

**Social Studies Content Themes for Elementary/Middle School**  
**From**  
***“The Making of Milwaukee Curriculum”***

**Immigration/Migration:**

**Teaching about Immigration/Migration in Milwaukee**

The following activities are from “The Making of Milwaukee” on-line curriculum.

- **Making the Move (Discussing Moving to a New Place)**
- **Far From Home (Discussing Time Away From Home)**
- **Arriving in Milwaukee (Analyzing an Immigrant Photograph)**
- **Adding to Your Knowledge of Ethnic Milwaukee (Listing Immigration Information)**
- **I Regret I Did Not Come Sooner (Analyzing a Quote)**
- **Letters Home From Milwaukee**
- **Back to the Future (Comparing Present and Past Pictures of Ethnic Milwaukee)**
- **Making Comparisons (Using Venn Diagrams to Compare Immigration Today and Yesterday)**
- **Touring Many Nations In Milwaukee (Fieldtrip)**
- **Ethnic Sightseeing (Fieldtrip)**
- **Knowing Finer Points of Ethnic Milwaukee (Trivia Activity)**
- **A Very Unique City (Trivia Activity)**
- **Mapping Ethnicities**
- **Matching Photographs to Events (Timeline Activity)**
- **Adding Events in Time (Timeline Activity)**
- **Moving to a New City (Listing Factors Affecting Moving)**

**MAKING THE MOVE**

1. Have students recall a time in their lives when they moved into a new city or neighborhood. Ask students to write responses to the following questions:

- Why did you and your family move?
- What was the most challenging part of moving to another area?
- How did you adjust to your new city or neighborhood?
- What resources in the neighborhood helped you feel comfortable with your new surroundings?
- Did you ever feel like your family made the wrong decision to move? Why?
- What changes in your lifestyle did you or your family have to make after you moved to your new neighborhood?

2. Allow students to share their responses with another student or in small groups.

3. Using the responses to the invitational activity, discuss with students that moving to an unknown area can be extremely challenging. Explain to students that settlers who came to Milwaukee before it was a city shared the same types of experiences they recalled during this activity. These early Natives and settlers had to find ways to adjust to their new environments and survive in a time when technology was not as advanced as it is today. They used the resources around them and worked with others, sometimes strangers, to make the best of the land and opportunities around them. Furthermore, the perseverance, works and strength of these early settlers have helped pave a way for a new, vibrant and stable city such as Milwaukee.

#### Follow-up Learning Activity:

The following activity can be utilized as an extension of the previous activity:

- Challenge students to write a one-page poem that explains their moving experiences.
- Students' poems should incorporate the responses to the questions showcased above.
- Have students read these poems during an "open mic" in which students truly internalize and express their emotions associated with moving.

### **FAR FROM HOME**

1. Ask students to think about an occasion when they have spent time the farthest place away from their home. Then have the students individually write answers to the following questions. These questions could also be used to have students write a story, script for a play, poem, or children's book about their personal experiences of a time spent farthest away from home.
  - What was your journey to this place like?
  - How did you feel when you arrived at this place?
  - Did anything seem strange to you? If yes, explain.
  - What were the people like?
  - How do you think you would have felt if you were there all by yourself?
  - How do you think you would have felt if you couldn't speak the same language as the people who were around you?
  - How do you think you would have felt if you had to stay at this place for a long time?
2. Using the think-pair-share teaching strategy, have students share and compare their answers with another student. Then ask some of them to share their answers with the rest of the class.
3. Use their responses to explain to students that people who came to Milwaukee likely had a wide range of feelings about coming to this new place. While some

may have been excited about the chance for a new opportunity away from their homeland, others were likely afraid of being in a strange place. While some were able to rely on the support of family and friends, others came to Milwaukee alone and had to rely very heavily on themselves. While some may have enjoyed the challenge of learning about a new language and culture, others were nervous about this task.

## ARRIVING IN MILWAUKEE

*This activity requires access to the accompanying book, *The Making of Milwaukee*, by John Gurda, or the accompanying *Making of Milwaukee* website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com).*

In this activity students will discuss and debate the experience of coming to a new homeland like Milwaukee.

1. Have students study the photograph of the Polish Immigrant Family in Chapter 4, *Wheat, Iron, Beer, and Bloodshed*, of the Gurda book .

