

TM Mission Directions: **Immigration Laws**

Guiding Question for this station:

Which immigration laws do you think are fair and unfair?

Introduction:

Americans often think that law making is mystifying. We know that laws exist, but don't know how they become laws, why certain laws are written, or what the laws even say. Immigration is a controversial issue in the U.S., which makes it really important for us to understand immigration law and its history.

See the detailed directions for this station on the next page.

Station RUBRIC:

4 ABOVE grade level:

100% effort and ALL work completed, including EXTRA CREDIT section. Totally focused and on task!

3 AT grade level:

80-90% effort and ALL work completed. Wasted no time.

2 NEAR grade level:

70% effort and most of the work is completed. Wasted some time.

1 BELOW grade level:

50% or less effort and little to no work is completed. Wasted time.

Directions:

1. Read some of the immigration laws from the past.
2. Compare and contrast these laws.
3. Decide which laws are fair and unfair and why.
4. Write a **CERS** response to the guiding question about immigration law:
5. Present your group's **CERS** on the poster paper provided.

If you finish early: Extra Credit

1. Write an immigration law that includes at least 4 legal provisions or limitations.
2. Give it a name.
3. Pin it to the Presidents' wall near a president who seems interesting to you.

Law 1: Alien and Sedition Acts

Signed into law by President John Adams (member of the Federalist Party) in 1798, the Alien and Sedition Acts included four laws passed by the Federalist-controlled Congress as America prepared for war with France. These acts increased the residency requirement (how long someone had to live in America) for American citizenship from 5 to 14 years, it authorized the president to imprison or deport aliens (immigrants) considered "dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States" and it restricted speech critical of the government. These laws were designed to silence and weaken the Democratic-Republican Party. Negative reaction to the Alien and Sedition Acts helped contribute to the Democratic-Republican victory in the 1800 elections.

Law 2: The Chinese Exclusion Act - May 6, 1882.

It was the first significant law restricting immigration into the United States.

In the spring of 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Chester A. Arthur. This act provided an absolute 10-year moratorium (hold or freeze) on Chinese labor immigration. For the first time, Federal law proscribed entry of an ethnic working group on the premise that it endangered the good order of certain localities.

The Chinese Exclusion Act **required** the few **non-laborers** who tried to enter the United States to get certification from the Chinese government that they were qualified to immigrate. But that group found it increasingly difficult to prove that they were **non-laborers**. Thus very few Chinese could enter the country under the 1882 law.

The 1882 exclusion act also placed new requirements on Chinese who had already entered the country. If they left the United States, they had to obtain certifications to re-enter. The United States, national Congress, moreover, refused State and Federal courts the right to grant citizenship to Chinese resident aliens, although these courts could still deport them.

Informal Agreement, but like a law 3: The Gentlemen's Agreement

In August 1900, Japan agreed to deny passports to laborers seeking to enter the United States; this, however, did not stop many Japanese workers to obtain passports to Canada, [Mexico](#), or [Hawaii](#) and then move to the United States. Racism intensified, amplified by xenophobic articles in the press (news papers). On May 7, 1905, a Japanese and Korean Exclusion League was organized by Americans in San Francisco. Next, the San Francisco school board arranged for all Asian children to be placed in a segregated school.

Japan was prepared to limit immigration to the United States, but was deeply hurt by San Francisco's racist law that discriminated against its people. President Roosevelt, wishing to preserve good relations with Japan intervened. Roosevelt asked the San Francisco mayor and school board to come to the White House in February 1907. His goal was to persuade the San Franciscans to rescind(cancel) the segregation order, if he promised that the federal government would address the question of immigration.

The Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan was concluded after the Japanese wrote a note agreeing to deny passports to laborers planning to enter the United States and recognizing the U.S. right to exclude Japanese immigrants holding passports originally issued for other countries.

After the agreement was struck, the San Francisco school board ordered to desegregate their schools. A final Japanese note dated February 18, 1908, made the Gentlemen's Agreement fully effective, until the exclusionary Immigration Act of 1924.

Law 4: National Origins Act

Although there were no racial restrictions in the National Origins Act of 1924, the nature of the quotas ensured that limited numbers of certain Europeans and almost no Asians could enter the United States. The addition of the Asian Exclusion Act, which stopped Asians from becoming naturalized citizens, shut the door on Asian immigration until 1965. If populations of those immigrants from undesirable (not wanted) nations were already small, then only a minuscule(tiny) amount of additional immigrants from that country could join them.

For example:

The National Origins Act limited additional immigration from all nations, including China, to 2% of the number of Chinese Americans living in the US.

If 1,000 Chinese lived in the United States, then...

2% of 1,000 equals 20, which means that only twenty more persons from China could immigrate to the US. Add on to that additional restrictions on new immigrants, such as literacy tests, that number may be lower.

Conversely, if there were 150,000 Americans of British descent, 3,000 more immigrants could join them.

This Act effectively skewed(made unfair) the immigration system with the intention of keeping America's ethnic distribution consistent. The rules were calculated and amended several times with the quota and the population numbers from 1890 were used as benchmarks to restrict undesirable(unwanted) immigration even further.

**Write
your
groups
CERS on
the
poster.**

**Table name +
Period + CERS.**

Sample Graphic Organizer for your notebook

	Alien Sedition Acts	Chinese Exclusion Act	The Gentlemen's Agreement	National Origins Act
COMPARE:				
CONTRAST:				
INFERENCES:				

PREPARE YOUR CERS:

CLAIM:

EVIDENCE:

REASONING:

SIGNIFICANCE:

