in Michigan were immigrants! Today, immigration is still very important to the state. Without immigrants coming to our state, the overall population of Michigan would have shrunk in the past 5 years, but instead, it has grown! When there are fewer people, there are fewer businesses and jobs, so immigration has helped our state a great deal. Many immigrants have opened up new businesses that bring jobs and resources to their communities.

Our state's largest city, Detroit, has been helped by immigration in the past 20 years. Immigrants have helped by paying taxes, money that local, state, and national governments use to provide services to everyone. They also have helped start new businesses that provide many jobs.

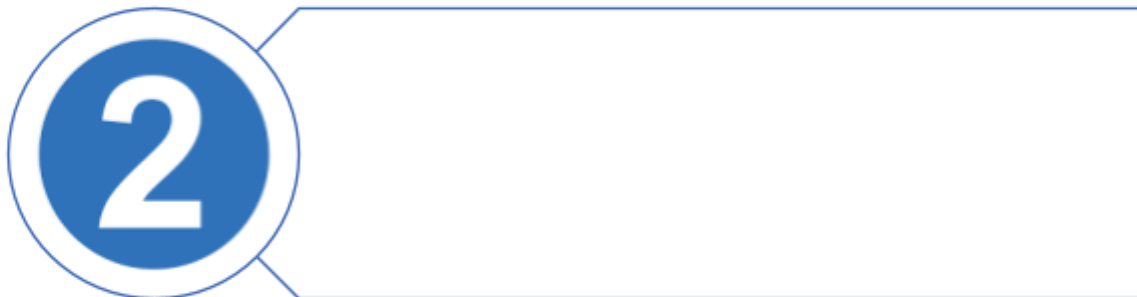
Other Michigan cities close to Detroit, like Hamtramck and Dearborn, have even larger immigrant communities. To learn more about immigration and immigrant communities in Michigan, you will take a closer look at Detroit, Hamtramck, and Dearborn. You will look at data and maps, explore images of these communities, and learn from the stories of people who came to these cities from other parts of the world.

Write down three important facts about immigration to Michigan that you just learned!

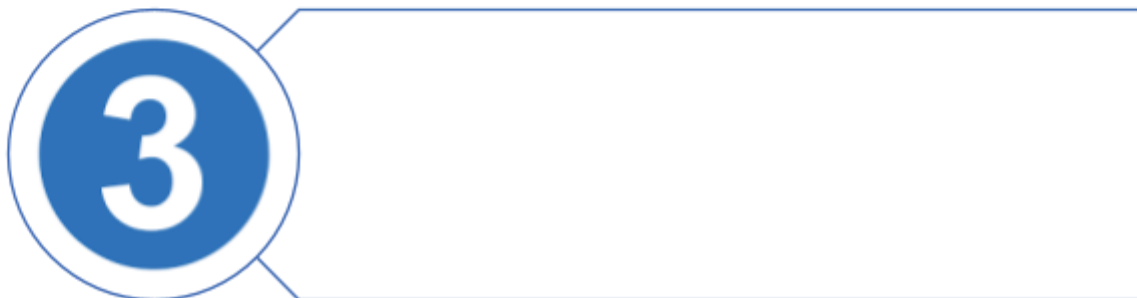
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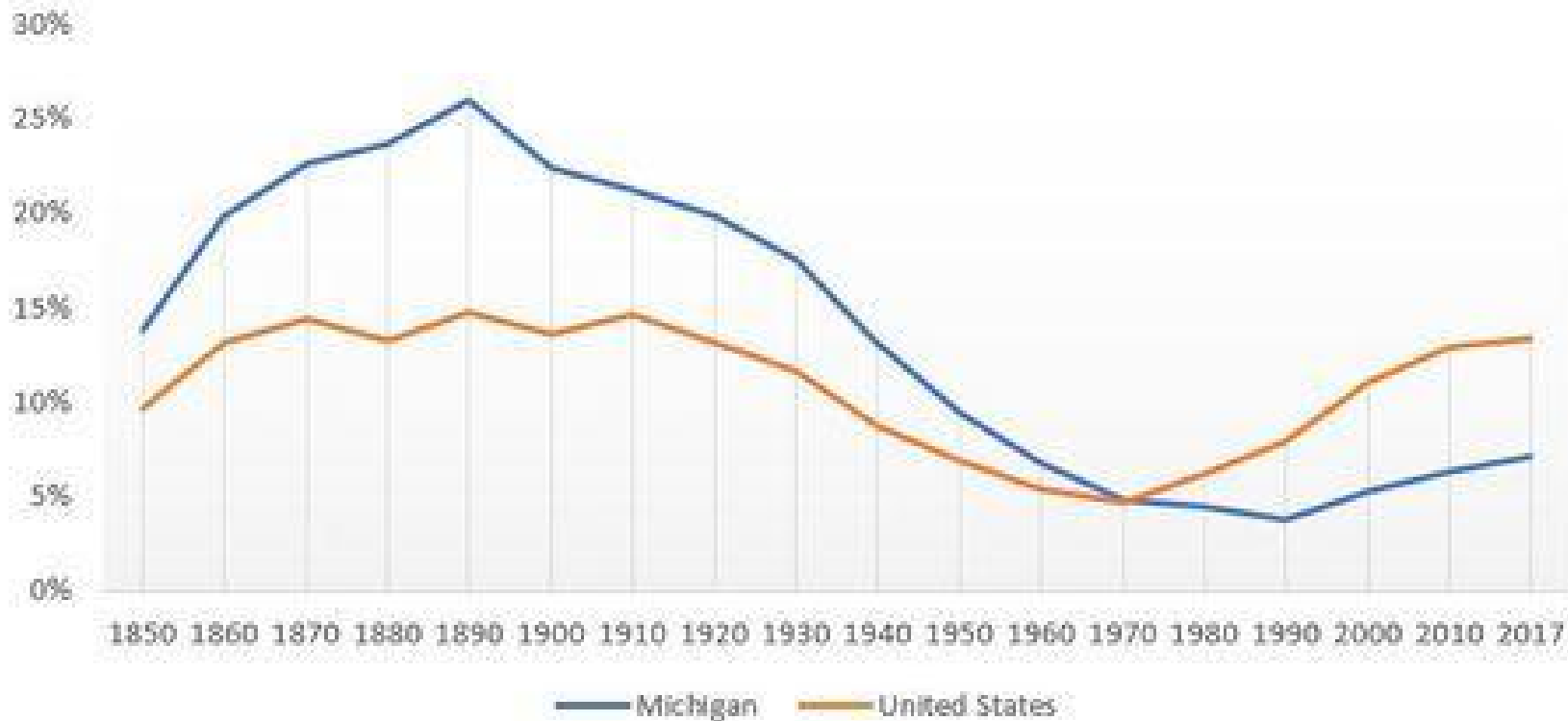
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Handout 3: Data Analysis

Study the graph below and answer the questions.

