

**ORIGINAL STUDENT RESEARCH TOPICS
2007 NATIONAL ONLINE YOUTH SUMMIT**

**COMING TO AMERICA:
IMMIGRATION, LAW & AMERICAN
IDENTITY**

**American Bar Association
Division for Public Education**

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Original Student Research Overview: Student Activity 11

Estimated Time: This activity takes place over the course of a number of weeks. Throughout the summit, you will want to work with students to manage several projects simultaneously.

Overview in Brief: The concept behind a youth summit is that students research and teach each other about different aspects of the summit topic. For the summit to be successful, each class participates by presenting research and students read the research of students in other classes and respond to it. This activity is designed primarily to ask students to seek out *facts*. Rather than simply making statements about how they feel or expressing their *opinions*, in this activity, students seek *facts* through research, organize and present the factual information. Students will also have the opportunity to express opinions about what they have learned.

Basic Principles: At the recommendation of the 2007 NOYS Planning Committee, *all classes* in 2007 will research at least one question on all five topics. The planning committee believed that if each class researched all topics, classroom sharing, as well as online sharing, would enhance student learning. You have considerable freedom to adapt how that research is conducted--individually, in pairs, or in small groups--and to modify the research questions suggested in the descriptions in this document to best suit your students' abilities, as long as you adhere to some basic principles. Please know it is *not* our intention that every student research all *five* topics. Individual students will research only one topic.

Basic principles to keep in mind:

- Each student will research one topic, and one question minimum about that topic.
- You have considerable freedom to adapt how that research is conducted--individually, in pairs, or in small groups.
- The final “product” is two-paragraphs only; one paragraph is fact-based while in the other students have the opportunity to write about what they think about what they learned.
- Set time limits and parameters for research appropriate to the assignment. *We do not intend for research to be comprehensive.*
- All classes will cover all five topics in some fashion.
- A debriefing is highly recommended.
- If a question presented in the “Student Research” descriptions appears to you to be too complex for your students to research as presented, we suggest that you break it down—perhaps into 2 or more parts, and ask one student to research one part, and another student (or groups or pairs) to research another.

Please Note: If you want to assign research papers for *extra credit*, consider setting two deadlines: the first deadline would be the deadline established for this summit research activity (Student Activity 11), which will be the same for all schools; the second deadline would be a reasonable deadline for a paper.

Objectives: Students will

- Research one of five topics
- Find two credible sources for their research
- Write 2 paragraphs about the topic one of which is grounded in facts, citing their sources, and the other of which expresses impressions about what the student learned (see below)
- Evaluate sources
- Use topic sentences to begin their paragraphs
- Present their paragraphs to classmates and other students online in a timely fashion—by meeting deadlines

Materials and Preparation:

1. Review the information in this document.
2. This is an ongoing activity. During the summit you and your students will need to “multi-task,” meaning you will want them to begin research while they are completing other work.
3. As you prepare, remember you may facilitate and adapt research as you believe appropriate—adhering to the basic principles of the research activity. Students may work individually, in small groups, or in pairs, to best suit your students’ abilities.
4. As you prepare, remember the final student assignment for this activity is to write one (1) paragraph based in fact and one (1) paragraph expressing an opinion about what students learned from their research. (See criteria below.) If student work in pairs or small groups, they need only provide a finished product of 2 paragraphs in length.
5. Make copies of the “Original Student Research Checklist” for students if you haven’t already done so. (See Tab 6 of your resource binder.)

Research Paragraph Length:

Please limit research paragraphs to the specified length. Past experience tells us that setting limits for students helps them to meet their deadlines.

If you want students to write longer reports, please ask students to complete their two paragraphs to share with students in other schools first. Please remember that students in other schools are counting on your students. These paragraphs are “material” for Student Activity 12.

ABA staff will check in with you to make sure you are keeping the 2-paragraph length in mind.

