FRONT DESK

Pre-Reading Resources

RESOURCE CONTENTS

- 5 Informational Texts
  - Variety of Text Features
  - A & B Response Formats
- 3 Activities & Anticipation Guide
  - Pair with Nonfiction Readings
- Topics cover the history of Chinese immigration to the United States and the American dream.
- Google Slides™ Links for Google Drive™
- Standards-Aligned Resources
- Answer Keys for Applicable Activities!

NONFICTION TEXTS

## History of Chinese Immigration: Part I

During the 19th century, countless immigrants from all over the world journeyed to the United States seeking freedom and opportunities. While immigrants from Germany, Ireland, England, and other countries in Western Europe flocked to America's shores on the East Coast. Asian immigrants, mainly from China, made their way across the Pacific Ocean to the United States' West Coast. Although each immigrant's story was unique, it was often the case that specific reasons contributed to the decision to immigrate. For example, rumors of gold motivated many to rush to California in hopes of striking it rich, but the area's wider range of other economic opportunities also inspired thousands in China to make the trip.

The Draw of "Gold Mountain"

One significant motivator for immigrants to trek west or sail east was the discovery of gold in California in 1848. Thousands of prospectors made their way to the San Francisco area to mine the precious metal in a frenzy[1] that became known as the Gold Rush. Rumors of "**Gam Saan**" or "Gold Mountain" traveled halfway around the world, and Chinese immigrants sought to strike it rich alongside Americans. Over 25,000 people emigrated[2] from China to California, causing the first major wave of Chinese immigration to the U.S. The Chinese immigrant population in the U.S. had spiked from a few hundred to a few hundred thousand by the time the Gold Rush reached its peak in 1852.

Chinese Population in U.S. (Thousands)

Year	Population
1830	3
1850	4
1860	35
1870	63
1880	104
1890	107
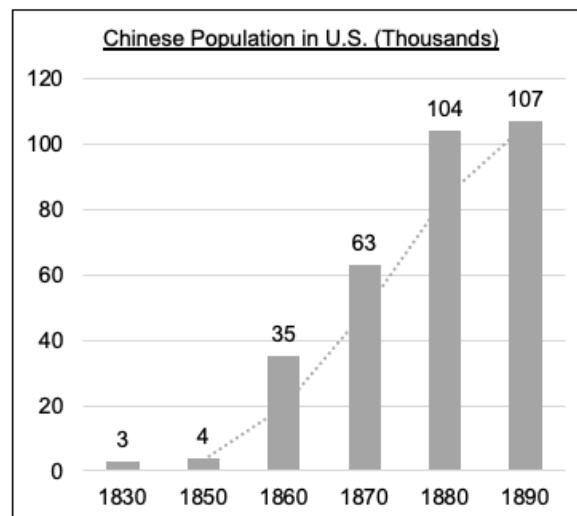
*Population data is approximate.

Of course, the potential of gold was not the only factor that pulled so many to journey across the Pacific Ocean. Back home, many Chinese were suffering from the effects of a decades-long conflict with European nations, including Great Britain and France. This conflict caused social, civil, political, and economic unrest. When a crop failure struck in 1852, countless Chinese, mainly male peasants from inland China, took to the sea and traveled east. Although many immigrants intended to mine for gold, not all Chinese immigrants worked with prospectors and miners.

The Need for Labor

With the Pacific Coast's economy booming, the United States government realized the need to connect the economy of the West with the economy of the East. As a result, in 1862 Congress passed the Pacific Railroad Act, chartering two railroad companies to complete a transcontinental[3] route. The Central Pacific Railroad Company started construction in California, working its way east to meet the Union Pacific Railroad Company. When the Central Pacific encountered trouble hiring and retaining workers due to the challenging work, the company began to hire Chinese immigrants. By 1867, Central Pacific used upwards of 20,000 Chinese immigrants to help complete the difficult task of building a railroad through the West's rugged[4]

- 5 Nonfiction Readings
- Educational Text Features
- Glossary of Key Vocabulary
- 2 Pages Per Reading

NONFICTION TEXTS

Chinese merchants in front of their dry goods store in the Arizona Territory. (1894)

landscape. The railroad ultimately did link the country together and accelerate economic expansion, an expansion that would not have been possible without the contributions of Chinese immigrant labor in building the Central Pacific.

Chinese immigrants also found work in the agriculture and industrial sectors. They worked on farms, fisheries, in factories, and as domestic servants. Chinese immigrants tended to accept these low-level, low-wage jobs in order to pay off their debt for passage to the U.S. and to send money home. U.S. companies exploited[5] them because they viewed them as cheap labor. Companies provided Chinese immigrants lower wages while pushing them to work longer hours with less rest. Still other Chinese immigrants established their own businesses, such as restaurants, laundries, and other personal services enterprises. Regardless, most came together to live in single communities, giving rise to "**Chinatowns**." These communities served as a way for the immigrants to preserve their culture and find safety and comfort with those like them.