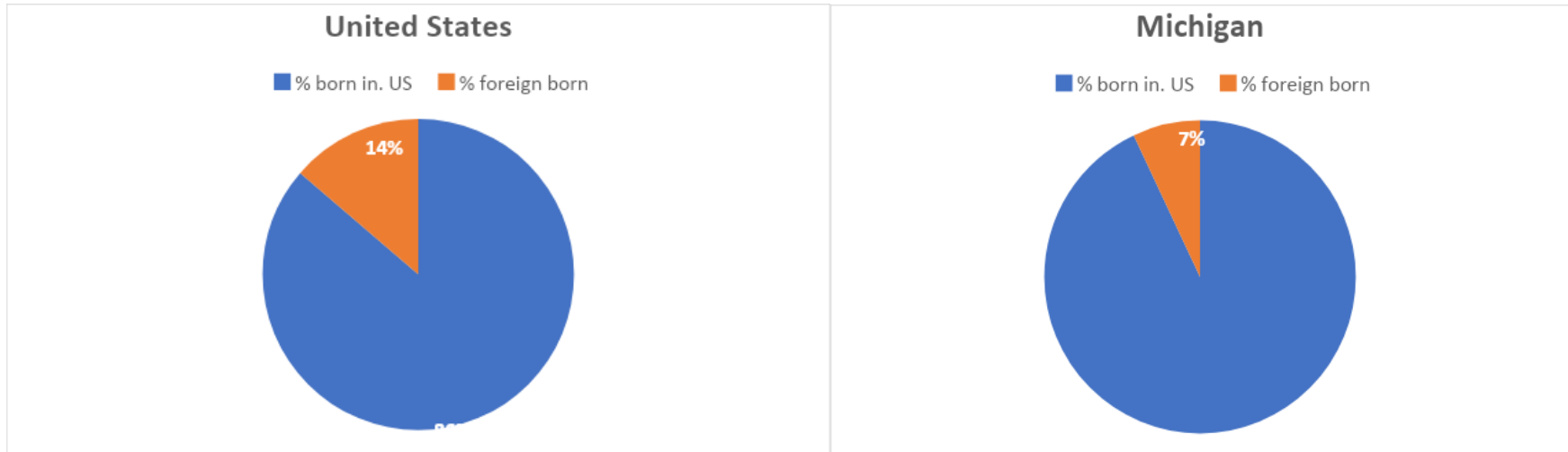
Percent of Michigan and United States population who were not U.S. citizens at birth, 1850 to 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

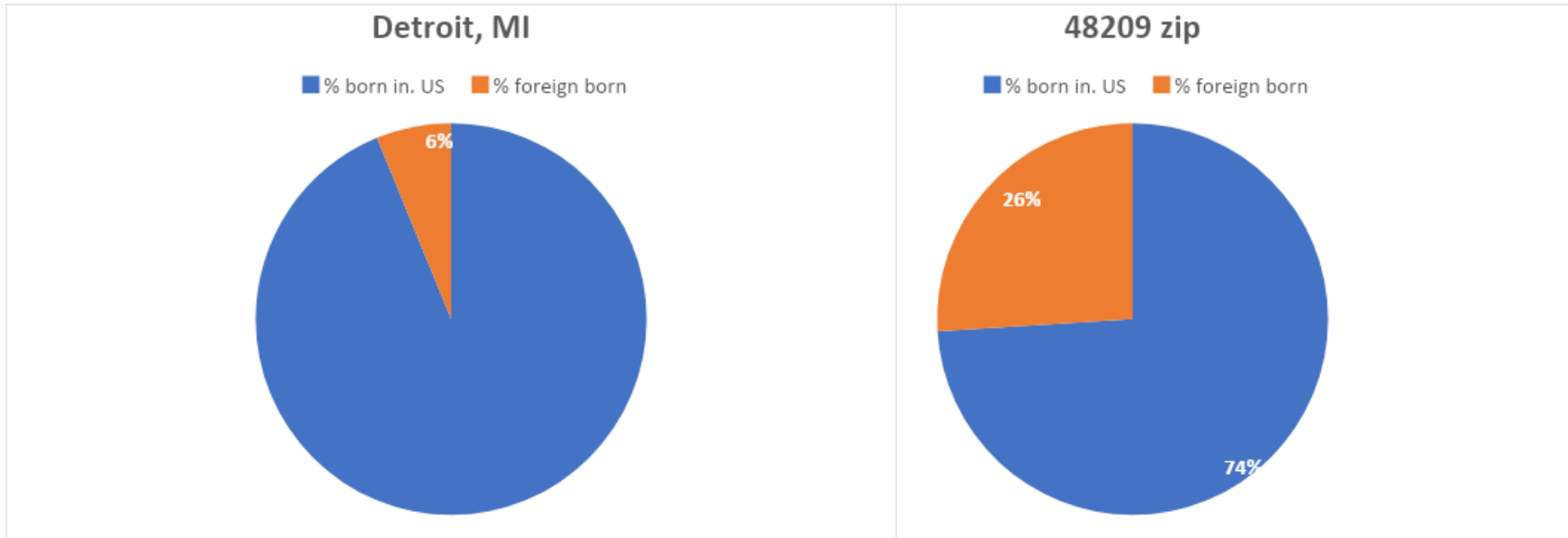
- 1) What do the numbers on the y-axis mean (this is the left edge of the graph, up and down)?
- 2) What do the numbers on the x-axis mean (this is the bottom of the graph, going across)?
- 3) What does the blue line show? Explain what information the blue line shows.
- 4) What does the yellow line show? Explain what information the yellow line shows.
- 5) In what year did Michigan have the largest percentage of people who were born outside of the United States?
- 6) How would you describe the change in immigration in the US and Michigan between 1970 and 2017? Did the number of immigrants in Michigan go up or down overall?

Study the pie charts below. All of the data in the pie charts is from the year 2019.

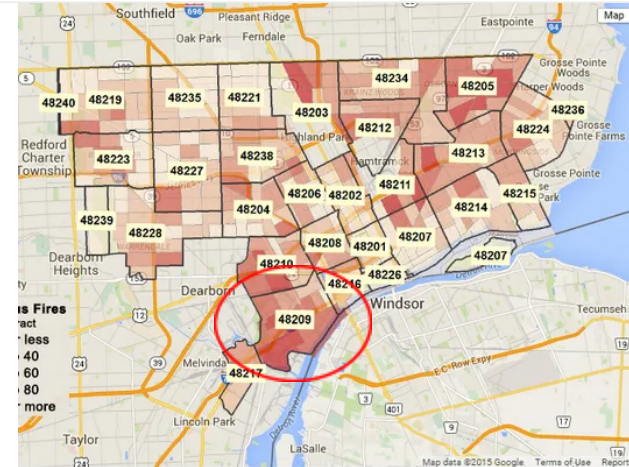


7) Write a sentence comparing the percentage of immigrants in the United States in 2019 to the percentage of immigrants in Michigan in 2019. Which one is bigger?