6. Think about the research topics. Talk with other teachers about how they would approach them. Many of these teachers have taught this particular topic to students in the past.
7. You might want to complete a test run of the material available on the Internet for the topic, locating key search terms and words that will help students conduct research on the Internet using general search engines. This will help you to determine if students will need to use sources other than the Internet. We have chosen topics for which we believe sources exist.
8. Inform your librarian (school and/or public) that students will be researching this topic. Many public libraries will set aside resources in a particular temporary reference section for schools if alerted to assignments in advance. Do not waste a lot of time locating resources online. If they don't exist, be prepared to send students to the library for print resources.
9. Review the examples of research paragraphs in the resource binder (See Tab 7). The examples may not meet all of the criteria for the activity listed below. When you discuss the activity with students, you may want to ask them to critique the examples and ask them to indicate which criteria the examples do not meet. *However, you are not required to critique the examples.*
10. You will want to be prepared to discuss "attribution" with students when you set up the activity. Students will need to cite two (2) sources in their research paragraphs.
11. You will want to be prepared to discuss *paraphrasing* and explaining facts "in your own words" to students.
12. Students should write drafts of their research-based paragraphs and their opinion paragraphs in a word processing program. They should check for grammar, punctuation, and spelling before posting them to the appropriate conference. Build time into your plans for this work.

Criteria for Research Paragraph

1. The final writing assignment is to be no more than two (2) paragraphs in length.
2. Paragraph one is to explain the *facts* that have been discovered through the research and cite two (2) sources.
3. Paragraph two is to evaluate the credibility of the two sources and explain what students think (*opinion*) about what they discovered through their research and why they have come to that conclusion.
4. Each paragraph should begin with a clear topic sentence.
5. Remember to ask students to explain why they hold the opinion. What is the logic involved in their opinions? (See "Original Student Research Checklist" behind Tab 6, resource binder, for ideas.)

Procedures:

Procedures may be modified, as long as the modifications adhere to the basic principles of the activity, achieve the activity objectives, the criteria for research paragraphs is observed, and deadlines are met.

1. Post by the scheduled deadline. (This aspect of the procedure may not be adapted.)
2. Provide class time or assign research as homework.
3. Describe the purpose of the activity to students.

4. Describe the activity. Give students copies of handouts.
5. Talk with students about the *criteria* for the two paragraphs they are to write.
6. You will want to explain to students that *attribution* means saying where you got your information from, or where you found your *facts*—the person, organization, article, book or Web site from which the fact/information is taken. Discuss *paraphrasing* and what it means to translate research “into your own words.”
7. As a class, you may want to review and critique the examples of research paragraphs.
8. Once students have completed their research and have organized their facts, ask them to write away from the discussion board in a word processing program. They should check their writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
9. Remember: Once students have presented their *facts* in one paragraph, ask students to evaluate their sources. Ask them to write a second paragraph about what they think (*opinion*) about what they discovered and explain *why* they have those thoughts. What is the logic behind their opinion? Remember to ask them to explain *why*.
10. Students are to post their work in the Category/discussion board devoted to a particular the research topic. (See “Posting Procedures” below.)
11. Students are to print off their research postings and keep a copy in their portfolio for your review.
12. Students are to sign their postings with their first names, the first initial of their last name, and their school name.

ORIGINAL STUDENT RESEARCH CHECKLIST

Check your work for the following:

- Have you written 2 paragraphs?
- Does each paragraph include a clear topic sentence?
- Does your first paragraph explain the *facts* you discovered through your research in your own words?
- Have you cited 2 sources for your research?
- Have you evaluated and briefly written about the credibility of your 2 sources?
- In your second paragraph, have you explained what you think (*opinion*) about the *factual information* that you discovered through your research and why you have come to that conclusion?
- Did you check your grammar, punctuation, and spelling?
- Did you sign your research posting with your first name, the first initial of your last name, and your school name?
- Did you post the research in the Web conference/message board devoted to your research topic?

(This checklist can be found behind Tab 6 of your resource binder.)

Posting Procedures for Research:

1. We will create one conference or “Category” for each research topic.
2. Ask students to post their research in the conference (the term in *Fuse Talk* is “Category”) designated for their topic.

3. Using the “New Topic” command, students should type the following in the “Topic” box: “Fr. student first name, first initial of last name, school name.” Please remind students no last names are allowed in the “Categories”/discussion boards.
4. Students will need to state the topic of their research in their writing. They should begin their research paragraphs with a clear topic sentence. Mistakes happen. Asking student to state the topic will help us track writing that may belong in a different conference. Please stress this when you give students your directions.

Please Note: If you did not prepare your students to post their research following the procedures outlined here, your buddy schools may have difficulty locating messages posted by your students.

Debriefing the Activity

After your students have completed this activity, hold a discussion with the entire class. Ask students to share their individual or small group research discoveries. Discuss the most important discoveries that they believe they made while conducting their research. If appropriate to the research topic, ask students to identify points of law that appear to be clear. Ask students to identify aspects of the law that appear to need further clarification. Ask students to identify points uncovered through their research on which experts appear to disagree. Ask students to identify areas that they believe require further research studies. This discussion will help you and your students refine your final class project(s).