End of an Era

As more Chinese immigrants arrived in the 19th century, they faced an increasingly hostile[6] nation, especially when an economic depression struck in the 1870s and competition for jobs soared. Chinese immigrants experienced violence and racism. State-sanctioned[7] laws also sought to drive out and exclude Chinese immigrants from realizing their dreams. Resistance toward Chinese immigrants grew and eventually culminated[8] in the first federal immigration law. In 1882, Congress passed the **Chinese Exclusion Act**, which effectively shut America's doors to nearly all immigrants from China. It would take decades to reverse the consequences. It was also decades before America once again would open its shores to those from Asia seeking a better life.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

[1] Frenzy: a state or period of uncontrolled excitement or wild behavior

[2] Emigrate: leave one's own country in order to settle permanently in another

[3] Transcontinental: (especially of a railroad line) crossing a continent

[4] Rugged: (of ground or terrain) having a broken, rocky, and uneven surface

[5] Exploit: to make use of unfairly for one's own advantage

[6] Hostile: unfriendly

[7] State-sanctioned: something the government allows by rule or law

[8] Culminate: to reach the highest point

➤ Appropriate Spacing to Allow for Annotation

➤ Common Core-Aligned

➤ Informational Texts and History Standards

➤ Critical Thinking Opportunities

NONFICTION TEXTS

History of Chinese Immigration: Part I

Nonfiction Text Features

Directions: Fill out the following organizer, identifying the key features of the informational text.

Feature 1: Graph	Feature 2: Image
What is it? Name/describe the feature.	What is it? Name/describe the feature.
How does this feature contribute to your understanding of the whole article?	How does this feature contribute to your understanding of the whole article?

Key Terms & Vocabulary

Directions: Define the key terms below by using context clues from the text.

Gam Saan	
Chinatowns	
Chinese Exclusion Act	

Main Idea & Key Details

Directions: Fill out the graphic organizer below in order to determine the main idea of the text.

Title:

Key Detail 1:	Key Detail 2:	Key Detail 3:

Main Idea: What is the article mostly about?

- ➤ Comprehension & Analysis Questions

- ➤ Format A – Text Features, Main Idea

- ➤ Format B – Analysis Questions

- ➤ Depth of Knowledge Prompts

NONFICTION TEXTS

Nonfiction Reading Analysis B
Name:

History of Chinese Immigration: Part I

1. What push factors motivated immigrants from China to leave their country in the 19th century? What pull factors attracted immigrants from China? What opportunities did these pull factors seemingly provide immigrants? Support with textual evidence.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What factor do you think was most influential in motivating Chinese immigrants to migrate to the United States? Why? Support with evidence from the text.

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. How did Chinese immigrants on the West Coast contribute to industrialization and expansion in the United States? Explain and support with evidence from the text.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Based on the text, what was life in the U.S. like for Chinese immigrants? What was their experience like living and working in America? Support with evidence from the text.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. In what ways did Chinese immigrants benefit from the opportunities the United States provided? In what ways did the U.S. benefit from the influx of Chinese immigrants? Support with evidence.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. Who do you think gained or benefited the most during this wave of immigration from China: immigrants or the United States? Why? Explain and support with textual evidence.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

- ➢ 2 Formats to Allow for Differentiation

- ➢ Use for Centers or Rotation Model

- ➢ Pair with Novel – Cross-text Connections

- ➢ Answer Key & Google Slides™ Links

3 ACTIVITIES

LIFE INFORMATION

Birthdate/Death & Birthplace:	Important Family & Friends:	Immigration to the U.S.:

INFLUENTIAL EVENTS TIMELINE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1.	2.	3.

Glue Top of Page Two Here

➤ Historical Document Analysis – 19th Century Sources

➤ Influential Immigrant Research & Pennant

➤ Defining Success Discussion Resource

➤ Anticipation Guide

3 ACTIVITIES

Examining Historical Documents: Part I

Historical Document Analysis

The following activity includes three different documents about Chinese labor and business in the 19th century. Complete all tasks for each source. Then, answer the final guiding question at the end.

GUIDING QUESTION: What do the documents reveal about the American public's attitude toward Chinese immigrants in the 19th century?