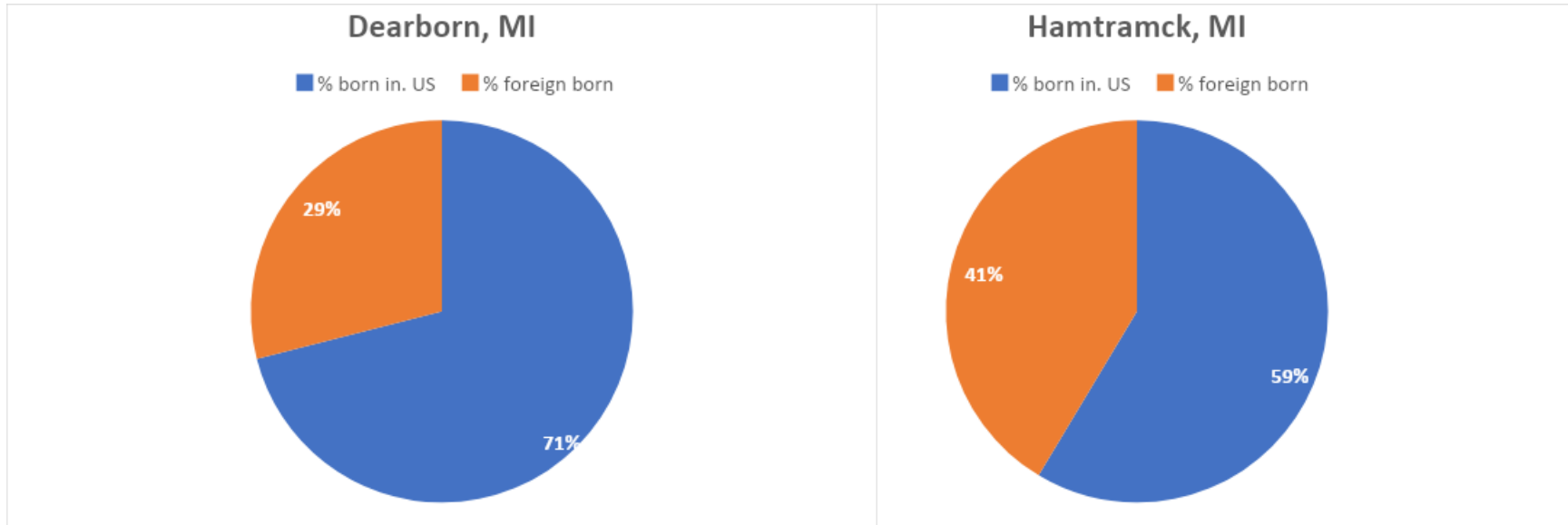
Study the pie charts below. All of the data in the pie charts is from the year 2019



8) The first pie chart above (on the left) shows the percentage of the entire population of Detroit, Michigan that were immigrants in 2019. The pie chart on the right shows the same information for one part of the city, the 48209 zip code in Southwest Detroit (circled on the map to the right). Looking at these two charts, which of the two areas - the city of Detroit or the 48209 zip code in Detroit - has a larger percentage of immigrants living in the community?



Study the pie charts below. All of the data in the pie charts is from the year 2019

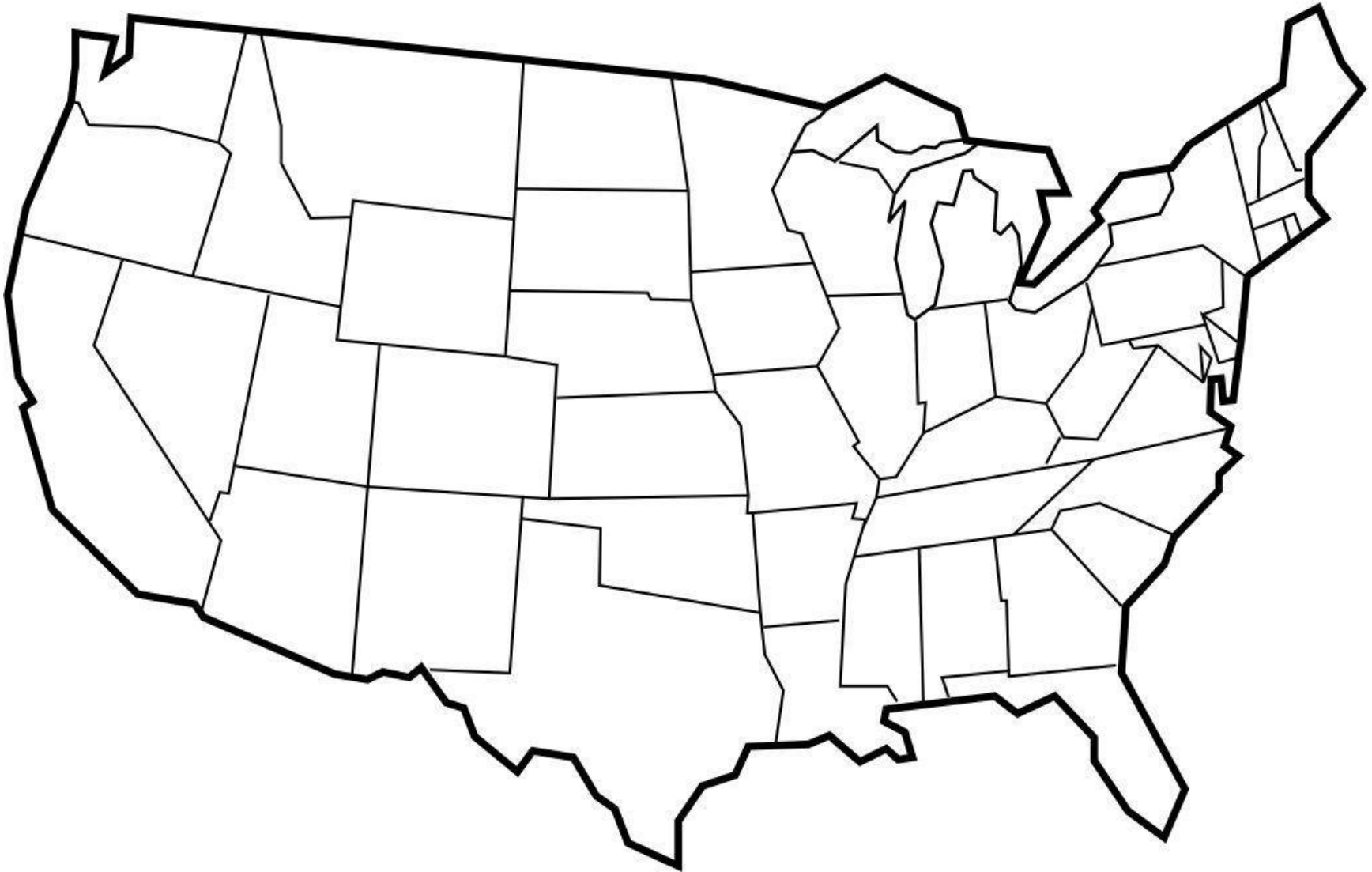


9) The pie chart on the left above shows the percentage of people in Dearborn, Michigan that were immigrants in 2019. The pie chart on the right shows the city of Hamtramck, Michigan. Using these data as evidence, write one to two sentences that compare the percentages of immigrants in both cities. Which city has a higher percentage of immigrants in its population?

10) In a short paragraph, describe how Dearborn, Hamtramck, and the 48209 zip code are different from the city of Detroit and the state of Michigan when it comes to their immigrant populations.

Handout 4: Map work

- 1) Find Michigan on this blank map of the United States and color it in with a color of your choosing.



- 2) Using a different map of Michigan, either online or from your classroom, find Wayne County in the southeastern (lower right on a map) corner of the state. On the map of Michigan below, find Wayne County and color it in.



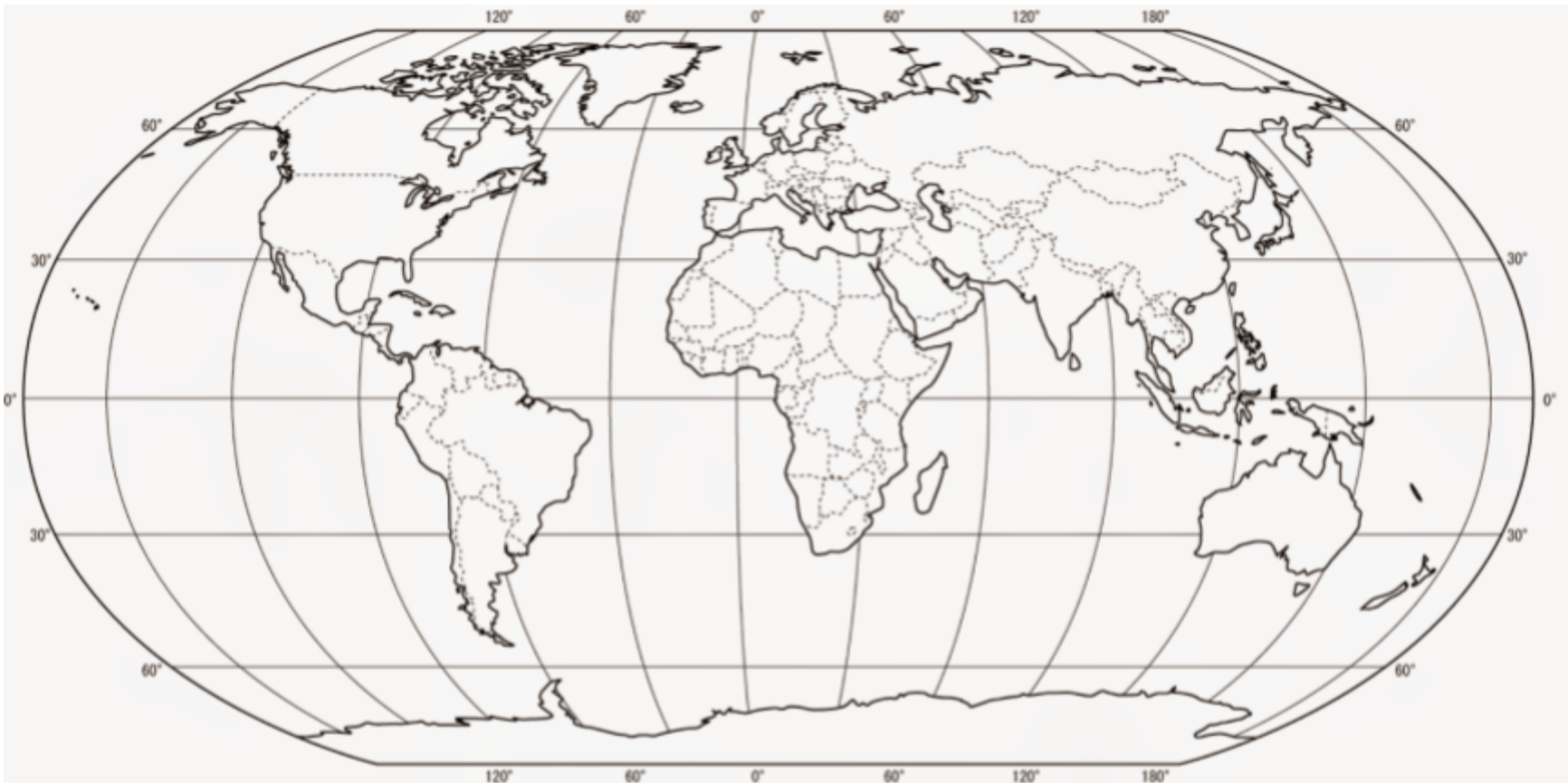
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4) Make a prediction! Why do you think that many immigrants choose to come to this part of the state?

5) Where do many immigrants to Michigan come from? Let's see! Using a world atlas online or in your class, find the following countries. There are many people from these nations who live in Michigan (and there are more countries we could add to this list!).

- Bangladesh
- El Salvador
- India
- Iraq
- Laos
- Lebanon
- Mexico
- Poland
- Puerto Rico
- The Philippines
- Yemen

On the blank world map below, create a map key that has a number for each country that you need to find from the list above. Then find that country on the blank map and label it by writing down the number it has in your key. You can also color in these countries. Then, draw a line from each of these countries to Michigan.



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Map Key:

Handout 5: Hamtramck- Michigan's Melting Pot

Hamtramck, Michigan, is a 2-square-mile city near Detroit. Hamtramck is small in size, but it has lots of people and cultural diversity. In the 20th century, most of the people who lived there were from Poland or were children of people from Poland. Today, the city has the largest percentage of immigrants in the state of Michigan. About 42% of the people are from countries in Eastern Europe, South Asia, and the Middle East.

Pick a street corner in downtown Hamtramck, and you will see a great mix of cultures in this tiny city. You will see a Catholic church across the street from a mosque (a place of worship for Muslim people). You will also see Polish pastry shops, sausage factories, and grocery stores. These Polish stores are right next to Bengali clothing shops that sell dresses and headscarves. There are also many Yemeni restaurants serving delicious lamb and flatbread.

What united the immigrant groups who came to Hamtramck **was the chance for good jobs in the automobile industry.** Hamtramck is surrounded by Detroit, and car manufacturing was a major reason many people immigrated to Detroit.

The first Polish immigrants started coming to Hamtramck starting in the early 1900s, hoping to find jobs at the new Dodge Main factory. This factory once employed 45,000 workers. It was one of the largest factories in the world. It transformed Hamtramck from a town of 3,500 residents in 1910 to a city of 48,000 people only 10 years later.

At one time, nearly 75 percent of the city's residents were Poles (people from Poland). But now, that number has decreased to about 10 percent. Many of the original Polish residents have moved to the suburbs. People from Yemen and Bangladesh are now the largest groups of people that live in Hamtramck.

What attracted Poles to Hamtramck then is what attracts Yemenis and Bengalis now – an affordable place to live, with similar people, customs and language.

Hamtramck also has a low cost of living and a reputation as a city that welcomes people from different countries and backgrounds. It is the most diverse city in Michigan. In 2015, it became the first American city to elect a majority-Muslim city council.

One spot that shows the mixing of Hamtramck's cultures is the Al-Haramain grocery store. *"It's huge, it's got everything you need, like a mini Kroger. You'll see people of all colors there, getting their groceries like everybody else,"* says Andrea Karpinski, a city councilwoman and lifelong resident of Hamtramck.

Al-Haramain caters to the surrounding communities by **importing** (bringing in from other countries) spices and groceries that the Polish, Bengali, Yemeni, Indian, and other people use in their food.

As the groups of people who immigrated to Hamtramck changed, more people from South Asia and the Middle East began to settle in the city to work in the surrounding factories. Many people from Bangladesh came to Hamtramck to work in the other factories. Many of these factories had supervisors of Bengali heritage who helped other people in the community get jobs.

But in 1980, the Dodge Main factory closed. Thousands of people lost their jobs. Other factories closed down as well. The loss of jobs made Hamtramck one of Michigan's poorest cities. But the low cost of living continues to attract immigrants.

Many of the immigrants from Yemen in Hamtramck moved there to escape a civil war in Yemen. Many people have suffered because of this war, and many Yemenis have fled their home in search of safety and a better life. Some of those people have settled in Hamtramck.



Today, Hamtramck is about 20% Yemeni, 20% Bangladeshi, 20% African American, 13% Polish, and the rest "is made up of everybody in the world."

Reading Response:

1. Why did Polish people begin to move to Hamtramck in the early 1900s? Is this a push factor or a pull factor?
2. Why have many people from Yemen moved to Hamtramck in recent years? Is this a push factor or a pull factor?

Adapted from:

- Silmi, M. & Raymond, K. (Oct 15, 2019). *One small city, three vibrant immigrant communities*. Michigan Radio. <https://www.michiganradio.org/post/one-small-city-three-vibrant-immigrant-communities>
- Block, M. & Nadworny, E. (Mar 28, 2017). *Hamtramck, Mich.: An evolving city of immigrants*. All Things Considered, NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2017/03/28/519017217/hamtramck-michigan-an-evolving-city-of-immigrants>
- Matheny, K. (Feb 4, 2017). *The story of Hamtramck, Michigan's Ellis Island, as Trump takes power*. Detroit Free Press. <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2017/02/04/hamtramck-michigan-immigrants-trump/97450148/>

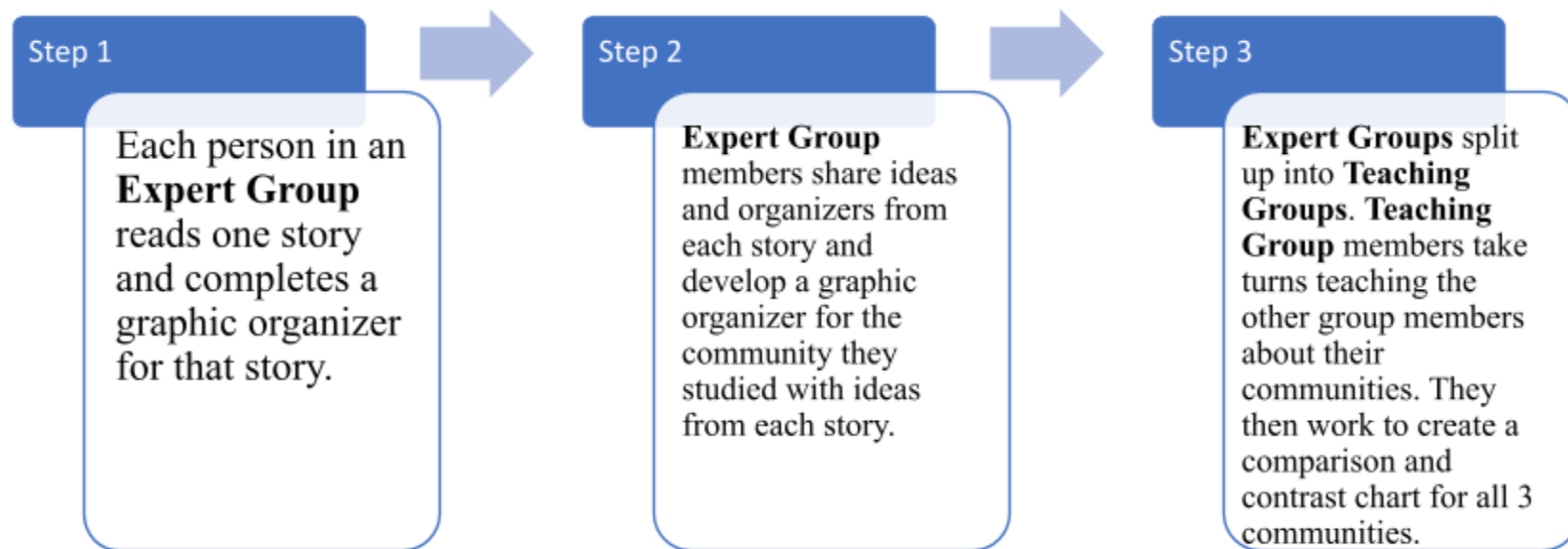
Title:	Hamtramck: Michigan's Melting Pot	
WHO is this story about?		
WHERE did they live originally?		
WHERE did they move to?	Hamtramck, Michigan	
WHEN did they leave their homeland?		
WHY did they leave?	 Push factors:	 Pull Factors:





Handout 6: Jigsaw Activity: You will be divided into two different kinds of groups for this next activity, which is called a Jigsaw Activity. First you will be in an **Expert Group** that will study one immigrant community. Working with this group you will focus on this one community and become an expert for your classmates who are in other groups learning about other communities.

Next, you will move into what is called a **Teaching Group**. This group will have at least one person who is an expert on each of the communities. It is called a teaching group because you will teach each other and compare and contrast the communities you have learned about. Your goal is to learn important things about people who immigrate to each of these really interesting communities!

Process



Step 1: Expert Group, Individual Notes

Title:		
WHO is this story about?		
WHERE did they live originally?		
WHERE did they move to?		
WHEN did they leave their homeland?		
WHY did they leave?	 Push factors:	 Pull Factors:

Step 2: Expert Group, Combined Notes

City	Countries where people began their journey	Push Factors	Pull Factors
What push and pull factors do these stories have in common?			

Step 3: Teaching Group, Combined Notes

	Countries where people began their journey	Push Factors	Pull Factors
Dearborn examples			
Hamtramck examples			

Detroit examples			

Comparison and Contrast

Community	Something interesting or unique about this community	What these communities have in common, or how they are alike
Detroit		
Hamtramck		
Dearborn		

Detroit

The Hmong Community in Detroit

The Osborn neighborhood in Northeast Detroit was once home to many Hmong families and the location of a large Hmong community.