2007 Student Research Topics Reminders

- To help your students focus their research, review the following descriptions of research topics and questions below.
- Set parameters appropriate for the assignment and the desired outcomes appropriate to your students' skills and maturity level, keeping in mind the basic principles outlined earlier.
- Think about a research timeline. You will want to assess your students' skills sets and maturity to determine how to approach the research. Some classes may be able to manage more complicated questions than others. *Again, research questions are offered to you to help guide rather than restrict your approach to the activity.*
- Keep in mind that classes will need to post by the established deadline. It will be important to stay on task and post by the deadline.
- This is a collaborative project. You will want to remember that students need time to read and question information presented by others. You will also want time for yourself so that you may help them synthesize their reading and to help them think critically about what they have learned.

Historical Perspectives

The United States has served as the destination point for a steady flow of immigrants throughout its history. During the colonial era immigrants tended to come from northern European countries. After 1840, the vast majority came from Ireland, where devastating crop failures had forced many residents to leave their homelands. By 1860, New York was home to over one million residents, and more than half of the population at that time was made up of immigrants and their American-born children.

After the Civil War (add dates), America's growing industrial economy required the addition of many more workers, and this need was filled once again by immigrants. Approximately 25 million arrived between 1866 and 1915, more than 15 million alone between 1900 and 1915. Not only were the numbers of immigrants swelling, the countries from which they came changed dramatically as well. Unlike earlier immigrants, the majority of the newcomers after 1900 came from non-English speaking European countries, quite different in culture and language from the United States at that time.

With the U.S. entry into World War I (1917), immigration declined dramatically, and remained low through the Depression era of the 1930s and the World War II years of the early 1940s. The number of new arrivals began to increase again during the late 1940s, and has risen steadily since that time.

A new phase of immigration began in 1965, when strict quotas based on nationality were eliminated. In 1978, the United States government set a single annual world quota of 290,000, and this ceiling was raised again in 1990 to 700,000. During the 1990s, immigrants have arrived at a pace that at times has exceeded one million per year, and have settled in all parts of the country.

The Colonial Era (to 1775)

Please Note: We hope that students remember enough of their early history to recall that Colonial Era settlers came mostly from Northern Europe and Great Britain. You may wish to remind them.

Research Questions:

Research one of the listed eras of immigration to the United States below and determine the answers to the following questions. Cite two credible sources for your research.

- The New Country (1776-1881)
- The Burgeoning Growth (1882-1916)
- Regulations and Restrictions, Part I (1917-1939)
- Regulations and Restrictions, Part II (1939-1945)
- Regulations and Restrictions, Part III (1945-64)
- A New Era (1965-1986)
- Immigration Reform and Control (1987-2007)

Part I: Who Came to America?

1. What groups were arriving in the United States during the era?
2. What are some of the reasons for the migrations?

Cite at least two sources for your research.

Part II: Public Response and Opinion

1. What was the public response by Americans to immigration in the era you chose?
2. What key historical events influenced public opinion, and why?

Cite at least two credible sources for your research.

Part III: Your Opinion

What is your opinion about something that you learned? Give reasons for your answer.

Note to Teachers: Advanced or upper level students may wish to research two eras and answer the questions for both eras.

Extension Activity:

Choose one of the time periods mentioned above. Find two primary sources from that era that describe immigrant feelings and/or experiences once they arrived in America. In one or two sentences, answer the following questions:

1. What kinds of optimism did coming to America represent for these immigrants?
2. What kinds of challenges? How did the immigrants react to these challenges?

Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Immigration Laws

The **Immigration Reform and Control Act** (1986) granted amnesty to illegal immigrants who had resided in the United States for a certain period of time. It also attempted to reduce incentives for future undocumented immigration by placing steep penalties on those who would harbor or hire unauthorized residents.

The **Immigration Act** (1990) increased the number of legal immigrants allowed into the United States each year. It also created a lottery program that randomly assigned a number of visas.

In 1996, Congress passed three new federal laws that limited access to public benefits and legal protections for non-citizens. Under the **Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act** (PRWORA), commonly known as the Welfare Reform Act, legal and undocumented immigrants no longer had access to federal public benefits, such as Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and food stamps. The **Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act** (IIRIRA) hastened deportation of illegal immigrants who committed crimes. It also made it more difficult for immigrants to make legal appeals following executive branch decisions. The **Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act** (AEDPA), made it easier to arrest, detain, and deport non-citizens.

