

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

FOR EDUCATORS

Arab American National Museum: Connecting Communities Exhibition

October 1, 2009 – March 28 2010 in the Main Floor Gallery; free with Museum admission.

The new multimedia AANM exhibit *Connecting Communities* uses metro Detroit as a microcosm of American immigration. Nine local immigrants tell their own stories, which often contradict stereotypes and misconceptions. Visitors will listen in on conversations with Arab, Latino, Southeast Asian and Eastern European immigrants, and view their photos and personal objects. Visitors will then be asked to reflect upon and share their thoughts about immigration and how it has impacted their own lives.

Our nation, including southeast Michigan, has witnessed a large influx of immigrants from different parts of the world. Immigrants are often portrayed as a threat to our way of life and as a burden on our economy. Stereotypes and misconceptions about immigrant life abound, and public opinion about immigrants, including that of young adults, is often tainted by this debate.

Our *core democratic values* reflect our belief that all people, including immigrants deserve the opportunity to experience and participate in cultural and arts activities and to participate in the shaping and telling of their own stories.

Student learning outcomes for this exhibition are:

Students will be aware of immigration issues that are of national concern.

- Students will be able to identify at least 2 immigration issues (examples: jobs, language, social and health services, property values, border controls, education)

Students will better understand the diversity of our area and the perspectives and history of immigrants in Southeast Michigan.

- Students will be able to name at least 2 immigrant groups in the Detroit Metro Area
- Students will be able to name at least two geographic areas in the Detroit Metro Area which have large immigrant communities.
- Students will be able to name at least one immigrant group that settled in the Detroit Metro Area primarily during the 1800s and at least one group that settled here primarily since the 1950s.

Students will better understand the common concerns and shared experiences of various immigrant communities.

- Students will be able to name three common goals of most immigrants (examples: better education, better job, personal safety, family cohesiveness, better life for children)

Students will recognize some of larger society's stereotypes and misconceptions about immigrants and minorities.

- Students will be able to identify at least 2 stereotypes or misconceptions (examples: immigrants don't pay taxes, all Arab women are oppressed,

immigrants don't want to learn English, immigrants do not contribute to the economy, immigrants bring down property values, immigrants don't want to be "American")

Students will gain knowledge and develop skills that will help them understand, appreciate, and interact with people from cultures different from their own.

Students will recognize the importance of recording personal stories (oral history) and the use of objects in documenting history.

- Students will listen to at least 2 recorded interviews
- Students will examine at least one displayed object

Students will develop and share their own perspectives on immigration with new insight gained from examining the first-person narratives of immigrants.

- Student groups have the opportunity to record and share a personal story or impressions of how immigration has impacted his or her own life.

Exhibition Resources:

*** Guided Student Tours**

Call Sonya Kassis 313 624 0202 for more information about a guided tour of the exhibition

*** Map**

Here is a link to the *Immigration Explorer* interactive map used in the exhibition:
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/03/10/us/20090310-immigration-explorer.html>

*** YouTube**

As part of the exhibition, visitors will be asked to share their thoughts on how immigration has affected their lives by recording comments at a video kiosk inside the gallery that will instantly appear on the popular video website **YouTube**. www.youtube.com/user/concom09

*** Audio Tour**

A free, cell-phone-based audio tour for *Connecting Communities* also invites visitor comments on the exhibition. 313-228-4495

*** Discussion Questions and Classroom Activities Connecting the Exhibition to Curriculum Standards and Benchmarks**

This museum visit aligns with the Michigan Department of Education's K-12 Curriculum Standards and Content Expectations. For more information, visit their web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>

Arts Education: Visual Arts:

Response Strand: Describe, analyze and understand the arts in historical, contemporary, social, cultural, environmental and/or economic contexts

World Languages – Diversity:

Identify diverse languages and cultures throughout the world

EXHIBITION CONNECTION:

What cultural objects did immigrants bring with them and how do they connect them to their country of origin?

Career and Employability:

Career planning. All students will acquire information from career awareness activities.

EXHIBITION CONNECTION:

What do the 9 immigrants do for a living and how does that contribute to their community?

English Language Arts:

Reading Strand: Narrative text

Investigate examples of stereotypes through contemporary literature

Informational text

Students will identify and analyze informational genre (museum labels)

EXHIBITION CONNECTION:

Compare and contrast the benefits and challenges of immigration in the United States.

List responses on the board or have students fill out KWL charts. What do you know about immigration, what do you want to know more about, and what did you learn about immigration?

English Language Arts:

Speaking, Listening and Viewing Strand:

Respond to multiple text types by discussing, illustrating and/or writing to show understanding

EXHIBITION CONNECTION:

Visitors will be asked to share their thoughts on how immigration has affected their lives by recording comments at a video kiosk inside the gallery that will instantly appear on the popular video website **YouTube** For more information about recording a YouTube video of students' views on immigration, call 313-624-0202

Social Studies:

Geography

Distribution and Migration of People

History

Explain how historians use artifacts and primary and secondary sources to explore the past

World History

Analyze demographic changes in America due to immigration

EXHIBITION CONNECTION:

Devise questions in class and interview family members or friends about their immigrant experiences. Share your stories. These sites have good ideas:

“How Do I Ask Questions?” from Judith Moyer’s *Step-by-Step Guide to Oral History*:
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/index.htm>

Scholastic’s *Immigration* web site includes an *Oral History Scrapbook* project
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/writing/prepare.asp?topic=Immigration>
and *Writing Workshop* with interview questions:

http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html#QUESTIONS

Social Studies: Civics and Government

**Core democratic values* of patriotism

Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship

EXHIBITION CONNECTION:

Dr. Anan Ameri, Arab American National Museum Director says,

“With the exception of Native Americans, all Americans have immigrant ancestors. We all desire a peaceful and productive life with adequate educational and employment opportunities. We all contribute to the fabric of American society.”

Give examples of how immigrants in the exhibition contribute to American life.