

The TEAACH Act and Using SAAPRI's Oral History Project in Illinois Schools

Topic: Oral History Project of South Asian Americans in Chicagoland Area 1945-1965

Theme: Immigration Experiences, The American Dream

Description: Primary source collection of South Asian American immigrant interviews and experiences from 1945-1965 in Illinois.

Resource: [SAAPRI link](#)

Essential Questions: At what point does an immigrant become an American? Why should we correct stereotypes of foreign experiences? How do we give voice to silent/ignored groups with unknown histories? What lies ahead for Asian Americans and all Americans in a diverse world?

ISBE topics: Civics, History, Sociology, Inquiry Skills

Suggested Grades: 9-12

ISBE Learning Standards:

SS.9-12.H.1. Evaluate the context of time and place as well as structural factors that influence historical developments.

SS.9-12.H.3. Analyze change and continuity across historical eras and identify what perspectives have typically influenced how historical eras are constructed.

SS.9-12.H.7. Identify and analyze the role of individuals, groups, and institutions in people's struggle for safety, freedom, equality, and justice.

Questions:

How do Asian Americans overcome obstacles faced by many immigrants in 1945-1965?

Why did South Asian Americans thrive in Illinois from 1945-1965?

What strategies did immigrants develop to cope with discrimination?

What were some reasons to stay in America?

What were some obstacles on the journey from New York to Chicago?

In what way would this group be considered pioneers during this time period?

Using the interviews as a primary source, find evidence of community growth and solidarity.

When did you note a divide with other marginalized groups? When could more solidarity have been developed?

Research Questions:

-Compare and contrast *redlining* for African Americans versus Indian Americans during this time period.

-How has *colorism* impacted Asian Americans in America? What other groups have been impacted by colorism? Find historical and current examples to support your answer.

-In what way can this oral history project be considered a *counter narrative* compared to our past historical textbooks? Explain. What other Asian American counter narratives can you find? Provide at least three examples. Compare and contrast these examples with the SAAPRI Oral History Project.

-Does the SAAPRI Oral History Project participants represent the American dream? Why or why not?

-How is immigrating to the US prior to the Immigration Act of 1965 a different experience from those who immigrated after 1965? Find other groups who immigrated here prior to 1965 and compare/contrast those experiences with the participants from the SAAPRI Oral History Project.