Security concerns resulting from the events of September 11, 2001 have resulted in anti-terror legislation that affects immigrants. The **Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act** (2002) tightens visa screening, border inspections, and tracking of foreigners.

In conducting the research below, students will learn about **contemporary** immigration laws.

Note: Links to the full text of all the Acts listed above that amend all the Acts that amend the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 may be found at: <http://www.uscis.gov/propub/ProPubVAP.jsp?dockkey=2b289cf41dd6b70a61a078a9fbfbc379>.

Part I

Research two immigration-related laws from the list below, and summarize the effect of the law in two sentences. Give two credible sources for your research.

1. Immigration Reform and Control Act (1986)
2. Immigration Act (1990)
3. Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), commonly known as the Welfare Reform Act (1996)
4. Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (1996)
5. Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (1996)
6. Enhanced Security and Visa Entry Reform Act (2002)

Part II

Choose one of the laws. Research two arguments that have been made in favor of the law and two arguments that have been made in opposition to it. Cite two credible sources.

Part III

What is your opinion of the arguments made about these laws? Give reasons for your answer.

Note to Teachers: Depending on which sets of laws your students studied for the Baseline Activity (Student Activity 7) you will want to assign a different set of laws. Students will learn about immigration laws across time during Student Activity 7. During Student Activity 11, this activity, students will learn about and evaluate **contemporary** immigration laws.

Immigrants, Public Benefits, and the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court has long held that all aliens—legal and illegal immigrants alike—are protected by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments from deprivation of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. But the Court has also held that basic due process protections do not mean that all aliens are entitled to the same benefits that citizens enjoy, or even that all aliens have to be treated alike.

In this activity, you and your fellow students will examine two Supreme Court decisions that considered the right of aliens to enjoy benefits provided to U.S. citizens. The first case, *Mathews v. Diaz*, 426 U.S. 67 (1976), involves a federal law that denied federal medical insurance coverage to aliens unless they had been admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence and had resided in the U.S. for at least five years. The second case, *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), involves a Texas state law that denied a free public school education to undocumented (i.e., illegal) school-age children.

Note to Teachers: Assign some students to research the Supreme Court’s holding in *Mathews v. Diaz* and others to research the Court’s holding in *Plyler v. Doe* (work in small groups of 4 to 6 students).

Please note that students will have been briefly introduced to each of these cases during the baseline activity—Student Activity 6. During the following research activity, they will understand, analyze and explain the case in greater detail.

The “source” for this research will ideally be the case decisions. In other words, students will work with “primary sources.”

Feel free to assign only one of each pairs of questions below to each student or group of students.

Part I: Analyzing and Researching the Case

Answer the following question(s) about the case you have been asked to research--*Mathews v. Diaz* or *Plyler v. Doe*:

- What was the legal status of the immigrants involved in the case (i.e., were the immigrants in the U.S. legally or illegally)? Was that status important to the outcome of the case?
- Did the Supreme Court uphold or strike down the denial of benefits to immigrants? What was the legal or constitutional basis for the Court’s decision?
- Was the decision of the Supreme Court unanimous or were there any dissenting opinions? If there was a dissenting opinion, why did it disagree with the majority’s opinion?
- Was a federal law or a state law involved in the case? Was the status of the law (i.e., federal or state) important to the outcome of the case? Why?

Refer to the case for your research. Explain your answers.

Part II: Your Opinion

What is your opinion of the decision the Supreme Court made about providing public benefits to non-citizen immigrants in the case you were asked to research? Give your rationales.

Part III: In Class Debriefing

Share your answers and opinion with a student who researched the other case.

1. How did the outcome of your case differ from the outcome of the other case?
2. What factors do you think would explain any differences in outcome?

The Economics of Immigration

Much of the controversy regarding U.S. immigration policy centers on the economic aspects of immigration, in particular illegal immigration.

The effects of illegal immigration are complex. Many corporations and industries (including agriculture and construction) welcome the availability of low-cost labor. They argue that a low cost workforce makes them more competitive, allows them to produce consumer goods at lower prices, and leads to economic growth that improves the U.S. economy. But unions have historically believed that undocumented immigrants are willing to work long hours in poor conditions. Their willingness to work can depress wages, displace American employees, and reduce the job opportunities and wages of low-skilled American workers. Others argue that citizens and legal residents carry the economic cost of illegal immigration, because they bear the burden of paying for the costs of entitlement programs and social services for undocumented immigrants and their children. However, many undocumented workers pay taxes.