The Hmong are an **ethnic group** (a group of people who share the same culture), mostly from the mountains of Southeast Asia in the countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand. The United States was involved in a war in Vietnam from 1955 to 1975. Because of the war, there was a lot of destruction and few jobs, and many Hmong people were worried they would be in danger after the war because some of them had helped the United States during the war. When the war ended, many Hmong people left Vietnam for Thailand, and from there many came to the United States.



Many of these Hmong families ended up coming to the northeast side of Detroit in the 1980s, and a small community developed there. Once the community grew, it attracted more Hmong people who wanted to live near family and where they could be supported by people who shared their culture.

The community grew over time and had many small businesses owned by Hmong people. In the year 2002, Michigan had the fifth highest population of Hmong Americans in the nation.

One person who came to Detroit from Laos was Naoying Yang. An [article](#) on the website The Neighborhoods.org tells the story of Yang. Yang lived in Laos during the Vietnam War and helped the United States forces. After the war, Yang and his family had to leave Laos in order to stay safe.

They made their way to the United States with almost nothing, lived in Washington and California, and then came to live in Detroit where they had some family. Their journey was very difficult, but they felt they had to leave Laos to survive.

Another Hmong person who came to Detroit was Richard Chang. As shared in an article from Michigan Radio, Chang moved to Detroit in 1981 after living in a refugee camp in Thailand. He attended Osborn High School in Detroit as one of many Hmong students in the school.



In 1996, he moved out of the city to live in a neighborhood where he thought the schools would be better for his kids. Later in 2008, he moved back to his old neighborhood but found that many of the other Hmong families had also left.

Like Chang and his family, many Hmong families began to move out of Detroit in the 1990's because of problems like crime and schools that did not support their kids. About 2/3 of all the

Hmong people on the east side of Detroit ended up moving out of the city. Many of them moved to the suburbs outside of Detroit to cities like Warren, Michigan.

In 2021 however, some former residents miss the sense of community they had back then and are looking for ways to come back to the city and redevelop the Hmong community in Detroit. Of course, some Hmong people are still in the city and are helping the city by opening new businesses. Gowhnou Lee, who is Hmong-American, has opened up a bubble tea shop and a restaurant in Detroit and is excited to share her culture.



Gowhnou Lee, co-owner of Tou & Mai, speaks of the Lunar New Year and the new business that she and her husband Cedric opened in Detroit's midtown. *Max Ortiz, The Detroit News*

Sources:

<https://www.theneighborhoods.org/story/hmong-residents-fled-northeast-detroit-now-theyd-stage-comeback>

<https://www.theneighborhoods.org/story/hmong-residents-fled-northeast-detroit-now-theyd-stage-comeback>

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2019/02/18/lost-asian-american-community-detroit-sees-reason-hope/2744890002/>

SOUTHWEST DETROIT

The following stories are real accounts shared by community members for this project. Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the people involved.

Sara's Story:



My name is Sara Rodriguez, and I am from Durango, Mexico. I came to the United States as an undocumented person as a young lady. I was 15 years old when I emigrated. My journey was not easy. Having to walk for so long was very difficult for me. I arrived in the city of Chicago in November of 1983. My mom had come to Chicago when I was 6 years old without me. I lived with my grandmother when my mom left. When I finally came, my mother was looking forward to hugging my brother and I. We had not seen each other for such a long time.

I came from Mexico with a degree in accounting and I felt important. But I had to work in a soda straw factory. I was still young and I had never worked in a place like that, so it was a big challenge for me. I struggled a lot. I did not speak much English, and I was teased and abused because I was undocumented.

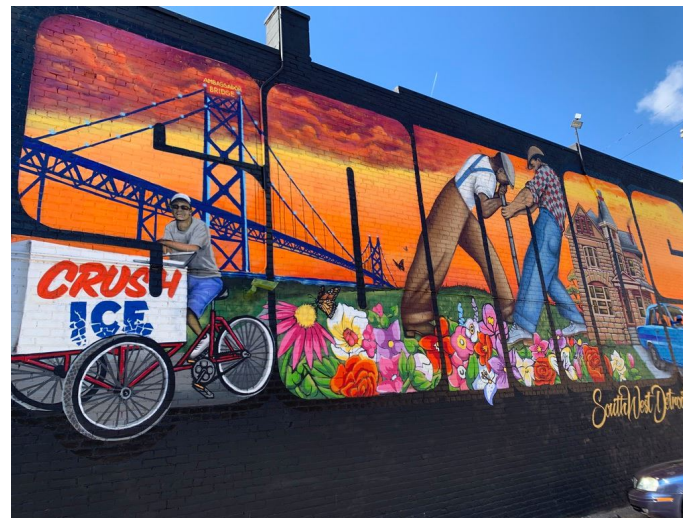
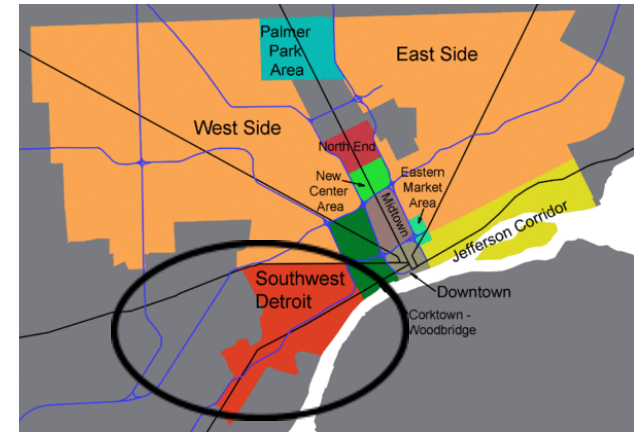
But I decided to continue with my education. I enrolled at school after work, but working full time was not easy. After work I felt tired and sleepy. I decided to stop attending school. My working hours were from 5:30 am to 5:30 pm, with one weekend to work and another to rest. It was not an easy job for a 15-year-old girl.



Durango, Mexico

At age 20 I got married, had 2 children, and became a housewife. My desire to continue with my education didn't stop. I went back to school. I have always felt the need to improve myself. I wanted to get ahead, and not get stuck in my house just being a housewife. I started at taking English classes, then I received my GED. I felt proud to succeed. I didn't stop there, I continued attending school studying for some credits until my husband decided that we would move to Detroit, Michigan.

That was another change for the family because it was a new place for us. I had to start from the bottom working in restaurants as a waitress to contribute with family's financial support. Soon after, I saw the opportunity to start working at an elementary school and thanks to that I decided to study and continue supporting my children. I started classes at a local university and got more education that helped me get a better job at the school.