*Or, go to the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section of *The Making of Milwaukee* website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com) and choose “Lesson Activity Images” from the pull down menu. Use the “search” tool to find the photo of the “Polish Immigrant Family”.*

2. Have students answer the following questions:
  - Where do you think these people might have come from? What causes you to think this?
  - What do you think their attitude is towards being in Milwaukee?
  - What do you think they brought with them when they came to Milwaukee?
  - What do you think they have left behind?
  - What will it take for these people to be able to call themselves “Americans”?
3. After students have written their responses, discuss students’ ideas as a group to see the possible wide range of ideas generated by the photograph.
4. Then tell students that this is a photograph of Polish immigrants who came to Milwaukee. Although it would be difficult for them to tell solely from the photograph that these were Polish immigrants, Polish immigrants tended to have large families like the one depicted here. Answers to the other questions are wide open to interpretation from the photograph.

5. Explain to students that they will learn many more specific details about people who arrived in Milwaukee from different countries like the individuals in this photograph.

## **ADDING TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF ETHNIC MILWAUKEE**

*\*\*Note to Teachers: During the following activity, students are asked to share their background knowledge and attitudes towards various racial and ethnic groups in Milwaukee. Consequently, it raises the possibility that students might use stereotypes and slanders that could be considered offensive to the racial and ethnic groups discussed in the activity. Make sure to have several teaching strategies in mind to deal with these potential situations before using this activity.*

1. Write the following words on the board or large sheets of paper around the room: German, Irish, Polish, Italian, Greek, African American, Serbian, Yankee, Norwegian, Slovenian and ask students to spend time walking around the room writing down words or phrases that they associate with each of these groups or any information they know about each group.
2. Select a student to read the final list for each group to the whole class. (Note: If the teacher is only planning to show portions of the video related to particular ethnic groups, then he or she may only want to include lists of those groups for discussion)
3. Engage students in a class discussion on the origins of their understandings or ideas about these racial and ethnic groups and the factors that have affected their perceptions of these groups.
4. Keep these lists up while students watch any video chapters from this unit and/or do any assignments or activities related to any video chapters from this unit.
5. At the end of the unit, ask students to add a new word, phrase, or idea they learned about this group to the list.
6. Finally, discuss whether or not their initial words, phrases, or ideas adequately characterized the different groups that settled in Milwaukee according to the information from the video and also discuss the new understandings about each group they developed from the video.

## **I REGRET I DID NOT COME SOONER**

According to the video at the end of Chapter 5, *Neighbors and Strangers*, a German immigrant wrote the following line in a letter home:

*“I thank the Lord that I am here, and I regret I did not come sooner”*

1. Read this quote to students or write it on the board and discuss the following questions with this perspective on “Coming to Milwaukee”:
  - What might have caused this immigrant to feel this way about Milwaukee?
  - Why might other German immigrants have agreed with the idea expressed in the letter?
  - Do you think there were Germans who may have disagreed with the idea expressed here? Explain why some may have not felt this way.
  - Do you think members of the other groups who came to Milwaukee felt the same way as the idea expressed in this letter? In what ways might they have shared this perspective? In what ways might they have not shared this perspective?
  - Based on your experiences with Milwaukee today, do you think you would feel the same way as this immigrant after living here? Why? Why not?

## **LETTERS HOME FROM MILWAUKEE**

1. Have students pretend to be immigrants from any nation where many people came to Milwaukee. They can either choose from a group that was presented in the video or the teacher can assign them a particular ethnic group. If students did *Activity 3, Governing Milwaukee*, they can even use the ethnic background they represented in this activity.
2. Have the students write their own letters home about their experiences in Milwaukee using details from the video to discuss some of the main events that affected individuals from their ethnic group in Milwaukee. Students should also use the video to speculate on the opportunities and obstacles that someone from the ethnic group they are writing about would have faced in Milwaukee.
3. Like the phrase in *Activity 5, I Regret I Did Not Come Sooner*, each student should finish his or her letter with a phrase that summarizes his or her overall attitude towards “Coming to Milwaukee.” This activity could also be adapted to having students write a letter as partners or as a group and share their letters with the rest of the class.

### Follow-up Learning Activities:

- Students could share their letters with the rest of the class and the teacher could lead a discussion about similarities and differences that students notice in the letters.
- *Students could also add images to their letters by going to The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com) Go to the “Image*

*Library”, within the “In the Classroom” section and use the “search” tool to locate photographs under the various pull down categories that match ideas from their letters.*

## **BACK TO THE FUTURE**

*This activity requires access to the accompanying book “The Making of Milwaukee” by John Gurda, or the accompanying website for the video, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com) .*

Look for a photograph of a German beer garden scene in Gurda’s book or on the website.