A useful background article is available at:

<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=1482&CFID=2375626&CFTOKEN=55296018#>.

Others may be found on the Web site of the Immigration Policy Center:

http://www.aifl.org/ipc/ipc_index.asp

Or the National Bureau of Economic Research:

<http://www.nber.org/>

Of great interest are three stories available from Neiman Reports, Fall 2006, Immigration:

<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/06-3NRfall/index.html>

See,

- Data Talk When Reporters Know How to Listen
By Stephen K. Doig
- Learning How Data Work With Reporting
By Stephen K. Doig
- The Dangerous Numbers Game in Immigration Coverage
By Ted Robbins

There is a great deal of debate about the impact of immigrants and undocumented immigrants on the wages of unskilled or low-skilled native workers. The studies appear to be inconclusive. Recently, contradictory studies have been presented on the impact of foreign-born workers on the wages of unskilled native born workers. (See resource binder, Tab 8, "The Immigrant Economy.")

Part I: Perspectives on the Impact of Undocumented Workers

Research different perspectives on the economic impact of undocumented workers.

- Find one expert or advocacy group that supports the employment of undocumented immigrants by American employers.
 - Find one expert or advocacy group that opposes illegal immigration because of its effect on American jobs.
1. Write a list of the economic pros and cons of illegal immigration, identifying at least two credible sources for your research.
 2. Do any of your sources suggest ways in which illegal immigration could be reduced or managed in order to maximize the benefits and minimize the drawbacks of employing illegal immigrants? If so, describe the proposed actions in two sentences.

Part II: Your Opinion

What is your opinion of the arguments about the impact of illegal immigration on jobs and the U.S. economy? Give reasons for your answer.

Immigration Issues in Foreign Countries

Immigration has become a global issue. From 1990-2004, the percent of foreign non citizens living in Western European European-Union countries increased 56%. 22.9 million, foreign non-citizens live in countries. In some respects, many of the same immigration issues being played out in the United States are being played out globally.

Although many Western nations in particular have faced declining birthrates, and are concerned about how they can sustain economic growth without immigration. For example, the French Institute of International Relations estimates that to maintain its economy, Europe must allow entry of 30 million immigrants by 2020. At the same time, some countries, such as Germany, France and Italy, are concerned about implementing less restrictive immigration policies because they currently struggle with high unemployment. This debate about economic issues occurs even in the United Kingdom, despite its strong economy and a steady birthrate. And, under a more unified Europe means that one nation's problem can be problem for others. Recently, many European countries in particular have started to more strenuously enforce existing immigration laws, pass new legislation, and take a new look at assimilation issues. Many of these nations in particular have limited legal entry, imposed language and culture tests for citizenship, and passed laws to stem illegal immigration. In many foreign countries, penalties for illegal entry and presence are greater than penalties in the United States, and employer sanctions are also much greater.

Japan and Sweden have very small immigrant populations but are attractive to immigrants because of high wages and strong economies. Brazil, Egypt, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, and Switzerland have significant illegal immigrant populations. Spain also struggles with illegal immigrants who arrive by boat to Spain's Canary Islands from African countries. Egypt is dealing with an influx of refugees from the Sudan. Many illegal immigrants also find their way to Italy along the Italian and Maltese coasts by boat. In Mexico, the immigrant population is transient. Many illegal aliens enter Mexico from Central American countries and cross Mexico on their way to the United States. And British "overstayers" make up the largest population of illegal workers in Australia, according to the BBC News.

Part I: Research Developments in Other Countries

Research and describe 2 recent developments in immigration law/policy in each of two of the following countries, and the factors that influenced those laws/policies:

- Australia
- Brazil
- Egypt
- France
- Italy
- Japan
- Germany
- Mexico
- Spain

- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom

Find *two* credible sources for your research. Cite your source.

Part II: Your Opinion

What is your opinion about these laws and policies? Give reasons for your answer.

Note to Teachers: Feel free to ask students to choose other countries. We know that online resource are available for the countries listed above.

Sources:

“Europe in Quandary as Immigrants Flood In,” Jeffrey Stinson, USA Today, June 7, 2006.

“European Commission Chief Urges Unity on Illegal Immigration Policy,” The Jurist, September 8, 2006.

“Many Nations Harsher than U.S. on Illegal Immigrants, Study Says,” by Susan Gamboa, Associated Press.

Immigration Law Sanctions and Enforcement in Selected Foreign Countries, Law Library of Congress, Report for Congress, April 2006.