A mural in Southwest Detroit

Marta's Story:

In 2001 I was 23 years old when I decided to move to the United States and leave my 1-year-old son with my mother in El Salvador. I wanted to bring my son with me but I started thinking that it was dangerous to bring him because I would be crossing 3 borders to make it to my destination and I was scared that something might happen to him.



My life in El Salvador was tough because I dropped out of school when I was in 3rd grade and started to work at a young age to help my mother. I

worked in a coffee plantation that did not pay well and those are some reasons why I decided to move. My husband was the first to migrate to the U.S. and then save up money so that I could come. Crossing the borders was one of the most difficult things because there was a lot of walking, running, and swimming in big rivers to get here.



Once I made it to the United States I went to New York where my husband was and from there I started work at a local factory with my husband. New York was a beautiful state, but expensive to live in, and all the apartments cost too much. It was hard to find jobs as well. That is why we left and decided to move to Michigan in 2003 and for other reasons as well.

My family settled in Southwest Detroit and we were surrounded by a lovely community. At the time Michigan was the only state that had jobs to offer and was nearby. Michigan is a nice state, but when I got my first job here in the U.S, it was difficult for me because I only spoke Spanish and I barely understood English. Another thing was that I was never taught

how to write. Living in Detroit I found people that would help me learn English.

I still live in Detroit Michigan with my family. I have 4 daughters and 1 of them graduated from a local school, two of them go to this same school in our community. For me, I think that it is a great school that taught my daughters so much, and my husband and I appreciate it. I would always join the parent's meeting which was helpful for me because as a parent it taught me more about the education system and much more. I enjoy going to the meetings to learn new information and learn how to do things for my children. Detroit, Michigan was a great choice to live in because the community I'm surrounded by is lovely.



Dearborn

Dearborn, Michigan

The following stories are real accounts shared by community members for this project. Some names and events may have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals and families involved. Some people shared their stories and allowed us to use their names.

The Twins

2019- Yemen

It was the start of the 2019-2020 school year. Students were excitedly rushing to their classrooms. There were returning students and new students all eager to start a new school year at William Ford Elementary in Dearborn, MI. A special group of siblings who stood out that school year were a set of identical twin girls and their six year old brother. These ten year old twins were nervous and scared. They just arrived in a new country. Like many before them, they fled their home in Yemen. They left a war torn country where famine and illness was spreading throughout the country. Their mother had died in Yemen seven years earlier while giving birth to their brother. They were raised by their grandmother. Due to the war in Yemen, there are very little jobs so their father immigrated to America to build a better life for his family. He decided to build his life in Dearborn because of the many Yemeni immigrants that reside there. He was able to find an emotional support system and help finding work. Dad works very hard to provide for his family. He saved enough money to bring his family to America.





Their father returned to Yemen and brought his children in the Summer of 2019 to America to live with him, their stepmother who was a stay at home mom, and two half siblings. The girls were placed in fourth grade and the boy was placed in Kindergarten. They were age appropriate for fifth and first grade, but due to them not having any schooling in their own native language the school thought it would be best to give them an additional year to get caught

up. The girls struggled to learn a new language, a new culture, and make friends. Everything was so new to them. When the school had a fire drill, one of the twins ducked under the table terrified. With time and love from their teachers and classmates they started to speak English and understand the procedures of the school. They were starting to love school, they didn't miss a day even if they were ill. Unfortunately, their education was interrupted in March of 2019 due to the global coronavirus pandemic. The twins were eager to learn and joined remote learning daily. They are showing growth, but they are below grade level because of the late start in their education. Their education in Yemen was constantly being interrupted due to war. Now that they are in America the students have an opportunity to get a formal education, and are on track to graduate and contribute to society.

Mariam Hamid

1975: Lebanon

“BOOOOMMM, BOOOOMMM...my children, walk alongside the walls. Stay away from harm's way,” my mother said. Dark, gloomy, unpredictable flares of light around us, as we ran for cover. Fear, poverty, displacement, witnessing violent acts, were some of the experiences we went through in Lebanon during the war, in the Spring of 1975.

My father was a shoemaker. My mother was a housewife trying to make ends meet while raising ten kids. All ten kids felt the hardship my parents were going through. Our home, our village, our country was not a safe haven anymore. We were being pushed away from the only life we knew. My parents finally made the ultimate decision, they contacted family members who lived in the United States, asked for help.

In September of 1976, my mom and older siblings came to Dearborn, Michigan. We had several family members residing in Dearborn, they felt living around the family would be an easier transition for everyone. Immediately, my brothers began to tirelessly work to earn as much money as they can to get the rest of the family members to America. They found an



apartment in Dearborn and began exploring the city. May 28, 1979, our transition into the unknown, Dad and us girls arrived at Detroit Metro Airport. Although we were jetlagged from the trip, we were mesmerized with all the night lights, cars on the freeway, beautiful buildings, stable homes, and quiet neighborhoods, as we drove home.

Home, where we felt safe, at peace, happy, excited but yet, overwhelmed. Immediately, my parents registered us in school. We met extraordinary people that helped us overcome our fears and provided us with the tools we needed to assimilate to our new lives and embrace what our community, city, state and country provided us. Dearborn, not where we were born, but it's where we felt loved, safe, strong, content, and empowered with endless opportunities. Dearborn became my home. Where I have raised my kids, where I have dedicated my life to teach our future generations and where I will die. For that, I am forever grateful.



Mariam Hamid
5th Grade Teacher
William Ford Elementary

Mohamed Abdulla

Yemen 1972

What were your responsibilities at age 12? With his head hanging low and heart heavy, Mohamed Abdulla left grade school to accept the responsibility of providing for his family. Alone and just 12 years old, he left the familiar mountains of Yafai, Yemen for the bustling and drastically different British occupied city of Aden in the 1950s. He bounced around to several Gulf countries, settling in Qatar for five years until 1972. That was when he received a call from his brother-in-law.

After that call, he and his wife, Khadijah, promptly set out for the farms of northern California. Although they didn't speak English and didn't have much money, they were hopeful because Khadigah's brothers were there. As an immigrant in a foreign land, having family around is priceless. After a long tough year of picking fruit, Mohamed's uncle sent word from Dearborn, Michigan. "This is where you need to be", he advised. Many factories needed workers. They offered much better pay than the farm and there was a small Arab-American community forming. Mohamed quickly got a job at Ford Motor Company.



Khadijah would go on to raise eight children while Mohamed worked tirelessly to provide for them. As the family grew, so did the responsibilities. Mohamed and his wife saved every penny and bought a home. They continued to save then bought another. This continued several times over and to this day, they are still landlords. Throughout the constantly changing backdrop of immigrating, jobs, children, and life's tragedies, they maintain that second to their faith, their partnership got them through it.

The greatest benefit of their immigration was the opportunity for their children to go to school. An opportunity they never had. With their heads held high, they witnessed all eight children graduate high school and seven out of eight children graduate college. What a journey.

Brave men and women like Mohamed and Khadijah came to a country where they didn't speak the language, they didn't have much money, they had limited to no family support, they faced rampant racism, and many were uneducated. Many immigrants leave large families and support systems behind. Dearborn provided the early immigrants with an extended family. a community. They were strong, resilient, community-focused people. Their collective sacrifices have led to the great accomplishments that Yemeni Americans have today.



A mosque in Dearborn

Amira

Yemen (Early 80's)

Revolutions are said to turn princes into paupers and peasants into royalty. Aden, Yemen under empirical British rule could bear witness. It was during that time that Wij was born into privilege. The firstborn son of a poet and grandson of the first man to open and own a newspaper in the country, he was destined for a lifestyle of the rich and famous. His was a family enjoying cruises, members-only club and pool access, learning the fine arts, and enjoying and owning every bit of wealth begotten by wealth in the country. At the age of 16, and after having attended the best education that money could buy, he left Yemen headed for Europe, where he would end up completing his degrees and fellowships at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland and Oxford University. Life was good.

Amira's family was not among the Rockefellers of her times. She was the middle child of nine siblings, not including the two that had died at a young age from some form of fever. Her father was a hard-working, devout man, who put his faith and reliance on God, but took every bit of his responsibility as a provider and father as seriously as his faith and would accept no handouts, neither from man nor government. He worked at a factory literally until the day he died. Amira grew in this sort of dynamic. She attended public school to the extent that girls attended. Her fondest memories include her brother sneaking them to a theater once or purchasing a radio for her to secretly listen to game show trivia or the news when her father wasn't home. She loved education, and she loved to learn, so much so that

she scored second place in the national standardized test, earning her a full ride scholarship to Kuwait University.

By this time, the revolution had started, and almost just as quickly, it ended. Wij returned home a Dr. and opened up his clinic in the heart of downtown in one of the many buildings his family had owned. However, retribution was coming to the families that had cozied up to the British; viewed as sellouts. His cousin was thrown from the top of the mosque minaret in the middle of Aden. It was time to go. A beacon of light shown from the West. American beckoned, and Wij answered her call.

He went to Pennsylvania, at first, and worked on some medical research, but he liked the country, and he cared for his immediate family's safety and well-being, so he decided to bring them in. At the time, it was much easier to obtain citizenship and bring in your family if you joined the military, so that's exactly what Wij did. Within a couple years, he received his citizenship and began climbing the ranks of the military, eventually becoming a Major. He would eventually bring in his parents and send his two brothers to college in the US. Meanwhile in the 70's, it was uncommon for a woman to remain unmarried into their twenties, and seeing how both of her older sisters were married at 17, but she had not, Amira's marriage to learning became obvious to all. Despite custom, she went off to complete her degree in Kuwait, returning home to work with the mental health issues of a post-war, impoverished country. Her youngest brother's involvement in the revolution meant that her family could no longer return to Aden, so she settled with her parents and the last of her siblings in Taiz (a nearby city). Just next door, was a well-to-do family with a son in the states whose mother was arranging a marriage for. The war had brought this family to equal footing with Amira's. The fact that she was an educated woman was highly

sought after, since this young man was a doctor and wanted someone on his level. Amira accepted the proposal and Wij returned to Yemen for the last time in his life; to get married and bring his wife to the West.

Amira and Wij had four children before they ended their marriage with divorce. Initially, Amira and the kids returned to Yemen for some time. But life was difficult, and with four children who were US citizens, Amira broke the mold yet again and left her family and the country once more, this time to make a better life for her and the children in the US.

AND THE REST IS HISTORY....

Zeinab Al-Akashi

Iraq 1991

My family immigrated to the United States as a result of the 1991 Uprising in Iraq. They first sought refuge in Saudi Arabia and were then granted refugee visas to the United States before I was born. My family decided to settle in Dearborn, MI. The established Arab and Muslim community in Dearborn helped them settle here more easily, as they were surrounded by familiar faces, cultures, and more. Being in Dearborn made it easier for my dad to get a job even though he spoke little English. The community also provided my parents with the resources they needed to ensure they understood the American education system so that my sisters and I could succeed academically. With such a supportive community, my sisters and I were able to go to college and become teachers, nurses, and artists.



I love that living in Dearborn allowed me to connect with my roots when it was unsafe to visit back home. Though I did assimilate to American culture, it was my choice at my own pace and not in an attempt to fit in, as I was surrounded by peers who shared my culture and traditions all my life. I also love that I can witness the subculture formed by second-generation immigrants in my community firsthand. Seeing how we can create these spaces for ourselves and make such successful efforts to allow our heritage to live on in the diaspora has been fulfilling.

Why I love Dearborn

by **Fatima Abdulla**

I have lived in Dearborn my whole life. Dearborn is a wonderful city to live in for many reasons. One reason I chose to reside in Dearborn is the people. No matter which area I have lived in from the Southend, Eastend, or Westend the people are very hospitable. My neighbors have mowed my grass, and shoveled my snow if I was either out of town or sick. It's not uncommon for the neighbors in Dearborn to send you food, especially during the holy month of Ramdan. Another reason I love living in Dearborn are the mosques.

There are many mosques where I can visit. The mosques are located all over the city. Many people visit Dearborn for the diverse selection of delicious food. Dearborn is home to all types of food from Middle Eastern, Italian, American, Mexican, and many more. There are also many bakeries that have the most tasty breakfast breads. Cheese bread, zaatar, spinach, and many more. Being a Muslim I only consume kosher / halal meat. There are many local businesses that sell hallal meats. These local businesses also have many Middle Eastern items such as spices, beans, and breads that are accessible on a daily basis. Furthermore, Dearborn is known for its top notch city services. Trash and recycling bins are provided by the city and are picked up weekly. The schools in Dearborn have ESL endorsed teachers that can differentiate instruction for students immigrating from all over the world. If there is an emergency the police department will be there in minutes from the time the call is placed. Dearborn is a safe and welcoming city to live in and where I will always call home.



Stats/Overview Resources:

- American Immigration Council
<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-michigan>
- Michigan League for Public Policy: Wayne County Fact Sheet
<https://mlpp.org/2021countyimmigration/Wayne.pdf>
- NY Times: Interactive chart showing sources of migration into Michigan over time - need to switch from migration out of Michigan to immigration into Michigan
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/upshot/where-people-in-each-state-were-born.html>

Lesson Plans/Reading Resources

- A lesson on immigration to Southeast Michigan that has some additional readings and personal narratives from earlier immigrants
<https://detroithistorical.org/sites/default/files/lessonPlans/MIGRATION%20TO%20SOUTHEAST%20MICHIGAN.pdf>
- Lesson on immigration and the automotive industry in Michigan
<https://www.thehenryford.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/default-document-library/movingtomichigandigikit.pdf?sfvrsn=0>
- History of early immigration and land purchases in Michigan
https://project.geo.msu.edu/geogmich/michigan_fever.html



Hamtramck, 1954



[Jos Campau at Norwalk - Hamtramck MI.JPG](#) by Andrew Jameson is