AND

To see a photograph of a present day ethnic festival go to the following website:  
<http://www.germanfest.com/2004full/Bandfromthesky.jpg>

*The Then and Now photographs for this activity can also be found by going to the homepage of The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Go to the “Image Library” within the “In the Classroom” section and choose “Events” from the pull down menu. Be sure to use the “search” tool.*

*\*\*Note to Teachers: In the following activity, students will be considering the role that beer played in Milwaukee’s history and leisure time in Milwaukee. This activity is not in any way designed to promote the use of alcohol or to suggest that drinking is necessary for leisure. Make sure to have several teaching strategies in mind as this issue may potentially come up in students’ discussion and work.*

1. Have students use the above photographs related to ethnic leisure time in Milwaukee to pretend that they are either a person from the older photograph who has had the chance to visit the event in the modern photograph or a person from the modern photograph who has had the chance to visit the event in the older photograph and write a story about your experience.
2. Have them use specific features from the photographs and descriptions of ethnic leisure activities from the video in their stories. Also, tell them to be creative in attempting to describe what they see, hear, and feel but at the same time analyze details from the photographs to realistically portray both situations.

## **MAKING COMPARISONS**

1. Access the following news story from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel about Mexican immigration to Milwaukee  
<http://www.jsonline.com/news/metro/feb04/211195.asp>

2. Then have students use information from the video to complete a Venn diagram comparing the following issues related to past immigration to Milwaukee and present-day Mexican immigration to Milwaukee: 1). Where the immigrant groups settled in the past and present, 2). The size of the various immigrant groups in the past and present, 3). Milwaukee's unique role in immigration history, 4). Economic factors in drawing immigrants, and 5). the possible changes to the city as a result of immigration
3. Discuss the article with the Venn diagram as a class.

## **TOURING MANY NATIONS IN MILWAUKEE**

1. Have students visit sites in Milwaukee like the Italian Community Center, Serb Hall, Turner Hall, the Polish Heritage Alliance, German Fest Milwaukee Inc., and the Irish Fest Center that are still dedicated to preserving the city's immigrant heritage. Students could talk to individuals associated with these places and interview them about how and why they preserve ethnic traditions. They might even find people associated with these places that would be willing to talk to the whole class about a particular ethnic group's experience in Milwaukee.
2. Students could report their findings to the rest of the class orally or in writing.

*\*\*Note to Teachers: The group, Historic Milwaukee, Inc. has a variety of tours that students can take as a class or with a parent or guardian. More information is available on their website at: <http://www/historicmilwaukee.org>*

## **ETHNIC SITESEEING**

1. Have students visit or tour places that were significant aspects of the lives of different ethnic groups in Milwaukee (e.g. churches, landmarks, neighborhoods, parks, buildings, workplaces). Students could research the locations of some of these places. They could work to find people associated with these places to gain more information about any ways these places maintain an ethnic identity.
2. Students could write a report, create a PowerPoint presentation, create a postcard about these places, or create storyboards about their visit and findings or even make a video with their own narration that they could show to the rest of the class.

*\*\*Note to Teachers: The group, Historic Milwaukee, Inc. has a variety of tours that students can take as a class or with a parent or guardian. More information is available on their website at: <http://www/historicmilwaukee.org>*

## **KNOWING FINER POINTS OF ETHNIC MILWAUKEE**

1. According to the last U.S. census nearly \_\_\_\_\_ % of Milwaukee area residents claimed some German ancestry?
  - A) 30
  - B) 40
  - C) 50
  - D) 60
  
2. All of the following are considered German landmarks in Milwaukee except:
  - A) Saint Mary's Catholic Church downtown
  - B) Turner Hall
  - C) Mader's Restaurant
  - D) Saint Josaphat Basillica
  
3. All of the following Germans made a living brewing beer in Milwaukee except:
  - A) Pabst
  - B) Schlitz
  - C) Miller
  - D) Busch
  
4. Which of the following streets was named in honor of the Soldier's Home for disabled soldiers?
  - A) National Avenue
  - B) Wisconsin Avenue
  - C) Milwaukee Avenue
  - D) St. Paul Avenue
  
5. The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel who served as the first commander of Wisconsin's famed Iron Brigade was
  - A) Garrett Barry
  - B) Alexander Randall
  - C) Rufus King
  - D) Joshua Glover
  
6. Alexander Mitchell's home later became known as:
  - A) City Hall
  - B) The Wisconsin Club
  - C) The Summerfest grounds
  - D) The National Soldiers' Home
  
7. What was the name of the ship that sunk in Lake Michigan killing many Irish from Milwaukee's third Ward?
  - A) The Lady Elgin
  - B) The Santa Maria
  - C) The Maine
  - D) The Lusitania