DOCUMENT A: Excerpt from pamphlet titled *China's menace to the world : from the forum to the public.* (Page 1)

Published: Washington, D.C.; Pioneer Laundry Workers Assembly, K. of L., (1878)

1. To whom was the pamphlet addressed? _____

2. Who created the pamphlet? _____

3. When was the pamphlet created? _____

4. What was the topic of this excerpt of the pamphlet? _____
_____

5. What problems with Chinese immigrants did the publisher outline in the first five sentences? Explain at least two and support with evidence.
_____
_____
_____

6. What did the publisher ask the American public to do in response to the rise of Chinese laundries?
_____
_____
_____

7. Why did the publisher encourage the reader to examine the Steam Laundry Business? What did the publisher hope to prove?
_____
_____
_____

8. If conditions persisted, what did the publisher predict would happen to the laundry business in America? What would Americans have to do? Support with evidence from the text.
_____
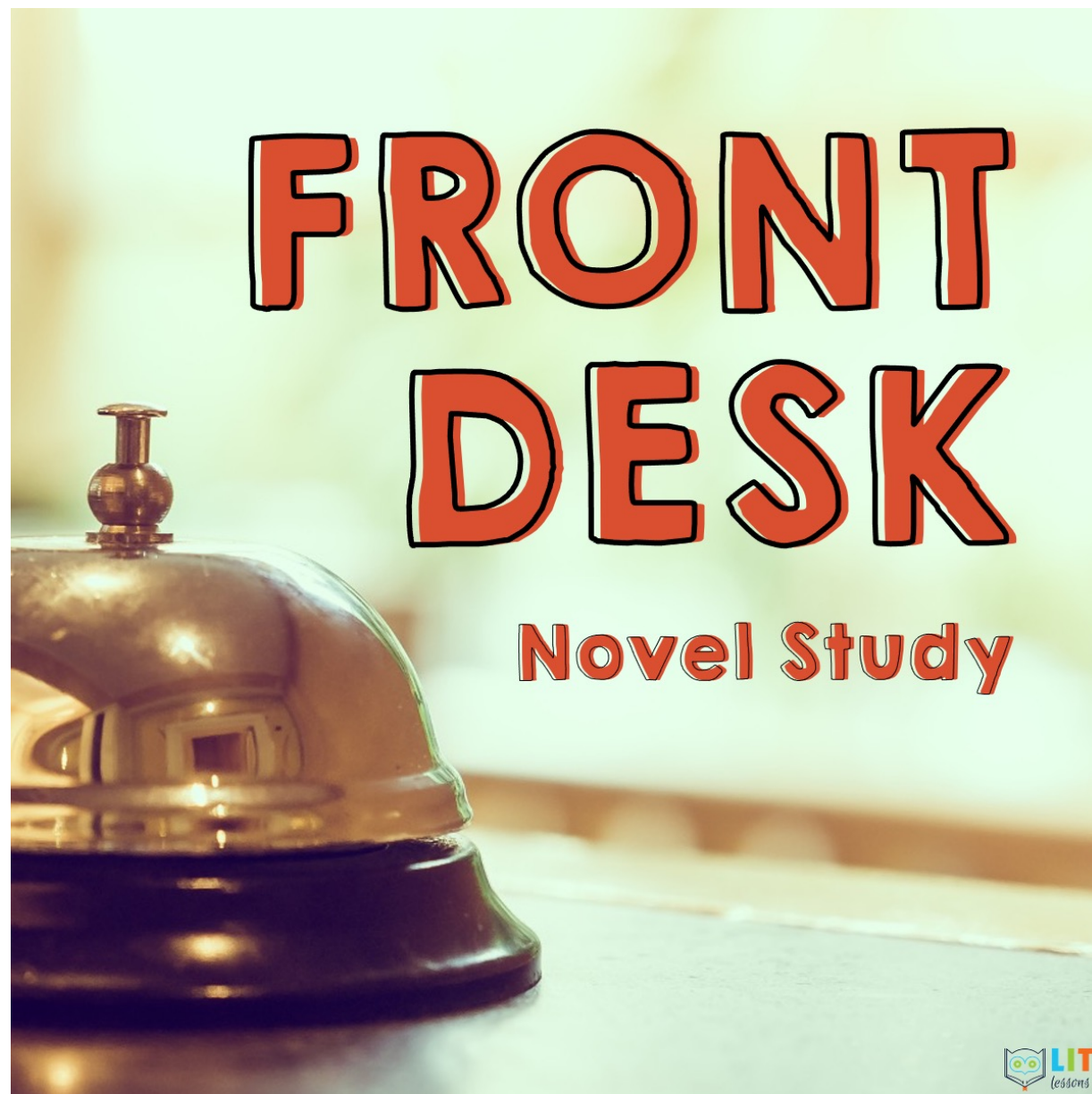_____
_____

➢ Build Background Knowledge

➢ Generate Excitement Around *Front Desk*

➢ Pair with Nonfiction Texts

➢ Connect History with Literature

BUNDLE & SAVE!

This resource is part of a comprehensive unit on *Front Desk*! Click the cover below to preview all the resources available.

TERMS OF USE

- **Credits:** Thank you to the following graphic artists; their fonts and graphics were purchased and used for this product.

- Finally, thank _you_ for your hard work and service to children. I know this product will help you in your efforts. Enjoy!