8. The first Polish church in urban America was in Milwaukee. It was called:
- A) St. Vincent's Church
  - B) St. Stanislaus Church
  - C) St. Thomas Church
  - D) St. John's Cathedral
9. Which church when built had a dome that was the second highest in the nation?
- A) St. Josaphat's Church
  - B) St. Hedwig's Church
  - C) St. Rose Church
  - D) Madonna di Pompeii Church
10. The oldest ethnic festival in Milwaukee is:
- A) Irish Fest
  - B) German Fest
  - C) Polish Fest
  - D) Festa Italiana
  - E) Mexican Fiesta
11. In 1890, where did Milwaukee rank nationally in terms of its foreign born population?
- A) It had the highest percent of foreign born residents in the nation
  - B) It had the second highest percent of foreign born residents in the nation
  - C) It had the third highest percent of foreign born residents in the nation
  - D) It had the fourth highest percent of foreign born residents in the nation

## **A VERY UNIQUE CITY**

Although every major urban area in the United States received massive number of immigrants between 1846 and 1900, list at least 5 things about immigration to Milwaukee or Milwaukee during this time period that made it unique from the rest of the nation

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Sample answers might include: 1) It had the highest percent of foreign born residents in the nation 2) It had an exceptionally large population of Germans 3) It had an island settlement of Poles from the Baltic seacoast 4) It had an ethnic church that became a

basilica 5) It had a large number of breweries 6) It had a National Soldiers' Home for disabled veterans from the Civil War

## **MAPPING ETHNICITIES**

1. Give students a blank map of Milwaukee while they are watching the film and ask them to color, with different colors, areas where the various ethnic groups in Milwaukee settled between 1846 and 1910. A Milwaukee map can be located at <http://www.mapquest.com/>
2. Then ask them to compare their maps with each other to see if they colored in the same areas.
3. End this activity by showing them the actual map of the areas where the various ethnic groups in Milwaukee settled on *The Making of Milwaukee* website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Go to the "In the Classroom" section and click on Interactive Tools to locate the Milwaukee Immigration Map Activity.
4. Or, to go directly to this on-line interactive lesson, the Milwaukee Immigration Map Activity, click here now:  
[http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/map\\_game.cfm](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/map_game.cfm)

*Please make sure to explain to students that these boundaries show where the largest number of each ethnic group settled in Milwaukee. However, the settlement of these ethnic groups was not limited to the boundaries on the map and people of various ethnicities settled in the areas marked on the map for any one particular ethnic group.*

## **MATCHING PHOTOGRAPHS TO EVENTS**

*For this activity, have the students go to *The Making of Milwaukee* website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Go to the "Image Library" within the "In the Classroom," section and use the "search" tool to find appropriate images.*

1. The teacher should break the class into groups or have them work individually on this project.
2. Then have students select up to five images from the various categories within the "Image Library" that they would add to the timeline events for this unit. Students should be able to explain why they would add these images.
3. Students should compare their results through class discussion and explain why they chose these images to represent this era in Milwaukee's history.

## **ADDING EVENTS IN TIME**

1. The teacher should break the class into groups or have them work individually on this project.
2. Have the students add at least 3 events to the timeline from the video or the accompanying book, *The Making of Milwaukee*, that have contributed to the significance of immigrants settling in Milwaukee.
3. Students should compare their results and discuss why they chose to add the events they decide on to represent this era in Milwaukee's history.

## MOVING TO A NEW CITY

1. Ask students to identify and describe a list of factors that might influence them to move to a new city.
2. Set the scenario in the following manner: Say, "*Every city has its positive and negative attributes. Imagine that you are 21, and have either finished college or have completed training for a new career. You are contemplating a move to a new city. What attributes would you want your new city to have? For example, if I were to move to a new city, I would want it to be (or to have) \_\_\_\_\_ (name one attribute) because \_\_\_\_\_*". In the next few minutes list 3-5 attributes on a piece of paper that you would want your new city to possess.
3. Ask each student to share one attribute so that you can compile a list on the board. Remind students that what is an important attribute for one person may not be important for another. (Write list on overhead, board, or chart paper).
4. After compiling a list of attributes, ask students to engage in a "fast-write" for 5-10 minutes about one of the most important attributes a city must have before they would consider moving to that city in order to begin their life as an adult and a new career.
5. At the end of the 5-10 minutes, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts.
6. Then, pose the question: *Why do you think people would have moved to Milwaukee in the late 1,800's? In what ways might their reasons be similar to or different than yours?* Encourage students to listen for reasons why people moved to Milwaukee at that time when they view Video Chapter 9, *Greater Milwaukee*.
7. After the Video Chapter is shown, have students compare their predictions with the actual reasons given in the Video Chapter.